

War Is a Racist Enterprise

Racism is an unspoken rationale for U.S. imperialist actions.

By [Danny Haiphong](#)

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The U.S.’s failure to prevent the Taliban from retaking political power in Afghanistan sparked feelings of panic in the foreign policy establishment. Warmongers and their loyal servants made endless demands for the twenty-plus year occupation to continue indefinitely. Familiar faces from [the neocon establishment](#) such as John Bolton and Bill Kristol urged Joe Biden to reconsider the withdrawal for “national security” reasons. An even larger cohort held firm to the belief that the U.S. should remain in Afghanistan on the premise that the lives of women were in imminent danger under Taliban rule.

Afghanistan has been the target of U.S. aggression since 1979 when Jimmy Carter approved of direct assistance to the Mujahideen, the pre-cursor to the Taliban. The bloody proxy war that ensued overthrew Afghanistan’s socialist government and gave the Soviet Union [its own “Vietnam.”](#) In 2001, the U.S. used the 9/11 attacks to invade Afghanistan and overthrow the Taliban, which ruled for consecutive years after the country was plunged into warlordism. More than a hundred thousand civilians perished in the U.S. war as Afghanistan was transformed into an unstable neo-colony plagued by [extreme poverty](#) and the [illicit heroin trade](#).

The debacle in Afghanistan exposes how racism oozes from every edifice of the U.S.’s imperialist wars. War requires the dehumanization of its subjects. It is assumed that Afghanistan *needs* the United States to achieve any modicum of (white) “civilization.” The people of Afghanistan have been deemed incapable of expressing self-determination without the almighty hand of the U.S. military. The Taliban, on the other hand, represents the “heart of darkness” that must be wiped away in order for the people of Afghanistan to leave their “primitive” existence behind.

Not long after the Taliban reassumed political power in Afghanistan did the Biden administration get busy expanding the U.S.’s theater of war beyond the Middle East. Sanctions were [placed on Eritrea](#) as part of the U.S.’s ongoing effort to maintain imperial domination in the Horn of Africa by resuscitating its most valued puppet in the region, the TPLF. Vice President Kamala Harris’s late August trip to Singapore and Vietnam focused on

the dangers China presented to Asia in a bid to ramp up the U.S.'s New Cold War. Just prior to the visit, U.S. officials claimed that Vietnam was the site of the mysterious [“Havana Syndrome.”](#)

The “Havana Syndrome” is a completely fabricated illness that has allegedly afflicted U.S. intelligence spooks residing in Cuba, China, and Austria. In 2019, anonymous U.S. officials complained of a similar illness and accused the Cuban government of launching “sonic attacks” which researchers later confirmed to be [the sound of crickets](#). Later reports alleged that [overexposure to pesticides](#) may have facilitated “Havana Syndrome.” Despite the perceived danger of “Havana Syndrome” in Vietnam, Kamala Harris successfully completed her anti-China tirade by calling the socialist power a “bully” in the South China Sea. Harris demanded that China adhere to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), a treaty that China has long ratified [but the U.S. has yet to sign](#).

The United States views the world's darker nations as having no rights that it is bound to respect. A host of military, political, and economic provocations are justified by evidence-free assertions that China is a “threat” to its own region. The U.S.'s endless wars in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Africa are viewed as necessary to curb “terrorism.” Russia's so-called “strongman” Vladimir Putin has been the crutch that holds together the aggressive deployment of the U.S.-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) along the country's borders. In each case, the United States is the standard bearer of white superiority that bears responsibility for cleansing the natives of their tendency toward barbarism.

Racism provides ample cover for the economic interests served by the U.S.'s endless wars. Federal contracts for weapons manufacturers grew [\\$119 billion from 2001-2020](#) in large part due to the bonanza of market opportunities that were engineered by the occupation of Afghanistan. The New Cold War against China and Russia has also driven the expansion of U.S. military resources into Asia and Africa. More than fifty percent of all U.S. military assets [reside in the Asia Pacific](#) and the U.S. African Command (AFRICOM) now possesses partnerships with [all but one African country](#) (Eritrea).

War serves a myriad of interconnected interests for the U.S. ruling class. As the market for private military contractors has grown, so too have profits for Wall Street investors. Fossil fuel corporations supply one of the largest polluters in the world, the U.S. military, with the crude energy necessary to facilitate its endless expansion. Oil shares frequently rise with [each new prospect for war](#). Military hegemony also aids in securing profitable markets through the installation of compliant political regimes. Capitalist Elon Musk alluded to this fact in July 2020 when he [proclaimed on Twitter](#), “We will coup whoever we want! Deal with it.”

Musk was referring to speculations that Tesla's burning desire to privatize Bolivia's lithium deposits motivated [the 2019 coup](#) of Evo Morales' popular government. For the imperialists, the world is merely a profitable marketplace from which to plunder. Humanity is cast aside, and any people or nation that challenges the authority of the U.S.'s war machine is targeted for elimination. Elimination, however, cannot occur unless the targeted are stripped of their right to exist and relegated to the status of brutes and savages. This is why the governments of Syria, China, Iran, Venezuela, Eritrea, and countless others are repeatedly accused of crimes against humanity which are neither verifiable nor legitimate.

In fact, the opposite is often true. China, for example, has arguably the world's [best](#)

[pandemic response](#) and has successfully [eliminated extreme poverty](#) after being one of the poorest countries in the world just two generations ago. The Syrian government is looked upon [by its citizens](#) as the rightful defender of a nation beleaguered by U.S. and Western-backed terrorists. Venezuela's Bolivarian movement has [built millions of homes](#) for poor residents and has served as an important example of socialist-oriented development in Latin America. Underneath the vitriolic smear of "dictatorship" usually resides a struggle for self-determination that U.S. imperialism desperately wants to defeat.

The rise of the United States was made possible by the reactionary trade in African flesh and the genocidal theft of Indigenous lands—both of which were justified by the divine right of white settlers and capitalists to impose violence upon any non-white people that stood in their way. It should come as no surprise, then, that an empire born from such a sordid history would export its terror abroad. The truth is that the U.S.'s wars at home and its wars abroad cannot be viewed as separate entities. Military contractors are cashing in on [weapons transfers to local police departments](#) based upon a litany of racist justifications for the mass incarceration state to terrorize Black Americans. They also benefit from the erection of a deportation machine that labels undocumented people "illegal" for the sake of "border control."

War cannot be excised from the planet without a mass movement led by a radical vision of class struggle that includes peace and solidarity in its overall agenda. Such a mass movement cannot take shape until those organizations and activists so willing to promote the State Department's racist lies are dealt with in kind. Imperialism is the primary contradiction fueling the crises before us. Its racist roots must be recognized before they can be defeated. This is indeed a difficult struggle, but we must dare to win.

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Danny Haiphong is a contributing editor to Black Agenda Report and co-author of the book "American Exceptionalism and American Innocence: A People's History of Fake News-From the Revolutionary War to the War on Terror." He can be reached at wakeupriseup1990@gmail.com. Follow his work on Twitter @SpiritofHo and on YouTube as co-host with Margaret Kimberley of Black Agenda Report Present's: The Left Lens. You can support Danny on Patreon by [clicking this link](#).

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