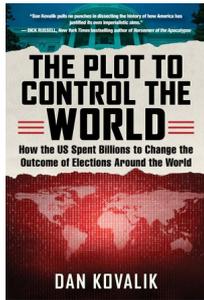


Working class heroes: Review of Kovalik's 'The Plot to Control the World'

Written by Eric Walberg Эрик Вальберг/ Уолберг □□□□□ □□□□□□

Wednesday, 20 February 2019 06:58



Dan Kovalik, The Plot to Control the World: How the US spent billions to change the outcome of elections around the world, Hot Books, 2019.

'Imperialism abroad - despotism at home' was once the credo of the Democratic Party, part of its 1900 platform. One of the tidbits Kovalik passed on at his Toronto book launch.

Yes, the US is the big interferer in others' elections, as Kovalik documents. But as counsel of

the Union of Steelworkers

and

lawyer for beleaguered workers in Colombia, Kovalik gave his listeners insight into the little known role the US trade union movement plays -- its betrayal of trade unionists abroad. Dozens of Colombia worker-heroes owe their lives to his lawyer smarts and dedication to the working class. As an American, he takes the evil of imperialism seriously and risks his own life to fight it. A real 'working class hero'.

Kovalik doesn't pretend to document all the US crimes (read [William Blum](#) for that). Rather, in 'The Plot' he takes you on a world tour to Eurasia, Africa and the Americas for key election rigging moments, moments that he connects with viscerally, and brings to life.

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He doesn't get to Venezuela, but it's really not necessary. Same old, same old. There is a clear template that has been honed over the decades, and that makes the Maduros and Talibans around the world justifiably cynical about US 'democracy promotion'.

Kovalik contrasts the pathetic claims of Russian interference in US elections with the real, devastating US interference in the key 1996 election there that catapulted an unpopular Yeltsin back into their White House to allow the US to rape and pillage another four years. And as orchestrator of the 2014 coup in Ukraine that brought neo-fascists into power, joining Europe's new right.

And Vietnam. It never stops giving. Kovalik highlighted the revelation in the mid-2000s of President Johnson's secret tapes (it seems Nixon wasn't the only



one who dabbled in that) of South Vietnamese officials and his political foes, that reveal how Nixon convinced the South Vietnamese to hold off on peace talks, that if he won, he would get them a better deal. Johnson calls this treason.

But Nixon won, and who's going to impeach a standing president for treason? (Ok, two million more Vietnamese dead. Who cares?) It was LBJ's tapes stored in the Watergate complex calling him a traitor that Nixon was after, but all that we heard about was the break in of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. Much better to get rid of Nixon using some nice sex scandal (sorry, that's Clinton).

So there's a parallel with Clinton's impeachment, and with Trump's maybe impeachment. When you've decided to go after a president, it better not be political (for their war crimes, bombing and subversion abroad).

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“All US presidents since WWII have been war criminals,” says Kovalik. The sheeple need to keep believing in the emperor’s ‘new clothes’. He can do naughty things, but he is basically a good guy. Never a traitor or war criminal.

And another parallel -- Reagan’s ‘October surprise’ in the 1980 election -- collusion with the enemy to hold onto the hostages at the US embassy until he was elected. The ‘enemy’ would get arms in exchange. It worked and, despite being exposed, Reagan was not impeached for treason.



But then, as Kovalik told us, □ it was Reagan who gave the go ahead in 1987 to the train driver to run over Vietnam veteran Brian Willson at the Concord Naval Weapons Station where arms were shipped to the Contras in Reagan’s so-called “secret war” in Nicaragua. Willson survived and is a friend of Kovalik. Another working class hero.

Kovalik recounted how the trade union movement has been working hand-in-glove with the CIA since the launching of the Cold War in the late 1940s. “People joke it’s really the AFL-CIA.”

Instead of supporting the Venezuelan workers in their current US-inflicted crisis, the US trade unions are supporting the attempt to overthrow the workers’ government. One would expect trade unions in the rich West to be sympathetic to their brothers in the imperial periphery, but this ‘workers of the world unite’ philosophy, once the credo of the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World) is long gone.

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The credo resurfaced during the Great Depression and WWII, when the union movement surged ahead in America. Enter, the Cold War, and the unions became government appendages, and the CIA began actively to work through them to quell workers everywhere.

When the CIA had its knuckles rapped by the Church Committee in 1975, there was a brief pause in subversion, but by 1979 they were back in action everywhere, doing the same dirty work through Reagan's National Endowment for Democracy, again using the trade unions as a cover for subversion.

Everyone knows about the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre (bad), but how about the same year, the Caracazo massacre in Venezuela, which resulted in the same thousand + deaths (no one knows for sure), when the neoliberal agenda was suddenly inflicted on the nation (no election endorsing it), doubling prices and privatizing huge swathes of the economy?

No problemo. The IMF blessing is enough 'democracy'. (Hey, guess where the Bolivarian revolution started?)

China bad, El Salvador good

We are programmed: China, Russia, Venezuela, Nicaragua bad, Colombia, El Salvador, whoever-obey-the-US, good. Kovalik shakes his head in exasperation."The US pushed countries into Soviet hands with threats, and then protested that they were secret communists and must be destroyed openly."

Cuba of course is the wonderful exception to US diktat, lucky enough to have a still powerful Soviet Union willing to stand up to the US bully. Was Castro a commie all

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along? Well, he certainly was after the Bay of Pigs.

Which brings us to the 1823 Monroe Doctrine. Once upon a time, the US could just move into any American country (Canada, the British-controlled exception) and wipe out any pesky caudillo. Nicaragua and Cuba were given especially harsh treatment in the 1930s. After Cuba held on to its revolution, the tide started to shift. But with Trump's latest threat to invade Venezuela, it seems the empire is hell-bent on more Monroe.

Kovalik marshalls devastating facts:

***Rome at 33 military bases to keep its world empire in tow, Britain 36, the US 1000.**

***The Colombian and United States governments worked overtime on mass killings in Colombia between 2002 and 2009. Trade unionist have been killed at the rate of one every three days over the last 23 years, half by the security forces. (Remember: Colombia good, Venezuela bad.)**

***The Wayuu natives are experiencing a slow motion genocide, as their main source of livelihood, the tributary of the Río Ranchería, was diverted to service Cerrejón, whose slogan is "responsible mining". It is Latin America's biggest open-pit coal mine (690 square kilometers), a joint Swiss-British-Australian-US firm, 'responsible' only in the sense of responsible for destroying the nation that lived there in peace with nature for millennia.**

***Samantha Power won a Pulitzer Prize for A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide (2002), which chastises US inaction on genocides in the 20th century. Obama made her UN ambassador, where she was able to advance her noble cause using R2P (responsibility to protect), advocating what? More invasions, Libya being Power's finest hour.**

Peace? Boring :(

Which brings us to peace. How to promote it? It's so hard to get there. Revolution is exciting, even if naughty (Fidelistas, Sandinistas, Chavistas). But who cares about the drip torture of the empire when you're trying to build a peaceful society? Bo-oring.

Kovalik recounts how Americans were shocked that he still proudly shows a selfie with the Sandinista Daniel Ortega, another close friend, despite the (fake)



news about him murdering, torturing, embezzling. "Building a socialist society, resisting endless slander and subversion, overcoming apathy and the legacy of corruption and hopelessness, that's hard, exhausting work. Sure you make mistakes, but they're honest mistakes, and you learn from them. You don't give up."

As a lawyer, Kovalik fights to make international law function. "The law should protect the weak against the powerful. But that's not what's happening. The US loves to use the International Criminal Court, but refuses to join, as that would mean it could (would) be brought to court. Only Africans have been prosecuted there." Ditto for the International Court of Justice. R2P is a violation of international law, a gimmick introduced in post-Soviet times to give the imperial system a sheen of respectability.

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How to appeal to the youth of today, the hope of the future? “When young people tell me there’s no hope, no future, I find it hard to disagree with them, but if we can show the youth that the only way to end global warming is to dismantle the war industry, there really is hope. It is the key to a future worth living.”