

The real Americans do not care who won the US election!

News:

The *Washington Times* - Saturday, November 12, 2016 reported that "Law enforcement arrested 33 Dakota Access pipeline protesters Friday after they slashed tires, destroyed a construction site, blocked county roads and attacked an officer with a stake near Mandan, North Dakota. The latest clash brought to roughly 500 the number of activists arrested by local law enforcement since about 2,000 began occupying nearby federal land in an effort to stop the pipeline's construction."

Comment:

While the world is focused on violent protests against US President elect Donald Trump's shocking electoral victory last week, another corner of America is protesting. These protesters are the forgotten Americans. These "Native Americans" are the survivors of colonial wars that stripped them of their original lands and forced many into small reservations. The US is home now to 1 million Native Americans and several thousand of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe have been protesting against a \$3.8 billion oil pipeline, which they claim will disturb sacred burial grounds and threaten the Missouri River, which is their main water source. On the 28th October, 141 protesters from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe were arrested during a major stand-off in North Dakota against the new pipeline, and yesterday, on the 11th November, a further 33 were arrested.

According to the *Guardian* Newspaper, 8th November, "Donald Trump is an investor in Energy Transfer Partners, the company behind the Dakota Access Pipeline, and Energy Transfer Partners CEO Kelcy Warren has returned the favor, donating \$103,000 to his campaign." As for the Native Americans, the *Guardian* interviewed several participants in the protests who had little faith in either Trump or Clinton. Guy Dullknife, an Oglala elder from Kyle, South Dakota, in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation said, "Trump really doesn't like Indians," but "If [Clinton] gets in, it's just all the same." Ho-Waste Wakiya, an enrolled member of the coastal band of the Chumash Nation, said, "Both of them are all about money. I'm ashamed of both of them." Frank Archambault of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe did not vote. He travelled in mid-July with his family from Little Eagle, South Dakota, to Cannon Ball, North Dakota, to stand up to the federal government and the oil industry: "I don't want to have a say in government," he said. "I guess you could call it trauma. I don't have faith in government, so I don't want to have a say." The Native Americans never have had much of a voice in the face of capitalist greed.

The pipeline is new, but the grievances of the Sioux tribes against U.S. colonial exploitation in the Black Hills region around North Dakota where the new pipeline is routed are deep and painful. The Sioux were once a great nation that lived partly in the Black Hills mountain range, which is 201 km long by 105 km wide, since before the U.S. Declaration of Independence. However, this area was coveted as a rich source of timber and animal furs by the European settlers that formed the US after gaining independence from Britain. Despite their greed for the resources of the Black Hills, the settlers feared the Sioux Indians and the terrain was difficult for them to penetrate. Nevertheless, under pressure from colonial settlers, the Sioux agreed to the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1851), which made some

concessions in exchange for U.S. recognition of Indian land rights to the Black Mountains and \$50,000 annually in compensation for 50 years. The US government violated the treaty in 1852 by reducing the period of compensation from 50 years to just 10 years. In 1866 there was war, and the Sioux won that war, which was settled with another treaty, but in 1876 there was war again after further incursions on Sioux land driven by news of rich gold deposits in the territory. The US government lost this war also, but the next year used a cruel policy of starvation to successfully force the Sioux Indians to give-up all their land rights in order to avoid genocide.

After 100 years the seizure of the Black Hills was finally declared illegal by US courts and by a U.N. investigation in 2012. Substantial compensation was offered, but not the land. However, the remaining tribal people living in small reservations within their former lands have so far refused all offers of financial compensation despite being the poorest communities in the entire US. They continue to fight for their land and their rights with dignity against rapacious capitalism and the lying elections that let people squabble over which face of the same corporations will manage the wealth of the nation for the benefit of a wealthy few.

Many of those who voted for Trump, did so because they wanted a 'business-man' to lead the US, rather than the lying politicians. Trump has been honest enough to keep no secrets, even about his dishonesty! During the 1990s, Donald Trump was fighting Native American tribes who were a threat to his gambling empire on the east coast of the US, far away from the reservations of the Standing Rock Sioux. The Washington Post reported on the 25th of July that, "When Trump began clashing with Native American tribes, the stakes for him were huge. He had benefited from Atlantic City's near-monopoly on East Coast gambling until a change in federal law in 1988 opened the door to more tribal casinos ... In response, Trump undertook a massive lobbying effort against Indian gaming ... He secretly paid for more than \$1 million in ads that portrayed members of a tribe in Upstate New York as cocaine traffickers and career criminals".

Now that Trump has won the presidency of the U.S., the supporters of the losing candidate are protesting on the streets, but they are blind to the fact that Clinton and Trump are really no different in the sense that they each represent both ends of the capitalist partnership between business and politics that hides behind glossy elections every 4 years. Trump the billionaire and Clinton the career politician could not exist without each other. Indeed, they were actually friends, as the smiling photos together show! The only difference is that capitalist politicians are better liars. The real story of American protest in the US is not that of the anti-Trump protesters, but that of the forgotten Native Americans in the harsh cold North Dakota hills, who care not who becomes President, because they know it makes no difference.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Dr. Abdullah Robin**