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Copenhagen Climate Conference choked by US imperialism

For the full article assessing the Copenhagen Conference, see www.vanguard.net.au

The fingerprints of US imperialism were all over the Copenhagen Conference, and the handwriting on the flimsy 'Copenhagen Accord' also matched that of the main environmental criminal.

Unwilling to accept any responsibility for its historic and current contributions to global climate warming, and determined to resist any restrictions or imposition of costs on its polluting industrial monopolies, US imperialism has, until recently, opposed any effective international action to deal with it. Unable to deny the science any longer, US imperialism was forced to participate in the UN process or lose all credibility. However, the objective was to stall and weaken any concerted plan of action that might threaten the profits of the major fossil fuel industries at the core of the US economic system.

The right-wing government of Denmark was a willing accomplice. It deliberately mis-managed the conference to frustrate any consensus or agreement, and caused much time to be wasted on procedural issues that should have been agreed well beforehand. It cynically accepted registrations from more than 40,000 people, although the venue could only hold 15,000. This gave it an excuse to filter out most of the activist groups and NGOs likely to demand strong action on climate warming.

To smooth the way for the US, the Danish government circulated a draft "text" for a new agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement that dropped the requirement for the developed countries to deliver mandatory cuts in their emissions and sidelined the United Nations and the developing countries. The "Danish text" was floated with a select group of 25 countries before being circulated to the other conference delegates. This back-door method of work was designed to achieve a 'fait accompli' by freezing out the G77 poor and developing countries and China, but it didn't work. The



solid unity of the developing countries threatened to frustrate the plans of US imperialism.

Another willing accomplice of US imperialism was Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia. Together with the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Rudd spent long days haranguing and bullying the delegates from poor and developing countries to drop their demands for a ceiling of 1.5 degrees (or 350ppm) rise in global average temperature, rather than the 2 degrees (or 450ppm) in the "Danish text". Rudd and Brown also demanded that the poor and developing countries drop their demands for the major developed countries to make the biggest cuts, and to provide the necessary technology and finance for the poorer countries to make adjustments for clean energy economies. Again, delegations from China, Cuba, Venezuela, Brazil and Sudan strongly resisted the lobbying efforts of Obama's 'running dogs'.

Finally, US imperialism had to call in President Obama to personally engage in the negotiations and salvage some sort of outcome. After a pompous address to the conference delegates, he summoned a meeting with four 'emerging' countries, China, Brazil, India and South Africa and tabled the draft text of a final statement. Obama's new "Copenhagen Accord" contained many of the features of the earlier 'Danish text'. There would be no interim targets on emissions, a 2 degree temperature ceiling, no binding requirement on developed countries, only token amounts of aid and compensation for developing countries

to 'adjust', only a voluntary appendix of commitment by countries to reduce their emissions.

For his part, Obama displayed an arrogant contempt for the whole process of democratic consultation and UN procedures. This "Copenhagen Accord" was announced by Obama at a press conference given just before he flew back to the White House for Christmas. He didn't even have the courtesy or the courage to face the conference delegates again! Dismayed by the steam-rolling tactics of US imperialism, the conference delegates could only agree to "take note of" the Copenhagen Accord, and the conference broke up.

While Obama, Brown and Rudd have all tried to make "a silk purse from a sow's ear", the whole world knows

that the Copenhagen Conference was a dismal setback for the hopes of the people of the world, especially those in vulnerable islands and low-lying coastal regions. Another postponement of global action to deal with climate warming will inevitably condemn vast numbers of people to a short and miserable life of famine, disease and dislocation.

Those most guilty are now trying to put the blame for lack of progress on others. Brown has blamed China, while Australia's Climate Change Minister Penny Wong has blamed "radical nations and radical states" for not toeing the line. This is exactly what the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) pointed to in a leaflet distributed at 'Walk against Warming' events around the country on December 12. "At Copenhagen, if there is no comprehensive international agreement, will Australia line up with the US to point the blame at poor and developing countries?" (Download leaflet at www.vanguard.net.au)

The biggest obstacle to progress on climate warming is US imperialism, and every effort has to be made to build the unity and strength of the anti-imperialist movement within each country and internationally, to expose, isolate and defeat US imperialist domination. The survival of humanity and the planet demand it.

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