

Who Wants Civil War In the Philippines?

by Mike Billington

Civil war is about to break out across the southern Philippines, just as British-orchestrated political and military explosions are going off around the world—especially on the borders of Russia, China, and India. With the global financial system in free-fall, the British empire is determined to provoke a war between the United States and Russia, and to destabilize the Eurasian powers generally, in a drive to impose its financial power over weak and divided nations. As in all these crises, the local populations are encouraged to see their problems as purely internal, expressions of long-term historical divisions and animosities, rather than the imperial manipulation intended to “divide and conquer.”

The incident that sparked the crisis in the southern Philippines, after years of relative peace in the region, was the aborted attempt by the government to sign a peace agreement, called a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), one of the two armed separatist movements among the Muslim minorities living primarily in the South. In a process guaranteed to blow up, the government and the MILF, under the auspices of the Malaysian government, and with “facilitators” from the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), concocted an agreement, in secret, which would have established a virtually independent state encompassing huge sections of Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan provinces, granting the MILF full power over the extensive oil and mineral deposits in the region, including the power to sell the rights to this national wealth to foreign interests.

Among the many problems with this deal was the simple fact that it was blatantly unconstitutional.

Incredibly, the government of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, as well as the director of the USIP’s Philippine Facilitation Project, Eugene Martin, *admitted* that the deal was unconstitutional. The government even initialled the deal, and arranged a formal signing ceremony in Malaysia, scheduled for Aug. 5, without releasing its (illegal) contents to the citizens of the nation—not even to the majority Christian population living in the region, where many villages and towns, largely dominated by Christians, were to be turned over to the rule of the new Moro-ruled entity. A prescription for civil war could not have been scripted any better by the British Foreign Office itself; that because it probably was.



What Was the USIP Role?

In 2003, the MILF chief, Salamat Hashim, exchanged letters with U.S. President George W. Bush, discussing U.S. support in the peace talks with the government in Manila. Bush then sent in the USIP, a pseudo-independent body fully funded by the U.S. government, on the same pattern as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). These government-funded entities have served as subversive tools, targeting governments deemed enemies of the Anglo-American establishment, using U.S. taxpayer dollars, but often working at odds with U.S. national interests.

George Soros, the British Foreign Office agent who uses his ill-gotten billions to subvert nations, works hand-in-glove with both the NED and the USIP.

The USIP carried out its “facilitating” function until June 2007, when it was unceremoniously dumped, under the direction of the U.S. ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney, with full support from Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific. It was clearly implied by Ambassador Kenney, that when she took that position in March 2006, she considered the role of the USIP to be contrary to U.S. policy and interests, leading her to

request the termination of the USIP contract, with Hill's concurrence. Hill, it should be noted, has played a significant role in turning U.S. policy in Asia away from the Cheney track of unilateral confrontation and regime change, especially in Korea, where he has served as the U.S. representative to the Six-Party Talks, and in Myanmar, where he has insisted on working with China and engaging the regime in Myanmar, despite massive subversion from the Soros/NED/USIP circles.

The USIP released a Special Report earlier this year, co-authored by the Philippine project director Martin, assessing its work in Mindanao. It is clear from this report, that the concept of creating an independent sovereign entity for the Moro minority was openly promoted by the USIP. The USIP was not allowed to attend the negotiations themselves, because of strong opposition from the Malaysian government, which sponsored the talks. Instead, they sponsored seminars and workshops, bringing in "experts" on the issue of "ancestral domain," including American and Canadian Indians. Thus, the concept of sovereignty granted indigenous peoples in the Americas was injected into the purely ethnic and religious divisions among the Philippine people. Martin's report even crowed about the "MILF enthusiasm for Native American 'sovereignty' and treaties with the federal government as a model for its own relationship with the government in Manila." The final result, as expressed in the MOA, came directly from this USIP process.

The USIP report reveals the intention to subvert the nation of the Philippines: "The three branches of government also lack consensus on the outlines of a deal that may be offered to the Moros. As with past agreements, a serious risk exists that the national legislature could scuttle any agreement signed by the government in the implementation phase. The Supreme Court might also declare unconstitutional any deal on ancestral domain that grants the Moros significant political authority and control over natural resources. A constitutional amendment might be required to protect a GRP-MILF agreement, but the prospects of this happening appear dim."

Author Martin thus knew very well that the proposal was unconstitutional, and that signing such an agreement would offer the Moro people a policy which would place them in legal and military confrontation with important elements of the government. He knew that the checks and balances of the Philippine Presi-

dential system of government would never allow such a deal to be implemented. He also knew that President Arroyo and her ally Gen. Fidel Ramos have been trying for years to hold a Constitutional Convention to change the charter from the Presidential system to the parliamentary system, doing away with the pesky opposition from the Congress and the courts, by eliminating the checks and balances altogether, and, in the process, eliminating the constitutional restrictions on foreign ownership of businesses and raw material wealth.

Was this the USIP intention? Martin, in fact, served as Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Manila from 1987-90, immediately after the coup against nationalist President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, which was run by General Ramos, under the direction of the neoconservative Secretary of State George Shultz and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz. Martin also served as Deputy Chief of Mission during Ramos's term as President in the 1990s. He can not plead ignorance to the nature of the continuing political crisis in the Philippines, nor the unavoidable consequences of the phony peace deal promoted by the USIP. He makes a habit of blaming Marcos for all disasters that have befallen the Philippines, ignoring the fact that Marcos had led his nation towards global leadership through development, including the construction of Southeast Asia's first nuclear power plant, and the world-famous Green Revolution, making the Philippines self-sufficient in rice production. All this was destroyed when Shultz and Wolfowitz deposed Marcos—in fact, that was the purpose of the coup.

The subversive role of the USIP in this process is expressed in its final report, which argues that a political settlement must be reached before economic development can be undertaken successfully. The report states: "The roots of conflict in Mindanao are primarily political, not economic or religious." It bitterly quotes a U.S. Embassy official telling him that "the formal peace process, which had been USIP's focus, was not the most critical element of future stability in Mindanao," and that the embassy intended to get more directly involved, through the Bangsamoro Development Agency, in real economic development activities.

This has been a leading issue for Lyndon LaRouche, who has repeatedly warned that political agreements, such as the Oslo Accords in the Mideast, are doomed to fail if they are not accompanied by aggressive development programs, providing a real physical basis for co-

operation between the different parties in the conflict. The British know this principle well: get populations fighting each other over land, and they will be diverted from offering resistance to the economic disaster being imposed upon them all.

Kenney Under Fire

Ambassador Kenney has also come under fire for her role in the insane anti-peace agreement. Although she dumped the USIP, she later held a highly controversial personal visit with MILF chief Mohammad Murad in his jungle headquarters, which was reported to have been carried on outside of Philippine government protocol. She was also in Malaysia to sign the deal on Aug. 5, but had to fly back when the Philippine Supreme Court issued the restraining order against signing the unconstitutional agreement.

However, as Martin complained in his USIP report, the embassy under Kenney was focused on economic development aid, not ancestral domain issues. Following the exposure of the agreement and the Court's intervention, the leftist groups in the Philippines have had a field day accusing the U.S. of imperial designs, orchestrating an independent Moro state in order to grab the oil and mineral wealth and arrange for permanent military bases. While that certainly fits the neo-conservative designs of the Cheneyacs, Kenney and Hill were more interested in development, although hardly on a scale adequate to solve the dire problems in the region.

Kenney has been quite direct in responding to the charges against her: "We are strong supporters of lasting peace as a way to development. We do not believe, on the part of the United States, that independence for Mindanao is appropriate. Lasting peace should be done within the territorial integrity of the Philippines." She insisted that she had not seen a draft of the MOA, which she considers to be a sovereign matter for the Philippines. She told the press: "We have no permanent presence in Mindanao. We have no plans to have a permanent presence—not military, not anything, not now, not in the future, not in our hopes, not in our dreams."

While noting that U.S. policy toward the Philippines has been a disaster since the overthrow of Marcos, it must be added that those who promoted this anti-peace agreement, assuring a severe threat of civil war, were not serving U.S. interests, but those of the British and their Soros-linked satraps within the United States.