

The imperialist war, the response of the working class and the tasks of the revolutionaries



Internationalist Voice

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Following the collapse of the bipolar world, the US emerged as the world's only superpower. However, its undisputed dominance was short-lived, and all the other imperialist powers pursued their own imperialist share and interests. The US was no longer able to exercise its hegemony as it had done during the Cold War. Therefore, in order to maintain its hegemony in the new world order and to weaken its rivals, the US tried to line up the other imperialist powers behind itself by waging wars, albeit with humanitarian words.

The goal of the US and NATO was to besiege Russia by merging the countries of the former Eastern Bloc into NATO or by launching "colour revolutions" in countries that were not at that time members of NATO. The West, led by the US, has been advocating "colour revolutions" in the former Soviet Union for the sake of its imperialist interests, so that pro-Western governments can come to power. The fact that the working class did not overthrow Stalinism in the countries of the former Eastern bloc, but that Stalinism disintegrated due to its internal contradictions and being in competition with the West, caused a series of illusions in former Eastern bloc countries, including the illusion that a democratic West can offer a high standard of living and political freedoms. Such illusions paved the way for colour revolutions.

In recent years, however, the countries that made up the former Western bloc have become more fragmented than before. Although NATO expanded after the end of the Cold War, with France and a number of eastern European countries joining it, internal divisions within NATO member states intensified. French President Macron has publicly stated that NATO has suffered brain death [1]. The US has tried to downplay its presence in NATO, and John Bolton, Trump's former national security adviser, declared that if Trump won the election, the US would leave NATO [2]. Italy, a major European member of NATO and where US nuclear weapons are based, has shown interest in the New Silk Road. The US has imposed sanctions on Turkey, which is a member of NATO and also has US nuclear weapons. Tensions between NATO members Turkey and Greece over oil exploration and drilling escalated to the point where France sent a warship to the Mediterranean Sea for the purposes of "regional control". Britain has remained far removed from other European countries.

China, which ranked eighth in the world in terms of GDP in the 1970s, has now risen to second place and is a tough competitor to the US. It is projected to become the world's largest economy by 2030, overtaking the US. It is clear to the American bourgeoisie that China's progress and rise to power is directly related to America's decline in power. Trump and the Republican Party are not the only ones to have highlighted the threat posed by China, The Democrats are no less concerned than the Republicans about this rival, and the entire American bourgeoisie opposes China's progress.

On the other hand, after the fall of the Soviet Union, it took time for Russia to finally reassert its imperialist ambitions as a claimant to world power. Russia's military arsenal and significant energy reserves (gas and oil) are tools for pursuing ambitious and imperialist policies. Russia did not want Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO. Withdrawal of NATO military equipment from these countries and the failure of NATO's siege of Russia would mean that Russia could expand its sphere of influence.

The US has been a major cause of global chaos, especially since the end of the bipolar world. The US goal is to weaken Russia as much as possible because an incapacitated Russia would not pose a threat to the US. A weak Russia, on the other hand, would not be a good ally for China. Contrary to the demagoguery of the American bourgeoisie on de-escalation, the American bourgeoisie not only seeks tension but also seeks to fuel tensions associated with the alignment of NATO members and other states behind the US in order to regain the lost hegemony of the US. Another US goal in dealing with Ukraine has been to disrupt relations between Russia and the EU, to line up Europeans behind itself, and to strengthen other countries' military dependence on the US. At one time, European gangsters, especially France and Germany, were pursuing their own imperialist interests, which were somewhat at odds with American interests. In the throes of this war, all NATO countries have once again lined up behind the US, and the Americans have regained control of NATO. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Macron declared that it had "delivered an 'electric shock' to the NATO alliance" [3]. As the war has continued, NATO has greatly increased its presence in eastern Europe, and most countries have increased their war spending (defence budget) to an unprecedented extent.

The fortunes of war working in the US's favour are such that it has been able to both pursue its own imperialist policies and boost its economy. Unlike other countries, especially those in Europe, the United States has been less affected by the economic downturn during the current war. Europeans once preferred to buy cheap Russian gas over expensive American gas. Now the United States wants to make up for European gas shortages by selling expensive gas and arms factories to Europeans. The global working class, and especially the European working class, will pay the price for the ambitions of American gangsters. All of this is happening at a time when the United States is not directly involved in the Ukraine war; but this war is clearly a blessing for American criminals (the American bourgeoisie).

Given all this, it can be stated that the Russian military operation has been in the interest of the US in the short term, and the US has been able to consolidate its hegemony for the time being. Having cut trade ties with Russia, the EU has become

partly dependent on the US for energy. It is apparent that Russia underestimated the humiliating US withdrawal from Afghanistan and thought that, given the differences between Western countries, the US would not be able to organize resistance against Russia and Russia can not only take advantage of the existing differences but also fuel those differences.

Although the US has managed to line up behind itself NATO members, Japan and Australia, etc., and has apparently formed a united front, support for this has not been unanimous, with an abstention vote on the part of Latin American countries, India and especially the Gulf Arab states (which were allied of the US) of the resolution condemning Russia in the thieves' nest (UN), Turkey's objection to the admission of two new NATO members (Finland and Sweden) shows a weakness in the united front.

France and Germany, two key members of NATO, are pursuing their own imperialist interests more clearly and openly, and this will threaten the iron alliance of the NATO front in the long run. Russia, China and Iran, on the other hand, have converged in their opposition to the US, each pursuing its own imperialist interests, which are sometimes at odds with one another. All of this means that we will see more chaos and conflict, a new round of imperialist tensions and instability from Europe to the Middle East, from the Caucasus to Southeast Asia.

The US focus has been on confronting China. The undeniable fact is that today's tensions are a foretaste of future imperialist tensions. The main confrontations will be between the US and China. The US wants to contain China, which is a strategic enemy, and its containment strategy began long before Trump. Biden is continuing this policy. In the new situation, the US, by lining up NATO and other countries behind itself, wants to create serious problems in order to curtail China's imperialist progress and thwart its ambitions in the name of the Silk Road. The New Silk Road, with its infrastructure, will allow China to access the ends of the earth and expand its imperialist power everywhere.

The war in Ukraine is not just being waged on a military level. Just as insidious is the propaganda war that is underway, poisoning the global working class. Both sides of the imperialist war are aware of the potential of the working class, and history bears witness to the fact that only this social class can end the war. Therefore, by propagating war and creating intellectual turmoil, the imperialist powers want to prevent this giant – the global working class – from getting to its feet and striding forth, so that they can more easily advance their imperialist goals.

Proletarian internationalism is a reaction to the imperialist war, and the international proletariat is the only force capable of stopping this imperialist war. Is today's proletariat in a position to advance its historical alternative, i.e., a social revolution? The fact is that a serious response has yet to be elicited from the international proletariat against the imperialist war, either in metropolitan capitalism or in peripheral capitalism. The proletariat – as a social class – is currently watching. It is a spectator. Although we are witnessing workers' protests in countries such as Iran, the global working class has nevertheless retreated from its positions globally, signalling a retreat from its class identity.

In the current situation, revolutionaries should not wait for the working class to make a move. The activities of the revolutionaries will not be taking place in a vacuum and will not be ineffectual. Most importantly, the imperialist war is bringing to the fore the need to raise the banner of internationalism, even if this leads to isolation of the working-class masses. This is one of the teachings of Lenin and Luxembourge, and it still inspires revolutionaries.

The bourgeoisie has made heinous attacks on the living standards of working-class people, who are paying the price for war with staggering inflation and falling living standards. The working class is being forced to defend its standard of living, which is likely to involve a confrontation with the imperialist war.

An imperialist war is not favourable ground for fruitful proletarian struggles, but the crisis of capitalism provides the best conditions for growth of class consciousness and concerted proletarian struggles.

Peace carnivals and anti-war campaigns in Western and European countries are part of NATO war propaganda, in line with NATO's imperialist goals. Within the capitalist system, the flames of war will continue to burn. Only the working class can bring real peace to humanity, through class struggle and by challenging capitalism. The destruction of humanity is inevitable if the working class does not act on its historical decree, which is to overthrow capitalism through the communist revolution.

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Notes:

[1] <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead>

[2] NATO under threat if Trump returns: Bolton

[3] <https://www.rfi.fr/en/international/20220318-macron-russia-s-invasion-of-ukraine-gave-nato-an-electric-shock>