

Joint statement of groups of the International Communist Left about the war in Ukraine

Workers have no country!
Down with all the imperialist powers!
In place of capitalist barbarism: socialism!

The war in Ukraine is being fought according to the conflicting interests of all the different imperialist powers, large and small – not in the interests of the working class, which is a class of international unity. It's a war over strategic territories, for military and economic domination fought overtly and covertly by the warmongers in charge of the US, Russia, the Western European state machines, with the Ukrainian ruling class acting as a by no means innocent pawn on the world imperialist chess board.

The working class, not the Ukrainian state, is the real victim of this war, whether as slaughtered defenceless women and children, starving refugees or conscripted cannon fodder in either army, or in the increasing destitution the effects of the war will bring to workers in all countries.

The capitalist class and their bourgeois mode of production cannot overcome its competitive national divisions that lead to imperialist war. The capitalist system cannot avoid sinking into greater barbarism.

For its part the world's working class cannot avoid developing its struggle against deteriorating wages and living standards. The latest war, the biggest in Europe since 1945, warns of capitalism's future for the world if the working class struggle doesn't lead to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and its replacement by the political power of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The war aims and lies of the different imperialist powers.

Russian imperialism wants to reverse the enormous setback it received in 1989 and become a world power again. The US wants to preserve its super power status and world leadership. The European powers fear Russian expansion but also the crushing domination of the US. Ukraine is looking to ally itself to the strongest imperialist strong man.

Let's face it, the US and the Western powers have the most convincing lies, and the biggest media lie machine, to justify their real aims in this war - they are supposedly reacting to Russian aggression against small sovereign states, defending democracy against the Kremlin autocracy, upholding human rights in the face of the brutality of Putin.

The stronger imperialist gangsters usually have the better war propaganda, the bigger lie, because they can provoke and manoeuvre their enemies into firing first. But remember the oh-so peaceful performance of these powers recently in the Middle East, in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, how US air power recently flattened the city of Mosul, how the Coalition forces put the Iraqi population to the sword with the false excuse that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. Remember further back the countless crimes of these democracies against civilians over the past century whether it be during the 1960s in Vietnam, during the 1950s in Korea, during the Second World War in Hiroshima, Dresden or Hamburg. The Russian outrages against the Ukrainian population are essentially drawn from the same imperialist playbook.

Capitalism has catapulted humanity into the era of permanent imperialist war. It is an illusion to ask it to 'stop' war. 'Peace' can only be an interlude in warlike capitalism.

The more it sinks into irresolvable crisis the greater the military destruction capitalism will bring alongside its growing catastrophes of pollution and plagues. Capitalism is rotten ripe for revolutionary change.

The working class is a sleeping giant.

The capitalist system, more and more a system of war and all its horrors, does not currently find any significant class opposition to its rule, so much so that the proletariat suffers the worsening exploitation of its labour power, and the ultimate sacrifices imperialism calls on it to make on the battlefield.

The development of the defence of its class interests, as well as its class consciousness stimulated by the indispensable role of the revolutionary vanguard, conceals an even bigger potential of the working class, the ability to unite as a class to overthrow the political apparatus of the bourgeoisie entirely as it did in Russia in 1917 and threatened to do in Germany and elsewhere at the time. That is, overthrow the system that leads to war. Indeed the October Revolution and the insurrections it gave rise to in the other imperialist powers are a shining example not only of opposition to the war but also of an attack on the power of the bourgeoisie.

Today we are still far from such a revolutionary period. Similarly, the conditions of the proletariat's struggle are different from those that existed at the time of the first imperialist slaughter. On the other hand, what remains the same, in the face of imperialist war, are the fundamental principles of proletarian internationalism and the duty of revolutionary organisations to defend these principles tooth and nail, against the current when necessary, within the proletariat.

The political tradition that has fought for, and continues to fight for, internationalism against imperialist war.

The villages of Zimmerwald and Kienthal in Switzerland became famous as the meeting places of the socialists from both sides in the First World War to begin an international struggle to bring the butchery to an end and denounce the patriotic leaders of the Social Democratic Parties. It was at these meetings that the Bolsheviks, supported by the Bremen Left and the Dutch Left, brought forward the essential principles of internationalism against imperialist war that are still valid today:

no support of either imperialist camp; the rejection of all pacifist illusions; and the recognition that only the working class and its revolutionary struggle could put an end to the system that is based on the exploitation of labour power and permanently generates imperialist war.

In the 1930s and 1940s it was only the political current now called the Communist Left which held fast to the internationalist principles developed by the Bolsheviks in the First World War. The Italian Left and the Dutch Left actively opposed both sides in the Second imperialist World War rejecting both the fascist and anti-fascist justifications for the slaughter - unlike the other currents which claimed the proletarian revolution, including Trotskyism. In so doing these Communist Lefts refused any support to the imperialism of Stalinist Russia in the conflict.

Today, in the face of the acceleration of imperialist conflict in Europe, the political organisations based on the heritage of the Communist Left continue to hold up the banner of consistent proletarian internationalism, and provide a reference point for those defending working class principles.

That's why organisations and groups of the Communist Left today, small in number and not well known, have decided to issue this common statement, and broadcast as widely as possible the internationalist principles that were forged against the barbarism of two world wars.

No support for any side in the imperialist carnage in Ukraine.

No illusions in pacifism: capitalism can only live through endless wars.

Only the working class can put an end to imperialist war through its class struggle against exploitation leading to the overthrow of the capitalist system.

Workers of the World, Unite!

International Communist Current (www.en.internationalism.org)

Istituto Onorato Damen (<http://www.istitutoonoratodamen.it>)

Internationalist Voice (www.internationalistvoice.org)

Internationalist Communist Perspective (Korea) fully supports the joint statement

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