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The Meaning of Imperialism

Context

This essay was written during the ceasefire of the 2026 Iran war. The state of the global political-economy can be characterised by stagnant real growth, inflation and militarism abroad. American power is more mask off abroad; it is blantant in its support of genocide, and in its terrorism against Cuba and Venezuela, and its belligerence in the wars with the Middle-East. The NATO alliance seems to be coming to a close. U.S. provocations over Greenland have begun a trend of European defense, delinking from the U.S. defence complex. Increasing tensions between Israel and Turkiye in occupied Syria present yet another stress on NATO. We have good reason to believe that the current ceasefire between Iran and America is, in part, a response to the increasingly dangerous situation that has developed in Syria.

This picture would be incomplete if we left out the open sores in bourgeois morality—the genocide of the Palestinians—and the ethnic cleansing of Southern Lebanon. Every modern institution that “Western civilization” established to safeguard the rights of man has been proven to be feckless at best. And, at worst, these institutions are complicit in crimes against humanity. The UN, the Hague, legacy media, and NATO have all been proven to be tools of the Western powers.

The troubles that rage abroad do not remain abroad. Quality of life for many Canadians has noticeably declined. Inflation is a general global trend; so-called core inflation has capped at 2.7 percent, but somehow grocery prices have almost doubled from since the COVID era; gas prices eat up any wage increases earned in the past few years; and housing is now just a bit less unaffordable. The problem with housing provision is not a lack of use-values on the market. This issue is not that there are no actual brick and mortar homes; it is that the many who need these homes do not have the monetary capacity to purchase them. The vast majority of young workers’ earnings go into rental units, and the consumption fund for the commodity market is destroyed by the most parasitical rent-seeking and speculative excesses. Underemployment and unemployment are the norm for the youth of our nation.

All of these problems spring from the heart of the capitalist mode of production. The lack of dynamism in the developed world is part of the long-term decadence and decline that has created monsters and monstrosities. A century ago, this period of capitalist putrefaction was identified as imperialism. Given the current political situation, it is critical that we understand the nature of imperialist world domination, and the means to fight it.

The Trap of Geopolitical Anti-Imperialism

Let’s start with what imperialism is not. The general understanding of imperialism frames the situation as a state-system of big powers that devours little powers. The great powers are understood as imperialist; the small powers are framed as oppressed nations. In the age of neocolonialism, developed capitalist powers generally do not occupy other nations and form colonies, but the legacy despotic colonial empires have created long-lasting scars that remain impressed upon today’s geopolitical-economy. The world-system of today is formed around the legacy of violent expropriation that occurred on a world-scale. Anglo-American and European colonialism developed an international arrangement that solidified very wealthy nations that had benefited from colonialism and very poor nations that were created to be debt-laden and structurally dependent on their former colonial masters.

The nations of the “global-south”—a term that is a convenient generalization— are no longer under direct colonial occupation. This form of governance proved too expensive and it created constant dangers of triggering intra-European wars. Neocolonialism exploits the economic and geopolitical imbalances between the ruled and the rulers that were present at the end of the Second World War. Techno-military and extractive arrangements were reconfigured into unequal market relations. The foundation of this inequality is the debtor-credit relation.

This historical longue durée of the development of the present neocolonial world-system has developed roughly two poles in global trade, creating nations of the core and the periphery. Core states have mature capital markets and low growth. These nations have become increasingly cartelized, and the corporations of these core markets have semi-monopoly protections provided by the state. These protections, such as intellectual property rights and state contracts, develop forms of rent-seeking that allow accumulation without competition. These societies develop capitalist cliques that openly suck dry state largesse, which was accumulated from the surplus-value extracted by workers either through income taxes or by regressive consumption taxes. When the relentless need for state handouts overflows the influx of tax receipts, the state buries the nation in debt. This is why Wallerstein describes the periphery as more dynamic than the core.

This sets up the general understanding of imperialism. The historical process has presented us with the dichotomy between oppressor nations in the core and oppressed nations in the periphery. Noam Chomsky’s massive production of political writings has tremendously obfuscated this understanding.

Chomsky's writings generally conflate the idea of imperialism with American aggression more generally. We contend that this simplification has had deleterious consequences for our thinking and politics.

The big fish eat the little fish, and the biggest fish is the United States and its NATO hang-ons. It has even become possible in this model of geopolitical imperialism to understand NATO, Japan, and S. Korea as the only imperialist bloc, because of their alliance with the U.S. When imperialism is only understood as quantitative differences in capital and military power within state systems, it follows that all state conflict with this imperialist league becomes real struggles against imperialism.

This is a fatal trap for revolutionary politics. It derails the real struggle against capital. Geopolitical anti-imperialism means taking the side of reactionary regimes in the hope that they can defeat the American imperialist league. But if this were to happen, would this not simply mean that another imperialist power would act as such a hegemon? Others secretly desire a multipolar world order, because they believe that the great powers could be played off against each other. This belief comes from the memory of the USSR as a socialist actor in the fight against imperialism. But this historical moment is over. In a multipolar world of solely capitalist powers, domination will not lessen; it will simply be franchised.

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We can not place the struggle against imperialism in the hands of powers that only desire to be imperialist powers themselves. Even pariah states like Iran have oriented their foreign policy towards Western integration. America has no true enemies, but its own imperialism compels it to invent them.

Anti-imperialism must begin as a struggle of the working-class against their own national imperialist. And this struggle must happen in every capitalist state. This strategy is internationalism. Internationalism understands that everywhere the culprits of imperialism is always their capitalist class.

The Second Empire as a Model of 19th Century Europe

Marx and Engels used the term imperialism, but the sense in which they used it differs from how imperialism would come to be understood in the Second International. This understanding of imperialism was tied to classical notions of republicanism. Republics collapse into empires when the citizens fail to defend their liberty. In ancient Roman history, the Roman Republic collapsed into the Imperium, like in Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith.

The Second Empire emerged from the degeneration of the Second Republic, a republic that owed its existence to the 1848 revolutions. This was a Pan-European revolution, its epicenter was undeniably in France. The bourgeoisie and the working peoples of France fought together to overthrow the king.

After the revolution, the urban working-classes received concessions. One of the most important victories for the working people of France was the establishment of the National Workshops. The workshop programs created conditions for full employment. If you could not find a job you could just go to the workshops, and you would get a job at a set minimum wage. The idea that all workers can find good employment breaks capitalism. The ultimate scourge of labour is the dismissal of workers. Unemployment and its subsequent hunger are the very means through which capitalist society presses human beings to do what they would rather not do. From the founding of the Second Republic, the bourgeois class felt that the working masses experienced too much freedom and security to be properly exploited.

This is why the bourgeois assembly hatched a plan to shut down the workshops and kidnap the state deputy responsible for running the program. When the working class discovered the treachery of the ruling class, they attempted to storm the assembly building, and then they fought the National Guards. They were violently suppressed in what amounted to a massacre. These events would go on to be remembered as the June Days. This was the historical moment in which the working class proved to be an independent force in politics.

The aftermath of the June Days left a deep terror in the hearts of the ruling classes. When the bourgeoisie fought against the aristocracy, they justified the struggle by claiming to represent universal values, the rights of man, and the rights of labour and property. But when they had won the struggle, it became obvious that honouring these bourgeois values would come at the cost of their social power. In other words, it would cost them their ability to accumulate.

Marx said this about the bourgeois class in power:

“Whatever amount of passion and declamation might be employed by the party of Order against the minority from the tribune of the National Assembly, its speech remained as monosyllabic as that of the Christians, whose words were to be: Yea, yea; nay, nay! As monosyllabic on the platform as in the press. Flat as a riddle whose answer is known in advance. Whether it was a question of the right of petition or the tax on wine, freedom of the press or free trade, the clubs or the municipal charter, protection of personal liberty or regulation of the state budget, the watchword constantly recurs, the theme remains always the same, the verdict is ever ready and invariably reads:

“Socialism!” Even bourgeois liberalism is declared socialistic, bourgeois enlightenment socialistic, bourgeois financial reform socialistic. It was socialistic to build a railway where a canal already existed, and it was socialistic to defend oneself with a cane when one was attacked with a rapier.

This was not merely a figure of speech, fashion, or party tactics. The bourgeoisie had a true insight into the fact that all the weapons it had forged against feudalism turned their points against itself, that all the means of education it had produced rebelled against its own civilization, that all the gods it had created had fallen away from it. It understood that all the so-called bourgeois liberties and organs of progress attacked and menaced its class rule at its social foundation and its political summit simultaneously, and had therefore become “socialistic.””

The bourgeois class’s only means of protecting their social power was to relinquish their political powers. Thus began a dynamic of retrogression that takes the name of Bonapartism.

Louis Bonaparte—known by the farcical name: Napoleon III—was the unimpressive nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte. The man himself was useless. He was deeply indebted, a gangster, and quite moronic. Yet he won the presidency of the Republic by a vote under universal suffrage, thanks to France’s large peasant population succumbing to his demagoguery.

The presidency descended into dictatorship, because the ruling class would rather abrogate its rights to the power of the executive office than risk the masses using their political rights against them. This began as a series of seemingly small concessions. One of the first and perhaps most grotesque violations of the constitution began with the bourgeois assembly granting the presidency command of the army in order to invade and crush the Rome Commune. They gave up the power to deputize public offices. And then they dismantled the citizens militia because it could be used in revolution. They did so even as Bonaparte bragged to his gang that they would pull off a coup. This brag was so well known in Paris that it was printed in newspapers.

Finally, the hour of the coup arrived. After spending two years disenfranchising the working-classes, the bourgeois elite expected the workers to fight for “democracy”. The turn out to this fight was non-existent. The new regime, the Second Empire, was a police state, which rising above all classes, vanquished the rights of the bourgeoisie as well.

Engels describes the new regime:

“As far as both workers and capitalists are concerned, Bonapartism is characterised by the fact that it prevents them coming to blows with each other. In other words, it protects the bourgeoisie from any violent attacks by the workers, encourages a little gentle skirmishing between the two classes and furthermore deprives both alike of the faintest trace of political power. No freedom of association, no freedom of assembly, no freedom of the press; universal suffrage under such bureaucratic pressure that election of the opposition is almost impossible.”

And Marx’s concludes:

“Imperialism is, at the same time, the most prostitute and the ultimate form of the state power which nascent middle class (bourgeoisie) society had commenced to elaborate as a means of its own emancipation from feudalism, and which full-grown bourgeois society had finally transformed into a means for the enslavement of labour by capital.”

The growth of modern state power in mid-19th century France took the form of the police-system. In the 19th century, they spoke of the police with a more expansive definition, as compared to the limited definition that arose in the 20th and 21st centuries. The police, here, means all forms of infrastructure directed towards the regulation of life and of the population. The police-system emerged only in larval form under Klemens von Metternich’s Holy Alliance. It was a reactionary league that attempted to snuff out the revolutionary notions of the French revolution. Only ten years later, the police developed well beyond spy networks. The capitalist state turned the massive bureaucratic structure towards policy. Policy is the modern secret of the police. The total state was formed on the reactionary need to subject the totality of human life to regulation, for the sake of the law of value. The total domination of the French working class was the prerequisite for the full unleashing of rapid industrialization upon small manufacturers.

Europe was watching. But this new autocratic regime was not rejected by the rest of bourgeois Europe. Instead, it was embraced as a model for the repression of the working class. Militarism was the means of strengthening the Second Empire. Within the two decades of the regime’s short life, imperial France unleashed endless wars within Europe and beyond. England and France formed a détente for the sake of dividing up the rest of the world.

A short list of England and France’s conflicts: the Crimean War, the Italian Campaigns, the Mexican Expedition, the Second Opium War, the first Vietnam War (in the southern half of Vietnam), various wars in West Africa during the scramble for Africa and lastly—the disastrous Franco-Prussian War that vanquished the Second Empire.

Okay, so it is not such a short list. But many of these wars were part of the second wave of colonial violence, which strengthened state power over society. New Imperialism began in the 19th century. The first wave of colonialism was characterized by slavery; settler colonies in the new world; the export of feudal social forms, such as in the case of Spain; and overseas wars in the colonies. The second wave or new imperialism was a distinctly capitalist expansion. It was a new conquest focused on the old world: Africa and Asia.

Liberalism in Crisis: J.A. Hobson

Liberalism developed an anti-imperialist tradition in response to the new imperialist wave. The domestic cost of imperialism became obvious to many when Cecil Rhodes was able to compel the British parliament to fight a war to preserve the value of his African investments.

The Boer War made an open mockery of patriotism. The anti-war movement of this time was forced to reckon with the nature of empire. Empire meant the undermining of democracy and domestic interest, the ascendancy of the British Foreign Office, and overseas plunder. Many returned to the politics of Richard Cobden to find a solution.

Richard Cobden’s own political career began in the first half of the 19th century during the beginning of this second wave of imperialism. As MP, his most historical contribution was the repealing of the corn laws. The free-trade of bread granted a much needed relief to the cost of living for the many British workers. Cobden also established the Free-trade League which would continue after his early death.

Free-trade was understood as the means of creating world-peace and cosmopolitanism. In Kant’s essay *On Perpetual Peace*, he developed a theory in which the warmaking of states would lead to increasing indebtedness. This would then force autocratic belligerent states to open society to more bourgeois relations and international trade, so these debt-laden states could raise higher taxes. Eventually, everyone will make so much wealth via trade; why would anyone need war?

Obviously this rosy prediction did not come to pass.

J.A. Hobson’s own work and politics was indebted to Cobden. Hobson was also radicalized by the Boer War. Clearly, imperialism was the lack of free trade, but he thought it may be even something worse: sub-capitalist. Imperialism was when the state would be co-opted by large financial joint stock companies in order to pursue accumulation by all means necessary. The ascendancy of finance created social relations that degenerated to the level of mercantilism. Ultimately, all states engage in two forms of intercourse; they either trade or make war. Protectionism and colonialism would always lead to warfare.

Hobson distinguished himself from Cobden through what he emphasized. While Cobden’s political project was aimed at the extension of free-trade throughout the world, Hobson detested protectionism. It had an immiserating effect on the domestic market, and in particular, on the working poor. Hobson’s work develops one of the first underconsumptionist theories of imperialism. He viewed free foreign trade only as a means to provision the domestic market, not as a policy goal. Oversea investments could be diverted to reindustrializing parts of Britain that had been unevenly developed. But it was also more than obvious that protectionism would never lead to greater home trade.

Hobson’s politics aimed at pushing society back to the values of free trade, cosmopolitanism and world peace. He desired a return to capitalism. In his mind this meant domestic capitalism. Despite understanding the pivotal role of finance and money markets in the development of imperial war and vast military expenditures he could not understand this as a dynamic within capitalism itself. He remained a liberal.

Imperialism is Capitalism in Decay

Hobson’s anti-imperialist politics provided us a bridge from the 19th century to the 20th century. But liberalism proved to be the limits of his thinking. The revolutionary Lenin was deeply impressed by Hobson’s analysis, but Lenin understood that imperialism was not a distinct phenomenon from capitalism. Rather, imperialism was part of the internal dynamics that subverted bourgeois values. Capitalists are driven to accumulate by the iron laws of competition, lest they fall behind their competitors or behind the demands of waged-labour. Only the socialization of production could solve this crisis.

Capital is estranged labour. The social category of private property is used to expropriate part of the labour-time of a worker *in-gratis*. This free work performed by workers is part of the totality of society’s surplus labour. This surplus does not come about through a fair exchange. Workers definitionally do not own the means to socially reproduce themselves. If they will not starve, they must work for someone else. In this way wage labour is extorted.

The accumulated dividends of capitalist exploitation are reinvested in the production process, and another part is taken as a revenue for the capitalist and their houseworkers (accountants, managers, thugs, lawyers...). This cycle of reinvestment allows for the reproduction of capital on an expanded scale. Industry will continue to expand until the rate of profit declines.

We must return to Hobson’s understanding of the role of finance in imperialism, because it is one of the most important lines of thought that Lenin will pick up in his own understanding of imperialism. Finance capital is needed to ensure that the cycle of capital can move without interruption. It is the most fluid element of the social reproduction of capital. Finance is the means of allocating capital efficiently. Banks are more willing to finance industries with the highest return on investment. Capitals compete not only for the sales of their commodities; but they also compete for the best deals in the money markets.

These twin forms of competition in the commodity markets as well as in the money markets, drive down profit rates and create a generalization of the rate of profit in all mature branches of industry.

The ascendancy of finance creates strong pressures on the cost of living. Right now, the costs of housing, food, transportation, travel, and the growing indebtedness of the working family, are all consequences of the competition of branches of industries to prove that they are worthy to be first in line for capital funding on the money market. The development of the credit system also reaches its own point of maturity when it can not find new high-performing branches of industry. This period of maturity in the business cycle is always a point of criticality. Capital-in-general must either expand or go into crisis. In the case of the financial markets, this starts as an acute credit crunch, followed by an agonising period of debt deflation.

During these periods of overaccumulation of capital, the outlay of capital becomes increasingly skewed towards replacing human labour time with technological innovations. Firms are always looking for opportunities to drive down labour costs. The increased productivity of labour leads to increased relative exploitation of labour, because without an active workers' struggle, increased productivity never produces a comparable increase in workers’ remuneration. The reinvestment of capital returns to the workers who generated this bonanza in the shape of further intensified social domination. It takes the form as a larger capital outlay of machinery, increased bureaucratic and managerial bloat, and the expulsion of superfluous labour from the production process.

Investment in machinery and logistics raises labour productivity and lowers socially necessary labour-time. It also generates a superfluous population. The 19th century Luddites fought against the addition of large machinery to the labour process because this addition introduced a qualitative transformation in social domination and precarity. Mature branches of industry compete in the money markets by offering greater returns. Higher profits are captured through the addition of machinery to the production process and by throwing more workers out of employment. Mature markets add vast numbers to the superfluous population. They also develop the social crisis that accompanies the destitute.

Unemployment in vast numbers has a qualitative character. Society becomes increasingly criminal and unstable. Prostitution, gangsterism, vagrancy, corruption and an atmosphere of debauchery all become normalized. The capitalists become criminal as well, in response to the lack of profit growth they resort to massive financial swindles. The state uses this social crisis as an opportunity for expanding the security apparati into the everyday lives of citizens. The growing social discontent can possibly become revolutionary, if the working class develops the consciousness for its own real interest.

Lenin quotes Cecil Rhodes, imperialist and architect of the Boer War, in his essay on imperialism:

“I was in the East End of London (a working-class quarter) yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for ‘bread! bread!’ and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism.... My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists.”



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The ruling-class understands that their privileges depend on the rest of society having some purchase in the status quo. The low growth of mature markets presents an acute crisis to capitalist ideology because the opportunities that placated the masses are rapidly evaporating. As noted by Cecil Rhodes, the means of averting class war on the home front is to create international wars beyond. This is why the First International warned the French working class that voting for imperialism was voting *“despotism at home and war abroad”*.

Mature markets can no longer grow without the state intervening. The social crisis of low growth, speculative bubbles, high prices for staples and housing, social destitution, and crime will not be solved at the cost of capital. The working masses will be expected to bear the social cost.

Off to the frontlines! For glory and accumulation!

Imperialism is the necessary expression of the crisis of capitalist social relations. High productivity and the superabundance of goods leads to unemployment and lack of buyers. Capital must leave mature markets for new investment opportunities. In the early 20th century, unbeknownst to Lenin, he was contemplating the tail end of the second wave of imperialism. The territorial division of the world was still the means for the European, American, and Japanese powers to secure new investment opportunities, natural resources and cheaper labour. The other side of the social crisis was the development of an international workers movement that would fight for control of their society.

As understood by Lenin, imperialism is reaction to the self-organisation of workers and the political parties that represent them. Lenin was a careful reader of Marx’s writings; this included Marx and Engels’ continuous writings on the Second Empire and the spread of Bonapartism into Germany via Bismarck and into Britain through the rise of the political influence of the Foreign Office. The fundamental lesson from the Second Empire was that capitalism had finished its progressive role in history, and now all current capitalist politics is retrograde and reactionary. The progressive force in history now is the self-organization of the working class.

Lenin’s pamphlet *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism* is read as an economic theory, but he states in the preface that the economic presentation was in large part to evade police censorship. As a result, he could not speak very much on political matters. The preface redirects Lenin’s reader to his writing published after 1914, which was published abroad to allow for a more explicit politics.

The first main point that we wish to convey to our readers is that imperialism here is critiqued as being merely a form of capitalism’s appearance on the level of the state-system. Imperialism is not a thing independent from the exploitation of wage-labour, as it is for Hobson, who sees it as opportunistic state policy. Second is the politics of imperialism is capitalist counter-revolution. The expansion of the police and security apparatuses, the crushing of labour, the creation of regulatory bodies, wars and national oppression, are all moments of the totality of capitalist society in the age of imperialism. If one is an anti-imperialist, one must be a socialist.

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Value-Form to State-Form

The capitalist state takes the form of a competition between definite nation states. Kant was correct to believe that constant wars between states would push all nations at war into debt and eventually subject nations to the compulsion of market forces. They would be forced to trade. But Kant was incorrect to believe that trade would be the basis of perpetual peace.

Kant’s vision of the federation of nations hinges on the absence of the class struggle. Wealth is not accumulated by means of trade. This is a mystification that springs from commodity fetishism. The real wellspring of wealth is the production and the exploitation of labour. The sphere of production creates real use value, but only abstract labour is valued as exchange value. This real abstraction is represented as prices and capital stock. These representations of value are imperfect, and an enormous amount of math and modelling goes into predicting their vicissitudes on Wall St. and Bay St., but market corrections (mistakes) happen all the same.

“I used to think that if there was reincarnation, I wanted to come back as the president or the pope or as a .400 baseball hitter. But now, I would like to come back as the bond market. You can intimidate everybody.”

— James Carville (Economic advisor to Bill Clinton)

The capitalist state is subjected to the law of capitalist accumulation because this is how it is funded. Capital does not rule the state through discrete people; it rules through the impersonal power of money. Even if a well meaning political party attempted to create laws that were working class friendly, if the laws interfered with capital’s ability to exploit labour, the government would find itself confronting a bond market in revolt. International investment would not view this country as a safe or competitive site of investment.

The law of value and the capitalist state-form necessarily place the working-class and capital at odds. Imperial plunder is necessary to create new growth; but, on the other hand, the dividends of imperialist war drives the state further into debt. Most of the dividends of imperialism go to the ruling elites. This intensifies inequality and creates even more discontent. War abroad is a means of escaping class struggle here.

Contemporary imperialism in the 21st century is no longer territorial colonialism. Under neocolonialism, the laws that keep the Global South enthralled to the Western imperial alliance operate just like the bond markets’ control over Canada. The difference is the ratios between domestic and foreign capital, as well as the use of humanitarian aid as blackmail.

The question of Palestine is closer to the national questions of the long 19th century, than capitalist imperialist policy in the age of neocolonialism. The Gaza genocide is one of the many horrors of the failure of the Second International to build socialism in Europe. But it is an outlier in contemporary global capitalist politics. The end of the Second World War allowed the capitalist powers the breathing room to restructure the rest of the world in their image, as subordinate smaller capitalist states, where national liberation meant national exploitation by global finance.

In *Wretched of the Earth*, Franz Fanon warns of the trap of national consciousness. He writes that during periods following national emancipation, the indigenous capitalist class will be economically limited by a lack of capital and by an underdeveloped staples economy. The national middle-classes of the neocolonial world make demands on the state to nationalize industry, thus giving them the appearance as socialistic and anti-imperialist, but this period of developmentalism is only temporary.

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Over time, the financial ties of the former colonial masters strengthen their demands on the domestic industries. In response, the neocolonial state becomes reactionary: it rolls back the concessions to the working class, and reopens the domestic economy to foreign capital. Despite a brief moment of heroic “anti-imperialist” resistance, the indigenous ruling-class will always return to acting as administrators of imperialism out of economic interest. They are nascent imperialists whether they manage domestic capital or foreign capital-as comprador bourgeoisie. Both cases are equally counter-revolutionary.

Imperialism is Here. Let’s Bring the War Home!

When we understand imperialism as a worldwide phenomenon of capitalism, we understand that imperialism’s contradictions can only be solved through internationalism. Internationalism is the only means of developing an anti-imperialist strategy. This strategy requires the self-organization of the working-class as a social and political force independent from all other classes. Internationalism means that the workers understand that workers anywhere else in the world are their brothers and sisters. They will fight against the oppression of other peoples, and they will organize towards the final struggle against their own imperialists. But most importantly, this struggle begins in action and consciousness in the labour-capital nexus of exploitation.

When we say “bring the war home,” we mean that the fight against imperialism begins on the national front. Imperial violence occurs domestically as well, by means of the police and civil service. Every country is constructed through its internal relations, which are simultaneously unique in their circumstances and the same in their relation to the domination of capital. The struggle against imperialism must begin in organizing aimed at the subversion of capital as it manifests in everyday life.

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