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# Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions—for the Second Congress of the Communist International [1]

V. I. Lenin

5 June, 1920

In submitting for discussion by the Second Congress of the Communist International the following draft theses on the national and the colonial questions I would request all comrades, especially those who possess concrete information on any of these very complex problems, to let me have their opinions, amendments, addenda and concrete remarks in the most concise form (no more than two or three pages), particularly on the following points:

Austrian experience;
Polish-Jewish and Ukrainian experience;
Alsace-Lorraine and Belgium;
Ireland;
Danish-German, Italo-French and Italo-Slav relations;
Balkan experience;
Eastern peoples;
The struggle against Pan-Islamism;
Relations in the Caucasus;
The Bashkir and Tatar Republics;
Kirghizia; Turkestan, its experience;
Negroes in America;
Colonies;
China-Korea-Japan.

1) An abstract or formal posing of the problem of equality in general and national equality in particular is in the very nature of bourgeois democracy. Under the guise of the equality of the individual in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or legal equality of the property-owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited, thereby grossly deceiving the oppressed classes. On the plea that all men are absolutely equal, the bourgeoisie is transforming the idea of equality, which is itself a reflection of relations in commodity production, into a weapon in its struggle against the abolition of classes. The real meaning of the demand for equality consists in its being a demand for the abolition of classes.

2) In conformity with its fundamental task of combating bourgeois democracy and exposing its falseness and hypocrisy, the Communist Party, as the avowed champion of the proletarian struggle to overthrow the bourgeois yoke, must base its policy, in the national question too, not on abstract and formal principles but, first, on a precise appraisal of the specific historical situation and, primarily, of economic conditions; second, on a clear distinction between the interests of the oppressed classes, of working and exploited people, and the general concept of national interests as a whole, which implies the interests of the ruling class; third, on an equally clear distinction between the oppressed, dependent and subject nations and the oppressing, exploiting and sovereign nations, in order to counter the bourgeois-democratic lies that play down this colonial and financial enslavement of the vast majority of the world's population by an insignificant minority of the richest and advanced capitalist countries, a feature characteristic of the era of finance capital and imperialism.

3) The imperialist war of 1914-18 has very clearly revealed to all nations and to the oppressed classes of the whole world the falseness of bourgeois-democratic phrases, by practically demonstrating that the Treaty of Versailles of the celebrated "Western democracies" is an even more brutal and foul act of violence against weak nations than was the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of the German Junkers and the Kaiser. The League of Nations and the entire post war policy of the Entente reveal this truth with even greater clarity and distinctness. They are everywhere intensifying the revolutionary struggle both of the proletariat in the advanced countries and of the toiling masses in the colonial and dependent countries. They are hastening the collapse of the petty-bourgeois nationalist illusions that nations can live together in peace and equality under capitalism.

4) From these fundamental premises it follows that the Communist International's entire policy on the national and the colonial questions should rest primarily on a closer union of the proletarians and the

working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. This union alone will guarantee victory over capitalism, without which the abolition of national oppression and inequality is impossible.

5) The world political situation has now placed the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day. World political developments are of necessity concentrated on a single focus—the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Soviet Russian Republic, around which are inevitably grouped, on the one hand, the Soviet movements of the advanced workers in all countries, and, on the other, all the national liberation movements in the colonies and among the oppressed nationalities, who are learning from bitter experience that their only salvation lies in the Soviet system's victory over world imperialism.

6) Consequently, one cannot at present confine oneself to a bare recognition or proclamation of the need for closer union between the working people of the various nations; a policy must be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements. The form of this alliance should be determined by the degree of development of the communist movement in the proletariat of each country, or of the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement of the workers and peasants in backward countries or among backward nationalities.

7) Federation is a transitional form to the complete unity of the working people of different nations. The feasibility of federation has already been demonstrated in practice both by the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and other Soviet Republics (the Hungarian, Finnish[2] and Latvian[3] in the past, and the Azerbaijan and Ukrainian at present), and by the relations within the R.S.F.S.R. in respect of nationalities which formerly enjoyed neither statehood nor autonomy (e.g., the Bashkir and Tatar autonomous republics in the R.S.F.S.R., founded in 1919 and 1920 respectively).

8) In this respect, it is the task of the Communist International to further develop and also to study and test by experience these new federations, which are arising on the basis of the Soviet system and the Soviet movement. In recognising that federation is a transitional form to complete unity, it is necessary to strive for ever closer federal unity, bearing in mind, first, that the Soviet republics, surrounded as they are by the imperialist powers of the whole world—which from the military standpoint are immeasurably stronger—cannot possibly continue to exist without the closest alliance; second, that a close economic alliance between the Soviet republics is necessary, otherwise the productive forces which have been ruined by imperialism cannot be restored and the well-being of the working people cannot be ensured; third, that there is a tendency towards the creation of a single world economy, regulated by the proletariat of all nations as an integral whole and according to a common plan. This tendency has already revealed itself quite clearly under capitalism and is bound to be further developed and consummated under socialism.

9) The Communist International's national policy in the sphere of relations within the state cannot be restricted to the bare, formal, purely declaratory and actually non-committal recognition of the equality of nations to which the bourgeois democrats confine themselves—both those who frankly admit being such, and those who assume the name of socialists (such as the socialists of the Second International).

In all their propaganda and agitation—both within parliament and outside it—the Communist parties must consistently expose that constant violation of the equality of nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities which is to be seen in all capitalist countries, despite their "democratic" constitutions. It is also necessary, first, constantly to explain that only the Soviet system is capable of ensuring genuine equality of nations, by uniting first the proletarians and then the whole mass of the working population in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; and, second, that all Communist parties should render direct aid to the revolutionary movements among the dependent and underprivileged nations (for example, Ireland, the American Negroes, etc.) and in the colonies.

Without the latter condition, which is particularly important, the struggle against the oppression of dependent nations and colonies, as well as recognition of their right to secede, are but a false signboard, as is evidenced by the parties of the Second International.

10) Recognition of internationalism in word, and its replacement in deed by petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism, in all propaganda, agitation and practical work, is very common, not only among the parties of the Second International, but also among those which have withdrawn from it, and often even among

parties which now call themselves communist. The urgency of the struggle against this evil, against the most deep-rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices, looms ever larger with the mounting exigency of the task of converting the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national dictatorship (i.e., existing in a single country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i.e., a dictatorship of the proletariat involving at least several advanced countries, and capable of exercising a decisive influence upon world politics as a whole). Petty-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the mere recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more. Quite apart from the fact that this recognition is purely verbal, petty-bourgeois nationalism preserves national self-interest intact, whereas proletarian internationalism demands, first, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world-wide scale, and, second, that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie should be able and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capital.

Thus, in countries that are already fully capitalist and have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and cardinal task.

11) With regard to the more backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate, it is particularly important to bear in mind:

first, that all Communist parties must assist the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in these countries, and that the duty of rendering the most active assistance rests primarily with the workers of the country the backward nation is colonially or financially dependent on;

second, the need for a struggle against the clergy and other influential reactionary and medieval elements in backward countries;

third, the need to combat Pan-Islamism and similar trends, which strive to combine the liberation movement against European and American imperialism with an attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landowners, mullahs, etc.;

fourth, the need, in backward countries, to give special support to the peasant movement against the landowners, against landed proprietorship, and against all manifestations or survivals of feudalism, and to strive to lend the peasant movement the most revolutionary character by establishing the closest possible alliance between Western European communist proletariat and the revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies, and in the backward countries generally. It is particularly necessary to exert every effort to apply the basic principles of the Soviet system in countries where pre-capitalist relations predominate—by setting up "working people's Soviets", etc.;

fifth, the need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries; the Communist International should support bourgeois-democratic national movements in colonial and backward countries only on condition that, in these countries, the elements of future proletarian parties, which will be communist not only in name, are brought together and trained to understand their special tasks, i.e., those of the struggle against the bourgeois-democratic movements within their own nations. The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, but should not merge with it, and should under all circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its most embryonic form;

sixth, the need constantly to explain and expose among the broadest working masses of all countries, and particularly of the backward countries, the deception systematically practised by the imperialist powers, which, under the guise of politically independent states, set up states that are wholly dependent upon them economically, financially and militarily. Under present-day international conditions there is no salvation for dependent and weak nations except in a union of Soviet republics.

12) The age-old oppression of colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers has not only filled the working masses of the oppressed countries with animosity towards the oppressor nations, but has also aroused distrust in these nations in general, even in their proletariat. The despicable betrayal of socialism by the majority of the official leaders of this proletariat in 1914-19, when "defence of country" was used as a social-chauvinist cloak to conceal the defence of the "right" of their "own" bourgeoisie to oppress colonies and fleece financially dependent

countries, was certain to enhance this perfectly legitimate distrust. On the other hand, the more backward the country, the stronger is the hold of small-scale agricultural production, patriarchalism and isolation, which inevitably lend particular strength and tenacity to the deepest of petty-bourgeois prejudices, i.e., to national egoism and national narrow-mindedness. These prejudices are bound to die out very slowly, for they can disappear only after imperialism and capitalism have disappeared in the advanced countries, and after the entire foundation of the backward countries' economic life has radically changed. It is therefore the duty of the class-conscious communist proletariat of all countries to regard with particular caution and attention the survivals of national sentiments in the countries and among nationalities which have been oppressed the longest; it is equally necessary to make certain concessions with a view to more rapidly overcoming this distrust and these prejudices. Complete victory over capitalism cannot be won unless the proletariat and, following it, the mass of working people in all countries and nations throughout the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity.

## Notes

[1] Notes to "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions" were received by Lenin from G. V. Chicherin, N. N. Krestinsky, J. V. Stalin, M. G. Rafes, Y. A. Preobrazhensky, N. D. Lapinsky, and I. Nedelkov (N. Shablin), representative of the Bulgarian Communists, as well as from a number of leaders in Bashkiria, Kirghizia, and Turkestan. Along with correct ideas, the notes contained certain grave errors. Thus, Chicherin gave a wrong interpretation to Lenin's theses on the necessity of support for national liberation movements and on agreements with the national bourgeoisie, without due regard for Lenin's distinction between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry. With regard to this Lenin wrote: "I lay greater stress on the alliance with the peasantry (which does not quite mean the bourgeoisie)" (Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.C. C.P.S.U.). Referring to the relations between the future socialist Europe and the economically underdeveloped and dependent countries, Preobrazhensky wrote: ". . . if it proves impossible to reach economic agreement with the leading national groups, the latter will inevitably be suppressed by force and economically important regions will be compelled to join a union of European Republics." Lenin decisively objected to this remark: ". . . it goes too far. It cannot be proved, and it is wrong to say that suppression by force is "inevitable". That is radically wrong" (see Voprosy Istorii KPSS [Problems of the C.P.S.U. History] 1958, No. 2, p. 16).

[2] As a result of the revolution which commenced in Finland on January 27, 1918, the bourgeois government of Svinhufvud was overthrown and the working class assumed power. On January 29, the revolutionary government of Finland, the Council of People's Representatives was formed by Edvard Gylling, Yrjö Sirola, Otto Kuusinen, A. Taimi and others. The following were among the most important measures taken by the workers' government: the law on the transfer to landless peasants, without indemnification, of the land they actually tilled; tax-exemption for the poorest sections of the population; the expropriation of enterprises whose owners had fled the country; the establishment of state control over private banks (their functions being assumed by the State Bank).
On March 1, 1918, a treaty between the Finnish Socialist Workers' Republic and the R.S.F.S.R. was signed in Petrograd. Based on the principle of complete equality and respect for the sovereignty of the two sides, this was the first treaty in world history to be signed between two socialist countries.
The proletarian revolution, however, was victorious only in the south of Finland. The Svinhufvud government concentrated all counter-revolutionary forces in the north of the country, and appealed to the German Kaiser's government for help. As a result of German armed intervention, the Finnish revolution was put down in May 1918, after a desperate civil war. White terror reigned in the country, tens of thousands of revolutionary workers and peasants were executed or tortured to death in the prisons.

[3] As a result of mass action by the Lettish proletariat and peasantry against the German invaders and the counter-revolutionary government of Ulmanis, a provisional Soviet government was established in Latvia on December 17, 1918, which issued a Manifesto on the assumption of state power by the Soviets. Soviet Russia gave fraternal help to the Lettish people in their struggle to establish Soviet rule and strengthen the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic.
Under the leadership of the Latvian Communist Party and the Latvian Soviet Government, a Red Army was formed, the landed estates were confiscated, the banks and big commercial and industrial enterprises were nationalised, social insurance and an eight-hour working day were introduced, and a system of public catering for working people was organised.
In March 1919, German troops and the whiteguards, armed and equipped by the U.S. and the Entente imperialists, attacked Soviet Latvia. In May they captured Riga, the capital of Soviet Latvia. After fierce fighting the entire territory of Latvia had been overrun by the interventionists by the beginning of 1920. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie established a regime of bloody terror, thousands of revolutionary workers and peasants being killed or thrown into prison.

# The Principal Challenge Facing the Working Class in the General Strike and the Elections

Gavroche | Unión Proletaria (Spain)

With the influx of immigrants into Ceuta and the judicial harassment directed against the government, the People's Party (PP) and Vox took their next electoral victory for granted. In opposition to Pedro Sánchez, the right presents itself as the defender of national sovereignty and the enemy of corruption.

Reality, however, exposes it as just as corrupt, if not more so (260 alleged cases involving the PP, compared with 142 involving the PSOE[1]): Gürtel, Bárcenas, Púnica, Lezo, Kitchen, Ayuso's luxury apartments, Vox's financing by the Iranian opposition, and so on.

Nor does it have much to boast about in terms of patriotism. It supported, and still refuses to condemn, the coup d'état, the war and Francoist repression against the people who had elected the Popular Front in 1936. To achieve this, it subjected that people—and continues to subject them—to foreign powers: first Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and today US imperialism, Moroccan expansionism against Western Sahara, NATO and the European Union. The only people against whom it dares to act courageously are poor immigrants and the nationalities of Spain that wish to free themselves from such "patriots."

As the workers' just struggle for bread, housing and peace grows, the right also hypocritically presents itself as the guardian of "order," when it is precisely its policies of unrestrained capitalism that provoke public disorder: growing inequalities, the impoverishment of the majority, repression of democratic protests, and the encouragement of the basest nationalist, racist, sexist and other instincts—all to keep the people divided in the face of their exploiters, and so on.

Just when the reactionary mobilization that the right had been cheering on was proceeding at full speed, its arrogant and clumsy determination to evict the elderly Mari Carmen Abascal mobilized the most dignified and solidarity-minded sections of the masses, thereby providing the parliamentary left with an unexpected lifeline. Pedro Sánchez seized this opportunity to bring forward the general elections, intending to capitalize at the ballot box on the right-wing blockade of decrees that would have eased or postponed the desperate situation of tenants (even if this relief were to be financed with public money rather than by the major property owners). The trade unions have also called a general strike in defense of the effective right to housing and the preservation of workers' purchasing power.

From Unión Proletaria and other workers' organizations, we have responded resolutely:

- By taking the side of the masses who suffer from and fight against real-estate speculation;
- By denouncing the specific capitalist roots of the problem and demanding the expropriation of large real-estate capital, in addition to urgent mitigating measures;
- By warning that, in order to satisfy these demands, the most advanced sections of the working class need their own political party.

For the general strike on November 11 and the parliamentary elections on November 29 to help workers resist and improve their lives, there are four requirements that we communists must fulfill.

## The Four Most Urgent Tasks

1) We need an accurate diagnosis of the relationship between the mobilization for the right to housing and the political situation, that is, the national and international class struggle. Following the 2008 financial crisis and the economic crisis that was conflated with the pandemic in 2020, the cost of housing—both homeownership and renting—has risen far more than wages. This phenomenon may be somewhat more pronounced in Spain, but it is widespread as a result of the crisis of present-day capitalism, which

is highly monopolized and financialized. Through banks and other financial companies, surplus capital (which cannot obtain sufficient returns in actual production) is directed toward land speculation and, increasingly, weapons manufacturing. This is how the current bourgeois regime confronts international competition, the declining profitability of Western industrial capital and the corresponding prospect of major wars of plunder.

The decline, above all economic, of the dominant capitalist countries and the growing contradictions between them are becoming increasingly evident (for example, consider the divergent positions of the United States and the European Union regarding the wars they are waging against Russia and Iran). By contrast, the interests and actions of the oppressed countries of the Global South naturally converge toward the formation of an anti-imperialist camp, for now only as an objective tendency that brings together political forces with different class characteristics. This is the true meaning of today's geopolitical conflicts: the US-Zionist war against Palestine, Iran and the entire Axis of Resistance; the war that NATO is waging against Russia through the Ukrainian Nazi regime; and the low-intensity wars against the peoples of Latin America and against socialist China and the DPRK. This is where the struggle between progress and reaction is actually being decided. In this struggle, communists and all consistent democrats must take sides, following Lenin's slogan: "Workers and oppressed peoples of the world, unite against the imperialists!"[2]

Within imperialist countries, prices are rising faster than wages, worsening the living conditions of the majority of the population, both in absolute terms and, even more so, in comparison with capitalists. Thus, while average real wages have remained stagnant over the past ten years, the major companies listed on Spain's IBEX-35 stock index have nearly doubled their profits, from €35–45 billion annually between 2015 and 2019 to more than €65 billion annually after the pandemic.[3]

The fact is that the growth of militarism and social inequality is being promoted throughout Europe by both the right and social democracy, although the latter does so in a more concealed and "softer" manner toward the most disadvantaged.[4] Over time, the capitalist right and the capitalist left have played the roles of "bad cop" and "good cop" with workers, taking turns in government so that the bourgeoisie can profit at our expense and turn us into cannon fodder. As for the petty-bourgeois democracy represented by Sumar, Podemos and others, by submitting servilely to the PSOE, the capitalists, the monarchy, the reactionary bureaucracy, NATO, the EU, Zelensky, and so on, it can barely wrest a few minor reforms from them. Its cowardly attitude demoralizes progressives and emboldens reactionaries.

The current mass movement for the right to housing has the employers' organizations and the right-wing parties as its principal enemies, since they oppose granting it even the minimum relief provided by the government's latest decrees. Nor is the movement willing to surrender itself for nothing to that "left" which now supports it solely with a view to winning the forthcoming snap elections. Once the elections are over, both wings of the bourgeoisie will converge on the objective of dismantling the movement, by fair means or foul, in order to continue along the capitalist path that inevitably accelerates exploitation, fascism and war.

2) We must participate in and defend this just mass movement against those who attack it from the right and from the "left."

On the right, it is attacked by fanatics of chauvinism, reaction and economic liberalism.

It is important to combat the demagoguery of capitalist ideologues who attempt to divide wage-earning workers by setting homeowners against tenants. In both cases, the overwhelming majority belong to the working class. Sixty percent of Spanish households own the home in which they live,[5] and the current movement is not directed against them. Indeed, it is the only movement that defends them when their insufficient resources prevent them from continuing to pay their mortgage (one in four households has a mortgage).[6] Nor is the movement directed against the two million property owners who own two homes. Even if they rent out their second home, they cannot live, much less become wealthy, on the rental income it provides. They are not the ones who have caused rents to skyrocket. That responsibility

lies with the large landowners and financial capitalists who monopolize the market, hoard vacant homes, speculate through tourism, and so on.[7] At most, renting out their second home has enabled these workers to mitigate the decline in their real wages caused by rising fuel and food prices. The real interest shared by workers who rent and those who own their homes lies in uniting as a class against monopoly capital, which devours the income of both groups.

There are also people on the "left" who attack the current movement because, like every emerging struggle, it has a partial character and lacks a general class standpoint; because it opposes "only" the rentier and most parasitic form of capital; because it is dominated by political tendencies that are inconsistent with the interests of the proletariat; because it is electorally advantageous to the imperialist left; and so on. The dogmatism and sectarianism of these hypercritical "left-wing" critics prevent them from recognizing that the disadvantages they mention—however real they may be—are far outweighed by the benefits the current movement brings to the development of the class struggle. These disadvantages can be perfectly neutralized, provided that Marxist-Leninists intervene in the movement correctly. The factionalist tendency of these loud-mouthed ultra-leftists reveals their individualist and therefore petty-bourgeois nature.

3) The correct intervention of communists consists in criticizing non-proletarian positions that hinder the movement's development toward victory, while at the same time preserving its mass unity. The necessary criticism must pursue the exclusive objective of broadening this unity so that the movement can achieve its goals.

In this regard, we seek to dissuade the masses from the opportunist[8] and counterproductive paths offered to them by petty-bourgeois reformists and also by those petty-bourgeois revolutionaries (anarchists, Trotskyists and similar groups) who, unlike those mentioned in the previous section, do support the housing movement. We must explain how mistaken the ideological and political foundations of these parties are, both in general terms and through their slogans and demands whenever these express those foundations in concrete form.

The contradiction between petty-bourgeois programs and the needs of the masses manifests itself in many aspects connected with the experience accumulated by the working class over two centuries of struggle. However, the most serious expression of this divide today is that the petty-bourgeois section of the movement avoids denouncing, out of political short-sightedness or cowardice, the principal reason for the rising cost of living and the impoverishment of the majority: the political course toward rearmament and war against Russia adopted by the European imperialist governments, including the Spanish government. Spain's military expenditure in 2026 alone would be enough to build 300,000 homes, while the aid to Ukraine acknowledged by the EU since 2022 is equivalent to more than two million homes![9]

Political problems cannot be solved by simply going with the flow or distributing blame equally from some supposedly immaculate vantage point. In concrete terms, Russia is the world's largest producer of raw materials and has no need to attack the rest of Europe. It is the European elites who are desperate to seize its wealth, and then move on to China (since they cannot compete peacefully with a socialist economy) and put an end to the insubordination of the "Third World." It was not enough for Moscow to sell them cheap hydrocarbons. To save the predatory Euro-Atlantic regime, they are prepared to sacrifice us on a massive scale at the altar of a war that would be nuclear.[10] We must denounce and prevent the crime our governments are preparing before they commit it. It is serious that the dogmatic "anti-capitalism" of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries distracts the people from identifying the concrete and principal enemy they must confront in order to survive.

We can see how, on this principal political question concerning our survival, right-wing and "left-wing" opportunists converge despite their apparent opposition. We must combat both deviations. It is a mistake to absolutize deviations of one kind while turning a blind eye to those of the opposite kind. As Lenin said, we must wage a "struggle on two fronts" against deviations which, although opposed to one another, are "the manifestation of bourgeois influence within

the proletariat."[11] Stalin held that "both dangers, the 'Left' danger and the Right danger, both deviations from the Leninist line—that is, the Right deviation and the 'Left' deviation—lead, although starting from different extremes, to the same result. Which of these dangers is the worse? I think both are worse."[12]

4) Finally, we face the challenge of defining the revolutionary proletarian path to which we are calling the most advanced elements of the movement. It is not enough to expose the essence of the problem, join the struggle and criticize those who weaken it. We must also clarify, as far as possible, the conditions necessary for the demands of the masses to become reality.

At present, the majority of class-conscious workers understand the defense of their interests as something to be pursued through parliamentary elections or, in the best-case scenario, through a general strike that—by occupying the streets, workplaces and educational institutions—develops to the point of forcing the bourgeoisie to submit to the popular will. Both means are on the immediate political agenda and, however necessary they may be, they are far from sufficient.

If we do not direct them toward building the Communist Party, they will lead to frustration, as has already happened with the general strikes and elections held since the restoration of the parliamentary regime. On their own, neither workers laying down their tools nor even the most loyal parliamentary representatives of the working class constitute a sufficient opponent for a bourgeois state armed to the teeth. Against the excessive hopes placed in elections and strikes, let us remember that: 1) the exploited can satisfy their needs only by exercising political power over their exploiters; 2) to conquer that power, they must defeat the centralized repressive force of the bourgeoisie; 3) to defeat it, they must develop and centralize their own forces, moving from the defensive to the offensive, beginning with the organization of their vanguard sector in a Communist Party.

We must address the advanced proletarians who will participate in the general strike and the elections and convince them to join in building the Communist Party as the most urgent and necessary task of their trade-union and political struggle.

## Without Revolutionary Theory, There Can Be No Revolutionary Movement

The number of communists committed to Marxism-Leninism is still insignificant, and we do not have the prior connection with the masses that petty-bourgeois revolutionaries have developed. It is easier for the latter to establish themselves among masses with little experience and deeply indoctrinated by bourgeois ideology and politics. We, by contrast, have needed many years to recover the revolutionary principles that the bourgeoisified leaders of the PCE and its splinter groups have concealed, distorted or even defamed.

The path by which workers can free themselves from wage slavery has been tested through two centuries of working-class movement and synthesized by the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism. Until the middle of the twentieth century, this was evident to anyone who received news of how the first state of workers and peasants—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—was consolidating itself, defeating the most ferocious imperialists militarily, bringing its strength into balance with that of the capitalist bloc, developing an economy without crises or unemployment, spectacularly improving the living conditions of its population, helping to form an entire bloc of socialist countries and liberating peoples from colonialism, and so on.

Of course, the bourgeoisie did everything possible to denigrate the achievements of communism, with the help of those who had once been part of it but subsequently renounced it. Nevertheless, its success was limited until a group of traitors led by Khrushchev managed to seize control of the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Suddenly, the attacks on communism by the capitalists were being endorsed by the leaders of the principal communist party. They portrayed Stalin, the personal symbol of the Soviet achievement, as a bloodthirsty and egomaniacal tyrant; free competition between businesses as a more effective method than collectivism and central planning; the state and the party as institutions belonging not to the proletariat but to "the entire people"; peaceful coexistence with the imperialists as a substitute for proletarian internationalism; parliamentary elections as the preferred

means of transitioning from capitalism to socialism; and so on.

Thirty years later, the group led by Gorbachev would complete this betrayal through the dissolution of the USSR and the restoration of capitalism in its territory and throughout Eastern Europe. In our country, it was the "Eurocommunist" team led by Santiago Carrillo that was responsible for liquidating the glorious Communist Party of Spain which, with only a few thousand members, had organized the heroic popular resistance against Francoism throughout forty dark years.

At the present moment, the mass housing movement represents progress compared with its predecessor, the 15-M movement. Postmodern inventions have been displaced by the red flags of communism. However, this is still a very rudimentary form of communism, far removed from the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The student youth who make up this movement have been shaped by the general anti-communist environment and, in particular, by the teachings of bourgeois academia, which has accumulated mountains of amendments to our theory, even from the most "revolutionary" and "proletarian" perspectives. Many young people are unaware that there has been, and continues to be, a whole host of intellectuals writing at the behest of imperialist institutions (from the "Western Marxism" of the Frankfurt School and the Congress for Cultural Freedom[13] to the recent summit held by Secretary of State Marco Rubio with anti-communist ideologues from 60 countries[14]).

### Down with Idealism! Long Live Materialism!

Among many supporters of communism, there is a noticeable idealist and intellectualist tendency to regard Marxist-Leninist theory as defective, as though it carried a "manufacturing defect" or an "original sin" that explained the collapse of the USSR and the retreat of the international workers' movement.

After suffering defeat, it is easy to be impressed by the wisdom displayed by hundreds of philosophers, economists, historians and others, to the point of accepting their conclusions when these contradict Bolshevik theory and tactics. There is no doubt that learning from them is useful and necessary, but this must be done both positively and negatively—that is, by employing a Marxist-Leninist critical outlook formed through the assimilation of the ideas of those communists who did the most for the cause and through the practice of the class struggle.

The best example to follow when correcting and updating a doctrine is Lenin. Far from regarding nineteenth-century Marxism as obsolete and superseded, when capitalism entered its imperialist stage, he defended and applied it as the only theory capable of understanding this new stage and leading the revolution to victory. Marxism-Leninism is by far the theory that has done the most to improve the living conditions of the oppressed and liberate them from capitalist slavery, despite the constant imperialist strangulation of socialist countries.

While continuing to investigate which mistakes may have facilitated the victory of revisionism in the USSR and many other countries, a materialist must recognize that even the most perfect theory, and its most perfect application to concrete conditions, cannot prevent a temporary defeat when the balance of forces is unfavorable. Workers remember that their strikes have often been defeated and try to draw the appropriate lessons, but this does not stop them from resorting to this proven method of struggle. A materialist militant must above all seek the causes of a defeat in objective conditions.

In the middle of the last century, the Soviet Union and the communist parties had defeated the Nazi-fascist onslaught of imperialism, but at the cost of tens of millions of the finest revolutionary lives and unprecedented concessions to their secondary enemies. Meanwhile, the United States emerged from the Second World War unscathed and enriched, having subordinated the other capitalist countries and monopolized the atomic weapon. These were the objective conditions that temporarily gave the bourgeoisie an advantage, including within the USSR.

Does this mean that we are condemned to repeat an endless cycle of victories and defeats, revolutions and counterrevolutions, like Sisyphus in the myth? Absolutely not. Consistent materialism is dialectical and understands that, on the historical scale, objective conditions develop, thereby increasing the possibilities for subjective action to succeed. Specifically, the

growing socialization of the productive forces brought about by capitalist relations of production, and in contradiction with those relations, progressively shifts the balance of forces in our favor: it weakens the capitalist class and strengthens the proletarian class. Marx expressed the dialectic between objective conditions and revolutionary action as follows: "until a situation is created that allows no turning back and the circumstances themselves cry out: Hic Rhodus, hic salta! (Here is Rhodes, jump here!—a reference to Aesop's fable about the moment when words must be demonstrated through deeds)."

We are now witnessing how international capitalism, which centralized its power in the United States in order to defeat the proletariat, failed to accomplish this mission. On the contrary, it is sinking into a profound crisis, while the peoples enslaved by it are rising to their feet with the help of China and Russia, the great powers forged by the revolutionary proletariat of the twentieth century.

Consequently, it is becoming increasingly clear that rebuilding the Communist Party requires starting from the theory and tactics of Marxism-Leninism rather than resorting to old utopias or new fashions.

## The Strategy and Tactics of the Revolutionary Proletariat

In the face of the capitulation of the largest workers' organizations to bourgeois democracy, some young people (and not-so-young people) have come up with the idea of "innovating" through the old tactical recipes of the "Leftists" whom Lenin criticized on numerous occasions: no participation in collaborationist trade unions, parliamentary elections or compromises with non-proletarian forces, and so on. Marxist-Leninist tactics have nothing to do with such childish simplifications. Rather, they are determined through a concrete analysis of the concrete situation. Thus, in the elections on November 29, we will have to make every effort to guide the working and popular masses toward acting in the way most beneficial—or, if one prefers, least harmful—to their strategic interests.

Among the regressive innovations currently in fashion, one stands out for its practical importance: the rejection of Lenin's theory of imperialism and the strategy corresponding to it. This rejection takes us back to nineteenth-century Marxism, when capitalism was not yet monopolistic, and today condemns its adherents to political sterility.

In the era of free-competition capitalism (not dominated by monopolies, although tending in that direction), the proletarian revolution could begin in one or several developed countries and rapidly spread to the rest of the capitalist countries. This was the path advocated by Marx and Engels. In this way, the possibility that the strength of the international bourgeoisie might be restored in countries where the proletarian revolution had not spread was curtailed; the risk of nationalist contamination of the proletariat was also reduced.

In the imperialist-monopoly stage of capitalism, which began around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the socialization of the productive forces acquired an international dimension, but one that was territorially uneven. The domination of monopolies in the most developed capitalist countries extended beyond national borders, so that a handful of nations oppressed and exploited the majority. The former live off the wealth generated by the world as a whole and use a small portion of it to bribe the upper stratum of the working class, which directs the organized movement of wage workers toward class conciliation, chauvinism, reformism, legalism and so on. In contrast, the latter suffer plunder that holds back the development of their economies and their own proletariats, a plunder sustained by political and military oppression (sanctions, blockades, destruction, invasions, and so on).

Consequently, from the outset, the imperialist restructuring of world capitalism strengthens the bourgeoisie, while the international proletariat is weakened by the growing differences between workers in these two types of countries. Under these conditions of increasingly unequal development, the working class can no longer triumph simultaneously in all countries. Furthermore, its victory depends on the weakening of the imperialists and their states through the democratic-bourgeois struggles of oppressed nations, which thus paradoxically become an inseparable part of the world proletarian revolution.

This is why, especially following the defeat of socialism in the USSR, contradictions between nations have manifested themselves more sharply than contradictions between social classes, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

"Previously, the analysis of the preconditions for the proletarian revolution," Stalin explains, "was usually approached from the standpoint of the economic condition of one country or another. Today, this approach to the problem is no longer sufficient. Today, we must approach it from the standpoint of the economic condition of all or most countries, from the standpoint of the condition of the world economy, because individual countries and national economies have ceased to be autonomous units and have become links in a single chain called the world economy; because the old 'civilized' capitalism has been transformed into imperialism, and imperialism is a worldwide system of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the overwhelming majority of the world's population by a handful of 'advanced' countries."[15]

If we do not understand and explain this reality of contemporary capitalism to workers, if we limit ourselves to dogmatically repeating that the proletariat stands in opposition to the bourgeoisie, socialism to capitalism, dictatorship to democracy, and so on, we will not be able to lead our social class toward the socialist revolution. We will only lead it toward opportunism and the defeat of its aspirations.

Raising the consciousness of the workers in our country, who are also exploited and increasingly impoverished, requires confronting them with international reality and combating their ignorance, the deception practiced by others, apparent comfort and fear of freedom and revolution. Revolution grows amid imperialist war, entails sacrifices and repression, and, after its victory, faces the hostile encirclement of the imperialists, with their aggression, blockades and other obstacles that will make it difficult to realize the benefits of socialism until it becomes consolidated in the majority of countries.

In addition to assimilating the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, we must apply them when seeking to understand how the principal contradiction, through which socialism will once again make its way, has been practically defined: the contradiction between the imperialist camp and the objectively anti-imperialist camp (states, peoples, classes and social strata, armed forces, parties and mass organizations, and so on).

In summary, rebuilding the Communist Party is possible only by bringing together militants who are prepared to assimilate and practice Marxist-Leninist theory and to place solidarity with all forces fighting US and EU imperialism above all else, regardless of their class character, ideology or capacity for resistance. The resulting organization's priority activity must be the agitation and dissemination of this program among the masses, above all through a regular and frequent press.

### Resolving Secondary Contradictions Within the Party

From this point onward, the communist organization will be able to fulfill its mission if it adopts an appropriate method for dealing with the other contradictions among its members, which do not necessarily have to be antagonistic.

Communists belonging to the same organization or to different organizations disagree about the relationship between the class struggle of the proletariat and other social questions: nationality, sexuality, democracy, and so on. Since contradictions can only be resolved by developing them, the first step is to express and analyze them from the standpoint of Marxism-Leninism (and its concrete formulation in the organization's political program). In this regard, we must avoid both tail-ending and sectarianism toward the spontaneous tendencies of the masses among whom we intervene.

To resolve contradictions, we must go through a process of the negation of the negation, as Engels explains.[16] If we examine the final result of such a process, we see that the thesis being criticized will have been "aufgehoben," that is, "simultaneously preserved and superseded"—superseded in terms of its form and preserved in terms of its content. The ultra-leftist proposals to abolish everything old are therefore absurd and counterproductive.

However, there can be no supersession if there is only preservation. The point is not to reconcile the

new and the old, which have entered into conflict, in an eclectic manner, as the reformists wish, but, on the contrary, to develop this conflict. We must begin by rejecting what is false and what has become obsolete with the greatest possible energy and intransigence. But we must do so in the way Engels explains: "I must not only negate, but also supersede (Aufheben) the negation in turn. I must construct the first negation in such a way that the second becomes possible, or comes into being. How? According to the specific nature of each particular case."

When addressing disagreements, therefore, each militant must make an effort to recognize the partial truths contained in the opposing opinion. After that, a certain amount of practical experimentation—through production, science and class struggle—is necessary before an important discussion can be definitively settled ("practice is the criterion of truth"). The point is that quantity must grow and accumulate so that we can achieve a new quality, and so that we can develop in connection with our surroundings until we reconstitute the Communist Party.

Certainly, an organization cannot always wait for disagreements to mature toward a resolution before taking action. When practical needs are urgent, a decision must be made by majority vote, but that decision does not have to be regarded as definitive.

This is the dialectical-materialist foundation of democratic centralism. Its opposite is bureaucratism, which first destroys democracy and ultimately destroys every possibility of centralizing and uniting the struggle of the working and popular masses into a single fist.

With the theory, tactics and organizational method of Marxism-Leninism, the coming November battle and those that follow will enable us to rebuild the Communist Party so that the proletariat can free itself from the horrors of imperialist capitalism and build socialism.

## Notes

[1] Corruption involving the PP and PSOE—All documented cases.

[2] "Speech at the Meeting of Cells of the Moscow Organization of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Russia," delivered on December 6, 1920.

[3] "The Evolution of Wages in Spain: Beyond the Averages" | National and International Economy | Cinco Días; and "Results of IBEX 35 Companies."

[4] Prioritizing the interests of capital in order to increase Gross Domestic Product is worsening workers' economic situation because it increases tourist-related real-estate speculation, the overexploitation of immigrant labor and dependence on EU subsidies: "Spain Gains Weight in Europe and Accounts for 15% of Real-Estate Investment"; and "Spain Is Growing, but Your Wallet Isn't: Why Life Doesn't Add Up Despite the Macroeconomic Figures"—El Orden Mundial (EOM).

[5] "Spain's Homeowner Population Is Shrinking: The Number of Households Owning Property Has Fallen by 22%, while Major Property Owners Have Quadrupled Their Assets"—Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and Agenda 2030.

[6] "Almost Half of Spanish Households Own Their Homes Without a Mortgage"—idealista/news.

[7] "More Than One Million Homes Belong to Large Property Owners, Half of Whom Own More Than 100 Properties Each" ("How Many Large Property Owners Are There? These Are the Cities with the Most Homes Owned by Large Property Holders").

[8] "Opportunism is the sacrifice of the vital interests of the masses in favor of the momentary interests of an insignificant minority of workers; in other words, it is the alliance of a section of the workers with the bourgeoisie against the proletarian masses." (Lenin, The Collapse of the Second International, Collected Works, Vol. 26, p. 261, Progress Publishers.)

[9] "Spain Increases Its Military Spending by 46% in 2025, Now Absorbing More Than €23 Billion in Public Funds"—Público; and "EU Surpasses €227 Billion in Aid to Ukraine to Continue the War Against Russia"—La Mañana.

[10] "Putin Warns That He Will Use His Entire Arsenal If Russia Is Attacked."

[11] Notes of a Publicist, Lenin, March–May 1910, https://www.marxists.org/espanol/lenin/obras/oc/progreso/tomo19.pdf

[12] On the Right Danger in the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the USSR, Stalin, 1928, https://www.marxists.org/espanol/stalin/obras/oe15/Stalin%20-%20Obras%2011-15.pdf

[13] "The CIA and the Anti-Communism of the Frankfurt School"—Rebelión; Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1950–1967–1979; and Cubadebate.

[14] "The Communist Enemy Returns"—lamarea.com.

[15] The Foundations of Leninism, Stalin, 1924, https://www.marxists.org/espanol/stalin/1920s/fundam/fundam3.htm

[16] Anti-Dühring, Engels: https://www.marxists.org/espanol/m-e/1870s/anti-duhring/ad-seccion1.htm#xiii

# To Help the Popular Movement Win the Standoff: Political Clarity and a Sense of Responsibility

Georges Gastaud | Pole of Communist Revival in France (PRCF)

France is undergoing a socio-political crisis of exceptional severity. The popular uprising against the high cost of living, the destruction of National Education, and the Macron-Lecornu war government is colliding head-on with the pre-fascist hardening of a temporarily distraught capitalist oligarchy. However, this uprising, still deprived of a Leninist vanguard widely recognized by the working class, runs a grave risk of being disoriented, isolated, and subsequently harshly repressed by the ultra-reaction in the process of coagulating—unless the world of labor rapidly asserts itself, through a renewable mass strike, as the leading force of the movement.

### France: The Structural Weak Link of a Warlike and Austerity-Driven Europe

A "classic land of class struggles fought to the end" (Marx), our country is, as the author of these lines has pointed out for a long time, the weak link of a warlike and Atlantist Europe. Strangled by the grueling Maastrichtian (the single Maastrichtian bloc) constraints, methodically de-industrialized at the instigation of Movement of the Enterprises of France (MEDEF), drained of its peasantry by trans-atlantic treaties, denatured by a fierce campaign to Americanize its language and culture, struck by the euro-destruction of solidarity-based pensions, Social Security, and public services, and pauperized by euro-austerity and the skyrocketing prices resulting from wars fomented by the Euro-Atlantist Axis (the relentless NATO attempt to encircle Russia, repeated Israeli-American aggression against the peoples of the Middle East, the Trumpist attempt to liquidate socialist Cuba with the aim of annexing the Antilles and the American continent, the naval blockade of the Asia-Pacific, preparations for a new Korean War—all forming one and the same global hegemonist chain...), an over-indebted France is commanded by Trump and/or Brussels to fund the war in Ukraine and European over-armament ever more, at the very moment when the 2026 draft finance bill allocates an additional €6.7 billion to Defense, adding to the exorbitant sums already earmarked for the Military Programming Law.

This governmental direction has nothing "defensive" about it: it is the budgetary translation of an imperialist strategy that sacrifices civil servants' wages, hospitals, schools, housing, and industry to maintain Western global hegemony. Regarding the Western European pole of the Atlantic Axis, we see Merz, Macron, and U. von der Leyen precipitating the construction of a grossly expansionist "European Federal State," ideologically caulked by means of a possibly exterminatory military confrontation with the Russian "devil." Built upon the logic of the National Council of the Resistance (CNR)—in accordance with which de Gaulle and the communist ministers of 1945 rebuilt our country (nationalizations, employment statutes, collective bargaining agreements, social security, pay-as-you-go pensions, a protective labor code...)—France is thus becoming the point of rupture in the Euro-American hegemonist chain. Indeed, its people balk at paying for war and accepting eternal austerity for some alongside the insolent enrichment of a few others, while its haute bourgeoisie can no longer govern normally: this is why a large portion of the political establishment is now burning to implement a fascist "solution" based on banning strikes and France Unbowed (LFI), institutional racism, and a march toward war against a backdrop of heightened submission to Brussels, Berlin, and/or Washington.

The result is an increasingly incandescent class confrontation between an immense but insufficiently class-conscious popular movement and an oligarchic power that, unable to solve the crisis on

socio-political grounds, attempts to bypass it through the stigmatization and criminalization of left-wing insubordination—a sign that the pseudo-republican bourgeois cultural hegemony is cracked, if not fractured. In the wake of the French popular uprising ("facciamo come in Francia!"), a whole series of frontal struggles, often foreshadowed by striking worker walkouts (Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain, Germany, even Türkiye...), are erupting across Europe, sketching, if not heraldic of, a possible Red October of the peoples. Held less tightly in check than the wage-earners are by the euro-reformist apparatuses of France and elsewhere, the youth has advanced to the forefront of the revolt; it pays a heavy toll to repression in the face of this reactionary Holy Alliance of EU-NATO—this new prison of peoples—secretes more each day under the iron heel of an offshore German imperialism undergoing massive rearmament.

### The Underlying Causes of an Explosive Crisis

"Marianne" no longer consents to being strangled by the Single Maastrichtian Party in power under various masks since the Mitterrand years. Behind the shuffling of labels, one and the same policy has been imposed for decades: free movement of capital, generalized competition, austerity, Atlantist alignment, a war economy, and cultural colonization by the Anglo-Saxon world. This policy has almost mechanically generated the current anger, if not its precise forms. Consequently, we will neither be able to exit from the top of this swaying between fascist and pre-revolutionary outcomes, nor save the dying nation, without breaking simultaneously with two complementary dangers, which are:

- The fascistization of the State and political life, which aims to shatter democratic freedoms, divide workers, and prepare society, particularly the younger generation, for continental war;
- The Maastrichtian vise and the war economy, which confiscate popular sovereignty for the benefit of the markets, the European Commission, and NATO, while threatening world peace: the current total global discredit of the warmonger Macron is not bad news for the friends of peace.

These two struggles are inseparable. To fight fascism without attacking the Europeist order that engenders it is to combat the symptoms while leaving the disease intact. To denounce austerity without identifying NATO, the EU, and big capital as the principal enemies of peace is to yield the field to the far right. It is this confluence of the two resistances that the Pole of Communist Revival in France (PRCF) has long summarized under the designation of the Antifascist, Pacifist, Patriotic, Popular, and Environmental Front: the "FR.A.P.P.P.E."...

### The Polarization of France Is Our Raw Material

The current polarization is our raw material. The people are mobilizing, high school students are taking to the streets, and workers are demanding wages, employment, industry, and rebuilt public services. The trade unions, after being received at Matignon without obtaining "any measures," are calling for a massive mobilization on November 5; the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) has launched a call for a general strike through the voice of Sophie Binet.

However, this polarization is distorted by the biased themes of the established left. LFI can in no way replace a genuine communist vanguard: while valiantly assuming its "osmosis" with the popular movement, LFI oscillates between verbal radicalism and complacency toward the EU. In particular, LFI does not propose a program of rupture with capital, the euro, and NATO—which would entail, notably, the outright nationalization of strategic economic sectors and the total denunciation of the sacred union aimed at supporting the pro-nazi regime of Zelensky; it proposes primarily a governing alternative within the existing framework, promising merely to "disobey" the EU on a case-by-case basis.

Two errors must nevertheless be avoided.

The first would consist in blindly following LFI, appearing officially within its setups, and confusing the righteous anger of the masses with the political line of an apparatus that—torn as it is between the initial Jacobin DNA of the Left Party (PG) and the European anchoring of LFI MEPs—refuses to break clearly with European structures of domination, as the French Communist Party (PCF) of Duclos, or even Marchais, and the CGT of Frachon and Kra-

sucki would have done.

The second deviance, graver still, would consist in failing in the duty of antifascist solidarity toward LFI. For LFI is today treated as the principal enemy by the ultra-reaction, which relentlessly targets its deputies (S. Delogu, Rima Hassan...). When the President of the Senate, Gérard Larcher, estimates—upon a proposal from the neo-Versaillais Retailleau—that the question of banning LFI "can be raised," it is not merely this formation that is targeted: it is the right of workers and the people to political opposition, to the right to demonstrate, and to strike!

We must therefore state clearly: Total antifascist solidarity of genuinely communist militants with the comrades of LFI in the face of the ongoing McCarthyite repression! Fraternal criticism of the political limitations inherent to this movement will never justify aligning with the reactionary campaign that seeks to silence it, thereby gagging the popular camp as a whole.

### The Irreplaceable Role of the PRCF

Founded by PCF militants who rejected its social-democratic drift and wished to keep Marxism-Leninism alive in today's forms, the PRCF is doing everything possible to reframe the current class confrontation ideologically.

We must thus fraternally criticize the petty-bourgeois biases of LFI: its refusal to pose the question of the euro, its inability to designate the EU-NATO as the principal enemy of peace, and its insistence—as a movement foreign to historical communism—on referring to a "people" with no defined class content by sacralizing juvenile "insubordination" of any kind. The risk then is shifting toward a politico-cultural leftism what, in accordance with the wish of the CNR ("putting the world of labor at the center of national life"), should once again become the axis of the popular rally: the primacy of the workers' movement to transform society.

We must also put the antifascist front back into perspective: a front that is not limited to defending formal liberties, necessary though that is, but which connects the fight against fascists to the fight against MEDEF, against austerity, and against the EU-NATO—systematically associating this combat (which pseudo-"antifas" and other anarchists fail to do) with the defense of social demands, world peace, and the sovereignty of all peoples, including our own. A people whose history, reflected not without contradictions by La Marseillaise and the tricolor flag, is by no means reduced to the horrors of colonialism, but still evokes, among a thousand others, the glorious names of Descartes and Diderot, Robespierre and Saint-Just, Louise Michel and Varlin, Jaurès, Marcel Paul and Ambroise Croizat, Jean Moulin, Missak Manouchian, and Léon Landini...

We must assert no less strongly the patriotic front: not the unbridled xenophobia of the unleashed neo-Versaillais right, but a popular patriotism that refuses to let France be a colony of finance, an advanced outpost of alienating all-Globish, and a stronghold for the recolonization of Africa. This presupposes a progressive, anti-imperialist, and social Frexit.

# General Secretary and President To Lam and Vietnam's Ambition to Enter a New Era of Development

Jozef Bossuyt | Communist Party of Belgium

Four decades after the launch of Doi Moi (Renovation) in 1986, Vietnam has moved beyond its image as a poor, underdeveloped country and is pursuing an ambitious goal: to become a developed nation with greater technological capabilities, economic strength and influence in international affairs.

At the center of this transition is General Secretary and President To Lam. He has described the road ahead as a "new era of development—an era of the Vietnamese nation's rise." Behind this symbolic phrase is an ambitious agenda: accelerating economic growth, reforming the state apparatus, removing institutional bottlenecks, placing science, technology and innovation at the heart of the development model, and expanding Vietnam's scope for international engagement.

## Putting Results at the Centre

To outside observers, one of the most distinctive features of To Lam's leadership style is his emphasis on action and results. His speeches frequently invoke implementation, removing obstacles, innovation and accountability. His call to "say it and do it, act immediately, act correctly, act decisively, see it through and deliver results" encapsulates this approach to governance.

Behind that message is a challenge that extends well beyond Vietnam: how to close the gap between ambitious strategies drawn up at the central level and tangible improvements in the economy, public administration and people's daily lives. For To Lam, the answer lies in the capacity to implement policy: a policy has real value only when it produces visible, measurable results.

This approach also helps to explain the resolve behind Vietnam's development agenda. Hanoi is seeking not only faster growth but also new drivers of growth. Science and technology, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, innovation and a highly skilled workforce are central to the country's development strategy.

It also offers a glimpse of the model of a 21st-century communist leader that To Lam may be seeking to embody: steadfast in his objectives yet pragmatic in his actions; committed to the core values of independence, development and social progress while adapting proactively to the technological, economic and geopolitical changes reshaping the world. From this perspective, innovation does not mean abandoning established principles. It means finding new ways to keep them relevant and vital in a changing era.

## The Figures—and the Questions Behind Growth

Vietnam's economy grew by 8.02% in 2025, with GDP per capita reaching US$5,026. Growth remained strong at 9.01% in the first nine months of 2026, while international trade continued to expand and foreign investment remained an important contributor.

These figures help explain some of the growing confidence evident in Hanoi's political discourse. Yet To Lam's vision extends beyond the sheer size of the economy. As he has repeatedly argued, a larger economy must ultimately mean better lives for people, through employment, education, healthcare, social protection and wider opportunities.

Here, Vietnam's growth story intersects with a familiar principle of the communist movement: economic development is not an end in itself. Its ultimate value lies in what it delivers for people. The "era of the Vietnamese nation's rise" envisaged by Hanoi will therefore not be judged by rising GDP figures alone. The harder test will be whether rapid growth can improve living standards, narrow development gaps and ensure that the benefits of modernization are widely shared.

## A More Confident Vietnam on the World Stage

This shift is also evident in how Vietnam engages with the world. Under To Lam's leadership, foreign policy is increasingly tied directly to national development. International relations are expected not only to preserve a peaceful environment but also to open up access to technology, investment, knowledge, markets and new resources. At the same time, in an increasingly polarized world, Hanoi continues to uphold principles long associated with Vietnamese diplomacy: independence, autonomy, and the multilateral diversification of external relations.

Striking this balance is far from simple. Vietnam wants to deepen ties with major powers without being drawn into choosing sides. It seeks closer integration into the global economy while retaining the ability to make its own strategic decisions. In other words, Vietnam wants to open its door wider to the world while keeping its own hand on the handle. This balancing act is helping Hanoi establish a more prominent position as the international balance of power shifts.

## The Answer Is Still Being Written

The road ahead for To Lam will not be smooth. Vietnam continues to face challenges in productivity, the quality of growth, institutional reform, human resources and competitiveness in a world of unprecedented technological change. A country determined to move faster must also confront the question of how to ensure that no one is left behind.

Perhaps the most striking feature of To Lam's message, then, is not a promise of an easy future but a sense of urgency: Vietnam has a historic opportunity and does not want to let it pass.

Over nearly a century, successive generations of Vietnamese leaders have faced different questions posed by history. Ho Chi Minh's generation, associated with the founding of the modern Vietnamese state, confronted the struggle for independence. The Doi Moi generation sought a way out of poverty and stagnation and towards greater openness to the world. The question facing To Lam and today's leadership is different: how can a Vietnam that has secured independence and reunification and achieved the successes of Doi Moi become a developed, prosperous country with greater influence in the world?

The answer is still being written.

Yet from new roads and factories to emerging technology hubs and Vietnam's increasingly confident presence at international forums, there is a palpable sense of a country in motion. At the center of that movement is To Lam, a leader seeking to turn aspiration into action and decades of accumulated achievements into a springboard for a new chapter in Vietnam's development.

# The Anti-People Government Replaced by an Anti-People Opposition

New Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Serbia)

The New Communist Party of Yugoslavia (NKPJ) states that the change of government following the parliamentary elections held on October 25 will not improve, even in the slightest, the very poor position of Serbia's working people.

The reason is simple. The bourgeois, pro-imperialist government of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and its coalition partners has been replaced by the bourgeois, pro-imperialist opposition "Student List." This reactionary formation is the successor to the anti-people policies of the notorious Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), which Western imperialism installed in power in Serbia following the counterrevolutionary coup of October 5, 2000, through which the remaining achievements of our country's socialist construction were dismantled.

Accordingly, the working people of Serbia have nothing to celebrate, as an anti-people government is being replaced by an anti-people opposition.

The SNS governed for 14 years, diligently continuing the reactionary process of privatization initiated by DOS in 2001, distributing subsidies to foreign companies so that they could generate ever-greater superprofits, and ensuring that corporate profit tax remained the lowest in our region. The SNS relieved private employers of a range of parafiscal obligations, thereby reducing the flow of funds into the state budget intended for healthcare and education. It tightened the conditions for granting sick leave and, until its very last day in power, stubbornly refused to declare Sunday a non-working day for employees in the retail sector. Serbia is, in fact, the only country in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) where retail workers are required to work on Sundays in order to generate profits for their capitalist bosses. During the SNS government, amendments to the Labour Law were adopted that were entirely anti-worker, continuing the transformation of labour legislation in favour of exploitative big capital that had begun under DOS.

In practice, the SNS government ignored the occupation of Kosovo and Metohija, Serbia's southern province, and the terror inflicted upon the Serbian people in that territory by the Albanian separatist puppet regime serving pro-imperialist interests. The SNS continued the reactionary process of bringing Serbia into the European Union, a prison of nations whose objective is to make the rich even richer and the poor even poorer. Furthermore, the Serbian Armed Forces continue their cooperation with NATO under the "Partnership for Peace" programme, despite the fact that NATO is the principal military instrument of Western imperialism. NATO dismantled the SFRY and provoked a bloody fratricidal war across its territory, carried out aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999, occupied Kosovo and Metohija, and subsequently dismantled the common state of Serbia and Montenegro. Everything DOS did during its ten years of reactionary rule, the SNS continued from 2012 to the present day.

At the same time, through its propaganda machinery, the government irritated the public with fairy tales about a high standard of living and average salaries of approximately €1,000, even though, in reality, such earnings remain among the lowest in Europe. It must also be noted that half of the country's employees can only dream of receiving that salary, as they earn less than €794 per month, the median wage. From January, the minimum wage will be €600. Just how inadequate these amounts are is demonstrated by the fact that the average consumer basket costs €943, while the minimum consumer basket costs €485, a figure that will increase by January. The government led by Aleksandar Vučić also boasted of record-high pensions, yet from January next year the

average pension will amount to only approximately €520. These are all reasons why the Serbian Progressive Party lost power and why its most important coalition partner, the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), failed to cross the electoral threshold in the elections that have just concluded.

The period ahead, during which power will be held by the ideological successor to the Democratic Opposition of Serbia—the anti-people "Student List," led by former Democratic Party officials and supported by all the bourgeois, pro-imperialist parties previously represented in parliament—may prove even worse for the interests of Serbia's citizens than the SNS government.

The policy of accession to the EU will continue, as will military cooperation with NATO. The occupation of Kosovo and Metohija by Western imperialism will continue to be ignored, while cooperation with friendly China will also be severed under pressure from Brussels. Furthermore, although some leaders of the "Student List" claim that sanctions against Russia will not be imposed, it remains highly questionable whether a consensus on this issue can be reached among the leaders of this reactionary formation.

The NKPJ and its youth organisation, the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia (SKOJ), contested the elections to the National Assembly of Serbia on the Russian Party list. They share common positions with this party on the EU, NATO, cooperation with fraternal Russia and BRICS, and the anti-fascist struggle. The list won 0.2 per cent of the vote, an excellent electoral result considering that it received unequal treatment in the media and had significantly fewer financial resources for its campaign than Serbia's largest bourgeois, pro-imperialist parties. The votes of communists who supported the list at the call of the NKPJ and SKOJ also contributed to this strong result.

The NKPJ assesses that the election campaign was used to the fullest extent possible to promote the struggle of working people against exploitation and Western imperialism.

The NKPJ takes this opportunity to condemn in the strongest possible terms the so-called "citizens' assemblies" supporting the "Student List" for their shameless and brutal attack on Informer television, which took place the day after the elections. Although a member of the leadership of our youth and student organisation had previously been subjected to vicious targeting by this television station, which completely ignores the activities of the NKPJ and SKOJ, and whose editorial policy we seriously object to and consider harmful, we will always condemn attacks on people who are at their workplace carrying out their duties. We therefore condemn this attack as well.

Finally, the NKPJ calls upon the working class, the rural proletariat, students, pensioners, young people, the unemployed, Yugoslavs, and the honest intelligentsia to form an electoral front bringing together all progressive, anti-fascist, and left-wing forces in the struggle against the exploitation of other people's labour and Western imperialism.

Secretariat of the NKPJ
Belgrade,
October 27, 2026.

# Social Chauvinism, the Western 'Left' and the Antiwar Movement

Harpreet Pannu | Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

On 20 August, the Guardian published a so-called 'open letter' entitled: 'To Iran's political prisoners: trapped between two blades of a scissors'. Although supposedly addressing Iranian political prisoners, the letter was written in English and first published in a British newspaper.

Appended by around two dozen signatures, mostly from American university professors, the message of the 'open letter' was that in the midst of the brutal US/Israeli attack on the Iranian people and their government, progressive humanity should beware of siding with Iran and should instead continue to support regime-change activists.

The Iranian people, according to the authors, are caught between "two blades of a scissors"—ie, between the brutality of US imperialism and the equal brutality of their own government.

It is not the intention of this article to analyse the contents of the 'letter' in detail, for the simple reason that it is just a rehash of the same dull nonsense we have heard a thousand times before. With the possible exception of the prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal, there is no signatory worth mentioning by name—and serious doubts have been raised as to whether he did, in fact, put his name to the document.

Be that as it may, the argument it outlines is a commonly expressed one amongst left social democrats in the imperialist countries—even amongst those who identify their essentially pro-imperialist politics as 'socialist', 'Leninist', 'Bolshevik' and so on. Indeed, this false argument and the failure to combat it has fatally hamstrung virtually all attempts at building solidarity campaigns to defend not only Iran but also Syria, Libya, the Donbass, socialist Korea and countless other nations facing military and economic attack by imperialism.

A genuine anti-imperialist must be able to tell the truth about these countries, explain the real reasons they are being attacked and express full support for their resistance to imperialist aggression without worrying about the various reactionary slurs ('tankie', 'Stalinist', 'islamo-left', etc) that will be thrown their way.

## A plague on both your houses?

At first glance, it seems incredible that anyone should still have the nerve to promote the notion that 'America and Iran are two equal evils'. This is the same US imperialism which, on the very first day of its savage bombing campaign, deliberately targeted a school and massacred over 160 schoolgirls. And which went on to attack several other schools and sports clubs, killing many more children.

This is the same imperialist/zionist camp that intentionally obliterated the crowded al-Ahli Arab hospital in Gaza in October 2023, murdering over 500 civilians—an atrocity that served as the opening act for two years of genocidal slaughter of hundreds of thousands of people, mostly women and children.

It is the same imperialist/zionist camp whose storm troopers were widely reported by doctors on the ground in Gaza to be raiding hospitals and deliberately smashing the equipment to maximise civilian suffering and death.

It is the same imperialist/zionist camp that has carpet bombed southern Lebanon and wiped dozens of towns and villages completely off the map. Locals are still forbidden to return to their lands or the ruins of their homes—those who try are routinely shot at or targeted with drones.

It is the same Anglo-American imperialism whose ghastly crimes in Libya, Syria, Yemen and throughout the region—not to speak of their crimes elsewhere—will blacken the pages of history for generations to come.

What exactly has the Iranian government done to

justify being equated with such vicious war criminals? Enforce a public dress code that disproportionately affected women? Repress violent Kurdish separatist forces? Imprisoned those it caught spying or, in the worst case, applied the death penalty to those convicted of treason? Are any of these remotely comparable to the terrible crimes of Anglo-American imperialism/zionism in the region, to any reasonable observer?

We can be certain that even the Russians cannot be accused of anything close to such brutality during four and a half years of military operations in Ukraine. For if the Russian army had bombed and destroyed a hospital with 500 people inside, or flattened a school filled with schoolgirls, or committed any crime even close to this level, the US and EU imperialist media would be screaming it from the rooftops.

The worst 'Russian war crimes' alleged to have been committed were the executions of a handful of adult male prisoners in the town of Bucha (most likely a Ukrainian false flag to justify prolonging the war), and the supposed 'abduction' of children living in an active war zone (otherwise known as evacuation/rescue of civilians). Clearly the dreaded 'Russian imperialism'—putting aside the inconvenient fact that Russia fulfils none of the economic criteria to be described as such—is obviously nowhere near as murderous as the real imperialist powers, in particular Britain, France, Germany and the United States of America.

As obvious as these day-and-night differences may seem to reasonable people, there remains a bizarre tendency amongst the self-identifying 'western left' to dismiss any consideration of scale or context and to insist abstractly that "both sides are bad", "we must oppose all oppressors on principle" and similar grandstanding claptrap.

But it's like claiming that a violent rapist and his victim are "both bad" because "she is a cow" and "I don't like her on principle". Would you respect the 'principled stance' of someone expressing such a view? Obviously not—you would revile them as a rape apologist.

So what should we think of someone who makes the same vile false equivalency not just about individuals but about entire nations?

Clearly, there can be no parallel drawn between the aggressive violence of an imperialist alliance and the defensive violence of the country resisting that aggression. That should be obvious to any rational observer. The real question is not whether the western left's position is correct, but how such a patently ridiculous position gained so much traction in the first place?

### The chauvinism of the western populations

The answer is chauvinism: the implicit belief that most westerners have been imbued with since childhood that on some level we are just inherently superior to the hyperexploited masses of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Typically, this belief is held subconsciously, without our being fully aware of it, and is accompanied by a subconscious racism—the association of white skin with 'advanced civilisation' and of darker skin with 'backward', 'barbarian' or 'childlike' peoples.

Workers living in the imperialist countries have invariably been saturated in racist and chauvinist propaganda since birth, administered via the mass media, the education system, books, films, computer games etc. It is one of the ruling bourgeoisie's most powerful tools in trying to ensure that no class solidarity ever develops between workers in the west and those in the oppressed, neocolonial world.

The higher standard of living enjoyed by the workers in the imperial core—a bribe paid for from the massive superprofits that the imperialists rake in from their superexploitation abroad—is held up as proof of European people's supposedly higher degree of civilisation and humanity.

Our trade union and working-class movement leaders are bribed from these same superprofits but even more generously—to ensure their loyal cooperation in maintaining social peace and in helping to perpetuate such racist and chauvinist thinking amongst the working class.

Some may question how this is possible, given that the left is apparently so vocal and active in a myriad supposedly 'antiracist' and 'antifascist' campaigns. The answer is that the chauvinism of the left—known as social chauvinism—usually does not present itself

so blatantly as the crude "P*kis out" supremacism of the right.

Rather, social chauvinism is primarily distinguished by a practical refusal to recognise that the struggle of the masses of oppressed peoples throughout Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania to free themselves from imperialist domination is equally important as the struggle for workers' rights in the imperialist heartlands.

Social chauvinists enthusiastically participate in antiracist campaigns that are focused specifically on the relatively privileged black and brown-skinned people living at home—as well as in campaigns against sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc—but show little to no meaningful interest in anything outside of the bubble of the imperialist countries.

The oppression and exploitation suffered by the peoples of Congo, Sudan or Haiti, for example, is many orders of magnitude more severe than the condition of even the very poorest workers in Britain, but we are encouraged to view it as something irremediable, based in a natural poverty and somehow connected with the inherent backwardness and inevitable corruption of the 'third-world' nations.

Such 'socialists' are only interested in discussing the activities of imperialism in the neocolonies when it becomes impossible to ignore—for example when refugees come to our shores seeking some respite from the immiseration and/or physical destruction of their homelands, or when Britain is on the verge of openly initiating an aggressive war. Even in these cases, the response of the social chauvinists is condescending and superficial.

Refugees, for example, are portrayed solely as poor defenceless people whom we need to look after and protect from the nasty fascists—an act of bounty carried out in much the same spirit as one might volunteer their time for the protection of abused dogs and cats at the local animal shelter.

The question of why the refugees are fleeing their homeland in the first place, or how the British imperialist regime is involved in creating the situation that makes those countries unliveable, is rarely considered—never mind the question of how we might mobilise the working class to force the imperialists to stop their destructive activities so that the refugees might actually be able to safely return home.

According to this mindset, refugees and migrant workers are not seen as crucial allies in the global struggle against imperialism, but as poor victims to be patronised and protected.

In the case of imperialist military aggression, the social chauvinist left can vary in its tactics. Some will stridently support the aggression "to save the children from [Insert Tyrant Here]" (by bombing them!), performing verbal and mental backflips that Josef Goebbels would have been proud of in order to present such a position as somehow consistent with 'socialism'.

Most social chauvinists will nominally oppose the war, but on a purely petty-bourgeois pacifist basis—think platitudes about how "war is bad", "war solves nothing" etc—the arguments of a Lennon rather than a Lenin. Crucially, they will also fully endorse and repeat all the imperialist media's hysterical demonising and dehumanising propaganda tropes against the targeted country, rushing to condemn anyone who expresses scepticism towards official narratives about "Gaddafi's Viagra soldiers", "Assad's sarin gas", "Putin's assassins" etc.

The result is a very weak but apparently 'principled' and nominally 'left-wing' politics of "Yes, we agree that so-and-so dictatorship is very, very bad and evil, and they are massacring kids like you say, and we hate them as much as you do, but war is bad and imperialism something something (look we are Marxists because we mentioned the word imperialism!) ... so we can't ever support any military action no matter how many kids that evil dictator is killing."

Needless to say, this creates an 'antiwar movement' that is saturated with imperialist prejudice and incapable of making an objective analysis. Its members, imbued with a sense of smug superiority, are encouraged to sit in (uninformed) judgement over others rather than to understand the economic roots of the war and to recognise in the attacked people a group of fellow workers with whom they should be building solidarity and a common struggle against a shared class enemy.

Rather than learning from the revolutionary struggles of others, they join in with the dehumanisation of the patriotic masses of Libya, Syria, Iran, Russia,

Venezuela, Cuba, DPR Korea etc.

In order to soothe their own cognitive dissonance, they will dig up any ancient case of an allegedly repressive act against workers in the targeted country, often fictitious and always shorn of context, and cry that "true socialists cannot support such a regime on principle".

It is then very easy for the imperialists to encourage workers to make the last, relatively small jump in abandoning the last thin pretence of 'principled opposition to war'—an 'opposition' no longer based on anything other than abstract dogma—and becoming open supporters of imperialist wars in the name of 'fighting authoritarianism', 'protecting democracy', and so on.

This explains why so many of imperialism's most shamelessly militaristic ideologues today are former Trotskyites who came out of the supposedly 'antiwar left'. Of course, those still in the 'antiwar left' will loudly denounce these figures for their open warmongering and emphasise the supposed contrast with their own 'antiwar' politics.

But when we actually speak to such people, we find that there is scarcely anything dividing the self-identifying 'antiwar left' from the unashamed warmongers. They express the same dehumanised, infantilised view of the world outside of Europe, the same utter ignorance, contempt and derision towards the peoples of west Asia, Africa, the Indian subcontinent and east Asia. And they show the same tendency to invent an idealised 'Syrian people' or 'Iranian workers' on whose behalf they 'advocate' while disregarding entirely the real views of the real people living in the country concerned.

### Dehumanising Iran means failing to build our own liberation movement

Returning to Iran, the vast majority of those on the social-chauvinist western left know nothing of that country or its people beyond what they have heard from self-exiled fanatics in the Iranian diaspora.

They accept imperialist propaganda at face value and remain entirely ignorant about the heroic sacrifices made by the Iranian people in defence of their revolution in the 1980s when under attack from imperialist-backed Iraq.

They shamelessly denounced the patriotic masses who demonstrated in 2009 in support of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the face of the west-backed 'green movement' for regime change that was trying to bring down the revolutionary government under cover of the same kind of flowery rhetoric that was deployed by Mikhail Gorbachev and his revisionist gang as they were destroying the USSR.

They ignored the hundreds of thousands of Iranians who poured onto the streets across Iran in January 2026 to face down the CIA/Mossad-trained fascist death squads that were unleashing destruction and chaos. Rather, they repeated the imperialist propaganda line that these were "peaceful protesters being ruthlessly gunned down by the regime", despite this false narrative being contradicted by virtually anyone on the ground.

(In a useful lesson about how the imperialist psyops machine works, the originator of this 'eye-witness report' turned out to be an Indian 'fashion blogger'-turned-'activist' with no apparent link to or source within Iran).

And they ignored the tens of millions of people who flooded the streets of every village, town and city to pay their last respects to their slain revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, following his foul murder by the imperialists.

Likewise, they show no interest in the titanic struggle waged by the heroic Yemenis against imperialism. They show little interest in Lebanon, and when they do, they dismiss the Hezbollah-led resistance and instead celebrate various irrelevant pro-western and US-backed figures whom they insist are 'real revolutionaries'.

They cheer Palestine because they have to in order to maintain any relevance in today's environment, but wherever they can they rush to condemn Hamas, the PFLP and any other organisation with organic support amongst the masses, instead urging everyone to support an imaginary, ideologically pure but completely fictional Palestinian Bolshevik party.

### When is a principle not a principle?

Ironically, it cannot even truly be said that the chauvinist left does oppose all tyranny equally on

principle, regardless of context or scale. This can clearly be seen from browsing any website associated with Trotskyites, revisionists or the wider liberal left.

We find there an endless series of articles attacking targeted countries like Iran, Russia, China or Belarus from a supposedly 'working-class' perspective, but we are hard-pressed to find even a single article about workers' rights in, say, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf sheikdoms—all of which are notorious for their horrific treatment of migrant labour.

Why the lack of interest in the crimes of those governments? Could it be that since they are all aligned with imperialism, there will be no reward for targeting their activities?

Finally, the supposedly 'principled stance' of the social chauvinists is very easy to maintain regarding conflicts on the other side of the world, whose consequences can be presented as remote from the everyday concerns of the British working class. But when it comes to dealing with matters on the home front, the same people are quick to discard all such sacred 'principles' and endorse the most vicious devils and war criminals in the name of choosing 'the lesser evil'.

One has only to see their hysterical reaction to the rise of right-wing anti-immigration political parties and candidates. "If you don't vote Democrat/Labour/SPD/etc, you're basically helping Hitler to power!" they scream, playing nicely into the culture wars framing of this issue and smoothly glossing over the very real crimes of the parties they are asking us to support as the 'progressive' choice.

The takfiri gangs who laid waste to Syria over the 13 years of that country's brave struggle against imperialist mercenary invasion were far more violent and destructive than any Maga, Restore or AfD. The vile, murderous war criminals of the Democratic and Labour parties have far more blood on their hands from their endless orgy of globalised looting than former Syrian president Bashar al-Assad—even if we accepted the wildest estimates of the latter's supposed atrocities.

Yet the chauvinists endorsed the west's hired killers in the name of 'principle' and lashed out against any suggestion that President Assad's government might at the very least be preferable to Isis/al-Qaeda rule.

In the same manner today, 'on principle' the chauvinists attack any suggestion that the Islamic Republic's social and political system might be preferable to the CIA/Mossad-trained monarcho-fascist gangs that are seeking to replace it. Yet they are happy to endorse Democrat/Labour war criminals who oversaw the murder of more young women in Gaza in 45 days than the Islamic Republic by the wildest estimates might have executed in 45 years.

This is the essence of social chauvinism: it is socialism in words, but chauvinism in deeds. It rests in the implicit belief that 'our' imperialists, no matter how huge their crimes, are somehow more redeemable than the 'dictators', 'autocrats' and 'despots' of the third world—because westerners are inherently superior people.

Make no mistake, this rancid racism is at the heart of the apparently 'socialist' opposition to the building of a mass movement of solidarity with and unconditional support for the Islamic Republic in its titanic struggle against imperialism.

If they are ever to break the chains of their own exploitation by the capitalist-imperialist oligarchs at home, the masses in the west must break free from this chauvinist thinking—no matter how 'Marxist' or 'left-wing' its presentation appears to be.

We must build a real antiwar movement worthy of the name. One that enables the British working class to stand in unconditional solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran, with Ansar Allah-led Yemen, and with the real, fighting resistance forces in Palestine and Lebanon.

# Fight the Dismemberment of Sudan

Ella Rule | Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist–Leninist)

*The following is an article based on a presentation made by Ella Rule in London on 3 April 2026 as part of our series of Southall seminars.*
*In her introduction, Comrade Ella expressed reliance on two principal and invaluable sources of information: Harry Cross's book Undoing a Revolution—Sudan and the Politics of Debt and the Cardiff PhD thesis of Abdelwahab Himmat entitled The History of the Sudanese Communist Party.*
*The text from time to time quotes verbatim from these texts, but the views expressed in this presentation should not be attributed to either author without verification.*

The situation in Sudan is complex, making it difficult to distinguish between right and wrong in a civil war that has cost thousands of lives and displaced millions from their homes. In the early days of this war, it was all too easy to conclude that it was a war between an evil military regime on the one hand, and those who opposed it on the other.

Such a conclusion, however, would have been disingenuous in the extreme, and this presentation aims to explain why that should be.

## The economics

To seek the truth in this matter requires understanding of Sudan's economic and political history. Sudan's financial situation lies at the heart of all its woes, so we will start by looking at that.

In economic terms, Sudan is a failed state. And it is a failed state despite desperate efforts that have been made ever since independence in 1956 to bring its debt under control. The imperialist stranglehold over its economy, however, has meant that every attempt to break free has instead tightened the imperialist grip and worsened the financial situation.

When Sudan first fell under British control in 1898, the British, the better to exploit Sudan's considerable resources, built railways.

When the British left as a result of the grant to Sudan of its independence in 1956, it also left Sudan with the outstanding bill for the cost of building and maintaining the railways and other infrastructure projects up to the date of independence. Nevertheless, at the time the debts were manageable, even if imposed by an occupying power.

It had also replaced much of Sudan's largely self-sustaining agriculture with cotton plantations. By the time the British left, the world price of cotton had fallen considerably. In other words, Sudan started life with a huge interest-bearing debt and with reduced means of paying it off.

The strategy of every government since 1956 has been to find the means of reducing the debt, not refusing to pay it. This could only be by either increasing exports and/or by raising money from the population—eg, by raising taxes and/or reducing government spending.

Any hope of increasing exports was always dependent on heavy expenditure on modernisation of production techniques, entailing further borrowing on imperialist terms, while raising taxes or reducing government spending impacted the already-low living standards of the masses, leading sooner or later to mass protests and revolt.

When oil was discovered in commercial quantities on Sudanese territory in 1979, this caused great excitement. People imagined that Sudan's problems were all now going to be solved with the money that would be made from selling oil.

But what happened? The oil was largely to be found in areas inhabited by non-Arab people, especially the south of Sudan, and, since the south Sudanese had long been discriminated against by an Arab-chauvinist north, it was not difficult for imperialism to encourage the reigniting of the civil war waged by separatist movements in the south of the country (which had ended in 1972), and to arm it for a new war that lasted from 1983 until 2005.

These wars were waged at massive cost to the Sudanese government, again requiring more borrowing from imperialist concerns on their terms. Not only did the war drain the national budget, but obtaining any income from oil production was seriously delayed. Large-scale commercial production only started in 1999.

As a result, Sudan defaulted on its external debt in 1984, after which interest on arrears started to accumulate at 10 percent or more every year. By 2021, Sudan's debt had ballooned to some $60bn, most of

which was made up of arrears and unpaid interest accumulated from the 1980s. This left Sudan totally at the mercy of the imperialist moneylenders, as it constantly needed to borrow even to meet its everyday obligations. Naturally, every loan extracts its pound of flesh.

When oil was discovered in the western province of Darfur, this led to yet another civil war. On the face of it, the war was ignited by the conflict of interests between settled farmers (mostly non-Arab muslims) and nomadic tribes (all Arabs). Had the government been able to afford it, the disputes could almost certainly have been resolved by a judicious distribution of cash. But the government could afford nothing.

Imperialism therefore leapt in, theoretically to support the rebels but in fact to lay claim to the oil of the region. Although the government was able to suppress the rebellion by creating and letting loose on the local population the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), with their excessively violent approach to 'pacification', the whole operation was of course extremely costly.

And now history has been repeating itself with the current civil war being waged by the Rapid Support Force, which has turned against the government that created it. This time, the war is being fought not only for control of oil but also for control of gold mines and agricultural land.

Once again, imperialism is again supporting the rebels, but this time surreptitiously. Its ideologues are loudly condemning the genocidal activities of the RSF, which is supposedly supported only by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which is said to be seeking to expand its influence all over the middle east for its own self-aggrandisement.

Recently, however, in March 2026, US imperialism rather let the cat out of the bag by putting on its list of terrorist organisations not the RSF but the Muslim Brotherhood, which happens for the moment to be supporting the Sudanese government! This allows the US regime to sanction any government or organisation that assists the Sudanese government in this war, although it's apparently fine to help the opposition.

The truth of the matter is obvious: the UAE, like Israel, is just another extension of US imperialism to carry out its dirty work in the region. Like Israel it fully deserves the pounding that it is receiving from Iran as a result of its master's unprovoked attack on that country.

## The politics

In 1953, in preparation for independence, self-government elections were held to establish the first elected legislature in Sudan. The right to form a government was won by the National Unionist Party (NUP), whose leader Ismail al-Azhari became the first prime minister. By the time of independence in 1956, however, the NUP had split over the question of uniting with Egypt, a project dear to the heart of Ismail al-Azhari but which the party abandoned because it was unacceptable to the majority of the Sudanese people, who were looking for full independence.

Al-Azhari therefore abandoned the party, and its principal financial backers, the Khatmiya clan, withdrew their support, with many of its people forming a new party, the People's Democratic Party, that won large numbers of members away from the NUP.

The result was that the NUP (a broadly nationalist party) lost a no-confidence vote, enabling its rivals, a coalition of Umma and PDP (both representative of comprador interests, the Umma being pro-British and the PDP pro-Egyptian), to form the first post-independence government.

Obviously, this coalition government was never going to satisfy the people's desire for full independence.

The Umma party had been formed prior to the 1940s, and was one of two major sufi muslim sects in Sudan that influenced the political arena. Known as the Ansar, it was led by the Al-Mahdi family and dominated the west and central provinces of the country. Its policies, however, had, under the leadership of the Mahdi's son, evolved considerably from those espoused by the Mahdi, who had been a religious fundamentalist with a coercive approach to religion, and whose support had come principally from the trading community rebelling against high taxes and attempts to suppress the thriving slave trade.

The Mahdi fought a successful war against the British, and famously put to death the leader of the British troops, General Gordon. By the time of independence, however, his family, the financial supporters of the Umma party, were very pro-British, and much more inclined to make use of religious coercion, unlike their NUP al-Mirghani rivals from the Khatmiya tribe, who had a more purely sufi, non-political, approach.

## Class composition of Sudanese society

To say something of the composition of the society at the time of independence, it was a tribal feudal society with the overwhelming majority of the population being peasants. Different tribes dominated in different areas of the country, and warlordism—attempts by tribal chiefs to extend the area of their domination—had been rife.

Slavery had been eliminated only a few decades earlier by the British colonialists, but half the population of the capital, Khartoum, was estimated to be made up of former slaves. Under British rule, agriculture had turned towards production for export. In pursuit of their superprofits, however, the British had implemented some very beneficial modernisation reforms:

"At the outset of the 20th century, the colonial administration began massive investment programmes in education, agriculture and public infrastructure. Its aims were to exploit the economic potentialities of the country, supply British industry with raw materials, provide armies with sorghum, establish a firm rule and administer a vast and diverse country.

"The administration sought to create an educated, indigenous group as a link between itself and the population. To create this group, the administration established an elementary school in 1900. The school was intended to supply the administration with clerks. Gradually, more educational institutions were established: Gordon College in 1903, a secondary school in 1905, a survey school in 1907 and an irrigation employees school in 1909 ...

"These schools brought deep changes to Sudanese tribal society. From these schools emerged the first group of formally educated Sudanese, who began to spread all over the country as employees of the colonial administration. Gradually they brought knowledge, and social and political change to the rest of society.

"After the establishment of the Sudan railways networks and the Sudan Gezira scheme in 1925, small-scale processing industries and trade activities began to spread and expand in the northern part of Sudan, and later trade networks extended over the whole country. Trade activities reached all parts of Sudan except for the south, where it was prohibited by law. The south was considered a closed area.

"The railways and the Gezira scheme provided the backbone for the activities of the SCP [Sudanese Communist party]. In the railways, the SCP established its first relationship with the manual workers, and from there the first trade union movement began, which was closely affiliated to the SCP. In the Gezira scheme, the SCP began its activities among illiterate peasants, and in a short period built a very strong base ...

"Industrial activities had tended to be confined to edible oil, soap, water bottling and later cement manufacturing, in addition to the cotton ginning factories established to prepare cotton and sugar for export. The industrial sector was concentrated in Khartoum and central Sudan, bypassing the rural areas. This industrial sector was totally dependent on imported machinery.

"The agricultural sector, including modern and traditional sub-sectors, employed more than 68 percent of the economically active population. The industrial sector has not exceeded 7 percent in the past 50 years [ie, since the mid 1970s]. The agricultural sector contributed 45 percent of the GDP, while the industrial contribution did not exceed 5 percent.

"The service sector contributed 25 percent of the GDP, and at first it was under the sole monopoly of foreign banks and companies, and remained so until 1970 when it was nationalised. From the mid-1970s, the agricultural sector's contribution to the economy declined steadily and the service sector has taken the lead." (Abdelwahab Himmat, PhD thesis)

Looking at the class composition of Sudanese society at the time of independence, and indeed since then, it can be seen that the various political parties contending for political power in the first post-independence elections only represented exploiter interests—mostly feudal interests at that, or at best the interests of commercial traders—which explains why comprador parties for a long time ruled the roost, despite the deep desire of the Sudanese people as a whole for independence.

With the growing proletarianisation of the population, traditional political parties were becoming increasingly unrepresentative, making their tenure in office very insecure.

## The first elected governments

The Umma and PDP coalition appointed as its prime minister Abdallah Khalil of the Umma party, and in 1958 the same government was re-elected.

At the time, the first war of secession waged by the south Sudanese (which had started in 1955 and was not brought to a close until 1972) was under way, creating a serious drain on government finances. Under

the British, South Sudan had been administered as a separate colony, and on independence its people had no wish to become the vassals of the northern Arabs, which is why they went to war.

To deal with the cost of the war, which was happening alongside crop infestations that wiped out most of the cotton harvest (which normally provided up to half of the country's export earnings), as well as an Egyptian trade boycott over disputed Nile water quotas, all of which together had bankrupted the country, Khalil had to negotiate an international loan.

Short-term credits were agreed with Britain and Germany, along with a £3m loan from Barclays. A further $3m was offered by the USA, but this was opposed by the PDP and NUP as they feared it would antagonise Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Unable to manage without these loans, Khalil, only a few months after coming to power, himself engineered a military coup to overthrow his own civilian government.

### The first military regime

Under military rule, General Ibrahim Abboud became the country's first president. His hope was to be able to expand exports by increasing capital imports, alongside free consumer imports. For this purpose US 'aid' rose to over $75m. Concessions were also made to Egypt to enable the Nile waters dispute to be resolved, but this had a negative impact on cotton growers.

In other words, the military government sought to improve its finances by yet more borrowing. However, over the military government's six years in control, foreign reserves were depleted by the government's attempts at industrialisation, which did not always lead to any increase in exports.

Worse were Abboud's attempts to impose Arabisation and islamisation on the non-Arab, non-muslim south, leading to an intensification of the civil war that led to a vicious military crackdown.

The bill of course had to be paid by the working class and peasantry, through fiscal austerity and credit controls, which needless to say led to major unrest. This culminated in the banning by the army of a University of Khartoum seminar on the 'southern problem', which led to a student demonstration in which a student was killed and a subsequent general strike by professionals.

The economy was in a total mess. The military government decided it was time to hand over to a civilian one, and it resigned.

### The role of the Sudanese Communist party

From the start of military rule, all political parties were banned, especially the Sudanese Communist party (SCP), along with trade unionists. Nevertheless, the SCP flourished underground, calling for the overthrow of the military regime through writing slogans on walls, publishing press releases and pamphlets, and via internal circulars to members about domestic issues and external relations.

The SCP had wide influence among the oppressed classes despite the relatively small number of its members. It had originally been formed in 1946 as the Sudanese Movement for National Liberation (known as Hasito, derived from its Arabic name) by a group of young students and workers. The railways and the Gezira scheme established by the British provided the first base from which communism was able to spread in the country.

Sudanese students studying in Cairo in the 1940s brought back Marxist ideas and established early cells, which were connected to the Egyptian Movement for National Liberation (MDLN). The movement was further bolstered by Herbert Storey, a conscripted British soldier and member of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), who organised a cell in Khartoum.

The party's influence spread through work in fronts, such as the Anti-Imperialist Front, which was used to contest the 1953 elections. Following its third conference in February 1956, Hasito, as required for membership of the Third International, renamed itself the Sudanese Communist party.

The party had influence precisely because its policies reflected the material interests of the masses of the oppressed in Sudan—interests that featured very little, if at all, in the programmes of Sudan's major tribal-based political parties.

In these conditions, in Sudan as in Egypt, the forces of reaction had to create a pole of attraction away from communism to which the oppressed masses could attach themselves. That pole was the Muslim Brotherhood, which attracted support through its charitable works among the poor, whom they at the same time bombarded with anticommunist propaganda.

This anticommunism was mainly focused on the fact that communism's ideological basis—Marx-

ism-Leninism—is atheistic, something which seems extremely shocking to devout people whose whole life is centred around the religious rituals that hold their communities together.

The SCP, however, embedded itself in the local culture of the oppressed, joining in with their religious festivals, etc. In fact, it even paused its meetings for prayers at the appropriate times. Although Marxism-Leninism is indeed atheist, the truths that emerge from the application of Marxist-Leninist analysis to the material processes in the world can certainly be recognised by religious people.

If an atheist scientist says that it is true that H2O is water, the good muslim can perfectly accept that truth—as being the will of Allah. For practical purposes it amounts to the same thing. Indeed, muslim scientists were able to identify many truths about the way the material world behaves precisely because they were searching for understanding of Allah's will.

Generally there is no need, therefore, for communists aggressively to proselytise for atheism, unless there is a real problem to deal with. Where problems can arise is because religions tend to assume that God's will is unchanging: what was true 2000 years ago remains true today even though society has changed considerably. Religious fundamentalists assume that all change is against God's will!

On important issues such as the rights of women and the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), the Sudanese communists did proselytise against the continued oppression of women. They enthusiastically welcomed women members, and indeed were the only party who even admitted them, although these were few in number because of the strength of oppression that Sudanese women were, and to some extent still are, subjected to.

### The woman question

Dr Himmat explains: "Historically, the status of women in Sudanese society was very low. They worked in the home and in agriculture. Sudanese communities in all parts of the country were extremely conservative so even in more developed regions, women were rarely given the chance to drive cars, work in the public and private sectors, enter schools and universities, join political parties or be singers. Most women just stayed at home occupied with domestic duties.

"When the SCP [Sudanese Communist party] was established very few women received any formal education and this was limited to the daughters of elites in Khartoum and other major towns in Sudan. As the SCP saw itself as a liberation movement for both men and women, the SCP leadership showed a great deal of interest in recruiting women and girls to its ranks. However, strategies for recruiting women were confronted with many difficulties. First, religion and customs prohibited women from mixing with men. Secondly, a woman's status at the time was largely confined to household activities. Furthermore, Sudan was an underdeveloped society where people depended on a subsistence economy, which laid heavy burdens on women.

"Despite these difficulties as regards the non-educated classes, the SCP was able to recruit a small number of leading educated women. For example, Dr Khalida Zahir was the first female medical student, first woman to organise women to participate in politics and trade unions, and the first to lead a demonstration in 1940s. Dr Zahir, as a SCP activist, established with other young women a party women's association and began to recruit girls in secondary schools and at the university to the women's association. Dr Zahir was also married to the brother of the general secretary of SCP, which enhanced her status in a male-dominated party.

"Another prominent women leader was Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim. She was a daughter of a religious judge and a sister of prominent communists. Her brother, poet Salah Ahmed, was a leading figure in the SCP. Fatima became the general secretary of the Sudanese Women's Union, a progressive women's organisation, which was a coalition between the communists and democratic activists. She was member of the central committee of SCP and president of International Women's Union until 1994.

"Fatima was married to the general secretary of the Labour Union Association, Mr Shafie Ahmed Al-Sheikh. As can be seen from these examples, family connections played an important role for aspiring women activists and leaders.

"Both these women held opinions on politics and religion that complemented those of their male counterparts, successfully combining Islam and the struggle for socialism in their practice. In an interview Dr Zahir explained: 'Islam is not against women.'"

In fact, the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), which is still rampant in Sudan, is prohib-

ited by the Quran itself, but was inherited from pre-islamic slave society—perhaps to discourage promiscuity that might spread disease. But then from female slaves the practice was extended hundreds of years ago to women generally, and was absorbed into the practices of the sufis so that it became accepted as an islamic duty. So on this question, too, it is possible for atheists and muslims fervently to agree.

The Sudanese sufis, who regard religion as a personal matter, generally had less of a problem with supporting communists than the more coercive sects—especially the Muslim Brotherhood!

In anti-imperialist movements where the national bourgeoisie is in de facto alliance with the proletariat against a foreign imperialism that is stifling bourgeois ambitions, religion tends to play a large part, as the bourgeoisie relies on it to keep the proletariat under its control. In these cases, it is actually the duty of the communists to safeguard the unity of the anti-imperialist movement that would certainly be compromised by atheistic proselytisation. Religion must largely be left to 'wither away' when people begin to realise for themselves that no longer have any need of it.

### Restoration of democracy in 1964

Following the resignation of the military regime, elections were held in 1965 in which the People's Democratic party (PDP) and Umma once again emerged victorious, with Muhammad Ahmed Mahjub being appointed president. In the same election, the SCP was able to secure 12 seats out of 233 in the newly elected parliament, a great improvement on the single seat it had been able to secure in the 1950s.

Modest though this tally was, it caused great alarm among the reactionary forces, and the Muslim Brotherhood mounted a campaign against the Communist party, claiming that one of its members had insulted the prophet during one of his speeches. Mobs were mobilised to attack the party headquarters, all 12 communist MPs were expelled from parliament and the party was banned—all of which was egged on by US imperialism through its Voice of America broadcasts.

None of this, of course, alleviated the economic mess in which the new government found itself, or the civil war that was further bankrupting it.

There was no inflow of foreign capital at all between 1964-5, and President Mahjub resorted to the Magic Money Tree. He gave generous credit to agriculture, increased development spending, and used credit controls and protectionism to try to defend foreign reserves. This caused inflation, which brought about the downfall of his government in 1966.

He was replaced by Sadiq al-Mahdi, whose government in turn lasted only a year, and Mahjub was brought back in 1967. But again he had no answer to the country's severe problems. He did, however, break diplomatic ties with the USA and divest from the dollar in protest at western support for Israel in the six-day war, even though the resultant withdrawal by the USA of promised capital aid added significantly to his economic woes. Nor did he devalue the Sudanese currency as he felt the country could not afford to pay more for essential imports.

Still the protests continued, and in 1969 the army intervened once more to depose the civilian government, installing Jaafar Nimeiry as president. While Nimeiry and the communists were initially tactical allies after the 1969 revolution, deep fractures emerged over Sudan's future. The SCP strongly opposed Nimeiry's plan to federate Sudan with Egypt and Libya. They feared that joining a union with Muammar Gaddafi (who was virulently anti-communist) and Anwar Sadat would lead to their permanent marginalisation or persecution.

The communists pushed for a national-democratic revolution with greater autonomy for the south, while Nimeiry's faction leaned toward Nasserist Arab nationalism and centralised military rule.

Nimeiry demanded that the communists should disband their party and join a new one-party set up by him—the Sudanese Socialist Union—which of course the communists refused to do. In February 1971, Nimeiry officially banned all communist-affiliated mass organisations and arrested the party's central committee.

In response, communists in the Sudanese army, led by Major-General Hashim al-Atta led a coup that ousted Nimeiry, but al-Atta was able to hold on to power for only four days. With every support from imperialist interests, and assistance from Egypt and Libya, al-Atta was overthrown and immediately executed along with his supporters. Repression of the communists was stepped up. Thousands were killed and thousands more fled the country.

US and European imperialists were delighted with Nimeiry's anticommunist crackdown and eagerly stepped in to help his regime with loans and offered

haircuts on existing debts. Flush with imperialist money (albeit that it was repayable with substantial interest) Nimeiry was able to negotiate a peace settlement to end the first Sudanese civil war in 1972 and establish a federal state.

By 1977, however, Sudan's external debts had doubled twice since 1972 (from $361m in 1974 to $895m in 1977). This increase was caused by (1) a fall in world prices of cotton, (2) high interest rates, (3) the oil price shock and (4) expenditure on attempted diversification. The result was that the country in 1979 defaulted on its debts and was forced to turn to the IMF for help, which of course was only available on the basis of a swingeing structural adjustment programme (SAP).

This involved massive devaluation of the Sudanese currency—a disaster for a country that needed to import technology in order to maintain production—as well as fiscal austerity and reduced subsidies that caused a one percent fall in GDP between 1978 and 1981, leaving the country in constant need for refinancing and totally at the mercy of creditor countries, in particular the USA. This meant, for instance, that Sudan could not break off relations with Egypt when the latter recognised Israel in 1978.

Needless to say, the harsh austerity gave rise to local unrest. To counter this, Nimeiry turned to religion, not so much personally but at a state level, in order to co-opt the (sunni) Muslim Brotherhood in his support as an instrument of coercion. He integrated sunni islamists, including their eminence grise Hassan al-Turabi, into his regime.

While remaining strongly allied to the United States, Nimeiry's government enacted in 1983 what are known as the September Laws, which adopted sharia precepts including sanctions like public amputations and corporal punishments. The Muslim Brotherhood supported this, aiming for a complete islamic state.

It turned out to be quite an own goal! The laws were opposed by most other political forces in Sudan, including the sufi-leaning Ansar and Khatmiyya, and they contributed directly to accelerating the start of the second Sudanese civil war between the north and the south in 1983.

Fearing the growing power of the Brotherhood, Nimeiry turned on it in 1985, jailing hundreds of members, including Turabi, shortly before his own downfall.

It all came too late. The country was facing economic disaster that led to default on repayments to multilateral lenders (the IMF and World Bank), causing further loans to be denied. In 1985, the USA suspended $194m in aid. USAid forced on Nimeiry a 48 percent currency devaluation and also mandated the reduction of subsidies for petrol, bread and sugar.

The results were, predictably, mass protests, including student protests that were attacked by troops. Finally, senior army officers turned against Nimeiry and deposed him.

### Transitional government

From 6 April 1985 the country came under the control of a transitional government led by General Abd al-Rahman Sawar al-Dahab.

Sudan's debts now stood at $8.6bn, and the cost of servicing them was spiralling with the addition of fees and interest charges. The country had no money to pay for the importation of essential spare parts for its productive machinery and other production related imports. It was totally dependent on 'aid' from imperialism, which rose from $116m pa (1979-84) to $331m pa (1985-7), and which in turn was dependent on total servility to imperialism.

### Return to civilian government

What a poisoned chalice faced the next elected government, chosen in elections that took place in April 1986! The leading contenders at this election were the Umma party, the Democratic Union party (principally consisting of the reconstituted unity of the NUP and the PDP, with the addition of Ismail al-Azhari's urban nationalist Ashigga party) and the National Islamic Foundation (ie, the Muslim Brotherhood).

Once again, the Umma emerged in first place, but formed a government on the basis of a coalition with the DUP. Two years later, the NIF was brought into the coalition as well, but was pretty soon ejected. The leader of the Umma party, Sadiq al-Mahdi, became president.

The dire economic situation, the continued protests of the masses, the persistent demands of the IMF for subsidy reductions, and the negative effects of being required to reduce the exchange rate of the Sudanese pound from 2.50 to 4.50 to the dollar, were simply impossible to deal with.

Dependent on western 'aid', al-Mahdi was bought and paid for. He tried to negotiate peace with the southern rebels in order to gain some economic respite, but this annoyed the army, which rebelled

and overthrew him on 30 June 1989.

### The military government of Umar al-Bashir

Al-Bashir was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood firmly committed to the principle of aligning political Islam with state power—in other words use of religion to secure political coercion. He favoured a one-party state and was, of course, virulently anti-communist. He set up the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation (RCCNS) immediately following the 1989 coup, suspending all other political parties until it was dissolved in 1993.

He was a fervent nationalist and in that capacity he initially took an anti-imperialist position on a number of issues. The downside of this nationalism was refusal to countenance any compromise that might put an end to the civil war with the south.

But his government had an independent foreign policy: it opposed western intervention in Iraq, supported Palestine, and supported anti-imperialist movements including Hamas, Hezbollah, al-Jamaa al-Islamiya (Egypt) and Front Islamique (Algeria). It offered shelter to individuals on imperialism's hit list, including Osama bin Laden and Carlos the Jackal (a PFLP Marxist-Leninist).

However, the continuing civil war kept draining the country's coffers, while the government's anti-imperialist positions ensured that western funding dried up, forcing Bashir into imposing ever greater austerity on the masses. This inevitably led first to protests and then to savage repression of the protesters.

In 1993, the USA listed Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism (SST) on the basis that it was providing a safe haven for groups on its designated terrorist list. The designation automatically gave rise to sanctions, thereby frightening off potential investors. With Bashir by now desperate for sanctions relief, Carlos the Jackal, Osama bin Laden and various anti-imperialist organisations were expelled from the country—but all to no avail.

In 1995, an attempted assassination took place of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, in which various Sudanese individuals appeared to be implicated, giving the imperialists an excuse to impose further sanctions on the government. In 1996, the United Nations security council passed Resolution 1044, condemning Sudan for its role in the attempt and demanding the extradition of three suspects believed to be hiding in the country.

Sudan failed to comply and in 1997 the USA imposed further unilateral sanctions. In 1998, it went even further and bombed the newly built al-Shifa pharmaceuticals factory. This was a further deterrent to foreign investment in Sudan, making sure that the country stood no chance of ever building up its economy sufficiently to have the means of working towards ending its debt servitude.

In 1998, President Bashir was ready to ditch the policy of providing a safe haven to anti-imperialists, bringing him into conflict with Hassan al-Turabi, his Brotherhood mentor, whom he removed from office and put in prison. The economic situation being totally out of control, he tried to make plans for a return to civilian rule.

With this purpose in mind, in 1998 he founded the National Congress party (NCP), which was the dominant and often sole legal political party during his rule until it was banned in 2019. Under al-Bashir's leadership, the NCP maintained a supermajority in parliament, winning heavily criticised elections in 2000, 2010 and 2015.

In 2003, Bashir's government was faced with the rebellion in Darfur, sparked by the legitimate grievances of the local non-Arab population and whipped up by al-Turabi through the Justice and Equality Movement, in which he was influential, but further magnified by imperialism, which was seeking to make use of these grievances to support a separatist agenda that would facilitate imperialism taking effective control of Darfur's oil. The rebellion was put down, but at great cost.

Especially significant was the creation and deployment of the Rapid Support Force (RSF) in the conflict. The RSF was put together from local pro-government militias tasked with trying to enforce peace. In lieu of paying the troops, the local gold mining business was handed over to it—which ultimately turned out to be a disastrous decision. RSF leader General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the uncouth son of local camel traders, regularly evaded his obligations to the Sudanese state while building up an economic empire of his own within Sudan, trading gold to foreign markets.

In 2005, peace was finally concluded in the civil war with south Sudan. It was agreed that income from the oil fields would be split 50:50, that there would be a referendum on secession in 2011, and that in the meantime the south would have a high degree of autonomy. In 2011, the south voted to secede and the separate state of South Sudan was established.

The peace agreement nevertheless meant that there

was a big drop in Sudan's oil income necessitating … austerity. Then in 2013, civil war broke out within South Sudan, bringing oil production, and Sudan's oil income, to a halt. The further austerity measures this necessitated led to big demonstrations that were violently suppressed, with hundreds arrested, especially Communist party members.

Locked out of commerce with the west, Bashir turned towards Iran and China. Back in 1999 the Chinese had bought a stake in a company building a pipeline from southern Sudan to the Red Sea for the transportation of Sudanese oil. France also engaged in some sanctions-busting.

Two decades of US sanctions effectively isolated Sudan from western markets, allowing China to become Sudan's most influential economic and political partner. By 2017, China had invested nearly $6bn in the country and dominated its oil and infrastructure sectors. Moreover, Sudan's location on the Red Sea made it a vital part of global trade routes. The USA became concerned that continued isolation would allow China further to solidify its Belt and Road Initiative footprint in the region, particularly regarding port development.

The consequence of this was that first under Barack Obama's presidency and subsequently under Donald Trump, the USA finally decided that Sudan had done enough in terms of countering terrorism etc for sanctions to be eased significantly, though it was still designated as a SST. That label remained in place until 2020, when Sudan was strong-armed into recognising Israel.

Following the easing of sanctions, the IMF issued a report as part of its Article IV consultation—a mandatory annual 'health check' for all member countries. This created a 'unique opportunity' for the country to re-engage with the global economy. It was, of course, all about what imperialism could now get out of Sudan, not really how Sudan could recover from its economic difficulties.

The report claimed that Sudan's financial problems were largely caused by subsidies for wheat and fuel, and made any financial support conditional on the removal of such subsidies. When implemented, the IMF's austerity recommendations made the economic situation far worse, as did the currency devaluations that it had also mandated. Huge protests ensued. spearheaded by the SCP. Demonstrators began demanding political as well as economic reform.

"In the run-up to the revolution, Sudan's youth leaders linked up with the unions of physicians, pharmacists, lawyers and secondary school teachers. The Sudanese Professional Association (SPA)—a network of parallel (or unofficial) trade and professional unions composed of doctors, engineers and lawyers among others—took the lead in organising and scheduling the protests.

"In late December 2018, they called for a march to the parliament in Khartoum, demanding the government raise public-sector wages and legalise the informal professional and trade unions. After security forces used violence against peaceful protests, their demands escalated into the call for the removal of the ruling National Congress party (NCP), the structural transformation of governance in Sudan and a transition to democracy.

"Their demands echoed those of previous popular protests, including in 2011, 2012 and 2013. But the 2018–19 protests were unprecedented in terms of their length and geographic breadth. They also followed a remarkably new, innovative and sustained process. Demonstrators learned from the mistakes of previous protests, which were highly centralised, mostly limited to middle-class Sudanese and lacking in strategies for confronting the state's ubiquitous security forces.

"Led by the SPA and organised at the level of the street by youth-led neighbourhood resistance committees (NRCs), the demonstrations were coordinated, scheduled and essentially designed to emphasise sustainability over sheer numbers. The protests were also spread throughout middle-class, working-class and poor neighbourhoods, and there was coordination with protestors in regions far from Khartoum, including the states on the Red Sea, to the east, and Darfur, to the far west of the country.

"Beyond the regional scale, the protests were also distinguished by never-before-seen levels of solidarity across class and ethnic lines. Youth activists and members of professional associations not only challenged the political discourse of the islamist state, they played a significant role in engineering cross-class alliances in the context of these demonstrations. The slogans they used were designed to resonate and mobilise support across ethnic, racial and regional divides.

"Over the course of the six-month-long protests, strikes, work stoppages and sit-ins were held, not only on university campuses and secondary schools,

but also among private-sector and public-sector workers. Among the most important examples were the strikes by workers of Port Sudan on the Red Sea, demanding the nullification of the sale of the southern port to a foreign company, and several work stoppages and protests led by employees of some of the country's most important banks, telecom providers and other private firms." (The struggle for Sudan by Khalid Mustafa Medani, Middle East Research and Information Project, 16 April 2024)

Controlling the demonstrations required mobilising the army. But the army refused orders to fire on protestors. Instead, in April 2019, it deposed Bashir.

Reflecting on Bashir's time in office, it certainly established that the Muslim Brotherhood, even though nationalist, cannot effectively lead an anti-imperialist struggle. At the heart of this inability lies its implacable hatred of communism as the representative of the interests of the working class and oppressed.

The Muslim Brotherhood's purpose from its very inception was to counter the rise of communism. It is a bourgeois organisation that is totally unwilling to make any significant concessions to the interests of the labouring masses beyond charitable works. It works on the principle that by religious and physical coercion, and even the availability of charity, the masses must do as they are told.

This is a recipe that collapsed in disaster with Bashir's gradual surrender to imperialism ending in his downfall.

Where the proletariat is not strong enough to take the leadership in a country's anti-imperialist struggle, and that leadership is therefore in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the latter must nevertheless be prepared to make sufficient economic and political concessions to the interests of the toiling masses to maintain their support. This the Muslim Brotherhood entirely failed to do.

### The interregnum

President Umar al-Bashir was replaced by his vice president General Ahmad ibn Auf, who resigned after one day and was replaced by General Abd al-Fatah al-Burhan. The army set up a 'Transitional National Council' (TNC) on which the protestors were loosely represented by the 'Forces for Freedom and Change' (FFC), which comprised the Umma party, the Unionist party, the communists, the Ba'athists and various social organisations. The FFC and the military council began negotiations. Meanwhile, street protests continued apace and continued to be violently suppressed.

Negotiations led to setting up the 'Transitional Sovereignty Council' to govern the country until elections should be held in 2022. Its executive body was the cabinet of ministers. All ministers were civilians except defence and the interior. The economic technocrat Abdalla Hamdok was appointed prime minister and fellow economic technocrat Ibrahim Elbedawi (ex—World Bank) was appointed minister of finance.

General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan was appointed president, with Dagalo as de facto deputy.

It quickly became apparent that economic chaos could not be tackled without 'reforms' that would not be popular with the electorate, which caused both pro-western and secularist civilians (the anti-Bashir faction) and the military to be less than keen on having elections as planned in 2022. They felt that elections would unduly favour the Muslim Brotherhood.

In the meantime, under the supposedly 'civilian' government, the economy was going from bad to worse. Early in 2020 an IMF debt sustainability analysis calculated that Sudan's debts stood at 200 percent of GDP, which the IMF considered 'unsustainable'. Eighty-six percent of the debts had been contracted before 1984 and were no longer being serviced. The remaining 14 percent had been just about manageable, but that ceased to be the case after the IMF austerity measures were implemented.

The economic technocrats tried various measures to rescue the economy.

In June 2020, numerous state-owned companies were privatised and the state monopoly in the mining and export of gold (which was Hemedti's source of power) was thrown open. This was dressed up as a measure against 'corrupt' state officials. Privatisation always favours the wealthy, in this case very much the all-powerful comprador DAL group that even Bashir had been forced to tolerate. DAL was close to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

In September 2020, Hamdok inaugurated a national economic conference to try to get consensus for austerity. He failed, but went ahead to abolish fuel subsidies altogether, giving rise to a 400 percent increase in petrol prices and 500 percent in energy prices! The FFC's economic committee drew up an alternative economic plan involving commercial and

capital controls, price controls and increased regulation of foreign trade. It was simply ignored.

In return for being relieved of its 'state sponsor of terrorism' (SST) status on 14 December 2020, Sudan joined the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco in recognising Israel. But, in return Sudan had to agree to pay $335m into a US 'victims of SST' fund for attacks on US embassies in east Africa in 1998 (that had been perpetrated by al-Qaeda)—a sum accounting for a third of Sudan's banked external reserves. Needless to say, there was no compensation by the USA for its bombing of the al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory.

Galloping inflation, bread shortages and a collapsing exchange rate engulfed the country. In January 2021, public spending was slashed by 24 percent while defence expenditure doubled and there was a vertiginous devaluation of the currency from 55 to 375 to the dollar! All in pursuit of the ever-elusive debt relief! Protests grew in Khartoum, but now they were supported by the military.

Finally, on 25 October 2021, the transitional government agreement was overthrown. Military officers arrested Hamdok and several members of the civilian government. Hamdok was briefly reinstated in November after protests ensued, but then resigned in January 2022. Throughout 2022, civilian participation in the Sudanese government was effectively at an end.

### The Burhan/Dagalo regime and the end game

Within a short time of directly taking over the government in 2022, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the new president, and Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo, his deputy and chief of the UAE-backed Rapid Support Forces (RSF), had fallen out with each other. Burhan was anxious for the RSF to be absorbed into the regular army under a single command, but Dagalo adamantly refused.

On 15 April 2023, the RSF and the Sudanese army came to blows and a brutal civil war ensued that continues to this day, the consequences of which are tragic in the extreme. Not only have there been hundreds of thousands killed in the fighting, but millions have been displaced, and 25 million people are suffering from severe food insecurity. Four million children are acutely malnourished, including 770,000 at imminent risk of death.

The stages of the conflict can be categorised as follows:

Heavy fighting began in Khartoum and Darfur on 15 April 2023. The RSF rapidly deployed throughout the capital, taking control of key infrastructure and residential areas.

The conflict escalated significantly beyond the capital, with rising violence in Darfur and the assassination of the non-Arab west Darfur governor Khamis Abakar by RSF militants in June 2023. The SPLM-N (al-Hilu)—a rebel organisation based in the Nuba mountains—became involved in clashes on the side of the RSF, and the conflict grew into a major humanitarian crisis. In July, it seized several army garrisons and an oil field in South Kordofan and attacked Kurmuk.

However, the Sudanese armed forces (SAF) secured the support of their former opponents in Darfur, the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement, because of their opposition to the RSF that had been responsible for massacres of the local non-Arab Darfuris during the earlier Darfuri uprising. For these groups, the SAF was quite definitely the lesser evil.

Between October 2023 and December 2023, the RSF made major gains, taking control of most of Darfur and crossing the Nile, while the SAF's positions in the western region collapsed.

From January 2024 to March 2025 however, the SAF regained momentum, successfully retaking key neighbourhoods in Omdurman in early 2024. Throughout 2024, the army launched offensives in Kordofan and along the Nile, and by early 2025 they had retaken part of the capital and significant infrastructure, including the al-Jaili oil refinery.

Despite SAF gains in the capital, the RSF captured the strategic city of el-Fasher in Darfur in October 2025 after a long siege. As the citizens of el-Fasher, members of the non-Arab Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa communities, have been deadly opposed to the RSF, the latter on taking the city engaged in a genocidal frenzy, killing at least 60,000 people. Analysis of satellite photographs suggests that the real number of massacred may be as many as 150,000.

By early 2026, the war remained in a brutal stalemate, with intense fighting in the Kordofan region and widespread famine, displacing over 12 million people.

It will be noted that, despite strong opposition from the local communities, the RSF has been focusing heavily on taking control of Darfur. Why?

An Al-Jazeera opinion piece from Minni Arko Minawi, the governor of the Darfur region, entitled

'A truce of separation' and published on 17 January 2026, is instructive. It was written in response to a US imperialist call for a ceasefire after the RSF had successfully captured el-Fasher, the last holdout city in Darfur, and ethnically cleansed it of the communities most likely to continue to resist.

The RSF, and its allies in the UAE and Libya, were equally keen on a ceasefire, while the Sudanese government said it would continue to fight until the RSF was disarmed. Given the terrible suffering in the country, should the government be condemned?

When it is understood that the UAE and the RSF are fundamentally tools of Anglo-American imperialism in its ongoing project of seizing control of Darfur's oil production, with the added bonus of its gold mines, then it is clear that anti-imperialism demands resistance, which is what the Sudanese government and the SAF are providing.

The aim of a 'ceasefire' is to facilitate a division of the country by carving out a US-controlled entity run by the RSF in all the best wealth-producing areas of the country. Sudan would be left with just its enormous debts, while the means of repaying them would have been simply confiscated. The new entity would inherit all its most productive facilities. Genius!

As Minawi says:

"Modern history is full of examples where humanitarian ceasefires transformed from de-escalation tools to preludes to fragmentation and secession. In western Sahara, Libya, Somalia, Yemen and South Sudan, ceasefires were not always bridges to peace; more often, they were transitional stages towards the division of states and the erosion of sovereignty.

"In the Sudanese context, specifically, Operation Lifeline Sudan launched by the United Nations in 1989 stands as a stark example of how humanitarian action was employed as a political entry point, eventually culminating in the secession of South Sudan through a referendum that followed a long process of normalising division.

"The current situation, however, is far more dangerous and complex. It does not involve a government negotiating with a political movement holding national demands, but rather an unprecedented scenario in which two parties both claim to represent 'the government' within a single state: the legitimate government of Sudan, on the one hand, and the RSF, seeking to establish a parallel entity, on the other.

"Negotiation between 'two governments' within one state is not only unprecedented in Sudan; it represents a grave political trap aimed at extracting recognition of a de facto force under a ceasefire umbrella ...

"A comprehensive reading of events suggests that this ceasefire is more likely to be an entry point for dismantling the Sudanese state than a bridge to saving it. It may lead to the entrenchment of division: zones of influence, multiple armies, different currencies, parallel central banks, competing foreign ministries and conflicting passports—a state without a state, and sovereignty without sovereignty."

We would go further and suggest not that it may lead to entrenchment of division but that this would be its very purpose.

Given this reality, we have no choice but to call for victory to the Sudanese government. There have in any event been many indications that the Sudanese military would like to return the country to civilian rule, but the most important thing is that there should be an undivided country to which civilian rule can be returned.

Whatever the nature of the government of that country, however, the question of debt servitude to imperialism remains to be solved, which is one that requires the resolute unity of the anti-imperialist forces—something that to date has never been achieved in Sudan, but which the experience of other countries suggests can and must be achieved.

# Imperialist Major Offensive of Late 2026: The Imminent Eastern European War and the Full-Scale Escalation of World War 3

Editorial Board of The Locomotive of Uprising, Monthly Magazine of the People's Democracy Party ('Republic of Korea')

*This article is a translation of the analysis examining the historical relationship between Russia and imperialism, serving to illuminate the imminent Eastern European war, published in the October 2026 issue of "The Locomotive of Uprising," the monthly magazine of the People's Democracy Party.*

Imperialism is the root of war. The Ukraine war is no exception. Only a few months after CIA Director Bill Burns visited Russia in November 2021, the Ukraine war broke out. Russia firmly rejected the imperialist scheme surrounding Ukraine's NATO accession and the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons and intermediate-range missiles. In August 2026, CIA Director John Ratcliffe visited Russia. There may be differences in character between the Biden "administration" and the Trump administration, but fundamentally they are no different in that this was a last attempt to pressure Russia. This time, too, Russia appears to have made its position clear. And now it is the Eastern European war.

NATO is draining Russia's national strength through a proxy war fronted by Ukrainian neo-Nazis. Britain's provision of large numbers of drones to Ukraine crosses Russia's red line. So does the legalization of nuclear weapons deployment in Lithuania following Finland. Drones, like missiles, are among the delivery vehicles that can carry tactical nuclear weapons. Russia faces attacks by tens or hundreds of thousands of drones that could carry tactical nuclear weapons. This is a fatal threat to the nation's very existence and is absolutely unacceptable.

World War 3, which began with the full-scale escalation of the Ukraine war in February 2022, extended into October 2023 with the West Asian war centered on Palestine. The attempt to start a war in the 'Republic of Korea (ROK, South Korea)' in October–December 2024 failed because of the DPRK's (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) war deterrent and "strategic patience" and the heroic December Uprising of the 'ROK' people. The imperialist forces then changed direction in February 2026 to an Iran-centered West Asian war, deepening the world war anew. As wars expand and theaters converge, the Eastern European war and the East Asian war are being accelerated. The West Asian war and the Ukraine war are converging, and NATO is intervening in the West Asian war. When the Eastern European war breaks out, the East Asian war is almost automatically bound to break out as well. An imminent Eastern European war is an imminent East Asian war.

The second half of 2024 is recorded as the imperialist war offensive that followed the NATO Washington Summit. A chain of events followed: "Freedom Edge" in late June; "RIMPAC" in July–August; "Ulchi Freedom Shield" and the Ukraine's invasion of Kursk in August; the concentrated attacks on Hezbollah in September; the 'ROK' drone attack on the DPRK in October; the lifting of restrictions on long-range missile use against Russia in November; and the 'ROK' military coup and the collapse of Syria's Assad regime in December. In the second half of 2026, the Iran-centered West Asian war is under way and expanding, while military tension is rising sharply in Eastern Europe and East Asia. Whether it is the Eastern European war or the East Asian war, once either breaks out, that is the full-scale escalation of World War 3. The full-scale escalation of World War 3 is imminent.

### Russia's Expansion and Rivalry Among the Imperialist Powers

Russia grew around the Grand Duchy of Moscow, expanded its power into the Volga basin and Siberia, and developed into a Eurasian great power. In the 18th century, through Peter I's reforms and the Great Northern War, it advanced to the Baltic Sea. In 1703 it founded Saint Petersburg. With the Treaty of Nystad in 1721 it secured Baltic coastal territory from Sweden and rose as a major European power. Under Catherine II it also expanded southward. Through the Russo-Ottoman wars it extended its influence over the northern Black Sea and the Balkans. In 1783 it annexed the Crimean Khanate and took control of the Crimean Peninsula. By taking part in the partitions of Poland, it also expanded its territory and influence in Eastern Europe.

The advance to the Black Sea became linked to the question of the Bosporus and Dardanelles straits, which lead to the Mediterranean, and it became a key factor in the clash between Russia's southward policy and the interests of the European powers. In the 19th century, the southward policy merged with the "Eastern Question." Russia sought to expand its influence over the Orthodox world and the Slavic peoples while securing control of the straits. Britain sought to protect its sea lanes toward the Mediterranean and India and its colonial interests, and France likewise sought to expand its influence in the Mediterranean and on the European continent.

This rivalry exploded in the Crimean War of 1853. The clash between Russia and the Ottoman Empire widened with the entry of Britain and France and turned into a full-scale war against the allied forces. The main theater was concentrated on the Crimean Peninsula and the fortress of Sevastopol. Russia was defeated in 1856 and concluded the Treaty of Paris. This treaty restricted military activity and fleet deployment in the Black Sea, and Russia's influence there receded sharply. Then, in 1871, the military restrictions were withdrawn through the Treaty of London, and Russia regained room for military activity in the Black Sea.

After the Crimean War, Russia, its southward advance blocked, turned the direction of its expansion toward Central Asia and the Far East. As it advanced in Central Asia to areas adjoining British India, the "Great Game" unfolded. At the end of the 19th century, Russia's advance into the Far East expanded further through the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the move into Manchuria. Russia built a rail network linking Europe and the Pacific, in 1898 leased Port Arthur and Dalian on the Liaodong Peninsula from Qing China, and secured military and economic footholds in Manchuria.

Meanwhile, as Japan, victorious in the Sino-Japanese War, rapidly extended its power into Korea and Manchuria, Manchuria and Korea became the key arena where Russia and Japan clashed to secure railways, ports, military bases, markets and spheres of influence. In 1902 the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was concluded, and the structure of confrontation in East Asia intensified further. Britain sought to check Russia's advance into Central Asia and the Far East and to protect its interests in China. Japan colluded with Britain to secure superiority in Korea and Manchuria. Nominally the alliance professed the independence and territorial integrity of Qing China and Korea, but in substance it tolerated Japan's rule over Korea.

Assured of British support, Japan did not shrink from a head-on collision with Russia and started the Russo-Japanese War in 1904. On the Korean Peninsula and in Manchuria, the main theater of the war, Japan gained the upper hand through the strength of its naval superiority and its total-war system. Russia, caught between the transport limits of the Trans-Siberian Railway and internal crisis, suffered repeated defeats. The Treaty of Portsmouth was concluded in 1905, ending the war. Russia handed over to Japan its leasehold on the Liaodong Peninsula and its interests in Manchuria, and ceded southern Sakhalin. With Russian checks gone, Japan received international recognition of its rule over Korea through the Katsura–Taft Agreement and others. The Western powers, instead of participating directly, fought a proxy war through Japan to block Russia, in return handing the Korean Peninsula over to Japanese imperialism.

### From Revolution to Civil War

Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War combined with the structural crisis inside Russia. The structural contradictions produced by external imperialist rivalry for hegemony and internal autocratic rule led to the 1905 Revolution. These structural contradictions deepened further with the outbreak of World War 1 in 1914. Russia entered the war as an Entente power together with Britain and France. As the war dragged on, food shortages, inflation and chaos in industry and transport worsened, leading to harsh exploitation of workers and the people.

Lenin defined World War 1 as an inter-imperialist war, and at the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915 he put forward an internationalist line of opposing the world war and turning the imperialist war into civil war. In February 1917, beginning with a demonstration by women workers in Petrograd, strikes and demonstrations by workers spread, soldiers joined them, and the February Revolution broke out. Nicholas II abdicated, and the 300-year Romanov autocracy collapsed. A system of dual power took shape, in which a Provisional Government centered on landlords and capitalists coexisted with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The Provisional Government continued the war on the pretext of its alliance with the Western powers and failed entirely to resolve the problems of food, land and the people's livelihood. As the state power seeking to continue the imperialist war collided head-on with the people's longing to end the war and resolve economic and livelihood problems, the revolution radicalized further.

Under the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!", the Bolsheviks advanced the halt of the war, the strengthening of Soviet power and the resolution of the land question. In October 1917 the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government in Petrograd and seized power, and the world's first socialist government was established. The Soviet socialist government issued the "Decree on Peace," then agreed a ceasefire with Germany in December 1917 and concluded the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, withdrawing completely from World War 1.

Although the revolution had triumphed, domestic and foreign reactionaries soon colluded and civil war broke out. In 1918–1921, the White Army and counter-revolutionary forces rose in revolt to crush the revolutionary government. An imperialist coalition of fourteen nations—including European powers led by Britain and France, alongside the USA and Japan—intervened. To prevent the spread of the revolution and to maintain capitalist interests on the eastern front, the European powers, styling themselves allied forces, carried out invasions and a full blockade in the north at Arkhangelsk, in the south on the Black Sea, and in the Balkans. They supplied vast amounts of weapons and funds to the Whites and prolonged the civil war. It was a comprehensive counter-revolutionary operation to crush the newborn Soviet government at its outset and to rebuild the capitalist order of hegemony on the Eurasian continent.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks put internationalist solidarity to the fore in order to break through the imperialist encirclement. They strongly opposed imperialism and colonial rule and stressed the national liberation struggles of oppressed peoples and the solidarity of the international working class. At the Second Comintern Congress in 1920, a strategy of organically combining the national liberation movements of colonies and dependent countries with the international revolutionary movement was addressed as a main agenda item. This line led to the formation of a substantive anti-imperialist front. At the Congress of the Toilers of the Far East held in Moscow in January 1922, socialist forces from Korea, China, Japan and elsewhere took part. At this congress a common front for overthrowing imperialism was built. The Soviet government's support for the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal liberation movements of colonies and dependent countries proved that internationalist solidarity was a real means of striking a blow and breaking through the imperialist powers' worldwide encirclement. After the Bolshevik Red Army's final victory, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formally launched in December 1922.

### The Anti-Fascist War and the Establishment of the Postwar Cold War Order

After Lenin's death, socialist state-building was pursued with Stalin at the center. From 1928, five-year

plans rapidly expanded heavy industry and the munitions industry. This industrialization later became the material basis for responding to the German invasion in World War 2. During the war, wartime production capacity was maintained by relocating industrial facilities to areas such as east of the Ural Mountains.

As Japan's invasion of Manchuria and Germany's military expansion went into full swing, the international situation deteriorated sharply. Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931 and established "Manchukuo," and in 1937 it launched the Sino-Japanese War in full. In Europe, Germany pursued rearmament and moved to annex Austria and dismember Czechoslovakia. In September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, and World War 2 began. In June 1941 Germany invaded the Soviet Union. The Battle of Stalingrad in 1942–1943 became the turning point that halted the German army's strategic advance. The Soviets then advanced westward and took Berlin in 1945.

In East Asia, the anti-Japanese forces of Korea and China fought against Japanese imperialism. In Manchuria, the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army was active from the late 1930s. Korean anti-Japanese armed forces led it. Later, as circumstances changed, some Korean-Chinese anti-Japanese armed forces moved to the Soviet Maritime Province and the Far East.

In May 1945 Nazi Germany fell. The leaders of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union took part in the Potsdam Conference from July 17 to August 2, and on July 26 the United States, Britain and China issued the Potsdam Declaration demanding Japan's unconditional surrender. Together with the Soviet declaration of war on Japan on August 8, the Korean-Chinese-Soviet anti-Japanese armed forces launched a large-scale general attack on Japanese imperialism on August 9 and advanced into the northern part of the Korean Peninsula. Japan announced its surrender on August 15 and signed the formal instrument of surrender on September 2.

In the course of Japan's surrender, a military demarcation line was set on the Korean Peninsula along the 38th parallel. North of the 38th parallel the Soviet army, and south of it the US army, handled the surrender and disarmament of the Japanese forces. This became the starting point that led, together with the entrenchment of the "Cold War," to a long-term system of division.

After World War 2 ended, Soviet influence extended into Eastern Europe. Socialist governments were established in the Eastern European countries of Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and others, and the Eastern European socialist bloc was formed. The US-centered imperialist forces defined this as an expansion of the Soviet sphere and a spread of communism, and pursued a policy of containment. The postwar international order was reorganized into a bipolar system with the Soviet Union and the United States as its axes. The United States and the Western imperialist countries created NATO in April 1949, building an anti-Soviet, anti-communist military alliance. In response, the Soviet Union and the Eastern European socialist countries formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955 and countered with a collective defense system.

The confrontation between the two camps hardened beyond Europe into a "Cold War" structure on a global scale. In the 1950s–1970s, armed clashes and crises of full-scale war between the two camps appeared as local proxy wars and nuclear war crises. The Korean War of 1950–1953 was the first large-scale hot war of the "Cold War" period, and in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, direct confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States came to the brink of nuclear war.

### The Formation of the Anti-Russia Encirclement and the Manufactured "Revolution"

From 1989 the Eastern European socialist bloc collapsed in a chain, and with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 the "Cold War" ended. Ukraine, too, declared independence in August 1991 and confirmed it by national referendum in December. NATO, which should have been dissolved, was instead expanded and strengthened. The "Partnership for Peace (PfP)" launched in 1994 and NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept were machinations to encircle Russia and to perpetuate the military dominance of the Western imperialist forces on the Eurasian continent.

In 1999 Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary

joined NATO. In 2004 seven more countries joined, including the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. From 2004 through the 2010s, NATO air policing assets were deployed and rotated into the Baltic region in stages. Missile defense sites aimed directly at Russia's mainland were built in Romania and Poland, turning all of Eastern Europe into a forward base for the West.

NATO concluded the Founding Act setting out basic relations with Russia in 1997. In the same year it concluded the "Charter on a Distinctive Partnership" with Ukraine. The imperialist forces pursued a dual strategy: they redefined Russia as a partner for cooperation while meticulously expanding NATO's eastern domain. Ukraine, a geopolitical pivot linking the Eurasian continent, the Black Sea and Eastern Europe, was the key target and the outpost of NATO's eastward expansion policy.

At the NATO Prague Summit in November 2002, the "NATO–Ukraine Action Plan" was adopted. It stipulated linking the Ukrainian military's command and control system to NATO standards, control of the military by civilian state organs, and the conclusion of agreements on the security of state secrets, and thereby accelerated the institutional subordination of Ukraine's military apparatus. In the civilian sphere, it deepened pro-Westernization by providing funds and training to civil society, the media, political organizations and others.

The ouster of the Milošević regime in Yugoslavia in 2000 and Georgia's "Rose Revolution" in 2003 are representative cases of regime-change operations led by the imperialist forces. Intervention in Ukraine was carried out with still greater persistence on the basis of this regime-change formula, with concrete budgets and the mobilization of quasi-governmental and public institutions. In 2004 the US government allocated $34.11 million of its $143.47 million Ukraine aid budget to "democracy programs," supporting elections, the media, civil society and political parties. The NED (National Endowment for Democracy) continuously poured funds into pro-Western political and civic networks and built the organizational and financial foundation for regime change. This network operated as the core base of the pro-Western forces in the 2004 presidential election. Immediately after the runoff election, it stoked controversy over electoral fraud and manufactured the "Orange Revolution."

The Yushchenko government, which subsequently took power, made EU (European Union) and NATO integration a national task and rapidly shifted Ukraine's external strategy to a Western-centered one. In March 2004, the Ukrainian parliament abruptly passed an agreement guaranteeing NATO forces access to Ukrainian territory, airspace and ports and freedom of movement within it. Ukraine's entire territory was opened as a legal and institutional corridor through which Western military forces could pass and assemble at any time. At the Yavorov training ground in Lvov, near the Polish border, US and NATO instructor teams were stationed and directly took charge of Ukraine's elite units. In this process, intelligence agencies such as the CIA deeply infiltrated Ukraine's military and intelligence agencies under the pretext of building a special operations intelligence network.

To stir up anti-Russian sentiment in Eastern Europe, the imperialist forces actively co-opted and tamed ultra-right chauvinist forces. With the imperialist forces' unofficial support, neo-Nazi armed organizations including the Azov Battalion legally penetrated the regular forces of state security organs such as Ukraine's Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Internal Affairs, and laid a foothold for expanding their power.

### The Red Line of NATO's Eastward Expansion, the Fuse of the Proxy War

At the Munich Security Conference in February 2007, Russian President Putin defined the US-centered unipolar system and NATO's eastward expansion as "a serious provocation that wholly violates the pledge against eastward expansion that the West made at the time of the Warsaw Pact's dissolution." He declared a "red line" publicly, saying that the forward deployment of military infrastructure near Russia's borders would never be tolerated.

Despite the warning, at the NATO Bucharest Summit in Romania on April 2–4, 2008, the question of Ukraine's and Georgia's NATO membership was taken up as an agenda item. Under the strong leadership of US President Bush, it was officially con-

firmed that the two countries would become NATO members in the future. On April 4, in an informal closed-door meeting of the NATO–Russia Council, Putin issued a strong warning to Bush: "You must understand that Ukraine is not even a proper state. A considerable part of Ukraine's territory was handed over from Eastern Europe and from Russia, and if NATO admits Ukraine, Ukraine will not survive as a state and will break apart."

In August, the Georgian Saakashvili regime, overconfident in the political and military backing of the United States and the West, launched a preemptive armed offensive against the pro-Russian conflict region of South Ossetia. Russia began a large-scale counter-operation under the pretext of protecting its peacekeeping forces and its citizens. In a matter of days it neutralized Georgia's military power and advanced to the very edge of the capital, Tbilisi. The Saakashvili regime appealed for immediate NATO military intervention, but once the fighting broke out, the Western imperialist forces abandoned Georgia and provided no military support whatsoever. Georgia permanently lost control of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, lost 20% of its total territory, and effectively surrendered.

After the Western imperialists' strategic failure in Georgia, the anti-Russia encirclement strategy was strengthened with Ukraine at its center. In 2014 the "Euromaidan" coup was engineered in Ukraine. In November 2013, when Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych suspended the conclusion of a comprehensive trade agreement with the EU and sought realistic economic cooperation with Russia, the US and Western imperialist forces immediately set about a planned regime-change operation. Under the protection of Western funding networks, including the NED, and of intelligence agencies, demonstrations were engineered on Maidan Square in Kiev. These soon turned completely into a violent, bloody coup spearheaded by neo-Nazis and Banderites. The US government publicly supported the Maidan events and kept in continuous contact with Ukrainian political forces. In February 2014 the Yanukovych government was ousted.

Interim President Oleksandr Turchynov immediately pressed ahead with exclusionary repression of Ukraine's pro-Russian population, including the abolition of Russian's status as an official language. In reaction, on March 16–18 the residents of the Crimean Peninsula decided, by an overwhelming turnout, on unification with their motherland, Russia. Through a swift military operation, Russia rapidly secured the Black Sea Fleet's security bases and the Crimean Peninsula.

After the breakaway of Crimea, a spontaneous uprising by the people against ultra-right chauvinist violence, together with a separatist movement, got under way in earnest in Ukraine's eastern Donbass region as well. In April the people of Donbass proclaimed the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic and rose in self-defensive resistance. On April 14, Turchynov branded the people of Donbass "terrorists," formally approved an Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) and launched a military attack. The Poroshenko neo-Nazi regime, which took power in May, then greatly expanded its military repression with the Western powers' full-scale funding and weapons support. The neo-Nazi militias formally incorporated into the regular army, such as the Azov Battalion and Aidar, carried out indiscriminate shelling and massacres against civilian residential areas in Donbass. The imperialist forces went beyond standing by and coordinating this civil war: they stationed military advisers, brought in large quantities of lethal NATO-standard weapons, and completely transformed all of Ukraine into a powder keg of proxy war.

### The Tactical Nuclear Missile Deployment Plan That Became the Trigger of the War

The armed resistance of the Donbass militias and the continued defeats of Ukraine's regular army left the front in stalemate. The Western imperialist forces and the Poroshenko neo-Nazi regime feigned peace negotiations in order to buy time to reorganize their forces. Under the leadership of German Chancellor Merkel and French President Hollande, the first Minsk Agreement was concluded on September 5, 2014. The agreement was effectively broken within weeks, as the Poroshenko regime did not stop its indiscriminate shelling of civilian residential areas in Donbass and launched a large-scale renewed offen-

sive at key points such as Debaltsevo in early 2015.

On February 12, 2015, the second Minsk Agreement was reached, centered on an immediate ceasefire, autonomy for Donbass and constitutional reform. In an interview after the outbreak of the Ukraine war in February 2022, Poroshenko confessed about that agreement, "We gained eight years to build an army and rebuild the economy." In an interview with the German weekly Die Zeit in December 2022, Merkel admitted, "The 2014 Minsk Agreement was an attempt to give Ukraine time, and Ukraine used that time to become stronger." Hollande concurred and confirmed that the agreement had been solely a way of buying time for Ukraine's military rearmament.

Immediately after the 2014 "Euromaidan" coup, the United States carried out astronomically large military aid over many years through programs such as the "Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI)." It continuously supplied offensive weapon systems such as "Javelin" anti-tank missiles, counter-battery radars and unmanned aircraft. Instructor teams from NATO member states, including the United States, Britain and Canada, were stationed on Ukrainian soil at places such as the Yavorov training center and directly trained tens of thousands of Ukrainian regular troops to NATO standards. In February 2019, the Poroshenko regime formally wrote NATO and EU (European Union) membership into the constitution as the nation's highest strategic goal. The Sea of Azov area degenerated into a NATO naval and air base where US Navy destroyers, NATO patrol aircraft and strategic bombers came and went constantly.

After the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in August 2019, a plan to deploy medium and short range offensive weapon systems on Ukraine's eastern border took shape. This meant that "Tomahawk" cruise missiles and the like, capable of carrying not only conventional high-explosive warheads but also tactical nuclear warheads, could be stationed right at Russia's border. If these weapon systems were deployed operationally on Ukrainian soil, the time for a nuclear missile to reach Moscow would be cut to only 4–5 minutes.

On December 17, 2021, the Russian Foreign Ministry made public a legally binding "draft security guarantee treaty" addressed to the USA and NATO. The draft stipulated the blocking of NATO's further eastward expansion by permanently excluding Ukraine's and Georgia's NATO membership and banning the establishment of military bases on their territory. In particular, it demanded a total ban on deploying offensive medium and short range missiles within the former Soviet territory. It further urged withdrawing NATO's military-related infrastructure to its pre-1997 level, before the first eastward expansion, and building a mechanism to prevent accidental clashes by limiting large-scale military exercises in border areas. It was the last negotiating proposal Russia put forward.

In the negotiations that continued into early 2022, the US and Western imperialist forces completely ignored Russia's demands, saying that "NATO's open-door policy is non-negotiable." From mid-February 2022, decisive signs were detected that the Ukrainian fascist regime was about to launch a large-scale full invasion of Donbass. On February 21, Russia recognized the independence of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic and concluded treaties of friendship and cooperation with both. On February 24, Russian President Putin declared the start of a special military operation and presented its goals as protecting the population, denazification and demilitarization. In his address he said, "Leading NATO countries are supporting Ukrainian nationalists and neo-Nazis to achieve their own aims," and added, "We will bring before a court those who committed many crimes and who bear responsibility for the bloodshed of civilians, including Russians."

### The Protracted Ukraine War and the Solid Anti-Imperialist Front

Immediately after the start of the special military operation, the US and Western imperialist forces poured tens of billions of dollars' worth of advanced weapon systems and funds into Ukraine. Within months of the outbreak of the war, the United States provided billions of dollars' worth of "Javelin" anti-tank missiles, "Stinger" air-defense missiles, howitzers and High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), taking the lead in the actual operational

control and arming of the Ukrainian army.

In March 2022, NATO held an emergency summit, greatly reinforced its standing troops on the eastern front, and created and deployed additional multinational battlegroups in four Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. It completed the blockade network of the "eastern front," from the Baltic Sea through Poland and Central Europe to the Black Sea coast. On February 26, 2022, the United States and the EU froze $300 billion of the Russian Central Bank's overseas assets and cut it off from the SWIFT payment network. In addition, they enforced an energy export ban and the withdrawal of multinational corporations and imposed unprecedented economic and financial sanctions. The imperialist forces sought to induce Russia's economic and social bankruptcy through a protracted war of attrition while continuously expanding weapons supplies to Ukraine and entrenching the proxy war. On November 17, 2024, the Biden "administration" lifted the restrictions on long-range missile use against Russia and decisively raised the possibility of escalation.

In the face of the economic blockade and military threats of the USA and the West, Russia converted its national industry to a complete total-war system and accelerated strategic solidarity with non-Western forces such as China and India. Based on its resources, energy and productive capacity, it expanded alternative markets and supply chains, and extended logistics networks running across Eurasia and non-dollar financial and settlement systems. In response to the prolonged war, it pursued troop recruitment and expanded munitions production in parallel. It reorganized the national defense industrial system into a 24-hour continuous operation structure and raised the defense budget to over 7% of GDP, driving the growth of the defense industry. Russia's munitions factories succeeded in substituting domestic parts and building alternative supply chains in response to the Western cutoff of parts supply. In 2023–2025, production of key combat equipment such as tanks, missiles, artillery and unmanned aircraft rose dramatically. In particular, Russia drastically strengthened its long-range strike capability to neutralize the air defenses the West had provided to Ukraine and to precisely strike deep military facilities.

In June 2023 Russia deployed tactical nuclear weapons on Belarusian territory, and in May–June 2024 it swiftly carried out joint tactical nuclear weapons exercises, demonstrating its practical nuclear deterrent toward NATO's eastern front. On November 19, 2024, it approved and put into effect the final revision of the Basic Principles of State Policy on Nuclear Deterrence. The revised nuclear doctrine considers even a conventional attack, if it is aggression by a non-nuclear state backed by a nuclear power, to be a joint aggression, and greatly relaxes the conditions so that nuclear weapons can be used if a serious threat arises to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state and its allies. It is both a warning that a military clash with NATO could escalate into a full-scale nuclear war and a deterrent that blocks direct Western intervention.

With the prolongation of the Ukraine war, the strategic and tactical cooperation of the anti-imperialist forces has leapt forward as never before. China and Russia deepened their comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era on the occasion of their summit on May 16, 2024. They expanded joint military exercises and joint naval and air patrols and strengthened energy cooperation in oil and natural gas, as well as trade and investment. They are expanding settlement in national currencies and financial cooperation, jointly responding to the West's unilateral sanctions and economic pressure. The DPRK and Russia concluded the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty on June 19, 2024, agreeing that if either side is subjected to armed invasion and put in a state of war, the other shall provide military and other assistance without delay. In October 2024, DPRK troops were directly deployed in the Kursk liberation operation, and the alliance relationship made a qualitative leap.

### The Imminent Eastern European War and the Full-Scale Escalation of World War 3

The full-scale escalation of the Ukraine war in February 2022 marked the onset of World War 3. In October 2023 the Palestine war broke out and immediately spread into the West Asian war. From

September to November 2024 and in December, imperialist forces persistently provoked a war in the 'ROK.' The Yoon Suk-yeol fascist regime's provocation of a limited war against the DPRK and its military coup were crushed by the DPRK's war deterrent and "strategic patience" and by the heroic uprising of the people in the 'ROK.'

With the war in the 'ROK' blocked, the imperialist forces set off the Iran war in February 2026, bringing the West Asia war to full scale, and they are scheming to expand the Ukraine war into Eastern Europe. In East Asia, the trigger of the Ukraine war is being reproduced through the attempt to deploy tactical nuclear missiles. The war is expanding and the theaters are converging.

In September 2025, NATO officially announced the Eastern Sentry operation and additionally deployed fighters, surveillance aircraft and air defense forces to the eastern front. In May 2026, Lithuania's foreign minister said NATO must show Moscow that it has the capability to infiltrate Kaliningrad and destroy its air defense systems and missile bases. In June, NATO activated its ninth multinational battlegroup in Finland and completed a forward deployment system linking Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. On June 26, Finland finalized amendments to its Nuclear Energy Act and Criminal Code, opening the possibility of operating NATO nuclear forces on its territory. On July 2, Lithuania agreed to pursue a constitutional amendment abolishing the constitutional ban on deploying nuclear weapons and foreign military bases. At the NATO Ankara Summit on July 7–8, NATO decided to provide Ukraine with 70 billion euros in military equipment, assistance and training and to maintain at least the same level in 2027. It defined NATO's deterrence and defense posture as a combination of nuclear, conventional and missile defense capabilities, and pursued strengthening of war-fighting capabilities such as precision long-range strike, integrated air defense and unmanned systems.

On July 24, 2026, the Ukrainian military bombed an Iranian vessel in the Caspian Sea, and the Ukraine war began to converge with the West Asian war. Today in Europe, clashes around Kaliningrad, in Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic states, are escalating into full-scale war.

On September 11, Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski argued that NATO should conduct military exercises near Kaliningrad more aggressively so that Russia would have no choice but to pull troops out of Ukraine. On September 13, Russian forces bombed railway facilities and a train at Yahodyn station near the Polish border. High-level Western figures, including a former British prime minister, a former Swedish prime minister and a former US CIA director, who were traveling after the Yalta European Strategy conference in Kiev, narrowly escaped death. It was an ultra-hardline warning that imprinted Russia's will to retaliate without exception against Western military and personnel involvement, even in NATO border zones. On September 14, in international waters near Gedser in southern Denmark, a Russian frigate fired a signal flare at a Danish military helicopter that was monitoring it at close range. Over the Baltic Sea, a standoff with French "Rafale" fighters continues on the brink of direct clash. On September 15, an Italian fighter shot down a Russian-made drone that had entered Lithuanian airspace from Belarus.

From September 2 to 20, the "Strong Griffin 2026" exercise was carried out in Lithuania, mobilizing about 2,500 troops and some 500 pieces of military equipment from the United States, Poland, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Ukraine and Moldova. On September 27, Poland and Lithuania announced that they are jointly preparing a cross-border civilian evacuation plan to move some residents of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into Poland through the Suwałki corridor in the event of a major crisis. On September 30, Russia revealed in a diplomatic note sent to NATO that the alliance is preparing an air and naval blockade of Kaliningrad. Russian President Putin pointed to NATO's preparations for military confrontation with Russia and warned that he would not rule out the use of nuclear weapons if Kaliningrad were directly attacked.

The Eastern European war means the full-scale escalation of World War 3. The Eastern European war leads directly to the East Asian war. In the second half of 2026, the war situation is extremely acute.

# The Decisive Battle Between A2/AD and MDTF

Stephen Cho | Coordinator of the Korean International Forum 6 November 2026

The flames of war in Eastern Europe, ignited by imperialism, are spreading into flames of uprising in Western Europe. This is an inevitable phenomenon arising from imperialism's unprecedented political and economic crisis. In particular, the astronomical sums pumped into the economy through inflationary policies during the 2008 US-originated financial crisis and the "COVID-19" pandemic produced unprecedented polarization, followed by high prices and high interest rates, a fatal conjuncture that ruined livelihoods. Having fallen behind in the engines of economic growth of the "AI" era, Western countries can no longer bear the high interest on their government bonds. The French government is trapped in a dilemma: without austerity, national default; with it, popular uprising.

At present, the ideological position of the major ruling parties in Western Europe is social-democratic right. Western imperialist forces, centered on social-democratic right-wing regimes and using the Ukrainian neo-Nazis as their vanguard in Eastern Europe, provoked the Ukraine war against Russia, aiming at most for Russia's fragmentation and disintegration, and at least for the exhaustion of its national strength. The imperialist forces' scheme was to bring World War 3 into full swing through a series of drives—the 2022 Ukraine war, the 2023 West Asian war centered on the Palestine war, and the 2024 East Asian war centered on a war in the 'Republic of Korea (ROK)'—and thereby form a "New Cold War" system. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s war deterrent and "strategic patience," together with the heroic December Uprising of the 'ROK' people, prevented the war in the 'ROK' and an East Asian war. Because the East Asian war scheduled for 2024 did not break out, the expansion to Eastern European war and the full-scale escalation of world war were delayed.

In the second half of 2024, the imperialist forces launched an all-out offensive. They conducted "Freedom Edge" among the USA, Japan, and the 'ROK' in late June; "RIMPAC" led by the Indo-Pacific Command in July and August; and "Ulchi Freedom Shield" between the USA and the 'ROK' in August. Through these exercises, they militarily completed the "Pacificization of NATO" that had been pursued politically at the Washington NATO Summit in early July. In August, the Ukrainian neo-Nazis and NATO launched the Kursk offensive in Eastern Europe, and in September the Israeli Zionists carried out concentrated attacks on Lebanese Hezbollah. The 'ROK,' which scrapped the September 19 Inter-Korean Military Agreement in June, followed up with a military leadership reshuffle and aggressive war exercises in August and artillery firing drills on Yeonpyeong Island in September. In October it launched the decisive drone attack on the DPRK. This attack continued through November and pushed the Korean Peninsula to the brink of war. When war still did not break out, the Yoon Suk-yeol regime even attempted, in December, a military coup, the first since 1980: a self-coup. Also, in November, the US Biden administration lifted the restrictions on Ukraine's use of long-range missiles against Russia. In December, the Syrian Assad regime was toppled by the imperialist forces.

In the second half of 2026, the imperialist forces once again launched an all-out offensive. The West Asian war centered on Iran began when US imperialism took up the Israeli Zionists' 2025 invasion of Iran in February 2026, bringing the Iran war into full swing. As of October, as the West Asian war and the Ukraine war expand and their battlefields converge, Eastern European war and the East Asian war are being accelerated at an extraordinary pace. Eastern Europe and East Asia are strategic regions where

the anti-imperialist camp and the imperialist camp are in confrontation as sharp as in West Asia. Following the NATO Summit in Ankara in early July, the Warsaw Security Forum in October served as an opening salvo. The former was a venue for high-level political work, agreement, and propaganda and agitation; the latter was the venue for the same work at the base-level. This time again, the joint exercises for aggressive war—RIMPAC, Ulchi Freedom Shield, and Freedom Edge—were conducted in July, August, and September, respectively. In July, the Ukrainian neo-Nazis bombed an Iranian ship in the Caspian Sea, which, combined with the Israeli Zionists' occupation of southern Lebanon, was enough to scrap the Iran–US memorandum of understanding (MOU). At the end of July in East Asia, under US direction and support, Japan's Aegis destroyer conducted its first Tomahawk test launch. It was the most perilous provocation of war linked to the US strategy of deploying tactical nuclear intermediate-range missiles in East Asia. Condemnation and countermeasures from the DPRK, China, and Russia followed immediately. In particular, Russia counter-attacked with Vladimir Putin's inspection of the Kuril Islands, which are in dispute with Japan, followed immediately by a missile test launch. In September, a train carrying a former British prime minister, a former Swedish prime minister, and a former US CIA director was nearly destroyed by a Russian bombardment at a point 2 kilometers from the Polish border. Around this time, there were also military clashes near Denmark and over Lithuania. NATO's blockade against Kaliningrad, the legalization of nuclear weapons deployment in Lithuania following Finland, and Ukraine's drone production, supported by Britain and others, together with its large-scale drone attacks on Russia, are all extremely dangerous provocations of war that cross the "red line" of an existential threat to Russia.

The implications of Putin's "Chekhov's Gun" speech at the Valdai Discussion Club on October 1, and of his observation of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) joint military exercise "Interaction-2026" the following day, are clear. The same goes for the ongoing NATO joint war exercise in Latvia and the joint war exercise involving ten European countries that begins in Poland on November 9. Britain's recent emergency food stockpiling guidelines and the bomb threats targeting at least 34 passenger jets across Europe between November 2 and 5 belong to the very same context. Currently, Western political systems are facing an unprecedented, massive crisis, with massive protests in October followed by a chain of general strikes in November. Meanwhile, the "US Deep State," which engineered the war in Ukraine alongside the "European Deep State," has won the US midterm elections and taken control of Congress. All these multidimensional variables—the expansion of the West Asian and Ukraine wars, the merging of the two battlefields, popular uprisings in Western Europe, and the outcome of the US midterm elections—are converging in a single direction that decisively accelerates the Eastern European war.

The imperialist forces' original plan is presumed to have been, in order: the Ukraine war, the Palestine-centered West Asian war, the 'ROK'-centered East Asian war, and the Ukraine-centered Eastern European war. Having failed to ignite an East Asian war centered on the 'ROK,' they are escalating the West Asian war centered on Iran, while forcefully pushing for the expansion into the Eastern European war centered on Ukraine and the convergence of these two battlefronts. The Eastern European war and the East Asian war are closely linked. Eastern Europe and East Asia are where the three major powers of the anti-imperialist camp, the primary targets of the imperialist camp, are located. If just one of these two battlefields erupts, World War 3 escalates to full-scale. With two years of delay and uprisings sweeping across Western Europe like wildfire, the danger of the Eastern European war has escalated proportionally.

The basic stratagem of imperialism throughout the 20th and 21st centuries is the "Great Game" strategy, notorious for its policy of "containment." Looking back over history through this lens, the "First Great Game" was the confrontation between Britain and Russia, the "Second Great Game" between the USA and the Soviet Union, and the "Third Great Game" between the USA-Europe and Russia-China. If the second is called the "Cold War," the third can be called the "New Cold War." In imperialism's stratagem,

threatening great powers are objects of containment and dismantlement, and small countries are objects of isolation and crushing.

Right after World War 1, Russia was transformed into the world's first socialist state, and right after World War 2, the socialist camp including the Soviet Union and the national liberation camp formed a worldwide anti-imperialist camp. Today, with World War 3 under way, the world is entering a new phase in which the anti-imperialist camp is being strengthened and expanded at an extraordinary pace. Here, the most thorough socialist DPRK; China, a socialist state with Chinese characteristics, and Russia, a state with a socialist legacy, form the ranks of the strongest nuclear-missile powers armed with hydrogen bombs and hypersonic missiles, and the thoroughly anti-imperialist Islamic Republic of Iran has also joined as a missile power, together forming the leading force of anti-imperialism.

A sub-strategy of the Great Game is the "Grand Chessboard" strategy. Zbigniew Brzezinski, who devised this strategy, together with Brent Scowcroft, forms the two main lineages of US imperialist military and diplomatic strategy. The former represents the main stream of imperialism—referred to as the "US Deep State"—comprising the social-democratic right wing of the Democratic Party and the 'Neocons' within the Republican Party; it seeks to divide and fracture Russia and China through "color revolution" operations and aggressive wars. The Yugoslav war was its rehearsal. The latter, as the imperialist non-mainstream comprising conservative Republicans—known as the "US anti-Deep State"—advocates "neo-isolationism" and promotes a strategy of "fortifying the Western Hemisphere."

The Ukraine war is a war started by the European Deep State and the US Deep State, and the Iran war is a war started by the US Anti-Deep State in concert with the US Deep State. The former put the Ukrainian neo-Nazis in front, and the latter was instigated by the Israeli Zionists. The decisive difference between the two is that in the former the European Deep State favors expanding the war, while in the latter the US Anti-Deep State favors halting it. As the war against Iran turned unfavorable, the US Anti-Deep State has in effect closed US military bases in the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. This is out of fear of lethal strikes from Iran's ballistic and cruise missiles and drones. In this respect, Iran's Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy must be viewed as having been realized in essence. Iran and Yemen's Ansar Allah have each taken control of the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait—two "choke points." When hegemony in West Asia passed from US imperialism to the "Shia Belt," Saudi Arabia formed, together with Pakistan and Türkiye, the Mecca Mutual Defense Pact—the "Sunni Belt." Although it is an opportunistic alliance with a pro-US, pro-Israel character, it is a clear sign of geopolitical and strategic retreat from the standpoint of US imperialism and the Israeli Zionists. By waging the Iran war, US imperialism consequently lost its hegemony in West Asia.

As in West Asia, similar things are bound to happen in Eastern Europe and East Asia. If Eastern European war breaks out, US imperialism will inevitably be defeated and forced to retreat in Europe, and if the East Asian war breaks out, in the Western Pacific. This means that Russia in Europe, and China and the DPRK in the Western Pacific, will each achieve A2/AD. The USA touts Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF) and Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2), but the reality is the opposite. Unlike in the past, even if war breaks out on the Korean Peninsula now, the USA would find it difficult even to intervene, let alone use tactical nuclear weapons. When the DPRK fires various hypersonic missiles carrying tactical nuclear weapons for a swift, decisive victory, the USA would not dare to respond in kind. This is because, if the USA attacked the DPRK homeland, the DPRK would immediately retaliate against the US mainland, and Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) would occur.

Through consistent effort and struggle since the Korean War, the DPRK has built up sufficient strength to neutralize in a single stroke all military forces, including US forces in the 'ROK,' in a contingency. The JADC2 and Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) that the US boasts of, together with the MDTF, would be paralyzed and destroyed the moment war breaks out

by the DPRK's Fractional Orbital Bombardment System (FOBS) carrying High-Altitude Electromagnetic Pulse (HEMP) warheads and its hypersonic missiles carrying tactical nuclear weapons. The Integrated Battle Command System (IBCS) under JADC2 and the Indirect Fire Protection Capability (IFPC), dubbed the "US version of Iron Dome," are equally powerless. The DPRK possesses the capability to fire 9,000 missiles and super-large multiple rocket shells per hour, along with 870,000 artillery shells. This volume amounts to 300 to 1,000 times the interceptor missiles held by the USA and the 'ROK.' Such military power and operations of the DPRK serve as a decisive contribution to China and Russia realizing A2/AD. In addition, the DPRK stands in strategic solidarity with Russia's Eastern European war through its participation in the battle of Kursk and its supply of missiles and other support, and intends to assist China's East Asian war strategically and tactically with its cruisers and nuclear submarines. Military and strategic cooperation between the DPRK and Russia, and between the DPRK and China, is strengthened and expanded as time passes, fatally wrecking the containment strategy of the US and Western imperialism.

It is NATO, not Russia, that has been exhausted and weakened by the Ukraine war, and the Iran war has accelerated the division of the imperialist camp and the unity of the anti-imperialist camp. The anti-imperialist camp overwhelms the imperialist camp in every field: legitimacy, capability, and operations. Like the anti-fascism of World War 2, the anti-imperialism of World War 3 is a banner of justice and victory. Imperialism is destined to be burned to death by the very flames of Eastern European war and East Asian war it ignited. World War 3 will be recorded as a new great upsurge in historical development, through the decisive defeat of the imperialist camp and the great victory of the anti-imperialist camp.