



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



www.thecommunists.net

New Series Issue Nr.73

May 2022

World Situation: In the Midst of a Global Political Tornado

Ukraine War, inter-imperialist rivalry, global energy
and food crisis, spontaneous mass protests, ...

by Michael Pröbsting

English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.73, May 2022

Introduction	p.3
On the Causes and the Nature of the Ukraine War	p.4
The patriotic resistance of the Ukrainian people which Putin didn't expect	p.4
Continuity and transformation of the bonapartist Putin regime	p.4
On the dramatic acceleration of inter-imperialist rivalry	p.6
A massive shift in the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism	p.7
Challenges of EU imperialism	p.8
Cracks in the capitalist world economy	p.9
Russia's resilience against Western sanctions	p.10
Who blinks first?	p.10
The threat to the global financial order dominated by the US-Dollar	p.11
At the beginning of a new global wave of mass uprisings	p.12
The crisis of revolutionary leadership and the struggle against social-imperialism, social-pacifism and imperialist economism	p.12
Conclusions	p.14
Footnotes	p.16

Picture on the cover: Destroyed Russian BMP-3 near Mariupol, 7 March (Source: Wikipedia, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e9/Destruction_of_Russian_tanks_by_Ukrainian_troops_in_Mariupol_%284%29.jpg)

Revolutionary Communism is the monthly English-language journal published by the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT). The RCIT has sections and activists in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, Pakistan, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Russia, Nigeria, Britain, Germany, and Austria. The RCIT is also in a Liaison Committee with the *Movimiento de Trabajadores y Campesinos* (Costa Rica).

www.thecommunists.net - rcit@thecommunists.net
Tel/SMS/WhatsApp/Telegram: +43-650-4068314

World Situation: In the Midst of a Global Political Tornado

Notes on global developments characterized by the Ukraine War, inter-imperialist rivalry, global energy and food crisis as well as spontaneous mass protests

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 13.4.2022

Preliminary Note: *The following document is an attempt to summarize the most important developments of the current world situation. It does not represent a detailed analysis as this is not the time which allows oneself to isolate in the study. Furthermore, the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) has dealt with the Ukraine War, the inter-imperialist rivalry and the Great Depression of the capitalist world economy extensively in other works and refer readers to these in the footnotes of the text at place.*

Furthermore, we need to emphasize that this document focuses on the current developments. While this is fully justified given the historic nature of the current events, we are also aware that such a focus gives our analysis a certain short-term, conjunctural character.

However, we hope that this document helps to provide an overview and a guide for revolutionary activists in a world political situation which is highly complex as well as very explosive. We are living in a political period from which history is made!

* * * * *

Introduction

Only the most cynical routinist can deny the fact that we are living in the midst of a global political tornado. The world situation is characterized by four main axes which will determine future developments in the course of this year.

* Putin's invasion of the Ukraine represents an attack of a Great Power against the most populous country since the Vietnam War (and which is also a neighboring country).

* The inter-imperialist rivalry between the U.S., Western

Europe and Russia is closer to a direct military confrontation or even to a world war than it has ever been since 1945.

* The capitalist world economy remains trapped within the Great Depression which began in autumn 2019. It has entered a Second Slump since 2021 and which accelerated in recent weeks since the beginning of the Ukraine War.

* These events have provoked a dramatic rise of energy and food prices – and hence of inflation in general. As a result, we are at the beginning of a new global wave of mass uprisings as the events in Sri Lanka, Peru and other countries demonstrate.

Before we deal with these four axes in more detail, we need to explain the following before. In our view, it is crucial to understand that all these developments can not be understood in isolation since they are related to each other. While each of it has its own concrete causes and mechanism, these developments strongly influence, shape and accelerate each other.

The reason for this contexture is basically that we are living in a historic period of capitalist decay reflected in economic crisis, social deterioration and environmental crisis. Such decline forces the ruling class of all states to intensify their attacks against the working class and the popular masses in their own countries. Furthermore, it pushes the Great Powers to accelerate the inter-imperialist rivalry. These developments in turn result in political and social destabilization and a shift of the ruling class towards militarism and chauvinist state bonapartism. Furthermore, these developments inevitable provoke the masses to rebel against these attacks.¹

It is evident that these developments fuel each other. Eco-



Publications of the RCIT

The Peculiar Features of Russian Imperialism

A Study of Russia's Monopolies, Capital Export and Super-Exploitation in the Light of Marxist Theory

By Michael Pröbsting, August 2021

Introduction * Another Denial of Russia's Imperialist Character * The Methodological Failure of our Critics * Russia's Economy: Dominated by Domestic, not Foreign, Monopolies * Capital Export and the Problem of "Round-Tripping" Foreign Direct Investments * "Phantom FDI": No Russian Peculiarity but a Global Phenomenon * Russia's Leading Multinational Corporations and their Foreign Investments * Imperialist Super-Exploitation via Capital Export * Imperialist Super-Exploitation via Migration * Conclusions * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format

conomic crisis and political and social instability at home provoke the ruling class to turn to repression at home and militarist aggression abroad. Protectionism and wars provoke economic shortage which, in turn, results in social unrest as well as accelerated rivalry between the Great Powers in order to control as much as possible of the decreasing volumes of available crucial commodities (energy, crucial raw materials, semiconductor, crop, etc.)

On the Causes and the Nature of the Ukraine War

As we have elaborated the RCIT's position on the Ukraine War in numerous documents, we will limit ourselves at this point to briefly summarize our approach. We consider it as crucial to recognize the *dual character* of the current conflict. The Ukraine War is the result of an invasion by Russia – an imperialist power – against a semi-colonial country.² Hence, the resistance of the Ukrainian people against Russia has the character of a just war of defense which deserves the full support of socialist all over the world.³

For this reason, the RCIT has initiated the *International Workers Aid* campaign which brings material aid to the Ukrainian people – the “*Sunflower Convoy*” – in collaboration with socialists in the Ukraine as well as organizations of nationally oppressed people.⁴

At the same time, the Ukraine War is the pretext for the acceleration of the rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – first and foremost the U.S. and Western Europe against Russia. In this conflict, the RCIT advocates a *revolutionary defeatist* position, opposing *both camps* – Russia as well as NATO. We have summarized our position in the following slogans:

* *Defend the Ukraine! Defeat Russian imperialism! International popular solidarity with the Ukrainian national resistance – independent of any imperialist influence!*

* *Down with all imperialist powers – NATO and EU as well as Russia! In all conflicts between these powers, revolutionaries fight against both camps!*

At this point we will limit ourselves to a few observations about possible future developments of the war. Basically, we believe that this war will have a *long-lasting character*. It is quite possible that there will be a ceasefire for a while but basically this conflict can not be settled in the near future given the nature of the forces involved as well as their antagonistic interest. The basic reason for this is the fact that the Ukraine War has a *strategic character for all parties directly as well as indirectly involved*. Let us explain this in some detail.

The patriotic resistance of the Ukrainian people which Putin didn't expect

While Russia's troops were able to conquer territory of the size of Britain in the first period of the war, the invasion has stalled since then and in early April, the occupation forces had to retreat from the northern region (Kyiv, Chernihiv and Sumy). The main reason for this success of the Ukrainian armed forces is the heroic resistance of people based on a wave of patriotic enthusiasm. Our comrades in the Ukraine report that since the beginning of the war we see the creation of a new generation of enthusiastic youth which is willing to fight and to die for their country.

It is therefore very likely that the Ukrainian resistance will continue for a long time.

Contrary to the expectations of Moscow, the invasion has provoked wide-spread hatred against the Putinist aggressors not only in the Western part of the Ukraine but also among the Russian-speaking parts of the population in the east of the country. This is reflected, among others, in the fact that even leaders of traditional pro-Russian parties denounce the invasion. The mayor of Kryvyi Rih Oleksandr Vilkul, once a prominent leader of the pro-Russian *Opposition Bloc*, called his former colleague Oleg Tsariov a traitor for his appeal to start collaborating with the Russian army. The faction of another pro-Russian party *Opposition Bloc – For Life!* in the Kherson city council voted for its dissolution. In cities occupied by the Russian army, popular demonstrations against the invaders are taking place despite the great risk for their lives. In contrast, the occupation forces have not managed until now to organize a single demonstration in support for their presence! Hardly any of the municipal authorities in the occupied territories (e.g. in Kherson, Melitopol, Skadovs'k) is prepared to collaborate with the Russian occupiers.⁵

These facts confirm surveys published already before the beginning of the war, which did show not only a wide-spread rejection of the invasion but also a willingness to take up arms. There can be no doubt that the brutality of the Russian military campaign, the siege tactics of major cities that increase human suffering, and the indiscriminate killing of civilians will only reinforce this determination. This means that any occupation of parts of the Ukraine will be very costly for the Russian invaders and will be therefore untenable in the long run.

For all these reasons, it is very risky for the bourgeois Zelensky government to accept any peace agreement which would leave a sizeable chunk of the country under Russia's control. In such a case, the former comedian would be immediately denounced as a traitor by his own people and would have to fear for his life.

Continuity and transformation of the bonapartist Putin regime

There has been also an important process of transformation of the Putin regime in Russia. It has been a bonapartist regime whose popular legitimacy has rested on the ability i) to overcome the chaotic and humiliating period of the 1990s (characterized by the effects of capitalist restoration), ii) to restore to a certain degree the “greatness” of Russia's glory as a Global Power and iii) to create the basis for certain wealth for the middle class and the labor aristocracy.

However, the effects of the Great Depression have undermined the economic stability. In addition, the acceleration of Great Power rivalry has put the Putin regime before the alternative to make a retreat or to take the offensive.

We believe that Putin has been aware that there exists a window of opportunity since the U.S. suffered important setbacks in the recent past, the EU is disunited as ever and China – Moscow's strategic ally – is accumulating strength. (As it is well-known, Xi and Putin stated in their joint declaration in early February that the “*friendship between the two States has no limits*”⁶). In addition, Russia has developed hypersonic missiles which provides it with a certain

military advantage to the US – but only until Washington will be able to catch-up in a year or two. Under these conditions, Putin – a strategic thinking politician and, by no accident, in power for 23 years – decided to strike now and to attack the Ukraine.

The Putin regime has exploited the war and the conflict with NATO for instigating an arch-reactionary wave of Great Russian chauvinism. This has been achieved with the help of a gigantic state-led propaganda machinery in combination with repression against liberal opposition media (e.g. the radio station *Ekho Moskvy*, the TV station *Dozhd*, and the newspaper *Novaia Gazeta*). Furthermore, one must not underestimate the political consequences of the Western aggressive policy of unprecedented sanctions which has strengthened chauvinist sentiments among the elite and the middle class. A political observer commented: “If not actually dead, Russian Westernism is somewhere close to it.”⁷

The Latvia-based anti-Kremlin media outlet *Meduza* commented “that discussions with high-ranking Russian bureaucrats revealed that even those who had initially opposed the war in Ukraine had now rallied around the flag. The sweeping sanctions imposed by the West against Russia have had the effect of consolidating anti-Western feeling. As one official told her: ‘Those people [in the West] don’t understand who they’ve messed with. This causes a sharp reaction even among those who thought differently and asked questions [of the authorities]. Now they won’t ask questions for a long time. They will hate the West and consolidate in order to live their lives.’”⁸

The ideology of Great Russian chauvinism is not limited to patriotic calls for rallying in “defense of the motherland” against NATO. The Putinist propagandists also disseminate extremely poisonous propaganda against the Ukraine

as an entity as well as against the Ukrainian people. Effectively, Putin and his ideologists deny the very existence of the Ukrainian nation and its right to have a separate state. We did already deal somewhere else with Putin’s explicit denial of the right of national self-determination for non-Russian people and his wild denunciation of the Bolshevik’s policy.⁹ In the course of the war, this thoroughly anti-Ukrainian line has been radicalized by the regime into a policy which we can characterize as *Great Russian totalitarianism*. It is aimed at robbing parts of the Ukraine’s territory, liquidation of a sizeable sector of the population, denying the Ukraine the very name of its country, enforced “re-education” of the population in order to “de-Ukrainize” and “de-Europeanize” them, etc. This has been openly elaborated in a wide-spread article published by Russia’s state-owned news agency RIA Novosti.¹⁰

It seems to us that the Putin regime has made a conscious strategic decision to rupture the existing world order and to challenge the Western powers. Fyodor A. Lukyanov, a leading political expert close to the Kremlin, stated that “Russia’s military intervention in Ukraine has spelled the end of an epoch in the state of global affairs after President Vladimir Putin launched the action last week. Its impact will be felt for years to come, but Moscow has positioned itself to ‘become an agent of cardinal change for the whole world.’ The Russian Armed Forces’ operation in Ukraine marks the end of an era. It began with the fall of the Soviet Union and its dissolution in 1991, when a fairly stable bipolar structure was overturned by what eventually came to be known as the ‘Liberal World Order’. This paved the way for the US and its allies to play a dominant role in international politics centered around universalist ideology. (...) The Russian leadership, which decided on extremely drastic steps, probably understood the consequences, or even

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan.
A Critique of the Left’s Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective

In *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* Michael Pröbsting analyses the accelerating rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – the U.S., China, EU, Russia, and Japan. He shows that the diplomatic rows, sanctions, trade wars, and military tensions between these Great Powers are not accidental or caused by a mad man in the White House. They are rather rooted in the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist system. This rivalry is a key feature of the current historic period and could, ultimately, result in major wars between these Great Powers.

Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry demonstrates the validity of the Marxist analysis of modern imperialism. Using comprehensive material (including 61 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that a correct understanding of the rise of China and Russia as new Great Powers is crucial for assessing the character of the current inter-imperialist rivalry.

In *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* Michael Pröbsting critically discusses the analysis of modern imperialism by a number of left-wing parties (left social democrats, Stalinists, Trotskyists and others). He demonstrates that most of these orga-

nizations fail to understand the nature of the Great Power rivalry and, consequently, are not able to take an internationalist and revolutionary stance.

The author elaborates the approach of leading Marxist figures like Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg to the problems of Great Power rivalry and imperialist aggression against oppressed peoples. He outlines a Marxist program for the current period which is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

The book contains an introduction and 29 chapters plus an appendix (412 pages) and includes 61 figures and tables. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry
between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan
A Critique of the Left’s Analysis and
an Outline of the Marxist Perspective



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International of Workers

consciously aspired to them. The page of cooperation with the West has been turned. This does not mean that isolationism will become the norm, but it does mark the end of an important historical chapter in political relations. The new Cold War will not end quickly. (...) Even in a favorable scenario, it will be many years before sanctions are lifted and ties are gradually and selectively restored. Restructuring economic priorities will require a different approach, which will stimulate development in some ways, and slow it down in others. The most active part of Russian society will have to realize that their old way of life is gone. 'Fort Russia' has decided to put its strength to the test and, at the same time, has become an agent of cardinal change for the whole world." ¹¹

At the same time, there exists a certain sense of realism among Russia's elite about the consequences of the Ukraine War. The director of the influential Valdai Discussion Club, Andrey Sushentsov, writes: "The use of force by Russia in Ukraine creates a new negotiating reality. (...) After such a large-scale shake-up, all the dust will settle, which previously prevented us from understanding the real outlines of European security problems. We must admit that the new security system in Europe will be based on mutual hostility. But this will be a variant of hostility that precludes provocative behaviour. Such behaviour is possible only in a situation where no one believes that the other side will attack you. After the outbreak of hostilities on February 24, there is no such belief among the NATO countries anymore. On the one hand, this will entail an increase in the military spending of European states and a change in the geography of the forward deployment of NATO forces and assets. They will be closer to Russia's borders. But, on the other hand, there will be an increased responsibility for the use of these forces and means. Any incident will provoke a crisis that does not correspond to the vital interests of European states. The result of the system of checks and balances will be a "cold peace" — the best possible option for today." ¹²

Furthermore, the war and the Western sanctions have forced the Putin regime to massively expand its mechanism of state-capitalist regulation in order to avoid a collapse of the economy. Related to this, the regime has imposed measures which strictly control the outflow of capital, resulting in a policy of "Russification" of the domestic financial market. *Tsargrad*, a right-wing media owned by the Great Russian monarchist oligarch Konstantin Malofeev (who is closely related to the notorious ex-FSB paramilitary leader Igor Girkin/Strelkov), praised this step as a "complete reformatting" which "returns the Russian Stock Market to the Russians". Another commentator characterized Russia's recent development pointedly as "capitalism in one country". ¹³

We can therefore conclude that there has been a clear shift in the nature of the bonapartist Putin regime. It has massively increased its authoritarian character and nearly liquidates all elements of bourgeois democracy. This is combined with a massive radicalization of its Great Russian chauvinism and militarism as well as a shift towards more state-capitalist regulation.

What is relevant for the character and the longevity of the war in the Ukraine is the fact that both sides — Russia as well as the Ukraine — have far-reaching goals for which they could mobilize wide-spread popular support in their respective countries. A retreat would pose huge domestic dangers to either government. In addition, both sides have not exhausted their reserves and, most likely, will not do

so in the near future. The Ukraine is militarily outnumbered by Russia but i) it has massive popular support, ii) it is a vast country with large parts effectively safe from Russian occupation where it can regroup its forces, and iii) it receives material and military support from Western states.

Russia, on the other hand, suffered a setback in the northern region. However, as an imperialist Great Power, it has a gigantic army and huge material resources and military reserves. It is very unlikely that the Kremlin would sign a peace deal in the near future which it could not sell to the public as a victory. So, while both sides have goals which are incompatible with each other, they are strong enough — at least for the time being — to refuse making significant concessions.

We shall finally note that the stakes are obviously very high for the Putin regime. If it loses the war in the Ukraine, it could open a deep crisis in Russia with the possibility of mass upheavals or a coup d'état!

On the dramatic acceleration of inter-imperialist rivalry

These dynamics of the Ukraine War correspond to the global dynamic in the inter-imperialist rivalry between the Great Powers. There has been a massive shift both among the leaders of the Western powers as well as of Russia. In the last years, there existed a kind of Cold War — at least since 2018 when Trump launched Global Trade War against China. ¹⁴ However, this process has reached now a new stage. It is still a Cold War, but it is now qualitatively closer to a Hot War.

Before the 24 February, there was no serious immediate threat of a military confrontation between NATO and Russia. Now, the situation is very different. True, the rulers of both camps don't have the intention to start a war against each other in the short term. But they could arrive at a situation within the next few months in which they might consider a military strike against their imperialist rival as a lesser evil compared to making a retreat.

Basically, this qualitative escalation of the inter-imperialist rivalry is the result of the fundamental shifts which have taken place in the relation of forces between the Great Powers in the past decade. While the Western power lost political, economic and military weight, their eastern rivals — China and Russia — increased theirs. ¹⁵ The RCIT has analyzed these developments in much detail, and we refer reader to the respective works. ¹⁶

At this place it is important to recognize the political shifts which have taken place in the recent one, two months. As indicated above, it seems to us that Putin and his inner circle have arrived at the conclusion that the time has come to make a decisive step towards expanding Russia's sphere of influence and to humiliate the U.S. and the EU. Hence, Moscow has invaded the Ukraine and threatens NATO not to intervene directly. It is remarkable that Moscow has warned the West about a nuclear war several times. Russia's ex-president and deputy head of security council, Dmitry Medvedev, has said that "there are several grounds under which Russia has the right to use nuclear weapons, including an attack on the country or encroachment on infrastructure as a result of which Russia's nuclear deterrent forces would be paralysed." ¹⁷

Sergey Karaganov, a former adviser to the Kremlin, ex-

pressed the same approach in an interview with the British *New Statesman*: “Well, escalation in this context means that in the face of an existential threat – and that means a non-victory, by the way, or an alleged defeat – Russia could escalate, and there are dozens of places in the world where it would have a direct confrontation with the United States.

Question: So your suggestion is that, on the one hand, we could have an escalation towards the possible use of nuclear weapons – if there is an existential danger to Russia – and, on the other, an escalation towards conflict in other areas beyond Ukraine. Am I following you correctly?

*Answer: I wouldn't rule it out. We are living in absolutely a new strategic situation. Normal logic dictates what you have said.”*¹⁸

A similar remarkable shift, in our opinion, is taking place within the ruling class of the U.S. and, more so, in the EU. While Trump started – and Biden continued – to wage a Cold War against China, including on the economic level, there existed deep divisions within the ruling class of the U.S., and even more so within the EU, about the approach towards the Eastern powers. For example, the Pentagon and other influential circles in Washington identified China as the main enemy and advocated preparation for a confrontation with it within the next few years.¹⁹ They therefore did not have a similar focus on Russia. There were influential circles in Washington which suggested a foreign policy aimed at splitting Putin away from Beijing in order to isolate the latter.

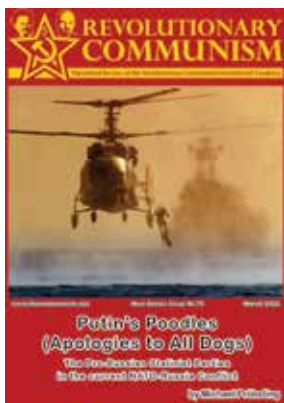
The same is true for the European imperialist powers. Just a few months ago, the construction of *Nord Stream 2* – a major gas pipeline from Russia to Germany – was finished. This reflected the interests of significant sectors of the European bourgeoisie to keep at least a business-centered relationship with Moscow. Likewise, EU governments have balked for years to increase their military spendings or to create a relevant EU army.

A massive shift in the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism

All this is changing now dramatically. The US and the EU have initiated an escalating wave of financial and economic sanctions against Russia. They systematically try to hurt the economy of their Eastern rival and hope to bring the country close to a collapse – or, as one U.S. official put, to return the Russian people to “Soviet-level” living standards. Hence, U.S. President Bidens remark about Putin (“For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power”) was by no means accidental.

The shift within the American ruling class is reflected in the consolidation of big business leaders around an aggressive anti-Russian foreign policy. A recent “letter to investors” of JP Morgan chief executive, Jamie Dimon, is a significant indicator for this. Despite warning that the US bank could lose up to \$1bn from its exposure to Russia, he urged Joe Biden's administration to take a stronger stance against the “grave new geopolitical realities” emerging after Russia's invasion of Ukraine which put a “potential restructuring of the global order” on the agenda. The JP Morgan boss calls for a shift towards an aggressive geopolitical strategy of the U.S. against its imperialist rival in the east. “We must confront the Russia challenge with bold solutions.” Such “bold solutions” include the deployment of more troops at the borders of NATO countries, acceleration of sanctions, a Marshall Plan for “our European allies, who are highly dependent on Russian energy”, etc.

It is clear that this leading representative of American monopoly capital considers such a move as part of a long-term political strategy which aims at strengthening a U.S. led imperialist bloc and at defeating its rivals in the East. “As we are seeing – and know from past experience – oil and gas supply can be easily disrupted, either physically or by additional sanctions, significantly impacting energy prices. National se-



PUBLICATIONS OF THE RCIT

Putin's Poodles (Apologies to All Dogs)

*The pro-Russian Stalinist parties and
their arguments in the current NATO-Russia Conflict*

by Michael Pröbsting, February 2022

Introduction * 1. NATO is the sole aggressor! Really? * Is it relevant for Marxists who is the aggressor?
 * What is causing the escalation of tensions between Great Powers: the party of warmongers or the imperialist system? * Can socialists defend “legitimate spheres of influence” of Great Powers? * Putin and Great Russian Chauvinism claim that the Ukraine is not an independent nation * Stalinism versus Bolshevism: The Ukraine and the right of national self-determination * From Kazakhstan to Syria: Stalinism is siding with the counterrevolution * Is Russian imperialism a “force of social progress”?
Discussion of a remarkable Stalinist document * Stalinism and social-imperialism: concluding remarks
 * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format

*curity demands energy security for ourselves and for our allies overseas. (...) America must be ready for the possibility of an extended war in Ukraine with unpredictable outcomes. We should prepare for the worst and hope for the best. We must look at this as a wake-up call. (...) We need to make this a permanent, long-lasting stand for democratic ideals and against all forms of evil. (...) Along with the unpredictability of war itself and the uncertainty surrounding global commodity supply chains, this makes for a potentially explosive situation.”*²⁰

These remarkable words of a leading monopoly capitalist who tries to approach the current geopolitical situation not only from the viewpoint of an individual business leader but also from a “*Ideal Total Capitalist*” in the sense Friedrich Engels spoke about it.

This goes hand-in-hand with a growing recognition that the U.S. has to combat both Eastern powers – China and Russia – at the same time and for this, it must assure the formation of a long-lasting alliance with Western Europe and Japan. Hal Brands, an American scholar of U.S. foreign policy (he is a professor at the Johns Hopkins University and is affiliated with the conservative American Enterprise Institute), formulated this approach in a recently published interview.

*“I think for a long time, Americans thought about Russia and China as two distinct challenges, and in many ways they are. But one of the things that we’ve seen before and during this crisis is that they increasingly act together, or at least in parallel, in important ways. (...) the problem that we confront today is one in which our two greatest autocratic rivals increasingly work together. (...) I think what the war indicates, though, is that the best way of putting pressure on China, which is the more dangerous and the more powerful of the two rivals, is actually to ensure that Russia is defeated, that it does not achieve its objectives in this war, because that will result in a weaker Russia, one that is less capable of putting pressure on the United States and its allies in Europe and thus less useful as a strategic partner for Beijing. (...) The United States simply can’t avoid the reality that it has to contain both Russia and China simultaneously. And if the United States were to try to buy one or both of them off, it would simply weaken its own position. That’s a tall order, but it’s not impossible. If you add up the United States and its allies in Europe and its allies in the Indo-Pacific, they dramatically outstrip Russia and China together when it comes to military power, economic power, diplomatic power – you name it. And I think that there is also a prospect that putting pressure on Russia can, over the long term, lead to a fraying of the relationship with China. As Russia becomes more dependent on China as a result of this war, it will become less and less comfortable with that dependency. And so this won’t make a huge difference over a two to three-year period, but over a 10-year period, perhaps.”*²¹

Such a shift towards a more aggressive foreign policy goes hand in hand with the emergence of a public campaign against all those public figures who are not anti-Russian hawks. A foreign policy expert from the conservative (!) Cato institute called this campaign a “*new McCarthyism*”.²²

As a result of this shift, the Western imperialists have imposed a series of sanctions against Russia (at the moment, the total number of sanctions on Russia is 5,515).²³ Seven Russian banks were cut off from the SWIFT system – a crucial part of global financial infrastructure – until now. Western states froze the reserve assets of the Central Bank of Russia (CBR), together with its sovereign wealth fund. Experts estimate that Russia has lost access to about 40 to

60% of the CBR’s international reserves, valued at \$640 billion. In addition, the US banned the trading of the CBR’s gold reserves, estimated at \$136 billion. In addition, over 500 Western multinational corporations have announced that they are suspending operations or leaving the Russian market altogether.

Furthermore, the US stopped imports of Russian oil and gas. The EU moved to drastically reduce its dependence on Russian energy too albeit Western European governments have not the same zeal in waging an economic and financial war against Russia as Washington. The reason is simply that the EU is much more important on Russia energy imports than the U.S. Europe relies nearly totally on the import of oil and natural gas, and a large chunk of this comes from Russia (25% of its oil and 40% of its natural gas). A total boycott of Russia’s export would pose a catastrophic threat for the economy as well as the households of imperialist Europe which is why its business leaders strongly warn against such a step.

The political and economic war of Western imperialists against their rival in the East also takes place on the diplomatic arena. In recent weeks, Europe has expelled about 300 Russian diplomats. Moscow did take reciprocal steps.²⁴

While US imperialism is the driving force in waging a political and economic offensive against its Russian rival, the European Union suffers from various inner contradictions. Both the economic factor (i.e. the dependence of Russian energy supplies) and the geographical closeness makes a direct confrontation with Putin far more risky for the EU imperialism. Also, one should not forget that the relations between US and EU have been bruised under the protectionist Trump governance and only rekindled recently. Even in the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia, it was the United States which pushed the European Union to start a more aggressive policy of threats and sanctions.

In these times and days nothing is stable. The close relations between the Eastern imperialists – Russia and China – as well as the relations between the Western imperialists, USA and EU, could change again. A negotiated compromise between Russia and EU for example could anger the Biden Administration while an escalation of the conflict between China and the USA could push the EU away from its American ally.

Challenges of EU imperialism

The general outlook of the European Union is in flux. The massive escalation of the inter-imperialist rivalry has pushed EU governments to dramatically increase the military budget. Germany’s Chancellor Olaf Scholz promised to raise spending above 2% of the country’s economic output. (“*We need planes that fly, ships that sail and soldiers who are optimally equipped.*”) A French parliamentary report published in February, a week before the invasion, concluded that in the event of large-scale conventional war, like one in Ukraine, an additional \$44 billion to \$66 billion over 12 years would be needed to bolster France’s military machine. President Emmanuel Macron has pledged a sharp increase in military spending – which is already \$45 billion, more than 10% of the government’s total budget – if he wins the upcoming presidential election. Belgium, Italy, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden have

also announced increases to their defense budgets.²⁵

This shift towards militarism and chauvinist foreign policy is combined with two important developments in the EU. First, such a policy goes necessarily hand-in-hand with the expansion of the bonapartist state apparatus. This development does not come as a surprise for Marxists. We have pointed out in the past years – in particular since the beginning of the COVID Counterrevolution in spring 2020 where the ruling class exploited the pandemic as a pretext for authoritarian policy – that such a shift towards *Chauvinist State Bonapartism* is taking place.²⁶ The politization of sport and culture by expelling Russian participants in international events, the canceling of musical events displaying Russian classic composers like Tchaikovsky, the legal prohibition of showing the symbol “Z”, ... all these are examples of a policy aimed at limiting democratic rights.

The second important development has been the ability of the U.S. to push the European powers into a confrontation against Russia. Until recently, Paris and Berlin did try to resist such pressure (see e.g. Germany’s insistence to keep the North Stream 2 project). Now, Washington successfully forced these powers to take a side and to join the anti-Russian sanctions and Cold War policy. Naturally, this was only possible because Putin made the EU leaders aware how vulnerable it is.

In short, the Ukraine War has provoked a geopolitical shift of the European powers towards Washington with the U.S. being the undisputed leader of the Western camp for now.

We shall briefly note at this place that the current problems of European imperialism are related to its fundamental political and economic weaknesses. In addition to its lack of political unity, its weight in the global economy has experienced a long-term decline by 1/3 in the past quarter of a century. While the EU’s share in global output was

24% in 1999, this has declined to 18% in 2020. Japan’s decline was even more dramatic while the share of the US economy decreased “only” from 29% to 25%. (At the same time, China’s economy and its global share increased massively.)²⁷

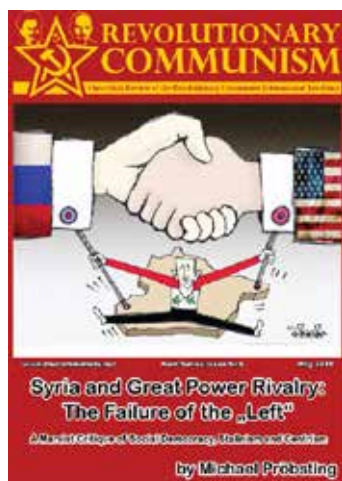
Last but not least, while it does not seem likely at the moment as the EU is marching forward in its attempt to become a more aggressive and united imperialist force, one cannot exclude the possibility that the European Union might also crumble under the consistent pressure of the events. Since the treaty of Maastricht in 1993, the EU has tried and yet not accomplished to transform into a united, coherent imperialist bloc and there is no guarantee it will ever achieve this goal. Naturally, the workers and oppressed have no interest to support the EU in this project!

Cracks in the capitalist world economy

It is evident that both camps – the ruling class of the U.S. and Western Europe as well as of Russia – have increased their stake many times over. The Putin regime has linked its fate with expanding the Great Russian Empire by, as a first step, subjugating the Ukraine (or at least a substantial part of it). Zelensky must either succeed in stopping this offensive or look for safe exile. And if Washington and Brussels do not succeed in humiliating their Eastern rival, it could open a political crisis in their countries.

In any case, the Ukraine War and the Sanctions War have already deepened the crisis of capitalist world economy as it has resulted in a dramatic increase of energy and food prices.²⁸ Bill Dudley, the former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, warned that a recession was now “*virtually inevitable*”.²⁹

The UN’s *Food and Agriculture Organization* (FAO) said its Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in international prices for a basket of commodities, averaged



Publications of the RCIT

Syria and Great Power Rivalry: The Failure of the „Left“

By Michael Pröbsting, April 2018

*The bleeding Syrian Revolution and the recent Escalation
of Inter-Imperialist Rivalry between the US and Russia –
A Marxist Critique of Social Democracy, Stalinism and Centrism*

Introduction * The liberation struggle of the Syrian people against Assad retains its just character * Against all imperialist aggressors! * Old and new Great Powers * The Ex-Stalinist turned social democrats: “God save the United Nations” * The Stalinists (and some caricatures in Trotskyist camouflage): social-imperialist servants of Assad and Putin * The Morenoite LIT, UIT and FLTI: the heart on the right place but not their brains * CWI and FT: failure to understand the imperialist nature of China and Russia * CWI / SWP(UK) / FT: refusing to support the Syrian Revolution * Conclusion * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

159.3 points last month, up 12.6% from February. As it is, the February index was the highest level since its inception in 1990.³⁰ Global wheat prices have increased 21%, barley 33% and some fertilizers 40%. Likewise, oil and gas are skyrocketing – energy prices in Europe are nearly 45% higher in March compared with a year earlier. This has pushed inflation in Europe to levels not seen in four decades, with prices in the 19 countries that use the euro soaring 7.5%.³¹

However, it is the countries of the Global South which will be worst effected by the consequences of this crisis. The FAO reports that the food crisis is at its most acute in Africa, where at least 14 countries import half or more of their wheat from Russia and Ukraine. And the International Committee of the Red Cross warns that some 346 million people in Africa are suffering from “alarming” hunger.³²

It is likely that Western sanctions are provoking a recession in Russia with experts predicting a possible sharp decline of its economy. According to the latest forecast of the World Bank predicts that Russia’s economy will contract by 11.2% in 2022 and Ukraine’s by 45%.³³

Russia’s resilience against Western sanctions

However, Russia is an imperialist Great Power and, hence, it has various means to withstand the pressure from its Western rivals. To the surprise of Western commentators, Russia’s Ruble – after a dramatic slump by more than 70% in the first weeks after the beginning of the invasion³⁴ – has recovered its pre-war level. Likewise, Moscow stock exchange did stabilize. Furthermore, inflation is increasing but not dramatically. *The Economist* – a leading publication of Western monopoly bourgeoisie and certainly above suspicion of any sympathy for the Putin regime – reports: “*And though it is early days, there is little evidence yet of a big hit to economic activity. According to an estimate using internet-search data produced by the OECD, a rich-country think-tank, Russia’s GDP in the week to March 26th was about 5% higher than the year before. Other “real-time” data gathered by The Economist, such as electricity consumption and railway loadings of goods, are holding up. A spending tracker produced by Sberbank, Russia’s largest lender, is slightly up year on year. Part of this reflects people stockpiling goods before prices rise: spending on home appliances is especially strong. But spending on services has fallen only a bit, and remains far healthier than it was during much of the pandemic.*”³⁵

Even if Russia’s economy is expected to shrink this year, its revenues from energy exports are actually increasing. The Russian finance ministry said on April 5 that Moscow expects to earn \$9.6 billion in additional revenue from energy sales in April alone thanks to high oil prices, which remain around \$100 a barrel.³⁶

Furthermore, as an imperialist power, Russia seems also to be able to push Western buyers of its exports to pay in Ruble. It has also agreed since some time with various countries, resp. is in process of agreeing, a financial transaction mechanism which allows it to avoid the US-Dollar.³⁷ Naturally, China plays a crucial role since it is both the largest resp. second-largest economy in the world (depending on the calculation method) and Moscow’s most important strategic ally. China is the country that imports most from Russia, and the one that exports most to Russia.

Russia seems to be able to offset – at least partly – the effects of Western sanctions by expanding its trade with China and other states. According to official data from Beijing, China’s overall trade with Russia increased 12.76% in March to \$11.67 billion and jumped 30.45% in the first quarter from the same period last year.³⁸

It is also an important development that India, which has been an important ally of US imperialism in the last decade (e.g. as a participant in the so-called “Quad” with the U.S., Japan and Australia), not only ignores Western sanctions against Russia but has also massively increased its purchase of Russian crude oil. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, India has purchased 13 million barrels of oil from Russia compared with just under 16 million for all of 2021.³⁹

Who blinks first?

In this context, it is important to recognize that it is only the Western world (U.S., Canada, Western Europe, Japan, South Korea and Australia) which have imposed sanctions against Russia. The rest of the world has not – despite massive pressure from the Western imperialists. Even some commentators of the mainstream media of Western monopoly bourgeoisie are noting this. Bloomberg’s Pankaj Mishra wrote that “*a large group of nations look ready to sit out of the new Cold War between a hastily reunited West and Russia.*” He concluded: “*The following trends are only set to intensify: opportunistic non-alignment, de-democratization, de-dollarization of the international financial system and de-Americanization of the globe.*” And Ed Luce commented in the *Financial Times*: “*Most of the world is on the sidelines waiting to see which way [the conflict] goes. (...) Not for the first time, the west is mistaking its own unity for a global consensus. ... Much of the world resents western sanctions.*”⁴⁰

This development reflects the end of global hegemony by the Western powers – something which the RCIT has repeatedly emphasized in its works on imperialism in the past decade.

In summary, it seems that both camps are determined to strike a strategic blow against their rival. Both are strong enough to take blows and to deliver massive strikes against their opponent. However, the ability to take blows is not without limitation. If Europe imposes a total boycott against Russian oil and gas and China, India and other states do not massively support Moscow, it could provoke a major economic and political crisis for the Putin regime. At the same time, it is very likely that such a total boycott by the EU would provoke a massive economic crisis in their own countries with devastating social consequences for the popular masses.

In the end, the decisive question is not only, which side can deliver a stronger hit against the rival. It is even more important, which side is politically stronger in taking blows. The Putin regime seems to have succeeded until now in winning large sectors of the population for its chauvinist narrative of waging a defensive battle against NATO. If it can keep this ideological hegemony at home via its state-controlled media and state apparatus, it could sustain a full-blown economic offensive of the Western powers.

On the other hand, it is questionable if the European Union could politically survive a massive economic and social crisis provoked by its sanctions policy against Rus-

sia – even if such a recession would be much less severe than that in Russia. Germany’s economics minister, Robert Habeck, said recently his country would not be able to wean itself off Russian gas until at least 2024. If an embargo on Russian gas went into effect now, Germany’s GDP could contract by as much as 5%, according to Habeck.⁴¹

Another economic expert described the consequences of a boycott of Russian gas as follows. “It’s possible to switch and cut out Russian gas use, but it’s a wartime mentality. It will be like the Berlin Luftbrücke all over again.”⁴²

In this context it is crucial to keep in mind that the EU governments have only partially succeeded in winning their population for their turn towards militarism and anti-Russian chauvinism. Naturally, the masses sympathize with the suffering of the Ukrainian people. But this does not mean that they support an aggressive foreign policy. The electoral victory of Orbán in Hungary and the strong electoral results for Anti-EU candidates at the first round of the French Presidential elections show such lack of hegemony by the political elite of the EU.

A recent poll among Germany’s youth and young adults (14-29 years) shows that the majority fears a war which could affect their country. Despite the near unanimity of the political establishment in supporting a substantial increase of the military budget, a sizeable minority is opposed to this. (43% are in favor and 22% opposed.) Only 18% support the introduction of military conscription (with 50% against).⁴³ In short, Germany’s youth is certainly not ready for an imperialist war!

However, even if the governments of the Great Powers do not intend starting direct military confrontation by now, there is a realistic danger that the current diplomatic and economic war can easily change into a military confrontation. In other words, it could open a devastating conflict of nuclear-armed powers, i.e. World War III. NATO might decide at some point that it should directly intervene in the Ukraine with its armed forces. In such a situation, a direct confrontation with Russia is nearly unavoidable.

In fact, there is an increasing number of policy experts in the West who advocate a direct military intervention of NATO in the Ukraine War.⁴⁴

However, such a confrontation could already take place before. Moscow’s ambassador to Washington, Anatoly

Antonov, warned the West about sending arms to the Ukraine in a recent interview with Newsweek. “We warn that such actions are dangerous and provocative as they are directed against our state. They can lead the U.S. and the Russian Federation onto the path of direct military confrontation. Any supply of weapons and military equipment from the West, performed by transport convoys through the territory of Ukraine, is a legitimate military target for our Armed Forces.”⁴⁵

For all these reasons, it is our assessment that the U.S., the European powers as well as Russia are heading towards a major collision. Everyone risks a lot. All participants calculate that the rival will blink first. We will see major political crisis in one or more of these imperialist states. And may be neither will blink first ... and we see the opening act of World War III. No doubt we are living in the midst of a watershed moment of modern history!

In this context, we repeat that a direct military intervention of NATO in the Ukraine War would most likely change its character. In our War Manifesto we wrote: “This combined and contradictor character of the war in the Ukraine and the global tensions between the Great Powers can provoke a change in the nature of the war. It can transform its character from a just war of national defense into an inter-imperialist proxy war. If such a transformation would take place, revolutionaries would be obligated to change their tactics and to stand for the defeat of Russian imperialism as well as of the pro-Western imperialist proxy in Kyiv. But this is only a possibility in the future and revolutionaries base their strategy on the facts of today and not on speculations about tomorrow.”⁴⁶

The threat to the global financial order dominated by the US-Dollar

The U.S. is determined to escalate the political and economic offensive against Russia – even more so as it is much less dependent on Moscow’s exports. However, it would be utterly wrong to believe that the current escalation of the inter-imperialist is without major risks for U.S. imperialism. Yes, on one hand, Washington could strengthen its position vis-à-vis the European powers. But, on the other hand, its unprecedented aggressive sanctions policy endangers its long-time hegemony in the financial and currency sector.



Publications of the RCIT

The Inter-Imperialist Cold War between the US and China

By Michael Pröbsting, March 2021

A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format

Introduction * A symbolic public row * Two thieves as upholders of moral standards * Escalating the conflict between China and Japan * The Quad Summit * Inter-Imperialist tensions in the Taiwan Strait * Unavoidable continuation and acceleration of inter-imperialist rivalry * Continuing doing business * Towards escalation on the Korean Peninsula? * “Fuck the EU” and Russia, again? * Confirmation of the Marxist analysis * Footnotes

The weaponization of the U.S. currency and the massive seizure – one could say expropriation – of Russian foreign assets by its Western rivals pushes not only Moscow to look for global economic and financial operations outside of Western-dominated institutions. It is also a warning signal for other states that Washington could seize their assets at the moment their interests collide with those of the U.S. In the past decade, we did already observe a trend away from the US-Dollar. More recently, Saudi-Arabia agreed with Beijing to partly use the Chinese Renminbi in their oil trade. It is unavoidable that this trend will now accelerate. Furthermore, one can expect that some of those states which have major financial assets in the U.S. (e.g. China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, UAE) will look to reduce these and to move them outside of Washington's reach.

Zoltan Pozsar, a former Federal Reserve and U.S. Treasury Department official, and now Credit Suisse Global Head of Short-Term Interest Rate Strategy based in New York, believes that we are witnessing the end of the current world monetary order. The leading financial expert wrote that *"this crisis is not like anything we have seen since President Nixon took the U.S. dollar off gold in 1971 (...) When this crisis is over, the U.S. dollar should be much weaker."* He added: *"We are witnessing the birth of Bretton Woods III – a new world (monetary) order centered around commodity-based currencies in the East that will likely weaken the Eurodollar system and also contribute to inflationary forces in the West."*⁴⁷

In other words, Washington's aggressive anti-Russian sanctions policy could provoke the end of the era of US-Dollar hegemony.

At the beginning of a new global wave of mass uprisings

The current world political crisis has major implications for the global class struggle. First, because the Ukrainian people are waging a heroic resistance struggle against a major imperialist power. If they are successful, they could be an inspiring example for many other oppressed people. Second, as mentioned above, the Second Slump in the period of Great Depression sends energy and food prices soaring. This provokes massive social crisis all over the world – most importantly in the semi-colonial countries of the Global South. We did already see mass protests in Sri Lanka⁴⁸, Peru⁴⁹ and other countries. The regimes try to suppress these protests by declaring state of emergencies. However, as we said in our statement on Sri Lanka: *"Given the deep political and economic crisis of the capitalist world order, we are convinced that the explosive developments in Sri Lanka are a harbinger of revolutionary upheavals in other countries."*

All these developments confirm the RCIT's analysis of the world situation which we outlined in a document half a year ago. We are living in a *pre-revolutionary phase* full of explosions – wars, revolutions and counterrevolutions.⁵⁰

The crisis of revolutionary leadership and the struggle against social-imperialism, social-pacifism and imperialist economism

The global political tornado of the current world situation demonstrates painfully, once more, the deep crisis of revolutionary leadership. Irrespective of its abstract proclamations of socialism, anti-imperialism and internationalism, the vast majority of the self-proclaimed left-wing parties has proven completely incapable of joining the right side of the barricade of the class struggle. And, in a number of cases, such parties are even supporting the imperialist counterrevolution. In short, we see, once again, that the majority of the self-proclaimed socialist vanguard does not represent by any means a vanguard – neither practically in the international class struggle not ideologically in terms of outlining a revolutionary program.

Those forces who take a fundamentally correct approach by combining the defense of the Ukraine against Russian imperialism with a consistent defeatist program in the inter-imperialist rivalry are a clear minority among self-proclaimed socialist forces (and sometimes we see a lack of theoretical clarity and openness to opportunist deviations even among these comrades).⁵¹

Under such conditions, it is urgent that authentic socialists join forces and fight for a consistent internationalist and anti-imperialist orientation in order to build a revolutionary leadership for the masses.⁵²

In the last three months, the RCIT has elaborated in much detail a revolutionary critique of the political failure of the reformist and centrist left. At this place, we will not repeat this in much detail and refer readers to our respective documents.⁵³ We shall rather limit ourselves to a general characterization of the political nature of these failures.

Basically, we can identify three trends of reactionary policy in the current world situation. These three trends do not necessarily exclude each other. Support for Russian or EU imperialism is often combined with pacifist phrases. One can also find empty calls *"against war"* and *"for peace"* amongst those who defend the policy of imperialist economism by negating the progressive nature of the Ukraine resistance struggle against the Russian invasion. *"Violence is no solution!"* – this classic battle cry of the decadent middle class in the imperialist metropolises, summarizing its liberal philosophy orientated towards a comfortable live and career without many conflicts (except on Twitter and Facebook), is deeply rooted among the reformist left!

1) The first trend can be characterized as *social-imperialism* – this means direct or indirect support for an imperialist power. Here we can differentiate between the pro-Russian and the pro-EU social-imperialists. The formers are mainly the Russian KPRF and its international allies, numerous Bolivarian and Pan-Africanist parties, a number of pseudo-Trotskyist centrists, etc. The most important forces among the latter the parties of the ex-Stalinist *"European Left"* which advocate an independent foreign policy of EU imperialism or even participate in its government like in Spain. (e.g. LINKE in Germany, PCF in France, SYRIZA in Greece, IU and PCE in Spain)

2) The second trend can be characterized as *social-pacifism* – a policy which focuses on impotent calls for *"peace"* without combining the struggle against war with the struggle against its material basis – capitalism. Further-

more, nearly all pacifists – openly or concealed – deny the progressive nature of the resistance of the Ukrainian people against the Russian invasion. By opposing violence in general, the fail to differentiate between *progressive wars* of oppressed people which deserve the support of socialists and *reactionary wars* which socialists can not support. This petty-bourgeois policy is advocated by all kind of petty-bourgeois pacifists, Stalinists, reformists etc.

3) We call the third trend *imperialist economism* – a policy which denies the legitimate character of the struggle of the Ukrainian people fighting against national subjugation by an imperialist power. Proponents of this policy consider this just war as a negligible detail and subordinate it to the rivalry between the Great Powers. Among the parties advocating such a policy are various Stalinist parties close to the Greek KKE as well as by numerous Trotskyite centrists like the CWI, ISA, IMT, IST, PTS/FT etc.

Revolutionaries must strongly oppose such revisionist positions which objectively reflect the outlook of the vacillating progressive petty bourgeoisie – a social strata which lacks orientation and perspective in a world of capitalist decay and sharpened class contradictions, and which seeks support in one or the other imperialist power. The urgent task is to push back the influence of such opportunist forces within the workers and popular mass organizations. Revolutionaries have to explain the real nature of the current conflict and try to win activists of such parties to a consistent internationalist and anti-imperialist program.

Conclusions

We shall conclude this document by summarizing the results of our analysis in form of a few theses.

1. The Ukraine War and the escalating diplomatic and economic war between NATO and Russia represent a watershed moment in world politics and have opened a new phase. Their fundamental causes are the deep crisis of the capitalist world economy and the political regime of the ruling class – factors which spur chauvinism, militarism and Great Power rivalry. We are in the midst of a global political tornado and without a clear analysis of these events, socialists will be incapable of finding a correct orientation and fighting for a revolutionary strategy.

2. For these reasons, these conflicts are not temporary extraordinary events but rather long-lasting developments which will leave their mark on world politics in the coming period. This does not mean that there will be necessarily a permanent war in the Ukraine in the next years. But even if military activities will be interrupted by ceasefires, a stable and long-lasting peace in the Eurasian region is highly unlikely. We can rather expect crisis, explosions, and renewed wars in the Ukraine and/or in other neighboring countries of Russia. This is i) because of the desire of Russian imperialism to expand and consolidate its sphere of influence, ii) because of popular resistance against such policy of colonialism as well as iii) because of attempts of Western imperialism to push their rival back.

3. The RCIT – including its comrades in Russia and the Ukraine – has emphasized since the beginning of the war that the conflict has a *dual character*. The Ukraine War is an imperialist aggression of Russia against the Ukraine, a semi-colonial country. Hence, the war of defense of the Ukrainian people is a just struggle which deserves full support of socialists all over the world. This is why the RCIT has been engaged in practical solidarity work with the Ukrainian popular resistance since the beginning of the war (street demonstrations, “*Sunflower Convoy*” to the Ukraine with practical aid, etc., clandestine revolutionary propaganda in Russia and the Ukraine). At the same time, there is an escalating conflict between two imperialist

The Failure of the PTS/FT to Recognize China’s Capitalism

*** An analysis of the capitalist character of China’s State-Owned Enterprises and its political consequences**

*** Eclectic empiricism and the failure of the PTS/FT to recognize the imperialist character of China**

Two Essays by Michael Pröbsting (in English and Spanish language)

Order the pamphlets via our contact address: rcit@thecommunists.net

camps – NATO and Russia. In this conflict, socialists must not support any side. These two conflicts are related with each other but not identical. Hence, the RCIT advocates the policy of *revolutionary defensism* in the Ukraine War but *revolutionary defeatism* in the Great Power conflict. Equating one conflict with the other can only result in gross confusion and political disorientation.

4. Can the character of the Ukraine War change? Yes, this is possible. Most likely, this would be the case if NATO intervenes directly in the war (e.g. by sending troops). In such a case, the Ukrainian armed forces would be put under command of NATO and their struggle would become a proxy war for Western imperialism. In such a case, socialists could no longer support the Ukrainian war of defense and would have to take the same position which they take in the inter-imperialist conflict between NATO and Russia: revolutionary defeatism against both camps. However, this is a possible scenario for the future which might never occur.

5. The unprecedented escalation of the conflict between NATO and Russia – drastic financial and economic sanctions, rupture of diplomatic relations, etc. – changes the character of the Cold War between the imperialist camps. Before February 2022, there existed a Cold War with only a theoretical possibility of military clashes between the powers involved. Now, we have a Cold War which could become a Hot War. In other words, World War III has become a realistic danger.

6. There has been a visible shift within the political orientation of several imperialist powers. In Russia the bonapartist Putin regime has massively increased its authoritarian character and nearly liquidates all elements of bourgeois democracy. This is combined with a massive radicalization of its Great Russian chauvinism and militarism as well as a shift towards more state-capitalist regulation. In the U.S. we observe a consolidation of the monopoly bourgeoisie around the project of an aggressive global policy against Russia and China and by deepening its alliance with Western Europe and Japan (under Washington's leadership). Within the European Union, the ruling elite is also shifting towards a qualitatively more aggressive foreign policy against Russia combined with a massive armament program and the expansion of Chauvinist State Bonapartism.

7. Likewise, one can observe a shift in the relationship between several imperialist powers. In addition to the obvious acceleration of tensions between the Western powers and Russia, we see that the war has pushed the European Union into a closer alliance with the U.S. in which Washington has an undisputed leadership role. Likewise, it is highly likely that we will see a deepening of the already existing "strategic alliance" of Russia and China. Given the massive sanctions which Russia face, we see a development of this relationship with a clearer dominance by Beijing. Furthermore, India's alliance with the U.S. ("Quad") has suffered from Washington's aggressive sanctions policy. New Delhi does not only not join the sanctions but in fact sabotages these by massively increasing its import of Russian crude oil. This deal is being financed by the creation of a new Ruble-Rupee mechanism which contributes to the undermining of the hegemony of the US-Dollar. While these trends are obvious for now, in these times one cannot exclude ruptures and changes of

blocs – for example that Russia and China or the US and (parts of) the EU start to drift apart from each other.

8. A few months ago (in October-November 2021), we pointed to the trend towards a Second Slump within the Great Depression which began in autumn 2019. The war and the wave of sanctions have drastically accelerated the crisis of the capitalist world economy. This crisis results in global inflation as well as dramatic increase of energy and food prices. This in turn will provoke hunger crisis and unemployment around the globe. We therefore expect a series of popular uprisings on all continents – a development which started already in Sri Lanka, Peru and other countries.

9. Under such conditions, it is urgent that authentic socialists fight for a consistent internationalist and anti-imperialist orientation in order to build a revolutionary leadership for the masses. As a matter of fact, large sectors of self-proclaimed socialists are incapable of joining the right side of the barricade of the class struggle or, worse, they join the imperialist counterrevolution. Basically, we can identify three trends of reactionary policy in the current world situation: i) *social-imperialism*, i.e. direct or indirect support for an imperialist power (e.g. various Stalinist and Bolivarian parties supporting Russia; ex-Stalinist and left populist parties in Europe which support an independent foreign policy of EU imperialism or even participate in its government like in Spain); ii) *social-pacifism*, i.e. impotent calls for "peace" without combining the struggle against war with the struggle against its material basis – capitalism – and without differentiating between *progressive wars* of oppressed people which deserve the support of socialists (like the resistance of the Ukrainian people) and *reactionary wars* which socialists can not support (such a policy is advocated by all kind of petty-bourgeois pacifists, Stalinists, reformists etc.); iii) *imperialist economism*, i.e. denying the legitimate nature of the struggle of the Ukrainian people fighting against national subjugation by an imperialist power and subordinating this just war as a negligible detail to the rivalry between the Great Powers (such a position is supported by various Stalinist parties close to the Greek KKE as well as by numerous Trotskyite centrists like the CWI, ISA, IMT, IST, PTS/FT etc.). Revolutionaries must strongly oppose such revisionist positions and push back their influence within the workers and popular mass organizations. They must explain the real nature of the current conflict and try to win activists of such parties to a consistent internationalist and anti-imperialist program.

10. Comrades, brothers and sisters: prepare for catastrophes of all kinds! The coming months and years will see a series of Cold Wars, near wars and Hot Wars, of (pre-) revolutionary as well as counterrevolutionary developments. Arm yourself with the program of revolutionary socialism! Get organized, because as an individual, you can not change anything! Get organized, because as a collective we can withstand the reactionary pressure, fight with the masses for a better future and defeat the tyrants! Get organized by joining the RCIT in building a Revolutionary World Party!

Footnotes

1 On the decay of capitalism see e.g. Michael Pröbsting: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective*, RCIT Books, Vienna 2019, Chapter I, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>; by the same author: *The Catastrophic Failure of the Theory of "Catastrophism". On the Marxist Theory of Capitalist Breakdown and its Misinterpretation by the Partido Obrero (Argentina) and its "Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International"*, RCIT Pamphlet, May 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-catastrophic-failure-of-the-theory-of-catastrophism/>; *World Perspectives 2018: A World Pregnant with Wars and Popular Uprisings. Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries*, RCIT Books, Vienna 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2018/>; *The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*, RCIT Books, Vienna 2013, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-of-the-south/>; *World economy – heading to a new upswing?* (2009), in: *Fifth International*, Volume 3, No. 3, Autumn 2009, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-economy-crisis-2009/>; *Imperialism, Globalization and the Decline of Capitalism* (2008), in: Richard Brenner, Michael Pröbsting, Keith Spencer: *The Credit Crunch - A Marxist Analysis*, London 2008, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-and-globalization/>; *RCIT: Advancing Counterrevolution and Acceleration of Class Contradictions Mark the Opening of a New Political Phase. Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries* (January 2016), Chapter II and III, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 46, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2016/>.

2 The RCIT has published numerous documents about capitalism in Russia and its rise to an imperialist power. See on this e.g. several pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting: *The Peculiar Features of Russian Imperialism. A Study of Russia's Monopolies, Capital Export and Super-Exploitation in the Light of Marxist Theory*, 10 August 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-peculiar-features-of-russian-imperialism/>; by the same author: *Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power. On the Understanding and Misunderstanding of Today's Inter-Imperialist Rivalry in the Light of Lenin's Theory of Imperialism. Another Reply to Our Critics Who Deny Russia's*

Imperialist Character, August 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-theory-and-russia/>; *Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics*, 18 March 2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 21, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>; *Russian Imperialism and Its Monopolies*, in: *New Politics* Vol. XVIII No. 4, Whole Number 72, Winter 2022, https://newpol.org/issue_post/russian-imperialism-and-its-monopolies/; *Once Again on Russian Imperialism (Reply to Critics). A rebuttal of a theory which claims that Russia is not an imperialist state but would be rather "comparable to Brazil and Iran"*, 30 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/once-again-on-russian-imperialism-reply-to-critics/>. See various other RCIT documents on this issue at a special sub-page on the RCIT's website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>.

3 We refer readers to a special page on our website where currently about 60 RCIT documents on the current NATO-Russia conflict and the Ukraine War are compiled: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/compilation-of-documents-on-nato-russia-conflict/>. The most important documents are: *RCIT Manifesto: Ukraine War: A Turning Point of World Historic Significance. Socialists must combine the revolutionary defense of the Ukraine against Putin's invasion with the internationalist struggle against Russian as well as NATO and EU imperialism*, 1 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/manifesto-ukraine-war-a-turning-point-of-world-historic-significance/>; *RCIT: Ukraine War: An Action Program for Authentic Socialists*, 1 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/ukraine-war-an-action-program-for-authentic-socialists/>; *Medina Gunić: A new turning point in Russia's invasion of the Ukraine*, 25 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/a-new-turning-point-in-russia-s-invasion-of-the-ukraine/>; *RCIT: Down with Putin's Imperialist War against the Ukraine! Neither Russia nor NATO - against all imperialist powers! For an independent popular struggle to defend the Ukraine! For a workers government to defeat the Russian invaders! No to imperialist sanctions! For an independent socialist Ukraine!* 24 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/down-with-putin-s-imperialist-war-against-the-ukraine/>.

4 See on this the website of the *International Workers Aid* campaign (www.workers-aid.net) and the report about the first trip of the Sunflower Convoy in this Ukraine (www.workers-aid.net/convoy/updates).

5 Serhiy Kudelia: *Putin's Occupation Options for Ukraine: Keep or Trade?* PONARS Eurasia, April 4, 2022,

China: Restoration of Capitalism and Transformation into an Imperialist Power

A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power

By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)

Order the pamphlet via our contact address: rcit@thecommunists.net

<https://www.ponarseurasia.org/putins-occupation-options-for-ukraine-keep-or-trade/>

6 See on this Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development, 4 February 2022, <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5770>. For our analysis see Michael Pröbsting: The Significance of the Putin-Xi Meeting. Russia and China close ranks against their imperialist rivals, 5 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/significance-of-putin-xi-meeting/>

7 Paul Robinson: Russia at a turning point? Canadian Dimension, April 1, 2022, <https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/russia-at-a-turning-point>

8 Quoted in Paul Robinson: Russia at a turning point?

9 See on this e.g. chapter 5 and 6 in a pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting: Putin's Poodles (Apologies to All Dogs). The pro-Russian Stalinist parties and their arguments in the current NATO-Russia Conflict, 9 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/nato-russia-conflict-stalinism-as-putin-s-poodles/>.

10 Тимофей Сергейцев: Что Россия должна сделать с Украиной, 03.04.2022, <https://ria.ru/20220403/ukraina-1781469605.html>; an English translation is available here: Timofey Sergeytsev: What should Russia do with Ukraine? RIA Novosti, 3 April 2022, <https://cryptodriftng.substack.com/p/day-40-what-russia-should-do-with?s=r&fbclid=IwAR1P1VbCQvOIQcBKupt2KEKXOnc7EGihI9oyWm3qTccjIKRUzmb60fM-npxc> and <https://socialistincanada.ca/what-should-russia-do-with-ukraine/>. For our analysis see Michael Pröbsting: A Revealing Document of Great Russian Totalitarianism. Commentary on an article published by the Russian state-owned news agency RIA Novosti, 7 April 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/ria-novosti-great-russian-totalitarianism/>

11 Fyodor A. Lukyanov: The End of an Era, 01.03.2022, <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/the-end-of-an-era/>; see on this also Paul Goble: Russian Elite Divided on Strategy in Ukraine but Not on Kremlin Goals There, Minic Says, Staunton, April 1 2022, <https://windowoneurasia2.blogspot.com/2022/04/russian-elite-divided-on-strategy-in.html>

12 Andrey Sushentsov: Towards a 'Cold Peace' in Europe, Valdai Discussion Club, April 5, 2022, <https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/towards-a-cold-peace-in-europe/>

13 See on this e.g. John Helmer: The Russian Revolution Of 2022 – Capitalism in One Country, Dances With Bears, 10 April 2022, <http://johnhelmer.net/the-russian-revolution-of-2022-capitalism-in-one-country/print/>

14 See on this the RCIT's documents on the Global Trade War which have been compiled at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-global-trade-war/>.

15 The RCIT has dealt on numerous occasions with the inter-imperialist rivalry of the Great Powers. See e.g. RCIT: World Perspectives 2021-22: Entering a Pre-Revolutionary Global Situation, 22 August 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2021-22/>; see also our book by Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective, RCIT Books, Vienna 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>; see also the following works by the same author: "A Really Good Quarrel". US-China Alaska Meeting: The Inter-Imperialist Cold War Continues, 23 March 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/us-china-alaska-meeting-shows-continuation-of-inter-imperialist-cold-war/>; Servants of Two Masters. Stalinism and the New Cold War between Imperialist Great Powers in East and West, 10 July 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/servants-of-two-masters-stalinism-and-new-cold-war/>; for more works on this issue see these sub-pages: <https://www.thecommunists.net/>

<https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-global-trade-war/> and <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-global-trade-war/>

16 The RCIT has published numerous documents about capitalism in China and its transformation into a Great Power. See on this e.g. the above-mentioned book by Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry; see also by the same author an essay published in the second edition of *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism* (edited by Immanuel Ness and Zak Cope), Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020, https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-91206-6_179-1; China: An Imperialist Power ... Or Not Yet? A Theoretical Question with Very Practical Consequences! Continuing the Debate with Esteban Mercatante and the PTS/FT on China's class character and consequences for the revolutionary strategy, 22 January 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-imperialist-power-or-not-yet/>; China's transformation into an imperialist power. A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power (2012), in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 4, <http://www.thecommunists.net/publications/revcom-number-4>; How is it possible that some Marxists still Doubt that China has Become Capitalist? (A Critique of the PTS/FT), An analysis of the capitalist character of China's State-Owned Enterprises and its political consequences, 18 September 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/pts-ft-and-chinese-imperialism-2/>; Unable to See the Wood for the Trees (PTS/FT and China). Eclectic empiricism and the failure of the PTS/FT to recognize the imperialist character of China, 13 August 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/pts-ft-and-chinese-imperialism/>; China's Emergence as an Imperialist Power (Article in the US journal 'New Politics'), in: "New Politics", Summer 2014 (Vol:XV-1, Whole #: 57). See many more RCIT documents at a special sub-page on the RCIT's website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>.

17 See The Guardian, 26.3.2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/p/y5j65/sbl>

18 Bruno Mações: "Russia cannot afford to lose, so we need a kind of a victory": Sergey Karaganov on what Putin wants. A former adviser to the Kremlin explains how Russia views the war in Ukraine, fears over Nato and China, and the fate of liberalism. The New Statesman, April 2, 2022, <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/ukraine/2022/04/russia-cannot-afford-to-lose-so-we-need-a-kind-of-a-victory-sergey-karaganov-on-what-putin-wants>

19 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: "Maritime Freedom" – A Keyword of the U.S./NATO Warmongers. A leading representative of the U.S. Navy outlines a militaristic strategy against Russia and China, 5 July 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/maritime-freedom-a-keyword-of-the-u-s-nato-warmongers/>

20 All quotes from Kalyeena Makortoff: JP Morgan boss: US should take stronger stance over Russia, 4 Apr 2022 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/apr/04/jp-morgan-could-lose-up-to-1bn-through-exposure-to-russia-says-boss-jamie-dimon-ukraine>

21 Scott Simon: How should the U.S. handle China and Russia's growing alliance? April 9, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/09/1091859801/how-should-the-u-s-handle-china-and-russias-growing-alliance>

22 Ted Galen Carpenter: McCarthyism re-emerging stronger than ever in Ukraine policy debates, Responsible Statecraft, April 11, 2022, <https://responsiblerestatecraft.org/2022/04/11/mc-carthyism-re-emerging-stronger-than-ever-in-ukraine-policy-debates/>

23 Ma Jingjing: Russia likely to increase Chinese yuan holdings amid Western sanctions: analysts, Global Times, Apr 12, 2022, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1259102.shtml>

24 Adriel Kasonta: Cutting ties with Russia against Eu-

rope's interests, Asia Times, April 8, 2022, <https://asiatimes.com/2022/04/cutting-ties-with-russia-against-europes-interests/>

25 Thalif Deen: Russian Invasion Of Ukraine Triggers Rise In Military Spending In Europe, 8 April 2022, <https://www.eurasiareview.com/08042022-russian-invasion-of-ukraine-triggers-rise-in-military-spending-in-europe/>

26 The RCIT has dealt extensively with the concept of Chauvinist State Bonapartism in the context of the COVID Counterrevolution. We have published more than 100 pamphlets, essays, articles and statements plus a book which are all compiled at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>. In particular, we draw attention to our book by Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>.

27 Hubertus Bardt, Sandra Parthie, Christian Rusche: Europäische Wettbewerbsfähigkeit: Potenziale nutzen, um nachhaltig zu wachsen. Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft, IW-Report 12/2022. Köln, 25.03.2022, p. 5

28 The RCIT has analyzed the crisis of the capitalist world economy in much detail. The latest documents are compiled on a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-great-depression/>. We draw particular attention to the following documents: Michael Pröbsting: World Economy: The Second Slump Has Begun, 28 November 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/world-economy-the-second-slump-has-begun/>; by the same author: World Economy: Heading towards a Second Slump? 2 October 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/world-economy-heading-towards-a-second-slump/>; see also Chapter I and II in RCIT: World Perspectives 2021-22: Entering a Pre-Revolutionary Global Situation, 22 August 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2021-22/>; Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>; by the same author: Another Great Recession of the Capitalist World Economy Has Begun. The economic crisis is an important factor in the current dramatic shift in the world situation, 19 October 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/another-great-recession-of-the-capitalist-world-economy-hasbegun/>.

29 Bloomberg: Is a Recession Coming? The Fed Has Made It Inevitable, 29.03.2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-03-29/is-a-recession-coming-the-fed-has-made-it-inevitable>

30 Nicole Winfield: Food prices soar to record levels on Ukraine war disruptions, 8 April 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-business-health-europe-united-nations-fe2cc912195478f0dd861e6252c8f3b3>

31 Liz Alderman: Energy prices in Europe soar 45 percent as inflation hits another record, New York Times, 1 April 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/economy/eurozone-inflation.html>; see also Geoffrey Kaviti, Chinedu Asadu and Paul Wiseman: Russian war worsens fertilizer crunch, risking food supplies, 2022-04-12 <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-business-health-europe-c6a2d-11380d3cb0c48d4c22703d1954e>

32 Laura Zhou: Sri Lanka and other developing countries count cost of Ukraine war, 10 April 2022, https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3173516/sri-lanka-and-other-developing-countries-count-cost-ukraine?utm_source=rss_feed

33 Intellinews: Russia's economy to shrink by 11.2%, Ukraine's by 45%, says World Bank, April 11, 2022, <https://intellinews.com/russia-s-economy-to-shrink-by-11-2-ukraine-s-by-45-says-world-bank-240981/?source=russia>

34 Alexander Mihailov: Russian ruble's gold standard unlikely to last, 6 April 2022, <https://asiatimes.com/2022/04/russian-rubles-gold-standard-unlikely-to-last/>

35 The Economist: Wounded bear. Under unprecedented sanctions, how is the Russian economy faring? Better than you might think, 30 March 2022, <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2022/03/30/under-unprecedented-sanctions-how-is-the-russian-economy-faring>

36 Mark Trevelyan and Jacob Gronholt-Pedersen: Analysis: Even with sanctions, Russia can afford to feed its war machine, Reuters, April 12, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/even-with-sanctions-russia-can-afford-feed-its-war-machine-2022-04-12/>

37 The Russian government has already urged the BRICS group (Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa) to extend the use of national currencies for import-export operations and integrate payment systems. (Russia urges BRICS nations to integrate payment systems and cards, Al Jazeera, 9 April 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/9/russia-urges-brics-nations-to-integrate-payment-systems-and-cards>)

38 The Guardian: China's overall trade with Russia rose by more than 12% in March from a year earlier in dol-

The Rise of Russia as an Imperialist Great Power

- * **Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire**
- * **Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and Russia's Rise as a Great Power**

Two Pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)
Order the pamphlet via our contact address: rcit@thecommunists.net

lar terms, 13.4.2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/apr/13/russia-ukraine-war-latest-biden-accuses-putin-of-genocide-russia-building-up-troops-on-east-ern-border-satellite-images-show-live?page=with:block-6256672c8f087ec40b13f42d#block-6256672c8f087ec40b13f42d>

39 John P Ruehl: India proves isolating Russia isn't easy, 10 April 2022, <https://asiatimes.com/2022/04/india-proves-isolating-russia-isnt-easy/>

40 Daniel W. Drezner: How robust is the global opposition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine? Washington Post, March 30, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/03/29/how-robust-is-global-opposition-russias-invasion-ukraine/>

41 Dan De Luce: Can the U.S. really reduce the Russian ruble to rubble?, NBC News, April 9, 2022, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/short-term-russia-may-able-cope-sanctions-long-term-different-rcna22071>

42 Quoted in Ben Aris: An energy embargo on Russia would hurt Europe as much as Russia, Intellinews, April 1, 2022, <https://intellinews.com/an-energy-embargo-on-russia-would-hurt-europe-as-much-as-russia-240001/?source=russia>

43 Jan Kixmüller: Reaktion auf den Ukraine-Krieg Die Jugend in Deutschland steht unter Schock, 06.04.2022, https://www.tagesspiegel.de/wissen/reaktion-auf-den-ukraine-krieg-die-jugend-in-deutschland-steht-unter-schock/28229538.html?utm_source=pocket-newtab-global-de-DE

44 See e.g. "Intervention will not turn this local conflict into World War III. It runs the risk of causing a tactical nuclear attack on Ukraine, but this risk is limited given what any retaliation could mean for Russia. The West must therefore decide how long it will refrain from engagement and allow Russia to sow devastation in pursuing expansionist ambitions for fear of casualties or the bomb." (Limor Simhony: NATO Intervention in Ukraine Won't Spark World War III, Foreign Policy, April 1, 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/01/nato-intervention-in-ukraine-wont-spark-world-war-iii/>). For more examples see Daniel Larison: Military do-somethingism is running amok in Washington, Responsible Statecraft, April 8, 2022, <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/04/08/hunger-for-war-against-russia-in-ukraine-is-heating-up-in-washington/>; Tom Nagorski: Former CIA leader: Time for NATO to 'take more risks' in Ukraine, Grid, April 6, 2022, <https://www.grid.news/story/global/2022/04/06/former-cia-leader-time-for-nato-to-take-more-risks-in-ukraine/>

45 Tom O'Connor: Russia's Ambassador to U.S. Reveals Why Ukraine War Began, How It Could End, Newsweek, April 8, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/russias-ambassador-us-reveals-why-ukraine-war-began-how-it-could-end-1696596>; Russia Today: Russia-US 'military confrontation' possible – Moscow, 9 April 2022, <https://www.rt.com/russia/553584-antonov-confrontation-us-russia/>

[confrontation-us-russia/](https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/apr/13/russia-ukraine-war-latest-biden-accuses-putin-of-genocide-russia-building-up-troops-on-east-ern-border-satellite-images-show-live?page=with:block-6256672c8f087ec40b13f42d#block-6256672c8f087ec40b13f42d)

46 RCIT Manifesto: Ukraine War: A Turning Point of World Historic Significance. Socialists must combine the revolutionary defense of the Ukraine against Putin's invasion with the internationalist struggle against Russian as well as NATO and EU imperialism, 1 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/manifesto-ukraine-war-a-turning-point-of-world-historic-significance/>

47 Zoltan Pozsar: We are witnessing the birth of a new world monetary order, Credit Suisse, 21.03.2022, <https://www.credit-suisse.com/about-us/news/en/articles/news-and-expertise/we-are-witnessing-the-birth-of-a-new-world-monetary-order-202203.html>; David Hollerith: Why 'money will never be the same' after Russia-Ukraine, and Bitcoin may benefit, 8 March 2022, <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/money-will-never-be-the-same-after-russia-ukraine-and-bitcoin-could-benefit-170422659.html>

48 RCIT: Sri Lanka: Organize the Mass Struggle to Bring Down the Rajapakshe Regime! 3 April 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/sri-lanka-organize-the-mass-struggle-to-bring-down-the-rajapakshe-regime/>

49 Damián Quevedo: Perú, el populismo sin nafta de Castillo se cae a pedazos, abril 06, 2022, <https://convergenciadecombate.blogspot.com/2022/04/peru-el-populismo-sin-nafta-de-castillo.html>

50 See e.g. RCIT: World Perspectives 2021-22: Entering a Pre-Revolutionary Global Situation, 22 August 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2021-22/>

51 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: LIT-CI "Would Undoubtedly Defend Russia". Recent articles of LIT-CI reveal a dangerous step towards social-imperialism, 29 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/lit-ci-would-undoubtedly-defend-russia/>; by the same author: Is Russia "Dependent on Western Imperialism"? Critical remarks on the LIT-CI statement on the current NATO-Russia conflict, 14 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/critical-remarks-on-lit-ci-statement-on-the-current-nato-russia-conflict/>

52 See on this e.g. Ukraine War: Joint Statement of UIT-CI, LIT-CI and RCIT, 13 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/joint-statement-on-ukraine-war-13-3-2022/>; see also <https://uit-ci.org/index.php/2022/03/14/ukraine-international-appeal-by-various-organisations/?lang=en>

53 See the relevant RCIT documents on the left-wing parties faced with the current NATO-Russia conflict and the Ukraine War at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/compilation-of-documents-on-nato-russia-conflict/>.

Two Pamphlets on the EU and Brexit

* **Marxism, European Union and Brexit**

* **The British Left and the EU-Referendum**

Written by Michael Pröbsting
(International Secretary of the RCIT)

Price for one pamphlet: 2 Pound (plus delivery charges)
Order the pamphlet via our contact addresses



What the RCIT Stands for

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a fighting organisation for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in various countries. The working class is the class of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labour power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, exploitation, are part of everyday life under capitalism as are the national oppression of migrants and nations and the oppression of women, young people and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and led by the working class, for she is the only class that has nothing to lose but their chains.

The revolution can not proceed peacefully because never before has a ruling class voluntarily surrendered their power. The road to liberation includes necessarily the armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasant republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in rank and file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods and schools – in councils. These councils elect and control the government and all other authorities and can always replace them.

Real socialism and communism has nothing to do with the so-called "real existing socialism" in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba or Eastern Europe. In these countries, a bureaucracy dominated and oppressed the proletariat.

The RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of workers and the oppressed. We combine this with a perspective of the overthrow of capitalism.

We work inside the trade unions and advocate class struggle, socialism and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is a layer which is connected with the state and capital via jobs and privileges. It is far from the interests and

living circumstances of the members. This bureaucracy's basis rests mainly on the top, privileged layers of the working class - the workers' aristocracy. The struggle for the liberation of the working class must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their upper strata.

The RCIT strives for unity in action with other organizations. However, we are aware that the policy of social democracy and the pseudo-revolutionary groups is dangerous and they ultimately represent an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class.

We fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. We fight for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

In a war between imperialist states (e.g. U.S., China, EU, Russia, Japan) we take a revolutionary defeatist position, i.e. we don't support neither side and advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class. In a war between an imperialist power (or its stooge) and a semi-colonial country we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed country.

The struggle against national and social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) must be led by the working class. We fight for revolutionary movements of the oppressed (women, youth, migrants etc.) based on the working class. We oppose the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism etc.) and strive to replace them by a revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class win. The construction of such a party and the conduct of a successful revolution as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky in Russia are a model for the revolutionary parties and revolutions also in the 21 Century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries! For a 5th Workers International on a revolutionary program! Join the RCIT!

No future without socialism!

No socialism without a revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

