

MATERIAL AND HISTORICAL CAUSES OF CURRENT MILITARY CONFLICTS

The determining causes of the events

As with Covid-19, many now strive to explain events and phenomena in the economic world – in production and circulation – by the war in Ukraine only and, as with Covid-19, this explanation is biased and misleading.

The same causes that necessarily impose war and destruction determine the wills, explanations and plans of the various individuals and groups that execute the actions that – independently of their own will and through results often contrary to those sought and beyond their control – end up realizing the conditions imposed by the material determinations.

If phenomenon A, the determinant of phenomenon B, also determines phenomenon C through which phenomenon B intensifies and acquires a certain form, what surprise can it produce and what doubt can there be that phenomenon A is the ultimate cause of both?

What historical processes determine the situation?

The center of gravity of world capitalism has been shifting and is shifting towards Asia (first the productive, then the commercial and finally the financial one), determining a gradual but inexorable loss of power of the winners of the 2nd world slaughter (USA in the first place).

The division of the world carried out at Yalta and Potsdam in 1945 among the victorious capitalist powers of the second world slaughter has long since ceased to correspond to the real balance of power between the various imperialisms.

The world order inaugurated with the atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, by the bombings of Dresden and Hamburg, on the ashes of the incineration on the war fronts and in the rear of tens of millions of workers throughout the world for the greater glory of capital, has expired.

The development of capitalism to all corners of the world and the volcano of production in Asia have plunged capitalism since 2008 into a great crisis of overproduction of which the episodes are following one after the other. This crisis of capitalist overproduction is sinking the rate of profit, sharpening the trade war and imposing the need for the destruction of the productive forces as a capitalist way out of the crisis.

Both the rupture of the division of the world and the crisis of relative overproduction of capitals lead the capitalist world towards imperialist war; it is not a question of the madness of one or another puppet but of the essence of the capitalist solution to the crisis: *"And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by **enforced DESTRUCTION of a mass of productive forces**; on the other, by the **CONQUEST of new markets, and by the more thorough EXPLOITATION of the old ones**. That is to say, **by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.**"* (Manifesto of the Communist Party).

Synthetic notes on the process of rupture of the world division and the crisis of overproduction

The victorious capitalist powers of the 2nd world slaughter (among them Russian imperialism, falsely called socialist) divided up Europe and the World. The period of post-war reconstruction lasted until the 1970s, in parallel with the development and culmination of the anti-colonial bourgeois revolutions in Asia (of which Maoism is just one expression) and Africa, culminating in the defeat of the US in Vietnam in 1975. At the end of this cycle, the first US trade deficit, the rupture of

the Bretton Woods agreements, the beginning of the fall in interest rates and the increase in US indebtedness signaled the first symptoms of the gradual decline of US imperialism.

From this moment the US tried to slow down capitalist development in Asia and Africa and their incorporation into the world market together with South America, fighting to block the interconnection and development of new capitalist areas (military coups in South America, overthrow of the Shah, Iraq-Iran war in 1980-1988, etc.).

But the capitalist powers defeated in the second world slaughter were recovering more quickly, having suffered greater destruction. German imperialism initiated the steps of its recovery with the ECSC (1951), the EEC and the EAEC (1957), with the objective shared with the French bourgeoisie that the third world war would not happen again in Europe. With the fall of false socialism in Russia (from 1989) and the crumbling of the Eastern capitalist bloc, the chains preventing the reunification of Germany and the imperialist recovery of its sphere of influence were broken. The other loser, Japan, managed to occupy the first 10 banks by assets in 1990 and to multiply by 10 the robotization of its industry in relation to the US and Germany.

The Iraq war (1990) was the US response to stop the "vanquished" threatening to dethrone it. By imposing the payment of war costs, with the contingency of Japanese production, it was imposed on a disarmed Japan to stew in the sauce of its own relative overproduction of capital. It did not work so well with Germany, which managed to impose the dismemberment of Yugoslavia (1991-1999), the creation of the EU (1993) and, after overcoming the attack on the European Monetary System in 1992, managed to launch its currency in 1999 in the financial markets to compete with the dollar as a hoarding currency and world currency.

In 2000 the ".coms" burst and the airlines went bankrupt in the US, and US imperialism proceeded to try the same recipe after the opportune self-attacks of 9/11 in 2001, with the invasion of Afghanistan. The failure of the attempt to take control of PDVSA in 2002 determined the US bourgeoisie to invade Iraq (2003) in order to unload the war on the rest of the competitors and to put oil at a price that would allow the launching of *fracking* gas and become a purely fossil fuel exporting country. But the high prices not only benefited the US, but also revived the Russian imperialist power from the disaster suffered in 1989.

In 2008, the crisis of relative overproduction of capital began in a general way, which has led world capitalism to witness the complete reversal of its parameters and coordinates for a not insignificant period of time (negative interest rates, trillions of dollars of debt with negative nominal yields, capital purchase and injection programs, etc.).

Twenty years after 2001, U.S. imperialism has not been able to maintain its positions and is withdrawing with its tail between its legs from Iraq and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Chinese capitalist imperialism is expanding throughout the world with the New Silk Road and European imperialism – which thought itself immune – is seeing with alarm how it is being displaced by Russia and China in Africa (withdrawal from the Sahel) and even from its backyard and area of influence (Eastern Europe and the Balkans).

It is in this context that the different capitalist imperialisms (USA, EU, China, Russia, etc.) are taking positions for this war through the multiple conflicts that are developing in the world (Ethiopia, Yemen, Taiwan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, etc.).

Any one of these conflicts can ignite the enormous powder keg of the multiplied accumulated war destructive capacity and **start the fire of the third world war.**

Scheme of exposition

In the following articles (*Rales and spasms of the capitalist mercantile circulation, Development of capital overproduction, World military effervescence, War in Ukraine and the economic sanctions, Against the imperialist war, revolutionary defeatism!*) we will detail the following process.

The **crisis of relative overproduction of capital** manifests itself in the most evident way in the enormous **injection of capital** that has produced **negative interest rates** (even nominal, but above all real, both bank and bond yields), a **swelling of both government and corporate debt** and in particular of **junk debt**, an **excess of liquidity** manifested by a plethora of capital, etc. that form the premises for the outbreak of a financial and industrial crash.

The **epileptic resumption of world circulation** after the lockdowns has generated a dichotomy of **overcrowding and undersupply** at the global level. This highlights the **anarchy of production** and, in turn, manifests itself simultaneously as a crisis of **overproduction of goods** that overcrowd before reaching their destination together with a **crisis of surplus productive overcapacity** in relation to the supply it receives.

This has meant the **de facto paralysis of part of the industrial production capacity** and the increase in prices of certain products, initially some of them of a secondary nature and then mainly of raw and auxiliary materials.

At the same time, OPEC+ has kept global **oil production below demand** and has **not yet recovered to the level of production** prior to the 2020 lockdowns. Oil was in free fall before the lockdowns and **its price is doomed to fall** because of the decision to drastically reduce the use of fossil fuels. However, there is no immediate replacement energy capacity and the onset of this transition has produced the opposite effect through a series of upheavals: the **price of oil has soared** and the **use of coal to generate electricity has broken its historical record.**

The shortage has reached the **commodity labor power**, either because of shortages in sectors such as road transport, or because of the refusal of many workers to return to work in the office, or because of the difficulty of travelling for immigrant workers. This has put upward pressure in certain sectors and areas on the wages of the lower categories.

A phenomenon to follow is how and to what extent the bourgeoisie has managed to transfer the **price increase of this part of constant capital** and, to a certain extent, of **variable capital** (wages) to the prices of final products (which have seen substantially smaller increases). One of the factors that historically slow down the **tendential fall of the rate of profit** is the devaluation of constant capital, we are witnessing a **substantial increase in the price of a part of constant capital** that stifles the profit of a whole series of productive sectors.

The US and European bourgeoisie were pumping more gasoline into the huge barrel of gunpowder accumulated, injection after injection, when the rising costs of energy and raw or auxiliary materials began to choke the profit margins of ever larger sectors of the bourgeoisie, while in certain sectors they were even forced to raise wages. While the stock market bubble

continued to swell to record highs, a substantial part of the companies was seeing their shares fall on the stock exchange.

In parallel, the **shift of capitalism's center of gravity towards Asia** continues. The congestion in the port of Los Angeles and in other Western ports is not only the product of the epileptic resumption but also of a **real increase in imports from Asia** to the US, a situation which has finally **collapsed the US trade balance** and turned it into an **imperialism which exports... empty containers!** The low interest rates, chronicled for more than a decade, have produced a tendency for **part of the speculative capital to move towards the financial markets of China** where the interest rate was higher. This is an additional reason for US capitalism to try to raise interest rates.

But the classic bourgeois recipe of **raising interest rates and ceasing to expand asset purchases would amplify the unmitigated outbreak of the crash** (not to mention ceasing to buy back debt in order to maintain accumulated balance sheets): the **depreciation of all speculative capital**, the **increase in the cost of debt refinancing** and the potential **bankruptcy of a whole series of States and companies** highly indebted.

Therefore, **the capitalist world was moving at a brisk pace during the year 2021 towards the outbreak of the financial and industrial crash**, on the basis of the productive overcapacity and overproduction of capital accumulated over the years, as well as the rales and spasms of the resumption of circulation after the lockdowns.

This leads to a series of **inevitable losses for the capitalist class as such**, but how much of it each capitalist has to bear is decided by **strength and cunning**: this is how it is determined **what part of capital will be destroyed or left unused**, what part will suffer a relative or temporary loss (Capital, Book III, Ch. XV).

The **balance of power between the different imperialisms** is no longer the same as it was in 1945, through a long process, and the **rupture of the division of the world** is manifested – without being exhaustive – in the US military withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan, in the genuflections and apologies to the Chinese government by US tycoons, in the direct delegations of US businessmen to China by-passing their government, in the expansion of China through the New Silk Road and its drilling of the backyards of Western imperialisms, the Russian military intervention on a global level, etc. And yet, **the previous division of the world has not disappeared all at once**, and various aspects of it are still in place. **A new division of the world can only be achieved through imperialist, commercial and military warfare.**

It is at the **intersection of these necessary processes** that the rest of the apparently accidental events take place, through which the underlying processes end up manifesting themselves and imposing themselves on material reality.

All this has been reflected on the political-military surface of the capitalist world in an **increase of military effervescence worldwide** with North Korea launching missiles on a weekly basis, China launching a hypersonic missile that literally went around the world, the increase of clashes and provocations in the Gulf of Aden, in the South China Sea, in the Black Sea, the expulsion of European imperialism from the Sahel and the intensification of the conflict in Ethiopia and Yemen, etc.

Following the **plan initiated in 2008** – which then proved unsuccessful in preventing the outbreak of the crisis – **the US**

has been building up a fortified powder keg in Ukraine, carrying out a series of summits and declarations of Western imperialism in the sense of reoccupying Crimea and part of the Donbas. This **has pushed Russian imperialism to attack first**, risking otherwise to see Ukraine reoccupy these territories. Two other factors have finally pushed Russia: the perspective of its **future weakening linked to the reduced use of fossil fuels** and the **emboldening produced by the US withdrawal** and its rapid victory in Kazakhstan.

But it is not only **strength** that counts but also **cunning**, and **Russian imperialism had been meticulously set up**, boosting its arrogance with threats of ridiculously inadequate sanctions while arming its regional rival to the teeth.

NATO and the US have taken direct military intervention out of the equation from the outset, refusing even to declare a no-fly zone. This is a sign of their relative weakness, but it is also a waiting game for a situation in which the bleeding out of the Russian army would allow them to act with a greater chance of success. **In no case we can exclude NATO military intervention** in Ukraine and the rest of the world.

Even once the attack by Russian imperialism had begun, the sanctions announced were timid and superficial in order to incite Russia to commit itself to a position from which it could not easily extricate itself. Then began what can be characterized as the **circumcentric attempt of U.S., European and Japanese imperialism to offload the losses of the financial-industrial crack concentrically on Russian imperialism**.

It is the attempt of US imperialism to generate a reciprocal destruction and bleeding between Ukraine and Russia as they did with Iraq-Iran from 1980 to 1988, to put Russia again through the debacle that followed 1989, to lock it into its relative overproduction as they then did with Japan from 1992 onwards, as they tried with China in 2020. It is the plan to **reignite the war in Europe** in order to carry out the destruction there or else to weaken the independent expectations of European imperialism, returning it to the lap of the USA and securing the exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the USA. European imperialism has been trying to avoid this situation, swimming between two waters, but its weakness on the military and cybernetic level, the drilling of its backyard by China with the low prices of its goods and its investment in infrastructures, as well as the irruption of the Russian bully at the edge of its borders, drastically diminish its room for maneuver. Just as a sector within the USA would be rather prone to attempt an alliance with Russia, so too within the European bourgeoisies there are sectors watching how their sacrifice is being prepared in case the conflict spreads from Ukraine to other neighboring states.

The repercussions of **this destruction and paralysis will not be limited to Russia**, but will reverberate throughout the capitalist world, because of its direct exposure to the Russian market and the fact that the origin of the crack is not in Russia. At the same time, this situation **throws Russia into the hands of China** and it will be **Chinese companies that will fill the vacuum left in the Russian market** by the flight of Western companies.

Two major imperialisms such as **China and India have refused to condemn Russian imperialism** and, in fact, are buying gas and oil from it at significant discounts.

The positions from which US, European and Japanese imperialism are shooting are the **predominance of the dollar and the euro in world trade**, its capability to **freeze funds**

and **transactions** in dollars, euros and yen, rendering half of the Russian reserves useless, its **control over the SWIFT payment system**, which is ten times larger than its Chinese equivalent.

Regardless of the immediate effects of Western imperialism's attempt, of its partial success or even if it backfires, the medium and long term consequences will be the **acceleration of the loss of the positions on which it currently relies**, i.e.: the **displacement of the dollar and the euro as currencies of hoarding and payment** by other currencies and especially by the yuan; the **displacement of its payment systems** by the Chinese alternative; the **displacement of the place of deposit and investment** by the Asian alternatives to it.

On the immediate level, **real interest rates remain negative** and the US interest rate curve remains between flat and inverted, with Western corporate profit margins narrowing and essential commodity inflation soaring, hitting the proletariat.

In any case, the destruction in Russia and Ukraine, even with the paralysis of part of world production due to the rise in the price of raw materials, **is not enough to overcome the crisis of world productive overcapacity**. The production volcano is in Asia and US imperialism **can only hope for a temporary relief if it does not extend this destruction to the Asian continent**.

Capitalism is advancing along the path of imperialist war towards the **third world war** in which the proletariat awaits the role of **cannon fodder** at the front and **exploitation flesh** in the rear if it does not arise – as a reaction against the war or from its development – the recovery of the class organizations of the proletariat, the **constitution of the proletariat in class for itself**, in **International Communist Party**, to **jugulate capitalism** by responding to its war with **revolutionary defeatism, rejecting any form of solidarity with the bourgeoisie itself and overthrowing it**.

THE CRISIS OF OVERPRODUCTION PRODUCES THE IMPERIALIST WAR

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