

On the relationship between imperialism and fascism during WWII.

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The aim of this article is to present in a short way the historical aspects of the relationship between imperialism and the fascist phenomenon that are important for the anti-imperialist movement.

What is fascism and how did it emerge historically?

Fascism (Italian fascismo, from fascio = bundle, a sheaf, league) is an ideological and political trend and system of government that emerged during the period of the general crisis of capitalism (after the victory of the first early socialist revolution, the Great October Revolution). It represents the interests of the most reactionary and aggressive forces of the imperialist bourgeoisie¹.

Fascist regimes were established in European countries during the inter-war period, notably in Italy, Spain and Germany. According to Georgi Dimitrov, "Fascism is not a form of state power "standing above both classes – the proletariat and the bourgeoisie," as Otto Bauer, for instance, has asserted. It is not "the revolt of the petty bourgeoisie which has captured the machinery of the state," as the British Socialist Brailsford declares. No, fascism is not a power standing above class, nor government of the petty bourgeoisie or the lumpen-proletariat over finance capital. Fascism is the power of finance capital itself. It is the organization of terrorist vengeance against the working class and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intelligentsia. In foreign policy, fascism is jingoism in its most brutal form, fomenting bestial hatred of other nations.... The development of fascism, and the fascist dictatorship itself, assume different forms in different countries, according to historical, social, and economic conditions and to the national peculiarities, and the international position of the given country."²

¹ Fascism, Dictionary of Philosophy, Ed. by I. Frolov. Progress Publishers 1984

² Georgi Dimitrov, "The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International," Main Report delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International – "The class character of fascism;" collected in VII

Wherever it comes to power, fascism imposes the terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary and aggressive forces of monopoly capital, for the preservation of the capitalist regime, for the strengthening of the forces of imperialist reaction and counter-revolution, against the popular democratic forces of anti-imperialism, social progress, revolution and socialism/communism.

Fascist ideology and practice are characterised by extremely aggressive anti-communism, claims to subjugate the working class, intolerance, nationalism, chauvinism, and racism.

The fascist mode of organising and exercising power involves the large-scale use of mechanisms of aggressive mass propaganda/manipulation, the most stringent control and repression of all aspects and manifestations of people's social and personal life, extreme forms of violence and police repression for the subjugation of the working class and of the people as a whole.

Historically, it emerged as an expedient set of methods and means for the ruling class to manage structural crises and to tame and oppress the labour movement, popular discontent, as a form of legitimisation of the aggressive use of state-monopoly methods of regulating the economy. It constitutes an effective form of militarisation of the capitalist economy and society as a whole, as a preparation for the effective involvement in aggressive war, for the achievement of imperialist grabs and conquests at the expense of rival imperialist powers, for the colonisation of countries and populations, for the crushing of anti-imperialist movements and of socialism.

Fascism rises and establishes itself by achieving, on the one hand, the pacification and subjugation of the people through terrorism and, on the other hand, the manipulation, political activation and mobilisation of significant sections of the popular masses, practising nationalist, xenophobic, racist and social demagogy in order to achieve the urgent strategic goals of the capitalist regime. The primary initial mass base of fascism is mainly the middle strata of capitalist society affected by the crisis, while it then recruits and enlists wider popular masses and even a section of the working class.

Fascist "movements" and regimes, despite their common characteristics, present certain differentiations and variations depending on the national and other historical peculiarities of their fields of application. A common feature is the association of fascism with the secret services of the bourgeois state, with the deep state, with paramilitary, organisations adjacent to the church, etc.

On the ideology of fascism.

What fascism projects as an ideological frame of reference is a system of irrational beliefs (fascist ideology), which eclectically extracts from various earlier reactionary ideological constructions and ideologies, such as colonial racism, irrational views (of the type of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Oswald Spengler and Giovanni Gentile), anti-Semitism, geopolitics, pan-Germanism, and so on³.

Fascist ideology focuses on ideas of the "greatness of the race", the mystification of "land and blood" ties, military expansionism, racial inequality, "class harmony", concepts of "popular community" and "corporatism"⁴, leadership ("the principle of the natural leader", the "furer", etc.). These ideas found formal expression in Nazism, as set out in Adolf Hitler's book 'Mein Kampf' (1925). The pompous demagogy of

Congress of the Communist International: Abridged Stenographic Report of Proceedings. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1939

³ See: Lukács, Georg Bernard. 1954. *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft*, Berlin; Wolin, Richard. 2006. *The Seduction of Unreason: Intellectual Romance with Fascism from Nietzsche to Postmodernism*. Princeton.

⁴ Corporatism, corporativism (from the Latin corpus = body).

fascism adopted elements of populism in order to capitalise on the popularity of socialist ideas among the masses and to turn them towards anti-socialism, anti-Sovietism and anti-communism.

Fascism as a form of state-monopoly imposition during the interwar period and WWII.

Fascism appeared as a counter-revolutionary reaction to the rise of the revolutionary movement after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Precursors of fascist regimes were the formations that emerged after the October Revolution, during the class "civil" war and foreign imperialist intervention in the territory that came under the control of the imperialist invaders and their local "white" collaborators and subordinates, until the latter were crushed by the revolutionary Red Army. Similar formations emerged during the invasion of the Japanese militarist regime in China, Korea, Indochina, etc.

The aggressive foreign policy of the fascist regimes established in a number of countries of capitalist Europe (Germany, Italy, Spain, etc.) eventually led to the Second World War (WWII). The fascist (anti-Soviet-anti-communist) aggressive "anti-Comintern" axis was formed under Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, militarist monarcho-fascist Japan and their allies. This axis, through the war it waged, became the mortal enemy not only of the USSR but of the whole of progressive humanity and, in particular, of the international revolutionary workers' movement. The fascist axis was crushed mainly by the Red Army of the Soviet Union, the People's Liberation Army of China, the Korean People's Army and the whole anti-fascist front movements led by the communists.

Fascism after WWII.

The crushing of fascist Germany and its allies by the forces of the anti-Hitler coalition in 1945 was a major defeat for fascism. After the WWII, fascism was temporarily weakened but not completely and permanently uprooted. Fascism reappeared in different historical forms in accordance with the changes in the structure, position and role of imperialism in the world balance of power, in accordance with the strategic and tactical aims of the financial oligarchy of the imperialist countries. These aspirations are connected with the victories and defeats of the early socialist revolutions and the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist movements internationally.

With the emergence of the camp of the early-socialist countries and the countries emerging from the victorious anti-imperialist movements, fascism, fascist-type "movements" and dictatorial regimes of various forms were promoted and imposed by the imperialist countries in collaboration with (or significant sections of) the local subservient ruling classes in the dependent, semi-independent and peripheral countries of the imperialist metropolitan centres. Long-lasting fascist regimes, such as those in the former colonial countries of Portugal and Spain established after the defeat of the democratic forces in the Spanish civil war, eventually collapsed and were replaced by systems of bourgeois parliamentarism - an intermediate form.

After WWII and the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Greece, a monarcho-fascist regime was imposed by the foreign intervention-occupation of Britain and the USA with their local collaborators, followed by short-lived pseudo-democratic regimes, and then by another openly fascist military junta imposed by the CIA, the USA and NATO (1967-1974). Fascist dictatorships were successively installed in a number of countries through imperialist interventions and coups: South Korea, South Vietnam, Turkey, Iran, Indonesia, Pakistan and a number of other countries in South America, Asia and Africa.

Fascism today as an instrument of transnational-monopoly imposition.

We should examine the current forms of instrumentalisation of fascism in relation to the era, the current stage of imperialism, its structural crisis and the context of WWIII.

The bourgeois counter-revolutions in the USSR and in the early socialist countries of Europe led to crude imperialist interventions in collaboration with sections of the newly formed local bourgeoisie, to civil wars, separatist nationalist movements, the fragmentation of countries, coups and a series of fascist-style dictatorships. Typical are the cases of the racist regimes of the three Baltic 'democracies', openly led for decades by the descendants and spiritual successors of Nazi collaborators, with the full support of the US-NATO-EU. These regimes have imposed apartheid on the 'non-natives', who are institutionally considered as 'non-citizens'...

Similar coup regimes were imposed in the states that emerged from the US-NATO-EU foreign intervention, the "civil war", the "colour revolutions" and the dissolution of Yugoslavia, but also in the formations that emerged from the counter-revolution and capitalist restoration in the USSR. Such was the "Black October" of 1993 in Russia under B. Yeltsin, the juntas in Georgia and especially the successive coups in Ukraine, culminating in 2014, which led to the imposition of an openly nazi-racist regime by the Euro-Atlantic axis and the unleashing of a genocidal war against the insubordinate population of south-eastern Ukraine.

Fascism is the spawn of capitalism in the stage of imperialism, it is its aggressive vanguard, especially today in the midst of the escalating WWIII.

The world capitalist system today *is not in the stage of 20th century imperialism, whose defining feature was state monopoly regulation at the level of the nation state*, a particular form of forced militarisation was the "classical" fascism of the inter-war period.

Today, we are *in the stage of transnational monopoly imposition*. This stage is characterised by the *attempt to completely subordinate humanity to the most powerful international multi-branch monopoly groups, to the most powerful in terms of capital, to the imperialist countries and their transnational organs. The sphere of circulation (export of goods and capital) no longer plays an important role in the structure of the relations of production of the present stage of imperialism. This role is now played by the sphere of production itself, distributed on a planetary scale and rooted in the technologies and organisation of this production*. At this stage, there are structural changes in the global and regional division of labour, changes in the positions and roles in the global production process, linked to the redefinition of the conditions and limits of the extensive and intensive development of capitalist production and the correlation of forces between imperialism, anti-imperialism and socialism.

The division of the world between the most powerful international multi-branch monopoly groups and between the most powerful imperialist countries in terms of capital (which are the main headquarters of these groups) on the basis of inequality and the extraction of monopoly super-profits on a global scale has been completed, while a rapid shift of power is taking place with the rapid progress of the PRC and the emergence of a new pole led by the latter and Russia (BRICS, etc.): the pole of the forces of socialism and anti-imperialism.

WWIII also escalates the consequent shrinking of the parasitic capacities of the pole of the traditional imperialist centres, which causes the increase of the aggressiveness of the axis of global imperialism led by the USA.

Therefore, *today, imperialism under the USA, despite the rampant push towards fascism in the countries of its territory, no longer has the need to establish outright fascist regimes in the frontline imperialist countries*

(as in inter-war Germany) with the claim to develop a military-industrial complex and armed forces competitive with those of the USA, independent and self-sufficient. This would challenge the de facto US hegemony in this axis.

Moreover, in contrast to the necessity of fascist/counter-revolutionary repression of the then strong revolutionary movement, the regime in the imperialist countries and the satellite countries of its near periphery today - seemingly, in the near future - succeeds in effectively manipulating the working class and the wider popular strata through consensual means and ways. This manipulation has now been consolidated through take-overs, corruption, fraud, demagoguery and the undermining of the workers' movement by its opportunist agents, but above all through atomisation and patterns of consumerism. The bourgeois regime achieves this by handing out crumbs of its parasitism, using the resources from the siphoning off of monopoly super-profits from around the world. It also achieves this through extreme alienation, individualism and competition, through the undermining of even the biological core of personality and the family, in combination with all the means and ways of undermining and invalidating the constitution of the revolutionary subject and the subject in general. As the imperialist countries are drastically cut off from their sources of parasitism throughout the world, the ability of the financial oligarchy to buy off, corrupt etc. the domestic working class at the trade union, ideological/political and cultural levels will also decrease. This will lead to a mass organic reintegration of the working class of the imperialist countries into the world revolutionary workers' movement - under conditions of weakening imperialism and strengthening the forces of socialism and anti-imperialism on the planet - and will put the late socialist revolutions in the imperialist metropolises on the agenda.

Fascism as a "tool" of proxy warfare.

Fascism instrumentalised, enabled and established by imperialism in the conditions of WWII has common elements, but is by no means identical with the fascism of the inter-war period, WWII and the 20th century as a whole.

Today's fascism is not "one of the same". It does not project - as it did in the past - the ideology and practice of guild/corporatism as an organic element of state monopoly regulation and the militarisation of the economy and society with fundamental reference to and application to the imperialist nation-state.

At the stage of transnational-monopoly imperialist imposition, the very instrumental use of fascism is subject to the transnational planning of the aggressor axis led by the USA.

Fascism today is even more deeply linked to the ideology and practices of extreme neo-liberalism, to the cannibalistic individualism of social Darwinism and to the poisonous whims of "desire" of "post-modern" irrationalism. Hence the combination of nationalism/racism and imperialist cosmopolitanism that characterises it.

Today, the US-NATO-EU imperialist axis is instrumentalising and "exporting" fascism and Nazism to install its subordinate regimes in countries that until the 1980s were part of the USSR, Yugoslavia or other countries that passed through phases of early socialism in Europe, South Korea, etc.

Fascism functions for modern imperialism as an instrumentally useful and expendable "strike force" in proxy wars against those who resist the continuation of its domination, against the forces of anti-imperialism and socialism in WWII. Entire countries and peoples are placed under brutal and open foreign management, turned into expendable "private military companies" of the aggressor Euro-Atlantic axis.

This is evident in the way the imperialists are treating the people of Ukraine today (as "cannon fodder") through the Kiev junta regime, against the people of the rebellious Donbass since 2014, and against Russia and its allies since 2022. The same fate awaits tomorrow the peoples of Poland, the Baltic States, South Korea, Taiwan, Greece and other Balkan countries, etc.

This is also evident in the actions of the Zionist racist formation of Israel, the war arm of the US-led Axis, which has been the brutal occupying power in Palestine for 7 decades, launching repeated genocidal operations against the Palestinian people, while acting as an aggressive imperialist bulwark and arm of the Axis in this strategically important region.

However, fascism was and remains the most consistent misanthropism and anti-communism, the most militant fighting force of counter-revolution, of the financial oligarchy of imperialism.

Therefore, as long as the deeper causes, the predatory imperialist interests and the guilty ones, the moral and physical perpetrators, those responsible for the re-emergence, the rise, the financing, the equipping, the training, etc. of today's nazi-fascists and brownshirts are not exposed, the abstract anti-fascism and anti-capitalism, however strong it may be, lacks a long-term perspective and strategic depth. The struggle against fascism must be consistent, patriotic and internationalist/anti-imperialist, aiming its arrows at the attacking imperialist axis led by the USA and at the reactionary policies of every government that, through NATO-EU, facilitates fascist actions and supports nazi-fascist regimes, such as those of Ukraine and the Zionist state of Israel.

The need to crush imperialism, whose tool is fascism.

War and fascism reproduce each other. A necessary condition for the working people's uprising is the destruction of both fascism and the imperialism that instrumentalises it when it's appropriate. They go together, one cannot be done without the other. Imperialism is the matrix that produces and reproduces fascism at every historical stage and in every era.

During WWII, the formation of an anti-fascist front at national and global level to crush the fascist/anti-communist/anti-Comintern axis was a strategic task. The USSR, the Third International and the global communist movement concentrated their forces on this task. The Soviet foreign policy and diplomacy exploited the inter-imperialist contradictions with extraordinary skill in order to divide the imperialist world of that time, to inactivate a significant part of the imperialist powers (M, Great Britain, USA, France, etc.) and to integrate them in the anti-fascist alliance against the axis.

Thus, during WWII, the strategically important frontal policy, the victorious policy of alliances, had to prioritise anti-fascism/anti-nazism and only through this to pursue the anti-imperialist and socialist aims of the communists.

As we have shown in previous writings, ***the character of the current war has some similarities, but it is qualitatively and essentially different from the two previous ones, due to the era, the context and the character of the powers that are de facto involved in it***⁵. Therefore, the attitude of the progressive, anti-imperialist and communist forces cannot be determined mechanistically, through metaphysical analogies, as if nothing had changed since 1914 or 1940 until today...

⁵ Cho Stephen, Coordinator of the Korean International Forum. On the "New Cold War", in: 'Platform' July 2023 № 8, pp 63-65; Patelis D. "On the current world situation and the tasks of the communist and anti-imperialist forces". Belgrade Conference: 2022.12.18. <https://wap21.org/?p=2149>

During WWII, inter-imperialist conflicts cannot play an important role due to tectonic rearrangements in the global balance of economic, political and military forces. Any continuation of the parasitic imperialist function of the Euro-Atlantic axis, any prolongation of its declining course requires, for existential reasons, the open consolidation and subordination of the former colonialist and the present neo-colonialist imperialist powers into a unified, united, aggressive axis led by the USA. This is evident in the imposition of ultimatums, the humiliation of the EU and Germany in terms of energy, etc. with new forms of cannibalism, economic and military strangulation and coercion by US imperialism (destruction of gas pipelines, de-industrialisation, subordination of the military-industrial complex to US purposes, increasingly direct involvement and transfer of the costs of supporting the nazi regime in Ukraine to the EU and NATO countries, etc.).

These conditions also radically change the character of today's fascism-nazism, transforming it into an instrument of war, intervention and coups d'état, into an "exportable" model of transnational monopoly imposition of regimes that act as subordinates, outposts and strike forces of the unique and deadly aggressive unified US-NATO-EU axis.

Therefore, ***in contrast to WWII, today, during WWII, the strategically important frontal policy, the victorious policy of alliances, must give priority to the consistent and militant anti-imperialism, to the prioritisation of the aggressor united US-NATO-EU axis as the №1 enemy of humanity, whose tool is the current versions of fascism. Therefore, it is only through the consistent frontal anti-imperialist struggle that anti-fascism/anti-nazism today gains meaning and is organically linked to the socialist aims of the communists.*** Those who do not put forward consistent anti-imperialism in today's struggle are objectively acting in a disorientating and undermining way.

The theoretical inability to diagnose the present era, the context and the de facto bipolar character of the war does not allow them to prioritise the aims of the movement rationally and effectively, making their - possibly pure - anti-fascist intentions rather fruitless. Behind this weakness lie versions of modern opportunism and the consequent revisionism that conflates the monopoly stage of capitalism with the character of the imperialist state.

The most consistent version of this deception is linked to the irrational metaphysical dogma/ideological construction of the "imperialist pyramid", which the current leadership of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) shamelessly promotes⁶. On the basis of this anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist deception, all existing states on the planet are projected as "more or less imperialist", fully and/or "in the making". Therefore, according to similar doctrines, today we do not have a singular WWII with many fronts/battlefields on the planet, but a multitude of conflicts of undefined character, "bourgeois settling of accounts between imperialists/bandits", so that both anti-fascism and anti-imperialism are practically undermined and devoid of meaning...

Many comrades have great difficulty in understanding the character of the war, comrades who - consciously or subconsciously - consider as "class betrayal" the assumption of the de facto coalescence of the other pole, the opposing pole, against the attacking imperialist axis under the USA, given that the new bourgeoisie of Russia, the spawn of the predatory capitalist restoration, is also participating in it. As we have shown, the Russian bourgeoisie would naturally want to become an organic part or competitor of the consolidated imperialism of the axis. However, the axis has left it no room for development in this direction, as it wanted and still wants to maintain Russia's position and role as an exporter of energy and raw materials to imperialism. They have been and are openly trying to weaken, disarm, fragment and completely

⁶ Patelis D. 10 commandments of the most volatile opportunism and revisionism, in: 'Platform' July 2023 № 2, pp 44-50. <https://waporgan.org/?p=2484>

enslave/colonise the territory of the former Soviet Union. Therefore, the Russian bourgeoisie did not declare war because they suddenly became anti-imperialist and pro-socialist. On the contrary, they were drawn into the war for existential reasons, with the well-known criminal ambivalence and bargaining they know from their own comprador service. Therefore, siding with the anti-imperialist and socialist pole in the war does not mean unconditional surrender to the Russian or any other bourgeoisie dragged into the conflict.

Moreover, and only because of certain variations of the specific historical peculiarities of the characteristics of the construction of early socialism (e.g. in China, the DPRK, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos), which do not conform to their preferred stereotype/example of "real socialism" (with some idealised phase of the course of the USSR before the counter-revolution/bourgeois restoration), they practically completely deny the existence of early socialism and imperialism on the planet (in full harmony with the revisionism of the current leadership of the KKE)!

The participation in the anti-fascist alliance of the imperialist frontline countries during WWII (as a result of the masterful policy and diplomacy of the USSR) is generally considered as tactically correct in every way. It is indeed grotesque that the same people, today, as WWII escalates, tremble at the thought of a country that the imperialists want to dismantle, conquer and completely colonise (for example, Russia) and countries to which their stereotypes do not allow "certificates of socialist purity" ..., joining the pole of the forces of anti-imperialism and socialism. What exactly are they afraid of? Not to be slandered by the professional disrupters/saboteurs of the movement, those who, in the name of "equal distances" and the nonsense of the "imperialist pyramid", justify the aggressor sole imperialist axis USA-NATO-EU?

Therefore, a superficial and ahistorical anti-fascism, detached from a consistent anti-imperialism and from the perspective of socialist revolution and communism, is without perspective during WWII.

There is an urgent need for a great front in which the unity of the people, the youth and the working class is forged against imperialism, for the defeat of NATO, the anti-people and anti-working-class policies of the governments that are the lackeys of imperialism, fascism, the state, deep state and transnational terrorism, with a view to the socialist revolution and the unification of humanity, communism.

During WWII, a coordinated anti-fascist action within the framework of a global militant anti-imperialist front with the communists at the forefront is necessary. Also necessary is the theoretical, ideological and practical struggle against the forces of opportunism and revisionism, which sow confusion and discord, which deny the necessity of a frontal anti-imperialist and anti-fascist struggle, which separate fascism from imperialism.

The mature offspring of this necessity is the World Anti-imperialist Platform, whose actions and influence are constantly increased⁷.

Understand fascism deeply, it will not die on its own, crush it!

DEATH TO FASCISM AND IMPERIALISM!

DEFEAT FOR THE CRIMINAL U.S.-NATO-EU IMPERIALIST AXIS!

VICTORY TO THE UNITED FORCES OF ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND SOCIALISM!

⁷ World Anti-imperialist Platform <https://wap21.org/>