

USA: Renewal of Workers' Initiative is Real

The working class stirs back into action the world over. In China, factory workers' resist their confinement in dormitories by employers, while workers push back in France against pension reforms. More recently in the US, labor actions in the logistical, automotive, and media sectors of the economy all attest to a new phase of the class struggle. This is characterized by an explosion in the number of workers' mobilizations, distinct from the last phase that began with the pandemic, whose hallmark was the asphyxiation of workers' struggles under the auspices of "public health". As yet, the offices of the state have confined the revival of workers' initiative to the corporatist "pens", that dismember workers' mobilizations via "rotation" strikes; strike calendars that alert bosses to mobilizations in advance; and "water-tight" seals between workers in different sectors and job-sites. It has also succeeded in channeling workers' resistance towards the defense of capitalism and its institutions. In short, workers are beginning to fight back, after experiencing a general decline of their living conditions, but their struggles are funneled back into the union framework, which is not only impotent to end their exploitation by capitalists but ensures their defeat in the class struggle by dividing them into industries, crafts, and specializations, as well as union/non-union.

In 2020, as the crisis of capitalism became apparent, it brought with it the subsequent revival of workers' combativity. Capitalism's recurrent crises are part of a cycle in which capital is accumulated—as, in fact, competition demands it must be—beyond capitalists' ability to maintain and expand it. The contradiction between inflated capital values and actual profits results in a contraction of profits for individual capitalists and produces a crisis in the whole economy. The subsequent disappearance of profitable investment opportunities within the productive sphere causes investment capital to flow into finance, instead. Indeed, financial profits make up an increasingly greater share of the income generated in the US, and this amount only continues to increase year after year. It is what today allows the high priests of capitalism to attribute the current crisis of capitalism to the financial uncertainty introduced by COVID-19, enabling states to weaponize the very real pandemic threat to justify the repression of workers' struggles on absurd legalistic grounds, while simultaneously decreeing stay-at-work orders that sent workers to be killed by the virus, on pain of hunger, in order to protect some capitalists' profits.

The Russo-Ukrainian War signaled an escalation of competition between states (imperialism), and consequently a deeper descent into barbarism for humanity. Attacks on workers' quality of life—aimed at increasing capitalist profits by reducing our income share in the economy—have been intensified as they start to be determined by the needs of capitalist rearmament. Tragically for workers, these needs now coincide with central banks' efforts to lower wages and raise unemployment in the name of curbing inflation, to meet the profit (and hence tax income) needs of a state preparing for generalized war. In short, governments attack the living standards of the workers at home with repression and austerity policies that gut social spending, justifying their assaults in the name of so-called "national defense", which has always been the defense of the bosses' political and economic regime, while they attack our working-class brothers and sisters in other countries with bullets and bombs! Experiencing such constant attacks on their living conditions, workers can only respond as they have so far: through class struggle.

But this revival in workers' combativity is quickly coming up against the institutions of the system, whose function in this situation is to prevent open class struggle from breaking out. In France, the struggle was subordinated to the unions and "socialist" parties, who channeled workers' energies and frustrations into "rotation" strikes and impotent "citizens' demonstrations" that accomplished nothing except to shore up support for capitalism and its organizations. The unions and "socialist" parties' domination over workers' struggles has had the effect, moreover, of disorienting workers ideologically by linking them to political programs for the revitalization of state capitalism. Their goal, besides power and the privileges it affords, is to help carry out capitalist rearmament under a "socialist" banner by branding initiatives that contribute to it, such as the nationalization of industries, as "socialist" or even revolutionary.

In the US, "reformer" union functionaries attempt to seize the opening that the current movement has presented them. They win union elections on the promise to be more combative and less compromising against the bosses. But the reformers' actions undermine their great promises. They advance a rancid union framework of pseudo-struggle that: a) routinizes workers' struggle to incorporate it into the management structure of capitalist exploitation, and b) paves the way, by securing labor peace, for capitalist rearmament. The strikes at Hunts Point Produce Market in 2021 and the Chevron Richmond refinery in 2022—where the contract brokered by the Biden administration, responding to the start of the Russo-Ukrainian War, was voted down—reveal the dynamic of this latest phase of the class struggle.

The revival of workers' combativity is a real phenomenon, but workers remain in the grip of capitalist institutions and limited to capitalist political horizons. This situation cannot be attributed solely to state and union efforts to sabotage workers' independent initiatives, at least entirely. Rather, the failure of these recent struggles in the US to go beyond the dimensions of legal, union-sanctioned action results from the absence of an alternative perspective within the movement. As capitalism's crisis worsens, more workers will be drawn to struggles, which will expand, becoming more frequent and forceful. Here, it is critical workers stand firm in their fighting and attempt to link the struggle for economic demands to the opposition to rearmament for capitalist wars in which working people will pay the entire balance.

US Capital on the World Imperialist Chessboard

Even the spokesmen of the bourgeoisie recognize that within the short-to-medium term, humanity faces the real possibility of a hot war between major imperialist powers. Capitalism, unable to overcome its profound crisis of profitability, compels states towards stronger competition with their rivals.

Imperialists are becoming desperate in overcoming that crisis; they are already broadcasting propaganda for a "good war" for democracy, preparing workers for their slaughter. There are no national solutions to overcome this congenital crisis. The solutions that capital proposes are militarization and war; capitalism opens the path towards world war. Only the working class led by a revolutionary organization can overthrow the capitalist system, bringing an end to imperialism.

Let's look at how "our" national imperialists, with the world's largest military budget behind them, contribute to this drive towards generalized war around the globe:

Israel and Palestine

The atrocious invasion of the Gaza Strip by the IDF was directly enabled by the US state. In the wake of the Hamas attack, the Biden administration gave Israel a blank check to attack with all means available to it: carpet bombing, sieging hospitals, blockading all aid for weeks. The message that the US is fully behind Israel's war is backed up by a \$14 billion military package to Israel and the deployment of two US aircraft carriers to be used as a club against any state that wants to join the fray.

This has had ripple effects across the Middle East. The conflict has strengthened Iran and brought their allies closer into an anti-US block. Iran's interest is in escalating this regional conflict to limit its own enemies and force its allies such as China, Russia and North Korea to give the Ayatollah's regime greater support.

The Abraham Accords, brokered by the US, normalized relations between Israel and Bahrain and the UAE, and talks were ongoing between Israel and Saudi Arabia until the conflict erupted. With fewer and fewer Arab countries supporting the creation of a Palestinian state, it was in the interests of both Hamas and Iran to break through this isolation. Iran is intending on Israel's indiscriminate slaughter of Palestinians and the impending refugee crisis to turn states such as Egypt away from the US. Additionally, in the aftermath of this latest imperialist butchery, proletarians both Jew and Arab are being mobilized around the national flag, taught by bloody massacres to run into the arms of their ruling classes, all too ready to sacrifice them in more slaughter. This all creates another flashpoint on capitalism's road to world war.

Saudi Arabia

The US is realizing it's not the only major imperialist power that has economic, political and military influence: its power is being checked even in countries that are its key allies, like Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is a major pillar of US imperialism, both militarily and in the extraction and sale of oil. Currently, other states are forced to purchase Saudi oil in USD, promoting dollar hegemony. However, there have been talks between Saudi Arabia and China in trading oil in the Chinese Yuan, which would pose a significant threat to US domination of the resource and region.

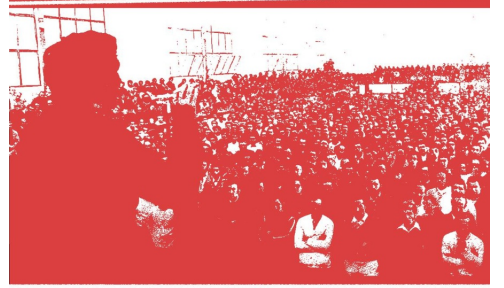
In May, China mediated the normalization of diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran. This weakens the US' anti-Iran bloc in the Middle East, and follows the US condemning Saudi Arabia's bombing and blockading of Yemen. It is still up for debate if the US will help Saudi Arabia develop their nuclear energy program. The Saudis, like any imperialists, have interests that go beyond their allies; their relationship with their western allies has become increasingly strained. They have been increasingly modernizing their economy for military preparedness in order to better maneuver in the imperialist arena for themselves.

Haiti

The US has invaded Haiti multiple times in history, most recently in 1995 and orchestrating a coup in 2004. As the social situation rapidly declines in Haiti, made worse by the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021 and with Port-au-Prince out of government control, the US state has been looking for a junior imperialist power to invade instead. The Biden administration tried foisting the task onto Canada, reasoning that the US is contributing a large amount of aid to Ukraine. Canada instead has utilized softer economic imperialist tactics, such as providing \$100 million for the state's policing and have sanctioned Haitians associated with gangs and assassination.

The US is interested in preventing Haitian asylum seekers from entering at all costs no

against rearmament, the state, the bosses' parties: the renewal of workers' initiative!



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matter how repressive the measures are. Already 200,000 Haitians have fled their homes, while workers are massacred daily by gangs and the national police. A multinational force led by Kenya is set for deployment at the start of 2024. Kenya's motivations are clear in leading the intervention; it gives them greater political and economic support in carrying out this favor for the US, showcases their military capabilities, and gets experience for any future war. Kenyan President Ruto has already received gratitude from Biden for leading the mission. Now, Haitian workers are in the crosshairs of both gangs and the Kenyan state.

Russia

The war in Ukraine has led to the consolidation of imperialist blocs, with NATO dominated by the US on one side, and Russia, junior partner to China, on the other. It is this war, since February 2022, that has opened capitalism's path to generalized imperialist war.

The war has led to the strengthening of the US bloc; Finland and Sweden moved to join NATO against Russia, and the USD is stronger due to military spending. The Biden administration has given Ukraine \$75 billion in military aid since the beginning of the war. The US' strategy in this war is to bleed Russia dry through the industrial slaughter of conscripted proletarians from Russia and Ukraine.

The Ukrainian state believes through continued western support that they can retake Crimea and the Donbass and are willing to feed workers to the meat grinder against the earthworks holding Russian territorial gains. Russia has only been able to offset the harsh sanctions imposed by the West through China and India's economic and diplomatic support. The US has been able to push Putin into implementing a regime of exception; the already worsening conditions for workers, coupled by martial law and conscription, is a gamble for the Russian bourgeoisie.

China

Biden and Secretary Blinken use every speech and press conference to underline China's threat to US imperialist interests. China's threat to US hegemony is greater than the USSR's which relied almost exclusively on its military capabilities. US-based military alliances with the intended purpose of containing China are multiplying, such as the trilateral security partnership "AUKUS" between the US, UK, and Australia and the "Quad", a security partnership between Australia, India, Japan and the US. Despite the US not recognizing Taiwan, it poses a major threat to China's strategic interest. Taiwan received \$345 million in funding for the first time through the "Foreign Military Financing Program" that's reserved for "sovereign states." The "Taiwan Enhanced Resilience Act" also authorizes \$2 billion in military grants for Taiwan until 2027. The US predicts a Chinese invasion of Taiwan this decade, prompting the CHIPS act to move semiconductor production away from Taiwan to the US, Europe and Vietnam which has recently upgraded its diplomatic status with the US.

Biden has pledged that in the event of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, the US military will

come to the defense of Taiwan. It is the struggle between the US and China for control over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and the world’s resources generally that presents the clearest path to a generalized imperialist war. The US and China are the poles around which are forming the battlelines for a new round of planetary destruction on a scale perhaps greater than the world wars of the last century. The US bourgeoisie, along with their European and pro-NATO allies, frame their imperialist dispute as one for democracy. This is a proven way to take workers off of their own class terrain to withstand declining living conditions, and march off for war to kill or be killed by other workers.

US capital divided on how best to plunder

The US ruling class is divided on its commitment in continuing aid for Ukraine. The Republican Party is the most divided on the subject of Ukraine, partly due to former president Donald Trump. This division led to the historic removal of speaker of the House McCarthy. He maintained spending for military aid for Ukraine in the bill to raise the debt ceiling, against the position of most republicans who had voted down further aid several times. This got the "neo conservatives" faction to support the Democratic party who they now see as the party of order best for US imperialism.

Despite the turmoil on the question of Ukraine, all camps of the American bourgeoisie are in favor of preparing the country for a struggle against its main imperialist rival, China. Biden's policies are a continuation of Trump's, especially regarding "economic nationalism" exemplified with the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and CHIPS Act. These acts are for contending with China in battery and semiconductor production and rearmament for military preparedness.

These major federal investments have their basis in the American state’s need for building an economy capable of fighting a generalized imperialist war. On August 16, 2022, Congress passed the IRA which includes investments for "Green energy", constructing new nuclear reactors and EV battery plants. OPEC continues to cut production despite US pressure, while US strategic oil reserves are the lowest they have been since the 1980s. The green paint splattered over the IRA really prepares the US economy for self-sufficiency in the case of war and further integrates the unions for this purpose. Green energy acts and curtailing "de-industrialization" have the blessing of the AFL-CIO which are state offices to maintain discipline in the face of increased unemployment, declining wages and living standards. This disciplining of our class will only heighten in the event that production serves any future “war effort.”

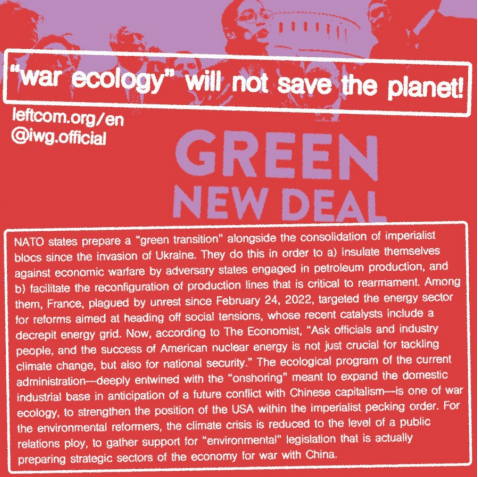
The IRA is part of the current project to revitalize American profits; aka, future revenue to fund war production. The state is shaken by the crisis stemming from the failure of capital to accumulate further exacerbated by Covid-19, the war in Ukraine and inflation further reducing anemic profits. These conditions have empowered the state to further

assaults on workers’ living standards in the name of defense. National defense was used as the reason when the Biden administration passed legislation preventing railroad workers from striking against declining wages and workplace safety protection; we can only expect to see more of this as we move closer to world war.

No matter what political divisions rack the American ruling class, no matter what program they put forth for social peace, the capitalists’ solutions are no solution for the working class. Our class, here and all over the world, can only expect more misery, slaughter, and the possibility of annihilation as capitalist imperialism threatens yet another world war. From the Straits of Taiwan to the Gaza Strip, the US is playing a key role in the strengthening of rival imperialist blocs. This can only be answered by the fight of the working class, who have nothing to gain from these deadly games, against the capitalist class in all countries and against the system of wage-labor itself.

No war but the class war!

Capitalism Promises Annihilation by Climate Catastrophe



Capitalism is killing the planet. July 2023 was the hottest month ever recorded, and the following months each set records as the hottest-ever August, September, etc. 2023 is on track to be the hottest year since records began, which fits the pattern of the last few decades where each year tends to top the previous in being the "hottest year ever".

The human effects, and repercussions on Earth's entire ecosystem, are enormous. Droughts multiply across the world, particular in already scorching regions like the Sahel in Africa. Adding on to shocks in food supply from the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, crop harvests come up short and bring mass famine in their wake for proletarians in countries like Afghanistan and Somalia. Extreme weather events are also multiplying in recent years, like the flood in Libya which produced a death toll of 20,000 people in August, the great majority we can assume to be members of our class. Floods in Pakistan displaced a sixth of the country's 200 million population in 2022. Refugees, proletarian migrants fleeing Central America, the Sahel, the Middle East, increasingly flee from inhospitable conditions produced by climate change, either directly or indirectly, such as the conflicts spawned by dwindling water sources. Wildfires in Canada

all throughout the summer brought clouds of smoke across vast swathes of the US, enshrouding cities like NYC in apocalyptic hazes.

Make no mistake about it, what we are currently experiencing is entirely in line with climate scientists' long held predictions, and in some cases has gone beyond them. We are at the stage of climate change where its effects are becoming generalized, hitting the proletariat first and the hardest. Additionally, beyond local disasters, we are now approaching the climate threshold where Earth's ecosystems begin to break down. The desertification of the Amazon, the collapse of the Atlantic wind currents, these are real possibilities this century or sooner. Humanity's survival, existentially threatened on one side by capitalism's march towards generalized imperialist war, is equally threatened on the other by climate breakdown brought on by capitalist production.

Who is to blame?

Let us not mince words. Capitalism is guilty for the climate crisis. It is a decadent, oppressive social system that lives thanks to not only the exploitation of the working class, but also thanks to the pillaging of the world's resources and destruction of its environments.

We do not pin the blame only on the multinational oil and gas companies like ExxonMobil, BP, or Gazprom. Neither do we lay the blame solely with "bad" politicians, those who accept bribes from these firms in return for lucrative contracts and climate-denialist rhetoric. These companies, the capitalists which manage them, have certainly got blood on their hands; they profit off of the extraction of the fossil fuels which go on to be burned and accelerate the heating of the planet, and certain (Exxon for instance) played major roles in suppressing scientific research about the real effects of CO2 emissions. The politicians who accept their bribes on the campaign trail to then oversee Earth's death by a thousand cuts while in office are equally to be condemned.

It would be an error to get caught up in blaming individuals, however. The entire system is to blame for climate change because the extraction, sale and use of oil, gas and other 'dirty' fuels is a vital component of world capital. Oil and gas are the literal fuels that world capital uses to power accumulation and profit generation in all other domains. It is not just that oil and gas directly take up large portions of certain states' GDPs, such as Russia, Saudi Arabia, or even the US where it is 8%. It is the fact that the vast majority of the rest of capital's (stagnating) economic growth is only possible thanks to oil and gas energy. So all the promises by left-wing factions within capital for a transition to "net-zero" emissions by 2030, or 2050, or whenever is far enough to not matter, are fantasies, if they are not outright lies. They would be removing the legs from economic growth which is unacceptable for capital. The only "success stories" in lowering emissions in the US and Europe are from the ruling classes of those countries relocating their polluting infrastructure to the shores of Africa, Asia and Latin America, for proletarians there to toil in.

This brings us to the wider picture, which is that capitalism is a system based on constant accumulation and generation of profits. The imperative is economic growth, which in turn means exploiting the working class to the hilt and acquiring raw materials at the cheapest price, while maximizing the amount of things produced. Besides the 'normal' degradation of living standards for workers, the result is a callous disregard for the environment and Earth's health, as these are non-concerns in the pursuit of profit. It is only to be expected then that capitalism's continued existence is synonymous with mass ecological destruction. With competition between leading imperialist powers accentuating since the War in Ukraine and

generalized imperialist war on the horizon, the tendency towards environmental destruction becomes even more pronounced.

Capital's "Solutions"

As capitalism is to blame for its climate crisis, all of its supposed "solutions" are either band-aids or have a more nefarious purpose.

Each year since 1995, the United Nations has held climate conferences (COPs) where the representatives of capital from each country go to make paper declarations about combatting climate change. These treaties are filled with cute words about reducing emissions by X year or supporting those affected by climate change, but they are unenforceable, given the competing imperialist interests at play. Heads of state cynically sign and parade these statements to give the system an ideological cover in front of the working class, that international progress is being made in fighting climate change, when nothing could be further from the truth. COP28 (hosted by the UAE who's bourgeoisie has enriched itself off of oil profits) is more of the same. No changes, just words.

What measures the bourgeoisie does implement to expand 'renewable' energy sectors of the economy, are undertaken in preparation for generalized imperialist war. The Biden administration's reduction of US dependence on OPEC has less to do with concern for CO2 emissions and more with a desire to grow a domestic energy infrastructure that can sustain a war with China. It is the same with the plans to open semiconductor plants powered by 'green' energy, and the same idea is behind the "Green New Deal". These are all measures designed to solidify capitalism in the face of resource depletion and the march towards war. Green capitalism is "war ecology", plain and simple. Our class will pay the price for all of it: from the extraction of raw materials like cobalt necessary to fund the so-called "green transition", to becoming tied to the state and unions in the new industries, and in the tried and tested sacrifice of the working class as cannon fodder for any future imperialist war.

Only One Solution: Proletarian Revolution

Environmental protests by young workers and students have been massive in recent years, fueled by rage at a system which condemns them to a future on an inhospitable planet. The scope, within the US and abroad, of the 2019 climate "strikes" testifies to the awareness by young workers of what is at stake: nothing less than humanity's survival. But one-day demonstrations, attended by politicians who represent this rotten system and led by organizations like Sunrise who conduct war ecology PR for these youth, will not halt capital's climate rampage.

No, only international proletarian revolution, led by the proletariat’s class party, and the creation of a global system of workers’ councils, present the escape from climate hell. The survival of our species demands a revival of the working class' combativity. That is, the connection of today's struggles with the vision of a future classless society that lives in ecological harmony with our planet. In this society production and distribution would be reorganized based on need, not profit, only then allowing for the international coordination necessary to overcome climate challenges. Communism would bring about the destruction of wasteful, polluting and destructive industries, such as the military, advertising, cash-crops, and all of the production that goes into them. Production would be sustainably increased to ensure access for all of the world’s population to the necessities of life. Climate refugees, rather than becoming the bogeyman for nationalist demagogues to divide the working class, would find refuge in a world that does not know borders.

Communism or extinction!

Who We Are

"The IWG stands for a global society where production is for need and not profit (and is therefore sustainable), where the state, national frontiers and money have been abolished, where collective power is exercised through class-wide organizations like workers' councils. This has to mean the active, daily participation of the majority aiming for the interests of all. Only then can the world be rid of the capitalist offspring of poverty, hunger, oppression and war: we call it communism but this vision has nothing in common with Stalinist state capitalism and the old USSR.

In order to get there we are working to create a world working class political organization - a 'party' for want of a better word - not a government in waiting but a guide in the struggle for a new world. We by no means claim to be that party but we do aim to be one of the elements which will need to come together in its formation. As the working class, the majority of the world's population, is more and more faced with the consequences of a crumbling capitalist system, it will have to unite and overthrow the capitalist system and its bloody imperialist appetites."

The Internationalist Workers’ Group is the US affiliate of the International Communist Tendency.

For more information about our organization and answers to frequently answered questions: <https://www.leftcom.org/en/about-us>

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