

Imperialism—and Imperialist War:

What is, and is not, its fundamental motivation, nature and role, and how it can be finally ended

In the previous message (Number Forty-One), I spoke to the reality of Japanese capitalism-imperialism, and the role of that imperialist country in the period leading into and during World War 2. The end of that second world war was marked by the atomic bombing of two Japanese cities by the U.S. Some people have argued that *racism* was the essential motivating factor in this horrific act of mass civilian slaughter—that these atomic bomb attacks were carried out because the Japanese people are not white. The fact is that, during the course of this war, Japanese people within the U.S. itself were subjected to terrible injustice (imprisoned in concentration camps, with their land and other property stolen) and crude racist depictions of Japanese people were a major feature of U.S. war propaganda. There is also little doubt that racism was *part* of the reason why, among far too many people in this country, the horrific atomic bomb attacks on Japanese cities were not only accepted but, to a sickening extent, *celebrated*.

Yet, this racism was *not* the *fundamental* reason these atomic bomb attacks were carried out.

It was fundamentally motivated by the needs and imperatives of U.S. capitalist imperialism. It was done as part of the moves to establish the USA as “Number One” coming out of that war—number one imperialist oppressor, number one in plundering and destroying people and the environment. It was a declaration of U.S. supremacy—and a warning—most of all to the then-socialist Soviet Union, which had actually been an ally of the U.S. during the war, but with the end of the war was once again regarded as an enemy which represented the main obstacle to American imperialist domination in the world.

It is definitely the case that the use of nuclear weapons, with the atomic bombing of Japanese cities, brought about a qualitatively new level and character to the destructiveness of war, and it ushered in a new, terrible era in human history. But the massive slaughter of civilians and destruction of cities, during World War 2 was not something that began with, or was limited to, the atomic bombing of Japan. For example, the massive fire-bombing of the German city of Dresden, by the U.S., also involved horrific slaughter of huge numbers of civilians.

The fact is that the development of the atomic bomb by the U.S. imperialists was initiated as a crucial means of gaining strategic superiority particularly over Germany, a *European* country. By the time the U.S. had developed the capacity to use the atomic bomb, Germany had already been defeated—and, if that had not been the case, no one can say that the U.S. would not have used the atomic bomb against Germany.

Since World War 2, there have been a number of occasions when U.S. war planners have drawn up plans to use nuclear weapons, even though that has not actually happened...so far. (Among other things, this was exposed through the work of Daniel Ellsberg. Ellsberg was a former military analyst for the U.S. government who, in 1971, through what became known as *The Pentagon Papers*, exposed the criminal nature of the war the U.S. was then waging in Vietnam. Ellsberg died recently, but before that he spent the last years of his life exposing, and warning against, the very real danger of nuclear war.)

It is the case that, once having used the atomic bomb against Japan—and never admitting, or thinking, that it was wrong to do so—the U.S. imperialists would have been likely to use nuclear weapons again—except for the fact that, not long after the end of World War 2, the Soviet Union also developed nuclear weapons, breaking the U.S. monopoly of those weapons, and creating the situation where considerations of nuclear warfare had to take into account the possibility of your own country being hit with nuclear attacks.

Still, there have been situations where the world has been brought very close to nuclear annihilation, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis in the early 1960s, when the U.S. and the Soviet Union went right to the brink of nuclear war. And, right now, the danger of war between nuclear armed imperialist powers is once again increasing, with the intensifying rivalry between the U.S. and China, and particularly now the war in Ukraine, which began with the invasion of Ukraine by Russia but quickly turned into a war in which the U.S. and Russia are (so far) indirectly fighting each other, with the U.S. (and its “allies” in NATO) heavily arming and essentially directing the Ukrainian forces, utilizing Ukrainian soldiers as “cannon fodder” in this war with Russia.

All this powerfully illustrates the literally life and death importance of my statement that:

We, the people of the world, can no longer afford to allow these imperialists to continue to dominate the world and determine the destiny of humanity. And it is a scientific fact that humanity does not have to live this way.

In order to no longer live this way, it is necessary to carry out a *thoroughgoing revolution*, to overthrow the system of capitalism-imperialism, and bring into being a radically different and much better system. A sweeping vision and concrete blueprint for that radically different and much better system is contained in the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, which I have authored. In this Constitution, the following is made very clear:

The New Socialist Republic in North America will not develop, and will not use, nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. It will wage a determined and many-sided struggle to rid the world of all such weapons—and it will do this as part of the larger, overall struggle to defeat and dismantle all imperialist and reactionary states and forces and to advance toward the achievement of communism, throughout the world, which will finally make it possible for the desires and dreams of countless human beings throughout history, and the fundamental interests of humanity, for a world without war, to at long last be realized.

This is not just a dream or simply a lofty aspiration. As I have spoken to throughout these messages (and in a concentrated way in numbers One through Eleven), **this is a rare time when the revolution to overthrow this system—yes, right in this powerful capitalist-imperialist country—is not only urgently necessary but is possible, and this revolution would make possible a crucial leap toward an emancipating future in which humanity can truly thrive, without the terrible suffering to which the masses of humanity are now subjected, and without the continual threat of nuclear annihilation.**



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