



**SPEECH TO THE 23rd IMCWP
COMMUNIST PARTY (Italy)**

Imperialism

It's widely known that NATO's member states – to which we can add Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand – are essentially dominated by US interests. For example, since 1947 Italy has always shown that it cannot take any diverging attitude from US interests, on pain of blackmail, pressure and even physical or political elimination.

This fact does not conceal the responsibilities of the national ruling classes. On the contrary. It relentlessly denounces them. This denunciation constitutes the creation of a political and ideological gap between the prevailing part of the national upper bourgeoisie, totally integrated into imperialist interests, and a large part of the petty and middle bourgeoisie that only gains disadvantage from that position, contrarily to what the case was in past decades and especially before the Ukrainian crisis.

Do we believe that socialism in a western country can be done *against* the vast middle class that is then in the process of losing prestige, political power and economic strength? Whether this situation can be described as “colonial”, “semi-colonial”, “vassalage”; it can be a matter for doctrinal debate. This propaganda can attract people, classes, groups that have so far looked to the self-styled “sovereignist” right and that can now open their eyes to the deception perpetrated by the representatives they have elected, consisting in a large part of the Italian working class voting and continuing to vote for reactionary right-wing parties, because of their disgust for the imperial left represented by the Democratic Party. This is the contrary of abdicating the project of socialism or of extending, with all the difficulties involved, the awareness of this *real* need among the broader masses.

What is imperialism and who is anti-imperialist?

Is it a fact that the US has categorised some countries as “rogues”? Is this only because of an inter-imperialist conflict? What are the parameters for classifying China, Russia and Iran as imperialist? Is Venezuela, with all its contradictions, an imperialist country? Do we also want to classify the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or that of Vietnam as imperialists? Where does this category stop?

Is it a fact that Iran is the one country that is the toughest bulwark against Zionism to be evaluated? Is it a fact that the capitalist front has cracked with the furious quarrel between the US and Saudi Arabia to be evaluated? Is it a fact that the US-led front is suffering blows one after the other to be evaluated? Is it necessary to recall Stalin's assessment of the Afghan conflict between the famous Emir and the British working class captive of British imperialism? Did Stalin confuse imperialism and anti-imperialism, too?¹

¹ The struggle that the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of Afghanistan is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the monarchist views of the Emir and his associates, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism; whereas the struggle waged by such “desperate” democrats and “Socialists,” “revolutionaries” and republicans as, for example, Kerensky and Tsereteli, Renaudel and Scheidemann, Chernov and Dan, Henderson and Clynes, during the imperialist war was a *reactionary* struggle, for its results was the embellishment, the strengthening, the victory, of imperialism. For the same reasons, the struggle that the Egyptians merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the bourgeois origin and



In Western Europe we have no Iranian, Chinese or Russian military bases, nor will we ever have them. We have no governments heterodirected except by the USA. The task of communists in Western Europe is to fight against their *own* imperialism, as Lenin taught us. Opportunism leads to an alliance with *its own* imperialism, as Kautsky did; we have to do just the *opposite*.

Popular feelings against US dominance in our countries are widespread in broad, even contradictory circles. The anti-Chinese and anti-Russian propaganda is overwhelming and it fuels the people's adherence to align themselves with imperialism in their own home country. Countering this propaganda, destroying the construction of the phantom "imperialist" dangers of China and Russia is the main aim of our propaganda.

The propaganda's vision of the pro-imperialist left that jointly denounces both NATO and China and Russia does nothing but fuelling confusion among the popular masses, leading them to a state of resignation ("they are all the same") that eventually leads to apathy and acceptance of the "inevitable" reality ("we're on this side, because on the other side it's the same or maybe even worse!").

The fact that Lenin wrote his immortal *Imperialism* in opposition to Kautsky, who had only identified the political and not the economic aspects (as Lenin explicitly warned us²), does not justify doing the exact opposite, i.e. obscuring the political aspects in order to assess *only* the economic ones.

We are familiar with the points listed by Lenin. There is no need to repeat them like a prayer. Instead, it is necessary to read Lenin in full and not extract two lines from a much more complex text. Read also the prefaces written later that outline Lenin's thinking not only during the war, but also and especially afterwards. The fact that Lenin in his 1920 *Preface*³ identifies only three "marauders" in the USA, Japan and Great Britain and no longer France, which came out battered from the previous world, not to mention Germany. All of this, it's indicative of Lenin's tactical pliability, combined with theoretical inflexibility.

bourgeois title of the leaders of Egyptian national movement, despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism; whereas the struggle that the British "Labour" Government is waging to preserve Egypt's dependent position is for the same reason a *reactionary* struggle, despite the proletarian origin and the proletarian title of the members of the government, despite the fact that they are "for" socialism. There is no need to mention the national movement in other, larger, colonial and dependent countries, such as India and China, every step of which along the road to liberation, even if it runs counter to the demands of formal democracy, is a steam-hammer blow at imperialism, i.e., is undoubtedly a *revolutionary* step. (Stalin, "VI. *The National Question*", in *The Foundations of Leninism*)

² Imperialism is the tendency to annexations: this is what the political part of the Kautskyan definition boils down to. It is accurate, but very incomplete, since, politically, imperialism means, in general, a tendency to violence and reaction. But here we are especially concerned with the economic side of the question, which Kautsky himself included in his definition. The errors in Kautsky's definition jump out at us. For imperialism it is not industrial capital that is characteristic, but financial capital. It is no coincidence that in France, in particular, the rapid growth of finance capital, while industrial capital declined from 1880 onwards, led to a great intensification of annexationist (colonial) politics. Characteristic of imperialism is precisely its eagerness not only to conquer agrarian territories, but also to lay its hands on heavily industrialised countries (Germany's lust for Belgium, France's lust for Lorraine), since in the first place the fact that the land is already partitioned forces, when a new partition is in progress to extend their hands over countries of all kinds, and, secondly, for imperialism is characteristic of the competition of certain great powers in the struggle for hegemony, i.e. for the conquest of land, directed not so much to their own benefit as to weaken their adversary and undermine his hegemony.) (Lenin, 'VII. *Imperialism, particular stage of capitalism*' in *Imperialism, supreme stage of capitalism*).

³ Capitalism has morphed into a world system of colonial oppression and financial iugulation of the overwhelming majority of the world's population by a handful of "advanced countries". And the partition of the "spoils" takes place between two or three marauders (England, America, Japan) of world power, armed from head to toe, who involve the whole world in their war, for the partition of their spoils). (Lenin, "*Preface to the 1920 French and German editions*" to *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*)



We don't mean that *all* second- or third-rate countries in the capitalistic world, as a whole, are victims of the former ones (or the former one), that the bourgeois class in the dependent countries do not find their own interests in part and therefore unwillingly submit. But, however, it is true that *within* all these countries there are classes that, by their position in the relations of production, are on the side of the exploiters but who, due to national and international relations, see their profits diminished or sometimes cancelled out. What kind of relationship is it supposed to be established with these classes?

As Engels says «According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimate* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Other than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into stating that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase.»⁴

The purpose of Lenin's writing cannot be rigidified within a formula that would be schematic, not to say mechanistic.

Step towards socialism

In a text wrote in September 1917⁵, i.e. in the era of the bourgeois republic that emerged from the February Revolution, Lenin clearly criticised the timidity on the part of the bourgeois government to take effective measures against the economic crisis that would challenge the interests of the capitalists. But there are some interesting passages.

In particular, Lenin admits the possibility of capitalist but not imperialist states⁶.

We can find one of Lenin's statement declaring that "monopoly capitalism" is a complete material preparation for socialism, the threshold of socialism, a step on the stairway of history between which and the step called socialism there are no intermediate steps. In fact he says:⁷

⁴ ... According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Other than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure — political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas — also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, of things and events whose inner interconnection is so remote or so impossible of proof that we can regard it as non-existent, as negligible), the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.. (F. Engels, *Letter to J. Bloch*, September 1890).

⁵ *The impending catastrophe and how to fight against it*, Lenin (1917)

⁶ The following objection might be raised: why do such advanced states as Germany and the U.S.A. "regulate economic life" so magnificently without even thinking of nationalising the banks? Because, we reply, *both* these states are not merely capitalist, but also imperialist states, although one of them is a monarchy and the other a republic. As such, they carry out the reforms they need by reactionary-bureaucratic methods, whereas we are speaking here of revolutionary-democratic methods. This "little difference" is of major importance. (*Ibidem*)

⁷ Everybody talks about imperialism. But imperialism is merely monopoly capitalism.

That capitalism in Russia has also become monopoly capitalism is sufficiently attested by the examples of the Prodigol, the Prodamet, the Sugar Syndicate, etc. This Sugar Syndicate is an object-lesson in the way monopoly capitalism develops into state-monopoly capitalism.

And what is the state? It is an organisation of the ruling class — in Germany, for instance, of the Junkers and capitalists. And therefore what the German Plekhanovs (Scheidemann, Lensch, and others) call "war-time socialism" is in fact war-



«Now try to *substitute* for the Junker-capitalist state, for the landowner-capitalist state, a *revolutionary-democratic* state, i.e., a state which in a revolutionary way abolishes all privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, and more than one step, towards socialism!»

For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. Or, in other words, socialism is merely state-capitalist monopoly *which is made to serve the interests of the whole people* and has to that extent *ceased* to be capitalist monopoly.»

The capitalistic monopoly Lenin refers to, it's the state capitalism of the bourgeois republic which, if implemented consistently, is precisely the *first step* which there is only socialism beyond it. So regarding Lenin's opinion indeed there are steps! There are intermediate stages, such as state capitalism, which by the way was what characterised the NEP, precisely defined by Lenin himself as state capitalism, an intermediate stage, obviously of necessity, between capitalism and socialism, where instruments of the previous relations of production are used, but which are no longer dominant

time state-monopoly capitalism, or, to put it more simply and clearly, war-time penal servitude for the workers and war-time protection for capitalist profits.

Now try to *substitute* for the Junker-capitalist state, for the landowner-capitalist state, a *revolutionary-democratic* state, i.e., a state which in a revolutionary way abolishes all privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, and more than one step, towards socialism!

For if a huge capitalist undertaking becomes a monopoly, it means that it serves the whole nation. If it has become a state monopoly, it means that the state (i.e., the armed organisation of the population, the workers and peasants above all, provided there is *revolutionary* democracy) directs the whole undertaking. In whose interest?

Either in the interest of the landowners and capitalists, in which case we have not a revolutionary-democratic, but a reactionary-bureaucratic state, an imperialist republic.

Or in the interest of revolutionary democracy – and then *it is a step towards socialism*.

For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. Or, in other words, socialism is merely state-capitalist monopoly *which is made to serve the interests of the whole people* and has to that extent *ceased* to be capitalist monopoly.

There is no middle course here. The objective process of development is such that it is *impossible* to advance from *monopolies* (and the war has magnified their number, role and importance tenfold) without advancing towards socialism. Either we have to be revolutionary democrats in fact, in which case we must not fear to take steps towards socialism. Or we fear to take steps towards socialism, condemn them in the Plekhanov, Dan or Chernov way, by arguing that our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, that socialism cannot be “introduced”, etc., in which case we inevitably sink to the level of Kerensky, Milyukov and Kornilov, i.e., we in a *reactionary-bureaucratic* way suppress the “revolutionary-democratic” aspirations of the workers and peasants.

There is no middle course.

And therein lies the fundamental contradiction of our revolution.

It is impossible to stand still in history in general, and in war-time in particular. We must either advance or retreat. It is *impossible* in twentieth-century Russia, which has won a republic and democracy in a revolutionary way, to go forward without *advancing* towards socialism, without taking steps towards it (steps conditioned and determined by the level of technology and culture: large-scale machine production cannot be “introduced” in peasant agriculture nor abolished in the sugar industry).

But to fear to advance *means* retreating—which the Kerenskys, to the delight of the Milyukovs and Plekhanovs, and with the foolish assistance of the Tseretelis and Chernovs, are actually doing.

The dialectics of history is such that the war, by extraordinarily expediting the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly capitalism, has *thereby* extraordinarily advanced mankind towards socialism.

Imperialist war is the eve of socialist revolution. And this not only because the horrors of the war give rise to proletarian revolt – no revolt can bring about socialism unless the economic conditions for socialism are ripe – but because state-monopoly capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for socialism, the *threshold* of socialism, a rung on the ladder of history between which and the rung called socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*. (*Ibid*)



due to the substitution of political power which is now in the hands of the proletariat.

Who can deny that there is no “third way” between the dominant capitalist or socialist relations of production? But does the mere presence of antecedent relations, which are still present in society but are no longer dominant for purely *political* reasons, entitle one to draw definitive and one-sided conclusions?

To come out of generic assumptions, the fact that in the People’s Republic of China, as in all other socialist countries – such as Cuba, PDRK, Vietnam, Laos – capitalist relations of production are present is an established, recognised fact. The question is whether these relations are *dominant* or not. This question can only be resolved by taking all other aspects into account, as Engels taught us. We are fully aware that it is not enough that a political organisation calling itself the “Communist Party” is at the helm to solve the problem. Instead, it is a matter of taking a critical look at the whole path of development that society has taken. As Stalin taught us, the class struggle is never as acute as after the proletariat seizes political power.

There is no single model of socialism. The socialist paths must materialistically take into account the starting points and the conditions of the route. Even the Soviet Five-Year Plans did not exclude the use of nonsocialist instruments such as piecework, contracts with foreign technicians and – although made difficult by sanctions – foreign trade, which could only take place on a mercantilist basis. But in comparing the two situations, can the USSR’s large supply of arable land and inexhaustible mineral resources be equated with China’s shortages in reference to the enormity of its population?

This can only be more so for socialist countries, such as Cuba, which is trying to extricate itself from an infamous imperialist blockade. Do the tools they use make it a capitalist, and therefore imperialist, country as well?

Let’s come to Russia. Russia is a capitalist country without shadow of a doubt. There is, however, a dividing aspect in the position that connects in relation Russia to the rest of the world. The strategic arms sector is in public hands and there are no private profits in that sector, while it is the whole economy that is impoverished by it. Contrary to what happens in the West. This creates a fundamental difference. The US and western countries are led by political-economic oligarchies that have an interest in waging war because of the lavish profits that *private* arms companies make. Moreover, the dominance imposed on the world based on the supremacy of the dollar, which is under discussion today, means that these oligarchies increasingly see war as the solution.

So we can broadly say that there are countries that have an interest in waging war out of convenience and necessity, countries that have no convenience and would like to trade in peace ... if they like it, while continuing to exploit their workers, as usual. The same of course applies to Iran on the one hand and all Western European countries on the other, Germany, France and Italy in the lead.

Africa

In this period, Africa is the protagonist of epochal upheavals. We have witnessed “coups d’état” carried out by militaries who have unseated political oligarchies compromised with the former colonizers. In certain countries the only force that can embody popular national interests is the military. They have the cultural tools that have always been denied to the subordinate classes. Bright examples in the history of Africa are Nasser in Egypt, Gaddafi in Libya, Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso.

Today we are witnessing a not so underground clash between the surrendering French and American imperialism, also in bad shape, but still prevalent compared to the former. It may be in the first



instance some African revolt could favour the detriment of the former and latter imperialism. The history of Vietnam reminds us of this.

What should be the attitude of communists?

As Lenin teaches, one must not take sides between two opposing imperialisms. It doesn't matter in the fight who started first or who is stronger. So the retreat of French imperialism is welcomed. The peoples who free themselves from it, if they had the strength to expel the first imperialism, they will find the strength to expel the second one, as the glorious history of Vietnam once again shows us.

The United States is at the top of the imperialist hierarchy and the other imperialist countries are subordinated and they are today cannibalistically attacked by the former ones (see the war in Europe waged at the expense of the German economy and therefore of the whole of "old" Europe), and these countries take revenge on the imperialist nations even lower down, such as Italy which miserably and illusorily tries to find an ally in the US leader.

Other countries, whether stronger or weaker, however capitalist, if they do not have the expansionist and predatory nature of imperialism, although they also try to pursue their own interests mercantilistically, are not imperialist. Above all, they do not have the propensity to export wars.

The war

Today, imperialist war is a pressing necessity for the United States. His allies or "vassals" are forced to follow them, even against the interests of the vast majority of his people and even large sectors of the ruling classes, due to the political directions is in the hands of the monopolistic oligarchies closely linked to Atlanticism. Among these we can include for example, in addition to our country, South Korea, a country occupied by countless American bases and reduced to a war platform aimed against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China.

The Brics+ countries are not imperialists. It is not Brazil, nor Argentina. But the Saudi and Emirati monarchies have also made a reversal. Saudi Arabia, for example, which "hosts" the important US air base of Prince Sultan – signing the resumption of diplomatic recognition with Iran, agreements on oil production with Russia, accepting the readmission of Syria into the Arab League – is an evidence regarding the fact that this country's leadership wants to break away from the US orbit. Considering how the Iranian general Qasem Soleimani, treacherously killed by the Zionist imperialists on 3rd January 2020 at Baghdad airport, where he had gone precisely to give impetus to negotiations with Arabia to resolve regional conflicts, had followed this path.

Now it is completely ridiculous to ask the question whether those regimes represent an example of a political system for communists and democrats to take as a model. It is obvious that this could never be the case. But here it is not a question of evaluating this, but the "overall balance" on the world stage that these countries play, whether aimed at stabilizing the world situation or a precipice towards the devastating war that would be fought mainly in Europe, Asia and Africa.

If a generalised war breaks out, or even if this low- or medium-intensity war becomes chronic, is this considerable good or bad? In a militarised and already helmeted society such as ours, will the spaces for political activity of those who oppose it, and specifically the political and trade union organisations of the proletariat, be facilitated or severely disadvantaged, if not excluded from being able to operate? Do we think the "so much worse, so much better" mentality will ever work? Lenin boldly said: «Either the revolution will stop the war, or the war will provoke the revolution». Before we experiment with the second possibility, shall we try all avenues to pursue the first?



It is therefore not a question of seeing US-led imperialism as merely “aggression”, unrelated to economic aspects. On the contrary! The aggressiveness of the US-led camp, and the nonaggressiveness, but the need to defend itself against all those who have no such interest, ultimately lie in precise economic reasons.

If you don’t like the term “anti-imperialist”, criticise it, perhaps by proposing a periphrasis such as “countries that don’t want or have no interest in waging war and are disengaging from the dominance of US-led imperialist capitalism before the roof collapses over their heads”. It would be more accurate but perhaps propagandistically unsuitable.

We can conclude this paragraph by pointing out that it is not true that “all bourgeois classes participate in the sharing of the spoils”. There are bourgeois classes that do not participate in the imperialist spoils. And this is the case in the USA, in Europe and in many other countries where there is a bourgeoisie that exploits its proletariat, but which does not participate in the imperialist spoils.

National sovereignty and socialism

How can national sovereignty be set against the struggle for socialism? The second is the essential precondition for initiating the first. We all agree that in Western Europe today there are no objective conditions for the seizure of power by the political organisations of the proletariat. Does the struggle for national sovereignty distance us or bring us closer to creating those preconditions? Posing only the prospect of socialism, without outlining what the *concrete steps* for that realisation are, makes it an unrealisable goal in the eyes of the broad masses, distances it into a utopian perspective, detaches it from the needs and contradictions actually experienced by most people. The necessity and inevitability of socialism must emerge in the consciousness of the people in the fire of the antiimperialist struggle. All the communist parties that have won have done so through this path, proving themselves to be the true unbending champions of national sovereignty.⁸

Once again we ask: did Stalin also confuse socialism with national sovereignty?

If we want to replace the term “colonial” with the more precise term “neo-colonial” we can get further in the matter.

Once again, wrong arguments are used by attributing them to the opponent of the controversy and with them an attempt is made to discredit him. The defeat of US-led NATO aggression is the *precondition* for a new season to begin. Certainly not the solution to *all* problems.

China and Russia

Many arguments have been used for classify P. R. of China as imperialistic.

One of these is that it participates to some international organizations, where capitalistic countries are the majority. In fact, it seems to us that the days when there were international fora where China and

⁸ Earlier, the bourgeoisie presented themselves as liberal, they were for bourgeois democratic freedom and in that way gained popularity with the people. Now there is not one remaining trace of liberalism. There is no such thing as “freedom of personality” any more, - personal rights are now only acknowledged by them, the owners of capital, – all the other citizens are regarded as raw materials, that are only for exploitation. The principle of equal rights for people and nations is trodden into the dust and it is replaced by the principle of full rights for the exploiting minority and the lack of rights of the exploited majority of the citizens. The banner of bourgeois democratic freedom has been flung overboard. I think that you, the representatives of communist and democratic parties must pick up this banner and carry it forward if you want to gain the majority of the people. There is nobody else to raise it. (Stalin, *Speech of the 19th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, 14 October, 1952)



Russia participated in multilateral meetings with other imperialist countries are long gone. And even if it was the case, does that determine their nature?

Regarding Chinese investments in Africa, we kindly suggest you to read the extensive documentation provided by the Chinese comrades on the subject. The fact that countries receiving these investments enjoy economic development in the form of infrastructure, factories, and increased income is only denied by imperialist propaganda that sees the ground taken from under their feet.

Referring to what Marx says⁹ about the conflicts between English and Irish workers, there is no doubt that, if we multiply that proportion by a thousand and project it on a global scale to the present day, Marx's England is today represented by the entire imperialist world that rests much of its profits on the robbery of today's Ireland, i.e. the entire world suffering under their political, financial, economic and military yoke.

We can therefore paraphrase Marx by saying: The ousting of the imperialist financial and economic aristocracy in Africa's conditions (and beyond), in turn, has as a necessary consequence its downfall in the West. This would fulfil the precondition for the proletarian revolution in the West.

Hence the incredibly valuable role that Chinese policy is playing in that chessboard it's not only for China or Africa, but also for Europe and North America.

The crusade launched by self-proclaimed "democracies" against supposed "autocracies" is a source of grave dangers to stability and progress. The most ridiculous arguments of Western propaganda, claim for instance the military bases of other country. But can one really compare the immense deployment of US bases around the world to any other country?

Capitalist systems barricade themselves behind the most archaic and deleterious protectionism. Those who for centuries starved and exploited the peoples of the world with colonialism and neo-colonialism today are the same who take about a "debt trap" and "resource exploitation" by China. They are terrified by the fact that nations are leaving their orbit and dollar's monetary dictatorship. They are terrified by the economic development of Africa, Asia, Latin America, which is also setting the stage for the creation of a modern working class in those countries, no longer just colonies to be milked.

Without a modern African working class, which only the system based on the production and exchange of commodities can create given the current conditions, the army of millions of proletarians that will *concretely* put an end to capitalism on that continent will not be created, according to paths that only history will take charge of writing. The *concrete* alternative is only the continuation of the underdevelopment, exploitation and corruption that first the colonial system and then the neo-colonial system of the western powers inflicted for centuries.

We beg to take a good look at what efforts the Chinese government has made to prevent in some cases ill-planned investments from plunging the receiving countries into crisis, at the billions of dollars the PRC has remitted to defaulting debtors, and compare it to the loanshark policies the IMF and World Bank have always pursued. And please stop basing their arguments on the reports of competitors.

⁹ Ireland is the bulwark of the English landed aristocracy. The exploitation of that country is not only one of the main sources of their material wealth; it is their greatest moral strength. They, in fact, represent the domination over Ireland. Ireland is therefore the cardinal means by which the English aristocracy maintain their domination in England itself. If, on the other hand, the English army and police were to be withdrawn from Ireland tomorrow, you would at once have an agrarian revolution in Ireland. But the downfall of the English aristocracy in Ireland implies and has as a necessary consequence its downfall in England. And this would provide the preliminary condition for the proletarian revolution in England. (Marx, *Letter to Sigfried Meyer and August Vogt*, April 1870)



The story of China's holding US public debt also needs to be carefully examined. Some accuse China of financing US imperialism in this way, as if it had no possibility of supplying itself elsewhere. In reality, this linkage has ensured that the PRC, by tying itself to US debt, has not been subjected to financial wars. In reality, it is precisely the opposite phenomenon, that of indebtedness to Western institutions, that makes a country's economy dependent. The Chinese have helped to dope the US economy, which has accumulated over 12 million million in balance of payments deficits in 40 years (1980 to 2020). This has allowed them to live on top of what they produced, buying goods and services for nothing, but the squeeze that countries that want to get out of this dependency are now putting on this trend is expected to bring the US economy to its knees. The most up-to-date figures say that China is rapidly divesting itself of holding this currency and now Japan is the leading holder.

Another misplaced remark concerns the trade that Russia and China continue to hold with Western countries, notably the US. Is it in the interest of these countries to interrupt these flows or is it instead the Western economies that have pursued the insane policy of sanctions? It is the European countries that are forced to cut their trade with China because of US pressure. So what is being demanded? That China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela should sanction themselves?

The Ukrainian crisis

Saying that the Ukrainian crisis is due to the Russian expansionism for "dividing the spoils of natural resources, energy deposits and freight transport routes" is ridiculous. Although the Donbass region has large mineral wealth, it constitutes an insignificant share for Russia and certainly do not justify such a costly and risky "investment" as the current conflict. Instead, this could be one of the causes, albeit minor, of the interest of NATO's neighbouring countries, which by now no longer hide their territorial longings against Ukraine.

The position of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) expresses the reasons of those who experienced that crisis from the inside and therefore seem to us to be the best accredited to give an assessment of it.

This is not a question of espousing Putin's arguments in all respects. But the PCFR has made it clear that Russian intervention has been demanded by that party since 2014. The fact that this intervention eventually came, against the interests of the Russian oligarchs, who would certainly have preferred to continue to do business undisturbed with the West, demanded by the citizens of the Donbass who have been fighting since 2014 against Nazi savagery on their territory, supported by the overwhelming majority of the Russian people, who realise that this is not just the war for the Donbass, but to prevent Russia from being fragmented by finding itself in what was done to Yugoslavia.

Final remarks

We submit this document for the attention of the international communist movement.

We want to avoid to throw the controversy into brawls.

We wish to maintain in the channels of frank but fair debate.