

NO WAR BUT CLASS WAR! THE MAIN ENEMY IS AT HOME!

The current progressive impoverishment of the working class is occurring on an international scale. This process has been violently accelerated by the economic warfare launched against Russia in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. We are told that this is the price that must be paid to stop Russian aggression. For now, the cost is *merely* the deterioration of our living and working conditions. Ultimately, even this will not be enough. The eventual cost that the ruling class will try to force us to accept will be our own flesh and blood.

The most obvious example of the assault on our living conditions in the West is the working class's loss of purchasing power due to the increases in energy prices, which has knock-on effects on the cost of producing other essential commodities, especially food. This is the price of *Democracy*, we are told by the ruling class's media. The virtue of *Democracy* has long been treated as an article of faith in many countries, including among those individuals and groups who consider themselves anti-capitalist. Reality is quite different. It is not the will of the majority of the population that determines state policy, but the interests of the capitalist class and the needs of their historically outmoded system that has always – even when it was a force for progress, which it has long since ceased to be – put the needs of capital above the needs of human beings, and certainly above the needs of the working class.

Because the path to the Third World War goes through the progressive impoverishment of the working population, the way to oppose this march to the slaughterhouse is to resolutely advance our needs as a class. Today, the priority need for workers everywhere is higher wages. The cost of living is shooting through the roof. The price of rent is outrageously high in Toronto and the surrounding area. Food and energy costs have increased. These are issues that affect the entire working class. The only way to push back this assault from the capitalists against the working class is for us to unify as a class, across all divisions, be they industrial sector or identity. However, for the effort toward class unity to succeed, we must soberly recognize the obstacles that stand in the way. One of the main (if not the main) obstacles to working class unity is the unions. It is precisely the unions who actively undermine the working class because they are no longer a tool for its unity and have long since become absorbed by the capitalist class as a means to hinder, disorganize, divide, and repress the workers' struggle. It is precisely through the division of our struggles by sector that unions have been able to force through nominal pay rises that, because of inflation, amount to real pay cuts.

Not long ago, the Internationalist Communist Tendency launched an initiative to set up struggle committees whose purpose is to fight against the prospect of a Third World War, not on a pacifist terrain but on a working-class terrain. This means rejecting the sacrifices that the ruling class is trying to impose on us in the name of national unity, the “right of nations to self-determination”, to protect democratic freedoms, or whatever false notions the ruling classes of this or that country are weaponizing to justify their warmongering.

The war in Ukraine is an inter-imperialist conflict. On the one hand, the Western powers – led by the US – have for decades engaged in a policy of pushing NATO military infrastructure

closer and closer to Russia's borders and have declared that Russia's red lines do not count. On the other side, Russia – one of the countries with the highest levels of wealth inequality in the world, alongside the US – has tried to break this stranglehold and thereby secure its own status as a major power for the foreseeable future. As a result of this desperate military adventure launched by Russia, which to a significant extent was goaded into an action the West assessed would be ruinous for Russia, we see the formation of trade and military blocs. Russia, with its vast natural resources and highly capable military, and China, with its enormous industrial base and an economy that is rapidly catching up to the US, represent the imperialist bloc opposing the US, Europe, and Japan.

The workers of all the countries on both sides of this divide, as well as of those countries like India that try to play non-aligned, have nothing to gain and everything to lose from rallying behind their ruling classes and national banners. For all these workers, **the only war worth fighting is the class war**. By fighting for higher wages to resist the erosion of our working and living conditions, we objectively resist the pushes to war by refusing to accept the sacrifices that are indispensable for high intensity war between major powers to be fought.

Today, the workers must resist. We are compelled to do so by the brutality of the attack on our living conditions. We are seeing this already in places such as the UK, where until recently there were major strikes developing in strategic sectors like the port of Felixtowe, in transportation, and in logistics. Opposite to this developing perspective, we see the perspective of world war as Liz Truss – the Prime Minister of the UK – assures her backers in the capitalist class that she will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons against Russia, even though this would result in a level of destruction that would far exceed that of WWII. The stakes could not be higher. In the US, whose ruling class is at the forefront of pushing for confrontation with Russia and China, there is the real possibility of a major strike among rail workers.

For our resistance to the sacrifices the ruling class tries to impose to be effective, we must seize the initiative, not allowing the unions to control the timing of our actions (allowing the state and the companies to prepare) and not allowing the unions to split us up according to sector. We must put forward general demands such as pay increases for all workers. When the moment comes to strike, the first order of business must be to connect with workers from other workplaces who may be on strike, as well as to spread the struggle on a geographical basis by calling on the workers in nearby workplaces of all industries—from factories to grocery stores, retail stores to warehouses, IT, logistics hubs and beyond—to join us in a common struggle for general demands. Victory depends on workers seizing control of their own struggle and refusing the sacrificial orders of the capitalist class and all of its proponents—from union to military.

If you agree with this perspective and want to join the fight for our class, we want to hear from you.

No War but Class War - Toronto (nwbcto@tutanota.com)
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Public meeting will be held on Oct 8 at 4pm at 320 College St, Toronto, M5T 1S3

<https://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2022-04-06/no-war-but-the-class-war-a-call-for-action>