

# **KRAS-IWA:**

## **TO THE INTERNATIONALIST**

## **ANTI-WAR CONFERENCE**

## **IN PRAGUE**

Dear comrades!

We in the KRAS-IWA, as heirs to the anarchist anti-militarist tradition of the 1915 Manifesto, welcome participants in the international conference who have gathered to speak out against capitalist war and capitalist so-called "peace" and to denounce the supposed leftists and pseudo-anarchists who take sides in the capitalist wars. We hope that this forum will be an important step in establishing practical interaction from below and across all organizational boundaries between all genuine anti-war and anti-militarist social revolutionary forces.

Unfortunately, the situation in this country and the difficulty of communication with foreign Europe do not give us the opportunity to directly participate in the conference. But in spirit we are with you. We are sending you a statement of our position on the issue of war and ask you to familiarize the conference participants with it.

**International Secretariate of KRAS-IWA**

## **ON THE CAUSES OF WAR IN MODERN CAPITALISM**

Before we talk about the role of crisis phenomena in the emergence of modern wars, in our view it is important to note that wars actually arise, firstly, from the nature of the ruling mechanism “THE STATE” as such and secondly from the diverse and multidimensional contradictions of modern capitalism as a world system. Most analyzes (including those from the left) are actually too short and don't go deep enough into the roots, as they usually don't fully understand this complexity.

These contradictions appear at various levels, namely global, regional, interstate and intrastate, with the drive for competition, domination, hegemony and expansion forming the very nature of capitalism and the very framework of its existence.

When talking about the war in Ukraine, for example, one must first of all take into account the global system framework. These consist in the gradual formation of two competing power-political-military blocs, one declining around the USA and the other rising around China. It is clear that their final composition has not yet been fully worked out - this may take a few decades. And it is also clear that contradictions and different interests remain between the states within these blocs. This can be roughly compared with the formation processes of the Entente and the German bloc before the First World War. Each strives to bring new states into its sphere of influence and expand its sphere of influence.

Furthermore, from a regional perspective, there is a struggle between the so-called Western Bloc and Russia, as a contender for regional hegemony in the post-Soviet space, for control and influence in the region of the former Soviet Union. It's about dominance, both economic and political, military and so on. There are also economic contradictions between Europe and Russia, for example in the area of energy strategy and struggle for energy market.

At the interstate level, the war in Ukraine arises directly from the struggle between the ruling classes and their states that emerged on the territory of the former Soviet Union. This is a fight for the redistribution of already shared space, resources, etc.

And finally we return to the intrastate level. Here we come to the question of the role of the crisis in the outbreak of war. Of course, this crisis is global and systemic. This is the impasse of the state and the capitalist system itself. This crisis did not begin today or yesterday. But now we are experiencing its avalanche-like intensification almost everywhere in the world. The crisis affects all areas of life and is accompanied by creeping fascization.

The economy is stumbling, so to speak, and public consumption is supported only by credit bubbles and so-called “military Keynesianism.” The latter requires a constant increase in military spending and weapons production, and the arms race inevitably contributes to wars. Politically, the old methods of rule called democracy no longer work, at least not in the same way. The result is a crisis of the old elites, a creeping fascisation and the entry of competing groups of the ruling classes into the political arena in the form of right-wing populism. In almost all countries there is a crisis of trust in the authorities and a crisis of legitimacy.

In such situations, states have always resorted to war. Firstly, they must make it possible to divert the growing discontent of the population by directing it towards an external enemy. The mobilizing consolidation of society against an external enemy was intended to strengthen the so-called “national unity” and the illusion of “common interests of different classes.” This means preventing the potential growth of class resistance. Second, the victorious outcome of the war should strengthen the population's trust in the government and give it new legitimacy in the eyes of the masses. In economic terms, moreover, the war makes it possible to accelerate the process of renewal of fixed capital, and the post-war restoration promises new enormous profits for capital.

Clarification is needed here, as it is often said that war is unprofitable for some influential groups of big business because it threatens their global connections and interests. You hear that about Russian oligarchs, for example. This gives rise to the illusory idea of the divergence of the economic and political interests of the ruling classes, of the contradictions between the state and capital.

We would like to emphasize that this is an illusion. The capitalist state has never expressed the interests of every single capitalist or even a group of capitalists. The state is a concentrated representative of the interests of the entire capitalist class, which by no means excludes competition and conflicts of interest within the capitalist class. A capitalist state is certainly capable of

oppressing certain groups of the capitalist class, but that does not make it non-capitalist or, in particular, anti-capitalist. In addition, as the current war in Ukraine shows, not everything is so simple with the position of supposedly oppositional groups of big business. Trade in many of Russia's most important export goods and raw materials is not only not declining, but is in some cases increasing. And very often the same so-called Russian oligarchs, as they would say in chess, play on both boards at the same time.

But let's get back to the question of the crisis. In general, it is to say that the worsening and deepening of crises leads to an increase in the frequency and severity of wars. In this case, one of the incentives for states and ruling classes is the attempt, if successful, to break out of the impasse of the crisis that those in power cannot resolve through so-called peaceful means.

However, capitalism is increasingly a system of general chaos. It is characterized by uncoordinated, chaotic and selfish actions by the actors, as a result of which the result of the development usually does not correspond to their wishes and plans. In philosophy this is called "antifinality". Therefore, war often not only leads to not getting out of the crisis, but on the contrary, the hardships caused by the war create a new, even deeper crisis. This is exactly what happened, for example, during the First World War. And it is precisely this crisis, created or exacerbated by war, that contributes to the growth of the class struggle and may one day contribute to the transformation of war into a social revolution, that is, to a revolutionary exit from war.

## **ABOUT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST**

First of all, it should be said that it is precisely and only the revolutionary struggle of the workers` class in the broadest sense of the word that can lead to a victorious social revolution and thus to the abolition of the social system that produces wars. As long as capital and the state exist, wars are fundamentally inevitable anyway.

Of course, we all wish that this current war will be the last and that it will lead to a social revolution or, as the old anarchists said, to the "great evening". We're not going to play prophets here, but given the current situation in society, this is unfortunately still a long way off. There are many reasons for this state of society in modern capitalism. Increasing atomization, alienation and loss of solidarity of people, the decline of class consciousness and class culture

or manipulative actions of the ruling classes, as well as crisis of ideas about the possibility of an alternative development and complete degradation and bourgeoisization of the established left or pseudo-"anarchist" and many other factors and phenomena are at play here.

Of course, the question also arises as to why today's wage workers are willing to endure the material cuts associated with the war. Firstly, in Russia and Ukraine, for example, this passivity is explained by the decline in the scale of class struggles and social protests in these countries in recent decades, which is a consequence of social decay, especially on the periphery of world capitalism.

The proletariat here has neither the experience nor the organization for such great resistance as would be required for a mass struggle against the war. Nationalist "pumping" also plays a role, to which large parts of the population are unfortunately exposed in the situation of constructing post-Soviet nations. Furthermore, in the initial phase of wars (as long as they are not immediately accompanied by immediate catastrophes), the situation of some workers may even initially improve. The expansion of arms production creates new jobs. And in disadvantaged regions, the opportunity to join the army for money is often almost the only source of income.

Of course, when the war drags on with no apparent prospect of an end, the army goes into total mobilization and the material difficulties become unbearable, the mood in society begins to change. There are spontaneous protests, unrest, strikes - and the revolution is close. This is exactly what happened in the First World War. It is difficult to say how possible this will be in Russia and Ukraine in the future. In the West, which has so far only been indirectly involved in this war, such a development is even more problematic today. Class struggles are taking place, but it is unlikely that the working class is currently ready for, for example, a general anti-war strike. And when mass protests against wars occur, they are often organized by forces that support one of the warring parties. This is unfortunately the case with demonstrations against the war in the Middle East. There are almost no or very few demonstrations demanding, for example, to stop supporting the war in Ukraine and to encourage the parties to a ceasefire.

But even if we say in principle that only the mass struggle of the working people can end wars, does that mean that it is enough to simply be satisfied

with this conclusion and not try to do anything about this current war? We are convinced that no. It is not so.

First of all, there is a difference between fundamentally eliminating the causes of war and ending a specific war. Yes, the statement that capitalist peace is, strictly speaking, also a form of war is correct. But in this case it is not about “peace” but about stopping a concrete, ongoing massacre, the mass murder of people. It would be cruel and irresponsible to the hundreds of thousands of proletarians dying to simply wash their hands and say, “There is nothing we can do at the moment.” Proletarian Lives Matter!

Second, the scale of class struggle and class consciousness do not fall from heaven. Their creation is not an automatic process. The fight has its own logic and its own dynamics. Concrete and daily class and social conflicts can become the school and gymnastics for a future social revolution if they develop on the basis of class self-organization and autonomy and go hand in hand with increased solidarity, the formation of appropriate struggle structures and the development of class and revolutionary consciousness.

Of course, as anarcho-syndicalists we think primarily of the economic class struggle. But the anti-militarism can also play a role of schools and gymnastics of struggle. It is just very important not to confuse the actual anti-militarist struggle with support for one or the other belligerent side!

What could internationalist social revolutionaries do now, even if there is no prospect of an imminent revolution?

The strategy of the social revolutionaries can consist of four parts:

**a)** “do not howl with the ruling wolves”: i.e. no support for states, war, any nationalism (and “national liberation”) and any “unity of the nation” as well as any “collaboration of classes”. The harm of patriotism, the fatherland and the idea of protecting it should be explained. Don't join the army yourself and if possible dissuade other people from doing so. No participation in official patriotic measures. So, a position “Without me” / “Without us”.

**b)** to explain real reasons for war and their class conditionality (“it is revolutionary to tell the truth”): We have to explain in whose interests the war is being waged and who benefits from it. We must explain that the workers do

not benefit from the war, that we do not care what language the master and the boss speak or where they live. This war is created by the state and the capitalist system and one must understand that we cannot get rid of the war without fighting them. So: war against war and the system of war!

c) practical activities against the concrete war (however small these may be today!): propaganda, sabotage of the war and army mobilization, practical solidarity with deserters, war objectors, with the population, etc. In countries not directly involved in the war, in addition to supporting deserters, this may include measures aimed at putting pressure on governments to stop supporting this war here and, on the contrary, encouraging the belligerents to do so to stop fire. Furthermore, as anarchist internationalists in Ukraine have repeatedly told us, it would be important if pressure were put on the Ukrainian state to open its borders and allow everyone who does not want to fight to leave the country!

d) Participation (strictly with one's own position) in the concrete class conflicts, social struggles, possible protests, hunger revolts, etc. If such unrest and uprisings occur, then one can also count on the internationalist option of the time of the First World War, i.e. with one revolutionary end to the war.

**Конфедерация революционных анархо-синдикалистов (КРАС)**

**NO WAR  
BUT CLASS WAR**

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КРОМЕ КЛАССОВОЙ**

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