

Against War, Revolution

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The text is a Lotta Comunista document — apparently the introduction to a collection on the Middle East. It looks back to the group’s position at the time of the 1967 Six-Day War and restates that position for the present. The introduction also sketches where the group came from: its founders passed through LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISM on the way from the Resistance to Leninism. These notes set out the article’s argument and the terms it runs on; every claim below is the article’s unless marked otherwise.

The cornerstone

The CORNERSTONE is a claim first printed in the group’s newspaper under the editorial “Against War, Revolution!” (Lotta Comunista 1967): Arab and Israeli workers have no conflict of interests. On the contrary, they share the same fate — exploitation by their own BOURGEOISIES — and those bourgeoisies are themselves bound together by the WEB OF CAPITAL invested in the Middle East. The web runs through what the article calls the old and new MECCAS OF IMPERIALISM: Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, Rome, Moscow, Tokyo — today joined by Beijing and, increasingly, New Delhi. Figure 1 plots them. The list is deliberately plural, and it deliberately includes Moscow: every major centre of capital, not just the West.



Figure 1: The article’s “old and new Meccas of imperialism” (static fallback of the interactive map).

The war as partition

From the cornerstone follows the article’s reading of the war itself. Its key characteristic is IMPERIALIST PARTITION: beneath the national and religious causes proclaimed by the belligerents, the war’s real content is the share-out of the region among the centres of capital. The word IMPERIALISM carries its Leninist sense here — not a policy that a state might adopt or drop, but the epoch in which the world is already divided and can only be re-divided (Lenin 1917).

On this reading THE NATIONAL QUESTION has been transformed — inverted. National movements that once cleared ground for progress now deliver new states straight into the web as clients; yesterday’s

oppressed nation becomes today's power. Any position taken for one national flag, however solidaristic its dress, therefore ends up aligned with some imperialist centre.

Figure 2 places the war the article is reading; the dates follow the standard history of the war (Oren 2002). Six days of fighting; the alignments it revealed had been laid down long before and lasted long after.



Figure 2: The 1967 crisis and war. Hover a node for the detail.

The war at home

The 1967 war proved the point in Italy. It revealed what the article calls the **IMPERIALIST POTENTIAL** of Italian society: a pro-Israeli current and a **LEFT-WING INTERVENTIONISM** emerged, loudly opposed to each other, yet converging in support of the Arab bourgeoisie and the Mediterranean policy of the Italian bourgeoisie. The disagreement over which side concealed the deeper unity — that Italy had a stake at all. War acted as the revealer: positions that looked like principles snapped into alignment with the material interests beneath them.

The method

Throughout, the article applies one distinction to war: appearance against essence. The **FANATICISM** that erupts at the outbreak, the causes the belligerents proclaim, and the flags they fly are surface. The movement of capital and the partition of the region are the content science must dig for.

Glossary

bourgeoisie The class that owns the means of production and lives by employing the labour of others. In this article, each nation has its own, and each exploits “its” workers.

cornerstone The load-bearing claim on which the rest of an argument depends. Here, the unity of Arab and Israeli workers’ interests.

- fanaticism** Extreme, unshakeable devotion to a cause, in which evidence is dismissed, opposition is treated as a threat, and lives become expendable. Erupts characteristically at the outbreak of war (1914, 2022), when latent material alignments become compulsory.
- imperialism** In the Leninist sense, not a policy but the epoch in which the world is fully divided among competing centres of capital, which can grow only at each other's expense.
- imperialist partition** The share-out and re-share-out of territories, markets, and spheres of influence among the centres of capital. Named by the article as the key characteristic of the war, beneath its national and religious surface.
- imperialist potential** The latent capacity of a society, revealed under the stress of war, to align its political currents — including its left — behind its own ruling class's foreign designs.
- left-wing interventionism** Advocacy of one's own state's involvement in a conflict, argued in the language of solidarity. On the article's account, the form imperialist potential took on the Italian left in 1967.
- libertarian communism** The current rejecting both private ownership of the means of production and the state, favouring direct worker control. Mentioned as a stage the group's founders passed through on the way from the Resistance to Leninism.
- meccas of imperialism** The article's figure for the centres the web of capital runs through — the places the system faces and makes pilgrimage to. Deliberately plural and including Moscow: every major centre of capital, not just the West. The sites change ("old and new"); the relation stays.
- the national question** The Marxist debate over whether workers should support movements for national independence. The article holds it has been transformed: in the imperialist epoch the old polarity of oppressed and oppressor nations has collapsed, so the Leninist answer — support the oppressed nation — leads into the trap it once avoided.
- web of capital** The mesh of investments, arms relationships, energy dependence, and financial plumbing binding the Middle East's states to the major centres of capital, and those centres to each other.

References

- Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich. 1917. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Petrograd.
- Lotta Comunista. 1967. *Contro La Guerra, La Rivoluzione! [Against War, Revolution!]*. Editorial in *Lotta Comunista*.
- Oren, Michael B. 2002. *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. Oxford University Press.