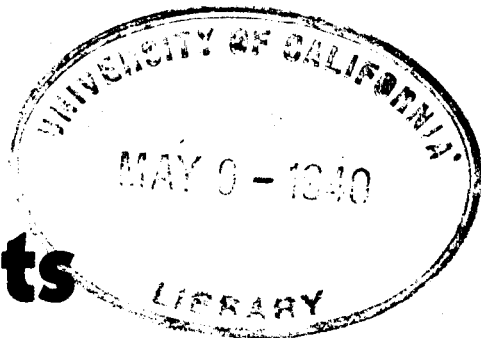


American Imperialism

THE MAIN DRIVING FORCE

FOR WAR

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AMERICAN IMPERIALISM - THE MAIN DRIVING FORCE FOR WAR

"That its wars are defensive against an offensive enemy, is the war myth of every country."

No country in the world has so successfully paraded this myth as American Imperialism. Its wars, war plans, imperialist invasions, and slaughter of colonial peoples are carefully hidden behind the shibboleth of "peace". Newspapers play up Uncle Sam as a "good neighbor," a "peaceful power", a "friend of democracy", etc. etc. History books carefully gloss over America's imperialist role, never mention a word about the robberies from Mexico, Spain, the Phillipines, etc.

In the first 135 years of these United States the total budget of the federal government was 66 billion dollars. Of this sum 56 billion dollars, almost 85%, was spent for war. From 1775 to 1923 the United States army engaged in ten **major** conflicts, 8,600 battles, and had a casualty list of 1,280,000 men. Hardly a very "peaceful" record!

American papers constantly picture the powers in Europe — Germany, Britain, France, Italy — as greedy monsters, always grabbing for new territory, exploiting thousands of colonials. But what of Uncle Sam? In 1790 the United States was only 892,135 square miles. Today the U. S. and its possessions are more than four times as large — close to 4 million square miles. Only a simpleton would think that the hands of the United States capitalists were clean in taking all of this land.

THE MEXICAN WAR

In 1827, for instance, Mexico abolished slavery. The Texans were against this and in 1836 they seceded. In January 1846, when Mexico refused to sell the area that is now New Mexico, California, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and part of Colorado the American army was sent in.

"It is a fact", stated Abraham Lincoln in 1847, "that the U. S. Army in marching to the Rio Grande marched into a peaceful settlement and frightened the inhabitants away from their houses and growing crops."

Take the case of the Spanish-American war. During the era of slavery the southern slave-owners wanted Cuba as a base for slave running. "Subsequently the sugar interests invested millions in Cuban plantations. In McKinley's time these interests subsidized a movement against the Spanish overlords and then appealed to the U.S. government to restore "law and order" by sending down U. S. marines to take over the island.

The day before war was declared, Spain accepted every demand that McKinley had put to it — abandonment of the concentration camps, an immediate armistice and peace negotiations. Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Russia, Italy, and the Pope, all appealed to the U. S. for peace. But American capitalism was hell-bent on making this killing. McKinley suppressed the news of Spain's acceptance of his ultimatum and declared war. American capitalists took over Porto Rico, the Phillipines, domination of Cuba, etc. From investments of 50 million dollars at the turn of the century, American investments rose to one and a half billion in Cuba by 1931, under the new domination by the U. S. Marines and the National City Banks.

PILLAGING THE COLONIES

In 1914 U. S. Marines took \$500,000 in gold bullion from banks in Haiti and forced the Haitian government to accept American loans and American control.

American imperialism has aided and provoked revolutions in Columbia — to take Panama away from that country and build the canal; in Mexico against the Huerta government; and throughout Latin America. Countries like Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica are as much under U. S. domination as Washington D. C. So is Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Chile, Nicaragua and to a slightly lesser extent Canada, Brazil, Venezuela.

The rule of American Imperialism in the western hemisphere can never be said to have been peaceful. At this very moment leaders of the nationalist movement of Porto Rico are in American jails for fighting for freedom. The U. S. capitalists, who are so concerned at the moment over the defense of "little Finland" were hardly so concerned 40 years ago when the Phillipine people were fighting for independence against Spain. After giving

the movement support for a while American Imperialism threw dozens of thousands into the very concentration camps that McKinley demanded Spain must abolish. "Hell-Roaring" Jack Smith, U. S. Army officer in the Phillipines, "commanded that every building in a certain area be burned and every native over 10 years of age be slain", according to C. H. Hamlin. And this wasn't all of the atrocities, either.

In Hoover's day troops landed in Nicaragua and shot down natives by the score; Sumner Welles, present Assistant Secretary of State, was the guiding genius behind Machado's murders in Cuba; under Roosevelt workers who strike on United Fruit Co. property in Central America have been brutally shot; unemployed — 13,000 of them — in San Domingo in 1937 were forced to dig their own graves and then be shot, rather than have them on the relief roles — and all this with the quiet knowledge of that good, good neighbor, Franklin Roosevelt, who is so terribly upset about "poor little Finland".

INVESTMENTS AND TRADE

The picture of the U. S. wars, the aggression against small countries, the oppression of colonials are only, however, just a small part of America's imperialist role, not the most important part. The above incidents merely indicate that U. S. imperialism is by no means as humane and as peaceful as its adherents constantly howl. To prove that American Capitalism is today the MAIN driving force for war — a war in which it is not yet involved in the MILITARY sense — it is necessary to examine more than just these military events; it is necessary to look into the economic roots of American Imperialism.

Because of the peculiarities of the development of American economy, U. S. Imperialism differs in form from that of older powers like Britain. The richest nation on earth can control the policies and destinies of dozens of small countries without sending an army to their shores, without DIRECT political control.

During the whole nineteenth century, despite her enormous natural resources — (the U. S. is today first in production of at least 15 of the 23 most important raw materials) — this country was only a second rate world power. In 1900 the U. S. had investments of only 445

million dollars abroad. England was the big gun all over the world, including Latin America.

UNCLE SAM AND THE WORLD WAR

By 1912 this figure had risen to almost 2 billion dollars. During the 4½ years of World War, the U. S. really went to town. It replaced English Imperialism as the dominant power in Latin America. From a debtor nation it became the world's foremost creditor nation. By 1920 American capitalists had 800 millions invested in Mexico alone; 525 millions in Cuba. Then followed the "golden twenties", and by 1932 — the height of the depression — the U. S. had investments abroad of 18 billion dollars — close to 4 billion in Canada, a billion and a half in Cuba, almost the same amount in Mexico, 714 millions in Chile, and other investments in every corner of the globe.

In 1937 the U. S. exported more goods than any other nation on earth, 800 million dollars more than its nearest rival, England. It possessed the largest port in the world — New York. Over 69 million tons were loaded and unloaded in this port, more than twice as much as the 2nd largest port, London. America now exported not only capital, but finished products and raw materials as well, in a greater amount than she imported these things. Sixteen billion dollars in gold bullion — two-thirds of the world supply — lay in the vaults in Kentucky.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that American Imperialism would take on different — more modern — forms than those of the older imperialist powers.

American Imperialism has digested all the lessons of that first big world pirate — Britain. In the course of hundreds of years of conquest Britain's military ventures have been very costly. Time after time the natives have risen up against British rule in Africa, Asia and everywhere else. The harsh rule of the foreign oppressors has caused whole populations to be wiped out by disease and murder. In many of her possessions Britain — and France — have found it difficult to find the necessary labor to develop their projects. To maintain her rule over the colonies Britain has been forced to spend billions for its armies stationed in the backward countries under its yoke

— 600,000 soldiers in India alone.

Rising as a new imperialist power after the Spanish American war, the United States confronted the situation where all the rich plums were already owned by Britain, Germany, Italy, Russia, France, Belgium, Holland. The game of hi-jacking these other powers could only proceed under the hypocritical formula, "the open door". Instead of sending an army to conquer the rich plums from England and the others, under this formula, Uncle Sam merely sent the dollar into these foreign parts to conquer markets from Britain, Germany and the others.

U. S. AND THE FIRST WAR

After forty years of this policy the American dollar has shown itself to be far more powerful than the combined strength of the German, Japanese and British armies. That is the crux of America's imperialist policy, behind which, of course, stands its armed might.

Britain won the world war from Germany, but the American dollar conquered the whole Latin American market from Great Britain. Nominally Canada is a British Dominion. But actually the 4 billion American dollars make that country merely another state of the Union — its policies are dictated in Wall Street, not in London. The Caribbean is an American lake in just as real a sense as the English Channel is British. Since the first world war the Anglo-American antagonism has been and remains the main inner imperialist antagonism.

Under Roosevelt the policy of the "open door" is being pushed through Hull's trade treaties.

In the struggle between the U. S. and the other powers on the ECONOMIC sphere after the war, it was inevitable that the U. S. would come out victorious unless the others used political and military measures. The U. S. has the richest resources in the world, the finest industrial technique, the most efficient labor. If there was an "open door" everywhere on earth the U. S. in the course of 15 or 20 years would drive all the other powers out of business because of her superior economic position.

It is precisely this economic pressure which has driven Japan to war in China, Germany to war in central Europe, Italy to fight against Ethiopia. Those countries which can not meet the competition of the American Goliath on the economic sphere must seek OTHER

MEANS, i. e. military means. But the MAIN aggressor, the force that is driving most towards a new armed redivision of the earth, is Uncle Sam.

OLD STORY — NEW DRESS

The theory of "manifest destiny" is not just a Japanese term to cover up its conquest of China. It was used in the United States a hundred years ago. It means precisely for Latin America what the term means for Japan in Asia — conquest, the "closed" door. So that while the U. S. is fighting to keep an "open door" everywhere else on earth, while it revokes treaties with Japan because it is trying to close the door in Asia, the U. S. has successfully kept the door closed in the western hemisphere, its own backyard.

American experts from the National City bank, Brown Brothers and Seligman, the First National Bank of Boston, Chase National bank, and others — sit in Latin American countries and supervise such things as customs, taxes, the building of railroads, etc. For every loan that these banks float — some of them forced down the throat of unwilling Latin American countries — the economic noose is tightened around the necks of these nations. And this is true not just of Latin America but many other countries throughout the world as well. Standard Oil owned by Rockefeller is a much more powerful dictator throughout the world than Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and 8 or 10 other countries combined. So is General Electric and U. S. Steel.

Instead of DIRECT political control, however, the U. S. is content to control the smaller powers under its wing through its economic experts, its ambassadors, its engineers. It is perfectly content to leave in nominal power native puppets like Vargas in Brazil, Gomez, Cardenas, and all the others. This is at one and the same time much more efficient than the British method and much cheaper. No armies are needed — only an occasional landing of marines and the subsidizing of native revolutions; and the natives are less hostile.

Of the four forms of imperialist rule, dominions, mandates, colonial rule by the home country, and indirect rule through a native puppet, America uses primarily the last method. It is especially suited to America's special role, the most powerful nation on earth. If the U. S. were

weaker economically it too would have to use the other methods, open, direct, military measures and control via the bayonet.

On this basis American capitalism can cloak its war measures. It can hide its imperialist aggression and penetration.

The "isolation" policy of the United States — "no foreign entanglements" — does not mean, as many simpletons believe, that the U. S. plays no role in Europe and Asia. On the contrary American Imperialism plays the decisive role, it is the "balance of power". The "isolation" policy merely permits the U. S. to use one power against another in Europe and Asia, and weaken them both to the advantage of American Imperialism. "Isolation" helps the U. S. throw its weight one way and then the other. Now it fails to go along with England on its sanction policy; Italy gets the oil she needs and weakens England's power in Africa. On other occasions the U. S. participates in parallel action with Britain in an attempt to check Germany in central Europe, or Japan in Asia. Again, "isolation" just like "peace" and "open door" is merely the most convenient cloak for the Imperialist policy of the U. S.

But the very strength of American Imperialism is its greatest weakness. America produces more surplus goods than any other nation on earth. It needs markets for these goods and capital. A few colonies in Asia, for instance, — which might allay Japan's internal decay for a period — would hardly be a beginning for Uncle Sam. He must take over dominance of the WHOLE WORLD, replace England and the Pound in world politics and reduce all other powers to secondary powers, if he is to repair his broken-down home economic fences.

The depression far from making this need smaller, has intensified it. American capitalists have rationalized their industry, have introduced labor saving devices that in the present war period has increased their productivity by at least 25%, according to recent figures. The need for new markets to absorb newer and larger surpluses thus becomes ever greater. Eighteen billion dollars in gold lie in the Kentucky vaults alone with no use for it whatsoever — a sum equivalent almost to the whole American foreign

investment abroad.

WORLD DOMINANCE

American Imperialism is not yet in the war, as we write these lines, in the military phase of the war, that is. Uncle Sam's strategy is to stay out of the military phase of the war as long as possible, until Germany, Britain and all the others are so exhausted that the U. S. can enter and dictate a peace which will give American Imperialism world hegemony. On the basis of the loans they intend to float — with the aid of the 18 billion dollars — after the next war, to rehabilitate Europe and Asia, Messrs, Morgan, Rockefeller at al expect to gain the same dominance over Europe, Asia and Africa they now have over Latin America.

Very likely American Imperialists intend to extend their control after the next war through the same demands for an "open door", for full independence of the British Colonies and French possessions, and for the conquest of these markets and indirect political control over them by the Almighty Dollar.

Very likely too the plans of Uncle Sam for aggrandizement and exploitation of larger areas of the world, are doomed to failure, will be squelched by the victorious proletarian revolution that is bound to develop during this World War.

Meanwhile Uncle Sam continues his Imperialist Policy to reorganize the whole world to his needs. He keeps up the fight for the open door all over the world, for the closed door in Latin America, for the continued penetration of the Dollar, for the weakening of all other powers, and prepares to enter the war at the decisive moment and take full control of the situation.

Those who are looking for the MAIN driving force for the Imperialist War, must look not to "aggressor" Germany, or Britain. Every section of the working class must fight its "own" bourgeoisie. But a correct fight is impossible without understanding that the main enemy of world peace, of world revolution, the main factor in redividing the earth for the third time, the MAIN DRIVING FORCE FOR WAR, is American Imperialism, appropriately garbed in the hypocritical cloak of "peace".

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