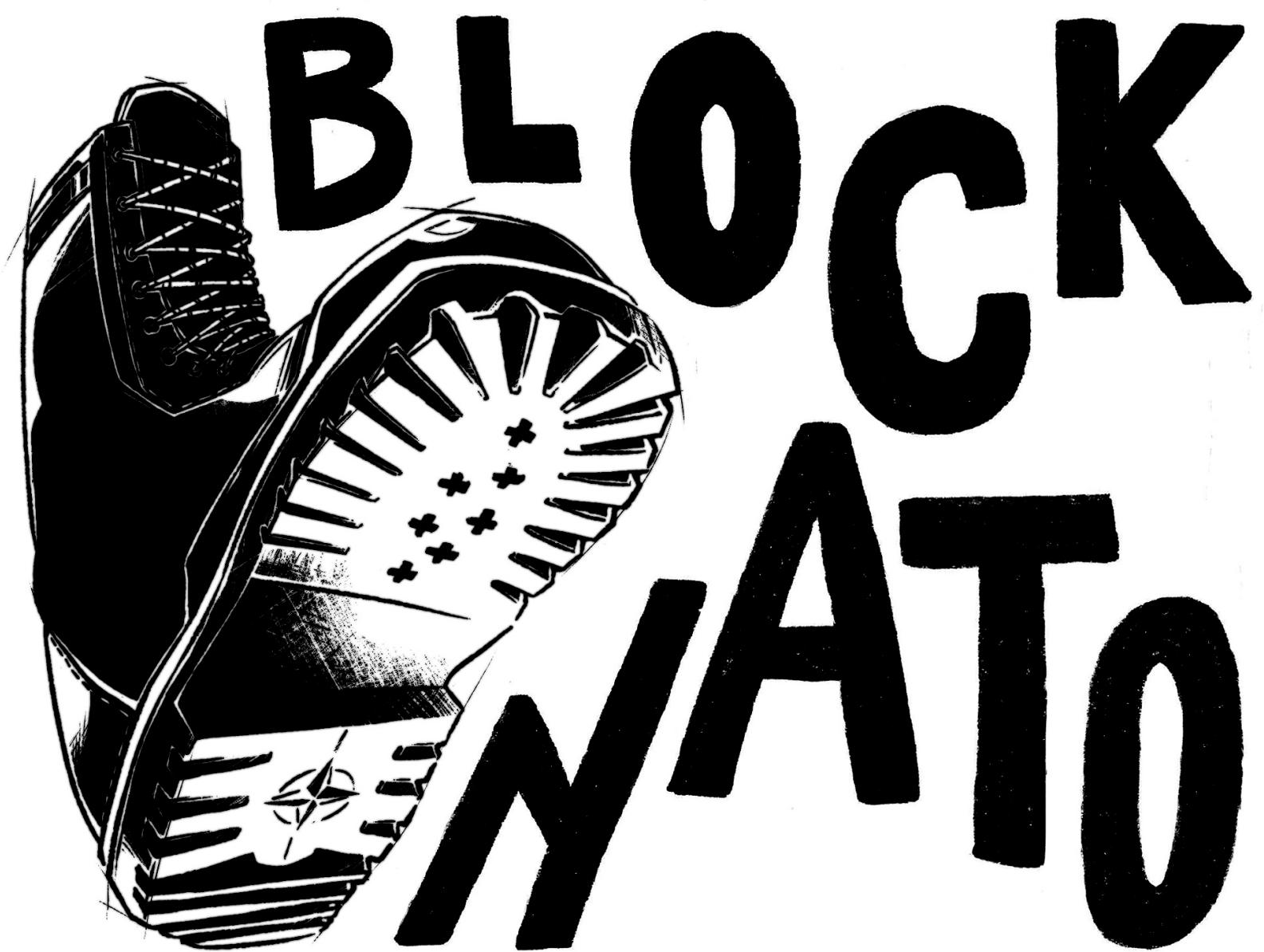


FALL 2024



NATO, four letters to bring down

From November 22nd to 25th, NATO's parliamentary assembly will be in Montreal for its mortifying circus. From a military alliance during the Cold War, NATO has today become the armed wing of Western countries, imposing its bellicose policies throughout the world. Faced with these war profiteers, it is imperative that we make our voices heard and combat their destructive logic.

The impact of NATO on our policies is huge:

✧ **Increases to military budgets:** This summit comes at a time when NATO is pressuring the Canadian government to increase the share of its GDP devoted to the armed forces to 2%, a 50% increase, while the Canadian government has already increased its military investments by 41% from 2014 to 2021.

✧ **Destruction in the name of United-Statesian imperialism:** Let's not be fooled by the sterile language of Western forces; NATO's interventions, far from being strategic and precise, are rather excessively powerful, disproportionate and imprecise. NATO destroys everything in its path, spreading misery and encouraging the multiplication of armed groups, all to preserve the interests of its member states, principally the United States, pillar of the alliance and giant of the military-industrial complex. This imperialist logic keeps the peoples of the Global South poor and dependent on the Global North.

✧ **Aiding and abetting the Palestinian genocide:** So-called Canada is complicit in the genocide in Palestine by contributing to the supply of weapons, facilitating economic and academic partnerships and, above all,

by its unwavering support for Israel, NATO's central ally. It is through military support for Zionist forces that NATO is able to maintain a strategic foothold in the Middle East, in order to advance the political and economic interests of its members.

Peace will not be won at the point of a gun, but by putting an end to imperialism and capitalism. It is in honor of all the colonized peoples of yesterday, today and tomorrow, here and elsewhere, that we call on your courage and determination to walk the streets with us!

On November 22, let's take it to the streets en masse to make our anger heard! Let's unite to remind States the world over that their hands will always be stained with the blood of the exploited, no matter how much they try to hide it in velvet gloves or laughable summits!

Together, let's block NATO and affirm our rejection of militarism, imperialism and colonialism!



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About

IMPERIALISM

Imperialism refers to an empire that spreads its control over external territories through political, economic, or military domination. Initially, the Ottoman or Roman empires aimed for direct annexion of territories under the control of the central government, as Russia and Israel are currently doing. However, the U.S and U.K. empires have rather opted for domination strategies that are primarily economic and political both backed with a potential or actual military power. While political conflicts are spreading through the world, imperialist ambitions also grow to the point where the term Imperialism can be linked to the policies of so many countries that it could be seen as an integral component of most states. Indeed, imperialism is the result of states produced and influenced by Big Capital where economic interests demand expansion into territories richer in resources, with weaker environmental protections or with lower wages.



Technicalities

Printed in 5000 copies by unionized workers in Tio'tia:ke (Montréal). Put together by activists from CLAC, Rage Climatique, ORA, IWW, Divest for Palestine and the March 15th collective. Write to us at otan@clac-montreal.net if you want more copies of the newspaper. We wrote this so the world finally resist its oppressors, do whatever you deem necessary with our texts to end capitalism and imperialism: photocopy it, give it, plagiarize it, send it over the Internet or send it via the mail to your families.



What's NATO?



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance between 32 of the world's richest countries aiming to maintain their global hegemony. The key part of NATO's charter is Article 5, which states that an attack on one member country is to be considered as an attack on all member nations. Historically created to respond to the Korean War (1950-1953), the alliance goal is to defend the interests of capitalist countries during the Cold War. However, with the fall of the Soviet bloc in 1989, NATO redefined its mission by granting Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) status to countries like Israel and South Korea. NATO positions itself to intervene in international conflicts in order to maintain the dominance of the Global North on the world stage. This is achieved by defending countries on the borders of empires that are seen as threatening the interests of Northern countries, such as Russia or North Korea.

Is NATO acting in order to prevent military offensives on third party States, forcing therefore the imperialists states to resolve conflicts without impacting civil populations? It's quite the opposite! Since the ending of the cold war, responding primarily to the United States interests, NATO



has participated in the Afghanistan occupation that started in 2001 and to the Iraq wars of 1990 and 2003. In two of these three cases, NATO's interventions aimed to maintain governments installed by the United States, either after the removal of Saddam Hussein in 2003 or Mullah Omar in Afghanistan. After long lasting occupations, these countries stayed in a state of complete instability, meanwhile their civil infrastructures are crumbling.

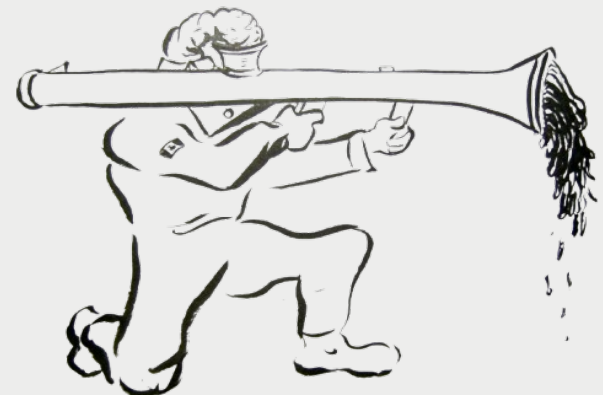
All G7 countries, with the exception of Japan, are NATO members, with Japan holding a MNNA status. Several articles in NATO's charter reference directly to the United States as secretary of the treaty. Their decision-making structures have evolved through the years, such as the creation of parliamentary assemblies in 1950, one of which is about to visit Montreal. These parliamentary assemblies are the largest debating space in the NATO system, bringing together 274 delegates from the 32 member countries, along with a few observers. The highest decision-making body remains the North Atlantic Council, composed of the 32 delegates, one per member country.

This military assembly knowingly acts to push interests promoting global north countries domination. The decisions coming from this assembly aims to maintain the impoverishment of global south countries, furthering the accumulation of wealth in the north at the expenses of the poorest states. Much more than a warlike version of the UN, NATO commits to take military action if countries in the Global South seek to free themselves from capitalist constraints.

Hard power and soft power: the twin strategies of a terrorist NATO

NATO exerts its influence through two kinds of power: hard power, or direct military intervention like the Kosovo bombardments in 1999, and soft power, strategies aimed at influencing foreign policy through diplomacy, economic sanctions, and the West's cultural omnipresence. No matter how diplomatic it may seem, however, NATO remains a coercive organization because its power rests on the implicit threat of military intervention, largely backed by the infinite military resources of the United States. The soft power of NATO, despite its diplomatic veneer, is thus imbued with military threat.

The Palestinian people, who have suffered Zionist atrocities for over 75 years, have the moral and legal right to defend themselves. In spite of this moral and legal right, however, any attempt at resistance against a key NATO ally like Israel is perceived as a threat to all member countries. Although NATO does not intervene directly in Palestine, it allows Israel to continue its genocidal actions via the tacit support of the Global North, most notably the United States, the main pillar of the Alliance. By tolerating each and every crime against humanity that Israel commits, NATO is issuing a strong message to any other global actor who would dare rise up against Western capitalist interests by making sure to show off what kind of repression they would suffer, up to the complete eradication of a people. By maintaining his power through such a regime of terror, NATO is itself a terrorist organization.



CHAIR À CANON POUR GROS À PHYNANCE

Blocking Imperialism is Possible!

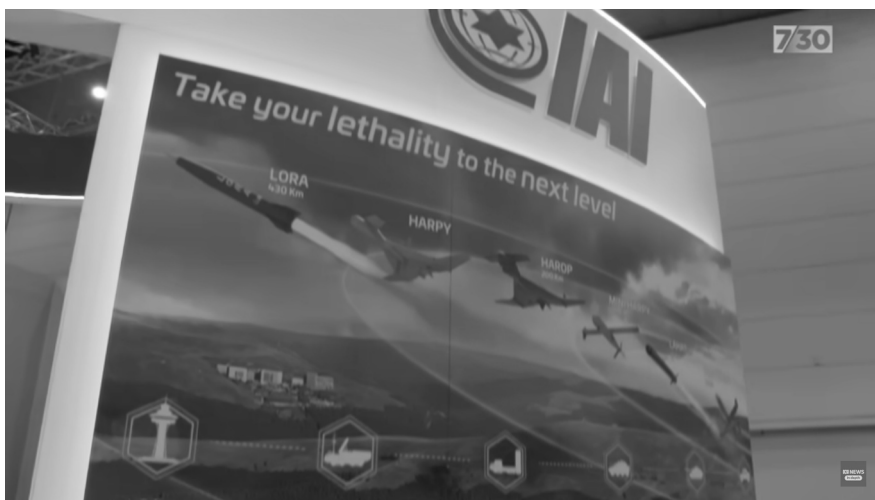
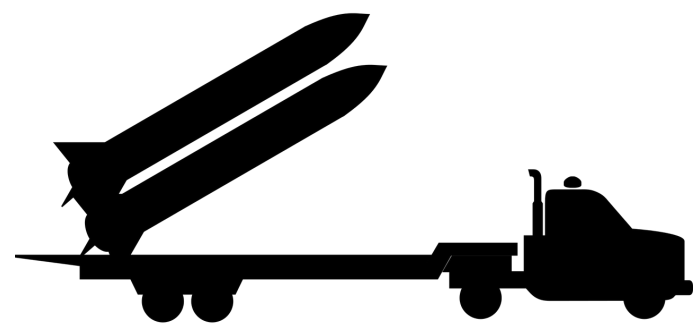
History is full of examples of movements that stood up to militarism and imperialism. As early as the 1960s, demonstrations against the Vietnam War mobilized millions of people around the world, denouncing American interference and imperialist massacres. More recently, in 2003, massive demonstrations against the invasion of Iraq brought together people from all walks of life, united against the destructive logic of war and the arms race.

These mobilizations demonstrated that popular resistance can highlight the excesses of governments and their military obsessions. Even today, demonstrations against NATO, arms sales, and the occupation of territories remind us that the power of the street can effectively oppose imperialist policies. Drawing inspiration from these past struggles, it is clear that protest remains a powerful tool for demanding a world where peace and justice take precedence over violence and domination.

In February 2003, 150,000 people took to the streets of Montreal to say no to the war against Iraq. Since then, anti-militarist mobilization has unfortunately waned. However, in 2022, there was a resurgence when a NATO summit was held in Madrid, Spain. Tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Madrid against the backdrop of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The genocide of the Palestinian people has provoked sustained mobilizations combined with a wide variety of tactics. In Melbourne, Australia, on September 11, some 25,000 people demonstrated violently against an arms trade fair. The disgraceful vulgarity of this event, occurring at a time when tensions and conflicts are escalating worldwide and we are witnessing genocide live on air, angered Australians to such an extent that the authorities were caught by surprise. Demonstrators greeted exhibitors by spraying them with red liquid symbolizing the blood their lucrative trade spills everywhere. With fair featuring slogans like "Take your lethality to the next level," there is ample reason to provoke a healthy anger against this trade of war.

The arrival of NATO's annual meeting in Montreal presents yet another opportunity to express our disgust and anger at this alliance, which only amplifies ongoing conflicts while enriching unscrupulous profiteers. Yes, we can demonstrate! Yes, we can still change the course of history!



Where is the Global South ?

The world's countries exist in a hierarchical relationship. That is to say, the richest countries, notably the seven richest (which make up the G7) – Canada, Germany, the United States, France, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom – live at the expense of other countries in the world where wages are much lower and where production has been outsourced over the past fifty years: Asia, Mexico, South America, and Africa. This organization is due, among other things, to strategies of economic, military, and political domination aimed at keeping Global North countries (the G7 and its allies) in dominant positions over the countries of the Global South (Asia, Africa, and South America). This is why most of our products are imported: generally, our wages are too high to be reduced to "dirty work". A glaring example lies in agriculture: more than 50% of our food comes from outside Canada, while 30% of the labor force in agriculture that still takes place here is made up of temporary migrant workers.

PALESTINE

FACING THE IMPERIALIST WEST

NATO is, and always has been, the armed wing of US imperialism and of the broader Global North. It manifests its power through direct and indirect military interventions, particularly in the Middle East, where Israel—itself a creation of Western colonial powers—benefits from unconditional support from NATO members despite not belonging to the alliance itself.

Because of its complicity in the crimes against humanity and human rights violations committed in Palestine for decades, and its ongoing silence on the genocide in Gaza, NATO is in violation of its own founding charter. This charter states that member states commit to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Occupied Palestine: laboratory of the Global North's military-industrial complex



Photo by : Divest for Palestine

The Zionist entity is an exceptionally privileged major non-NATO ally (MNNA). Because of its status, Israel has almost unlimited access to the most advanced military technologies developed by United States and Europe. The blockade and containment policy imposed on Gaza—the world's largest open-air prison—is made possible through the cutting-edge tools and technologies praised by NATO countries. This is embodied, in part, in the border walls which isolate the colonized and occupied population, and the surveillance systems which control Palestinian lives via checkpoints. The ultimate goal is to prevent Palestinians from uniting in resistance against 76 years of occupation.

Israel's physical segregation tactics include barriers made of metal mesh and reinforced concrete, surveillance cameras, drones, and military turrets commanded by the Zionist militia. Added to these physical barriers are facial recognition, cybersurveillance, and other methods of technological control. Palestine is, in essence, a testing ground for the

Israeli military and technological industry—and this is all supported logistically and financially by the Global North. Not only do the world's military dictatorships source weapons and surveillance technology from Israeli companies, but NATO members use them on their own populations. For example, in 2012, the plastic bullets fired by the Sûreté du Québec (SQ), which gouged out the eyes and disfigured student activists, were first tested by repressive Zionist forces.



Through its Innovation Fund, NATO facilitates access to cutting-edge military technologies for the Zionist army. Furthermore, the Fund's slogan, "Investing 1 billion to Secure the future," is reminiscent of a famous white supremacist slogan (the 14 Words¹). In June 2024, we learned that NATO would support four European companies working in cutting-edge military technologies, like ARX Robotics, which builds unmanned drones, and Fractile, which specializes in chip manufacturing. The Innovation Fund also invests in venture capital funds² that specialize in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and big data. Together, these investments demonstrate NATO's desire to support advanced technological warfare under the pretext that this form of military action offers the opportunity for precision strikes and is therefore "cleaner" and "more humane." However, since October 7, we have instead seen that AI-powered drones, among the many other forms of military automation deployed by the Zionist army, are killing the Palestinian population in a massive and indiscriminate manner. Advanced military technologies do not halt genocides—they accelerate them.

NATO's complicit silence

In October 2023, the Secretary General of NATO clearly showed his support for the Zionist entity by declaring in a press release that "Israel is not alone." In addition to remaining silent about the ongoing genocide in Gaza, NATO is violating its own norms by allowing the assassination of UN employees in Gaza and attacks on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Not only does it support the Zionist entity, but NATO-associated think tanks question the role that NATO could play in the "resolution of the conflict." A NATO Watch briefing published in December 2023 explores the idea of direct NATO military intervention to "stabilize the region" based on "success" of its stabilization missions in Ex-Yugoslavia in the late 1990s. However, these interventions were widely denounced for their direct attacks on places like churches, hospitals, and schools, which are protected by the



Photo by : Divest for Palestine

humanitarian legal framework that shelters civilian populations. NATO Watch's briefing closely mirrors a previous proposal by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. Both are part of the "Greater Israel" strategies; the attempt of the Global North to colonize a large part of the Middle East through the elimination of the Palestinian people, the subjugation of neighboring nations, such as Lebanon, and the appropriation of resources and territories. The members of NATO, the neo-colonial powers, are thus continuing their deadly project of world conquest through gunfire and blood.

By the **Divest for Palestine Collective**

NATO: a bare-faced imperialist machine since the 1990s

NATO has long used the so-called imminent threat of a Soviet Union-led world order to hide its true face: that of global US hegemony. As the Cold War came to a close in the 1990s, NATO's role in international relations evolved, notably in the former Yugoslavia. There, it quickly became evident that UN peacekeeping missions were unable to prevent the genocidal acts of Slobodan Milošević's Serbian Government against Muslims and the Bosnian, and Croat peoples. However, NATO's military intervention in Kosovo in 1999, acclaimed for its effectiveness by

Western powers, in fact gave rise to imprecise strikes targeting civilian places of refuge and humanitarian installations. These attacks constituted crimes against humanity just as disturbing as those attributed to Milosevic's troops. The way the international community dealt with these two war crimes groups, however, differs enormously. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia did not bring any charges against Western forces, instead recognizing the competence and autonomy of NATO as an international organization to investigate and

¹The complete slogan is "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." The simplified expression "secure the future" is perceived by many to be a fascist dog whistle

²Investment funds in early-stage companies that are not publicly traded and can yield a high return on investment, but remain high-risk. It is through these venture capitals that most startups finance their development

punish the perpetrators of crimes. This world-historic exoneration, which offered NATO the opportunity to be both the accused and its own judge, paved the way for a recurring normalization of war crimes by Western military forces. This brings us to today, to NATO's policy of unconditional support for the genocidal strikes of Israel.



Why block NATO

NATO pushes the Canadian government to increase its military expenses

As a military alliance, NATO's member need to keep their military expenses high in order to stay in the organization. NATO is therefore pressuring the Canadian government to increase its military budget to 2% of its GDP, that is to increase its military expenditures up to at least 55 billion. This demand follows NATO's goal, set in 2006 and reaffirmed in 2014, to have its members allocate 2% of their GDP to defense. As a result, Canadian military spending has already increased by 40% between 2014 and 2021¹. It also means these expenditures will continue to rise in proportion to GDP. These investments protect no one: Canada's only border is with the United States, with whom diplomatic relations are set fair. These additional tens of billions per year will therefore be invested in international missions.

NATO is the armed wing of Global North imperialism

As a member of the military alliance that is NATO, the Canadian government strongly contributes to the maintenance of U.S. domination over the rest of the world. However, NATO's interventions are not always declarations of war, but instead fit into a more subtle mosaic that makes opposition more complex. An example is the war in Afghanistan, initiated by the U.S. and the U.K. in 2001, where they carried out most of the bombings before a stabilization mission was taken over by NATO in 2003. At that time, the Hamid Karzai government was installed, and essentially, the Canadian mission consisted mostly to maintain the peace by operating checkpoints to prevent the ousted government from retaking control of the country by force. While the government only supported peacekeeping operations, the result was the same: it allowed Western allies to maintain control over the country. NATO remains an armed force that imposes the domination of the interests of Global North countries.

NATO and Militarism

NATO promotes armament as a way to deter attacks between nation-states. However, if the only reason one does not attack another country is that they are at the barrel of a gun, it becomes tempting to simply find a bigger gun. By occupying militarily, it provides arguments for the mobilization of armed groups. Indeed, it has been shown repeatedly that the military occupation of Afghanistan succeeded in galvanizing resistance, encouraging the development of armed militias and organizations: the examples of the occupations in Afghanistan, Libya, and Iraq clearly show that these strategies are effective in destroying populations, but useless in establishing stable governments.

On an international level, the establishment of treaties that consider an attack on one country as an attack on the whole alliance quickly led the Soviet bloc to set up the Warsaw Pact, a structure that has since been replaced by the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). These various treaties legitimize attacks on hostile countries, as they facilitate member states' entry into war. This can easily spiral out of control: after all, World War I partially started due to similar treaties. Moreover,

military deployments in the Middle East have only multiplied the number of armed groups fighting in the region. It is only through justice and wealth redistribution that peace can be established.

As a conflict management tool, war disproportionately affects the poorest, as it is always the most desperate who enlists in the military. In so-called Canada, after the anti-recruitment campaigns in CEGEPs and universities in 2008-2009, military recruiting shifted toward Indigenous communities. Additionally, long-term occupations like those carried out by NATO are very costly in civilian casualties, because after the initial bombings, the enemy becomes the civilian population. Ultimately, all occupations eventually end, leading to deep political instability similar to the pre-conflict situation, but often with enormous damage to infrastructure. Furthermore, groups that have armed themselves to fight the occupation forces bring the country into a far worse situation than before, often compounded by economic sanctions or import blockades.

NATO is the sum of its colonial states

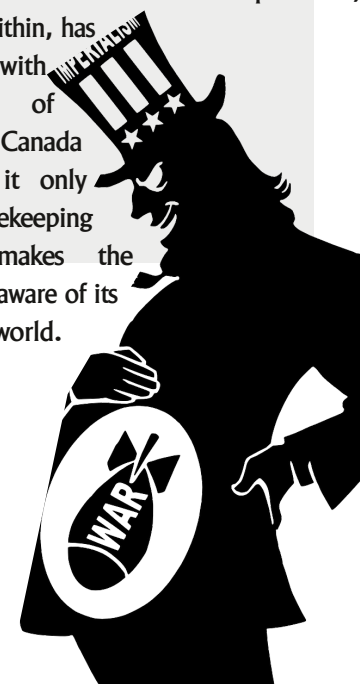
The four countries that blocked the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994-2007) — Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia — are either Major Non-NATO Allies (Australia and New Zealand) or founding NATO members (Canada and the United States). This is not surprising: directly in NATO's charter, it is mentioned that French Algeria (the document dates from 1953) is part of NATO territories, along with other international territories. It is no coincidence that NATO is allied with countries like Israel: they are well-versed in territorial occupation strategies. Like all states, building the myth of a nation, of a uniform cultural group — whether Canadians, Quebecers, or Israelis — with one language, one culture, and one identity, is the basis for keeping minorities, whether Muslim, Haudenosaunee, Innu, or Haitian, in poverty and exploitation.

¹ Bureau du directeur parlementaire du budget (Ed.). (2022, June 9). Dépenses militaires du Canada et objectif de dépenses de 2% de l'OTAN.

Canada-United-States Imperialism

The imperialist strategies varies depending of contexts, but ever since the downfall of the Berlin's wall in 1989, NATO specialized itself in a specific intervention tactic. There is generally a NATO intervention when a country is going through an instabilily phase or, then again, is suspected to fund "international terrorism". if the government in power is already aligned with the U.S. interests but faces threats, military occupation can immediately be carried out against the groups seeking to overthrow it. Otherwise, as shown by both cases of Afghanistan and the second Irak, the U.S. allow themselves to make unilateral attacks on other states, bombarding them intensively. This is made possible because there are no real significant internal political opposition in the United States, such as a well-developed anti-militarist movement. Therefore, as soon as the targeted government falls, international bodies are used to declare an interim government aligned with the interests of the Global North, and the territory is occupied to prevent violent actions aimed at overthrowing the new government, which is clearly installed by force. This is were NATO plays its main role; managing the military occupation that allows to keep a government in power. These much subtler roles are more adapted to Western countries: it can be said that it's a peacekeeping mission, that the goal is to prevent a government to impose or maintain harmful policies (for example, towards women in Afghanistan) and to participate in reconstruction (an insignificant portion of the total cost of the war).

These peacekeeping missions are just a smokescreen, masking war with a humanitarian glove: without the military maintenance of these new governments, often more problematic than the previous ones, U.S. bombings would not have the desired political effects. Just because tasks are divided between different countries in such a way as to ensure that the political cost is democratically acceptable does not make the mission any less problematic. Canadian imperialism, experienced from within, has nothing to do with conceptions of "traditional" war: Canada invades no one; it only participates in peacekeeping missions. This makes the population often unaware of its effects around the world.



About the war in Ukraine

By invading Ukraine, Russia brought to light the atrocities that generate capitalism and imperialism. Far from being merely a clash between two nations, this war reflects geopolitical rivalries between two Great Powers that both exploit their people for their own economic and strategic interests.

While the Russian state engaged in a conflict that denies not only the Ukrainian people's right to self-determination but also inflicts immeasurable suffering on populations on both sides of the border, the Ukrainian state has turned to authoritarian measures that undermine the very foundations of freedom. Meanwhile, while claiming they support democracy, the Western powers united through NATO are actually exploiting the conflict to reinforce their influence in the region and increase their profits.

Wars are manifestations of power struggles between states that exploit people. They only fuel the military-industrial complex, which thrives on human suffering, while multinational corporations generate billions in profit from arms sales and post-conflict reconstruction.

It is all the more unfortunate that some comrades take sides with one camp or another, falling into the trap of nationalism and militarism. In the face of this deadly logic, we must clearly oppose all wars, regardless of the reasoning behind it. It is imperative for the revolutionary movement to adopt an internationalist vision, one that transcends borders and unites struggles against all forms of oppression. Our response must not involve supporting either the Moscow regime or the Kiev regime.

The editorial committee calls for solidarity between Ukrainian and Russian workers, a rejection of militarism, and the building of a strong revolutionary movement capable of opposing the governments and institutions that exploit the conflict to maintain their power

True peace can simply not exist under capitalism.

WAR IN UKRAINE: THE EMPIRES ARE STILL WITH US

Ukraine's modern history is marked by military interventions from the West, including the Napoleonic campaign (1812), the Crimean War (1853–1856), and two world wars. During these conflicts, various regions of Ukraine frequently changed hands among Austria-Hungary, Poland, Germany, and Russia.

With the end of the so-called “Cold War” (which was actually “hot” in other parts of the world), NATO was expected to dissolve, having been established to protect Western countries from the Soviet bloc. However, at the NATO summit in July 1990, George H. W. Bush, Mitterrand, and Thatcher agreed on the necessity of keeping the alliance alive, despite its original purpose being rendered obsolete. In November of the same year, Gorbachev^[1] and Kohl^[2] reached an agreement that reunified Germany should join NATO in exchange for its renunciation of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, when the Soviet Union dissolved, US Secretary of State James Baker promised Gorbachev that NATO would not expand eastward, although this promise was never formalized in writing.

A turning point occurred in 1991 when war erupted in Yugoslavia (1991–1995) and Kosovo (1998–1999), resulting in at least 130,000 deaths and more than four million displaced persons and refugees. Amid the horrors of Milosevic's Serbian regime, Germany and Austria intensified tensions by unilaterally recognizing the independence of Slovenia and Croatia on December 23, 1991. The European Economic Community and the Vatican followed suit just two days later.

The aftermath was marked by escalating warmongering and nationalism, leading to war, massacres, ethnic cleansing, and interconfessional strife. The Yugoslav conflict was the first on European soil since 1945. NATO's bombing of Serbia in the spring of 1999 demonstrated its military and political force, overpowering the bureaucratic European Union. Over 128 days, 400 NATO aircraft conducted 480 sorties daily, resulting in the deaths of a thousand Yugoslav servicemen and 500 civilians.

This intervention breached the United Nations Charter, as NATO acted without the approval of the Permanent Security Council, which is required before any armed intervention between states can occur. It is true that Russia would have vetoed such approval.

Supported by France, the bombings were called for by the German government, which was the first coalition of social democrats and ecologists, led by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer.

For Russian leaders, this intervention by a Western organization was perceived as an attack on their Slavic brothers. They viewed the dismemberment of Yugoslavia as a deliberate effort by the newly formed European Union, established on November 1, 1993, to eagerly absorb the region in order to expand its own market.

NATO subsequently expanded to include several Eastern European countries: Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary in 1999; the three Baltic States, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, and Bulgaria in 2004; Croatia and Albania in 2009; Montenegro in 2017; and Macedonia in 2020. These accessions occurred at the request of

Precisions

The text provided by the Makhno Network was developed from excerpts of their book "War in Ukraine: Geopolitics of Empires", which were revisited to fit the format of the newspaper. It mainly addresses the question of NATO's role in the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. However, the book's ambition was, from its beginning, to offer a global and comprehensive overview of the actions and motivations that led to this crisis. Needless to say, the book extensively covers NATO's role as much as the one of "Greater Russia" and its successive wars of aggression.

"War in Ukraine: Geopolitics of Empires" doesn't aim to establish who are the good one and who are the villains but instead to shed light on the different mechanisms that triggered this deadly explosion, from which Ukrainian and Russian populations have been suffering daily for nearly three years. The consequences of this conflict primarily benefit the arms industries and the global capitalist conglomerates.

states seeking protection against potential new Russian imperialist ambitions. Additionally, NATO has intervened in other parts of the world, operating outside its legal perimeter: Afghanistan (2001–2021), addressing piracy in the Red Sea (2009–2016), and in Libya (Operation Unified Protector, 2011).

When Putin came to power in 2000, he initially opted for cooperation with the West. However, the U.S. government has insisted on maintaining its hegemony, desiring a Europe capable of controlling Russia for its own interests. This involves integrating the former Soviet satellites both economically and politically. For example, at the NATO summit in Bucharest on April 4-5, 2008, the alliance “welcomed the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine and Georgia to join.” The statement declared, “Today we have decided that these countries will become members of NATO.”

The use of the conditional phrase “will become” reflects a troubling ambiguity that leads to the “worst of both worlds.”

Such a statement irritates Russian leaders, particularly Putin. It also does not sit well with the Ukrainian leaders of the “Orange Revolution^[3],” who feel they have been deceived. In retrospect, one wonders whether the submission of French and German leaders, Sarkozy and Merkel, to the Bush administration's hawkish stance initiated Putin's assault on Ukraine in April 2008. Or how, to their tragic detriment, the Ukrainian people became both a shield for Western powers and a bargaining chip for the new tsar.

Ukraine's resources—wheat, oilseeds, coal, and electricity—as well as its strategic position for Russian pipelines, are overshadowed by the imperial ambitions of the powers involved. In the West, the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 have prompted NATO's further expansion, including the enlistment of a previously neutral state like Sweden, alongside a frenzied escalation of military budgets amid massive propaganda. The people—all the people—are paying the price.

Makhno Network, October 2024.

¹Mikhail Gorbachev (1931-2022) was the last president of the USSR.

²Helmut Kohl (1930-2017) was the head of the West German and later German government from October 1, 1982, to October 27, 1998.

³The “Orange Revolution” refers to a series of demonstrations that took place from November 2004 to January 2005, following the announcement of the results of the November 2004 presidential election, which many Ukrainians perceived as rigged. Several media outlets cast doubt on the spontaneous nature of this movement, pointing to the external assistance that the “revolution” was said to have received. The “Orange Revolution” highlights the muted struggle for influence between Moscow and Washington in the region.

Strasbourg : From NATO's Ashes, Everything Becomes Possible

In April 2009, Strasbourg was the scene of an explosion of anger, a collective cry against NATO and its militarist and imperialist policies. Thousands of protesters came together at the border of France and Germany to oppose NATO'S 21st summit, determined to voice their anger against this institution which has justified for decades war and colonization in the name of security.



The mobilizations began long before the first banners were deployed. Although the counter-summit organization's was marked by heated debates on the topic of violence in social movements, the numerous meetings, assemblies and preparation actions crystallized the desire to fight in many demonstrators. Affinities grew stronger, tactics were discussed and a willingness to confront settled. "For us, resistance was clear: we couldn't remain passive in the face of a system that respects neither life nor freedom."

Exacerbated by the 2008 economic crisis, the summit was the occasion for anticapitalist, anarchist and the peace movement to make their voices heard.

Around 3000 people, coming from all over Europe and even the U.S., settled on a vast plaza 8km from downtown Strasbourg.

Strasbourg's city center was transformed into a fortified city : barricades, mounted police patrols, helicopters circling the sky and even surface-to-air missile batteries were installed around the city. However, this didn't stop protesters from entering the heart of the hot zone.

On the Saturday, the April 4th, after violent clashes with the police in the previous days ended with 300 arrestations, around 30 000 people stormed the city. Quickly, a huge black bloc of over 2000 people formed within the protest.

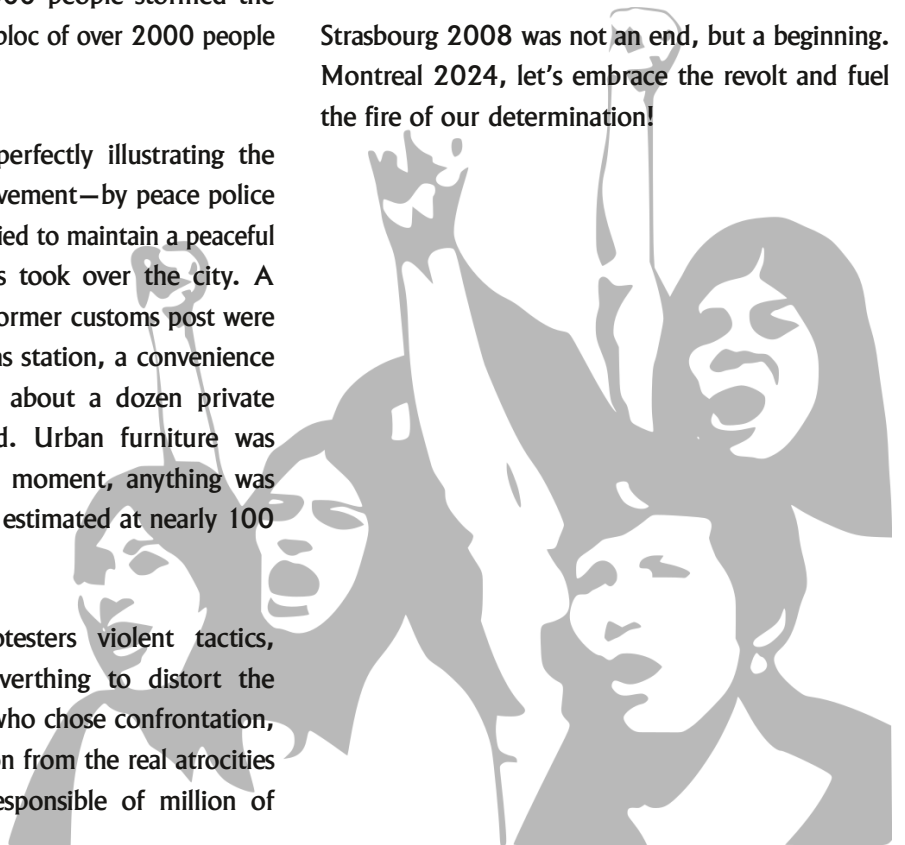
Despite some attempts—perfectly illustrating the polarization within the movement—by peace police and some organizers who tried to maintain a peaceful demonstration, black flags took over the city. A pharmacy, a hotel, and a former customs post were set on fire. A chapel, a gas station, a convenience store, a post office, and about a dozen private businesses were ransacked. Urban furniture was smashed to pieces. For a moment, anything was possible. The damage was estimated at nearly 100 million euros.

By focusing on the protesters violent tactics, mainstream media did everything to distort the message carried by those who chose confrontation, therefore diverting attention from the real atrocities committed by NATO, responsible of million of

deaths. As we denounce the brutality of the institutions that govern us, it is crucial to remember that the true violence is that of the States.

These large gatherings are privileged opportunities to spread our ideals. We must be clever, navigate the media bias, and be able to create alternative narratives—stories that show that the struggle for freedom is legitimate and necessary. Strasbourg was an opportunity for many comrades to unite in resistance and for groups from diverse backgrounds to come together around a common goal: to abolish the structures of oppression that govern us.

Strasbourg 2008 was not an end, but a beginning. Montreal 2024, let's embrace the revolt and fuel the fire of our determination!



Peace police: who are these parasites?

Peace police are people that see themselves like guardian of protester's security and of the movement's image, therefore opposing all other form of protesting the they would judge as being "violent". Yet, their so called empathy often hides authoritarian and violent dynamics: they impose their limits to political struggles, divide the movement and become complicit with police repression.

Peace police don't only settle for criticizing methods or tactics of the struggle, but in some cases they will go as far as denouncing and physically restraining other demonstrators. By aggressively interposing and using intimidation tactics, they seek to impose their vision of an "acceptable" protest. While the mainstream media narrative already distinguish "good" protesters from the "bad ones", peace police exacerbate this division within the movement.

The choice of tactics in a given context should be guided by a will to maximize respect for life. Above all, when the dilemma lies between the lack of media coverage and the condemnation of a disruptive protest, it is crucial to weigh the stakes. While thousands of people are killed each month, keeping the integrity of banks windows that financed a genocide should not be at the top of the priority list.

Peace police, you are not welcomed