

## Samir Amin

War, militarization are certainly not something new in history – neither in history in general, nor in modern history of the capitalist system. But, in order to meet that challenge and design an alternative efficient strategy, one has to be very careful and first analyze as scientifically as possible, the nature of war in the concrete circumstances of the time. That is, articulate the choice of war to state, nation, class, in the frame of the variety of economic and social interests. And in the light of that analysis, consider what problems can be solved by war. Liberation war has solved some problems, and other wars also have solved some problems which ought to be identified in accordance with the circumstances. It is said for instance that the current war in Iraq is the condition to create democracy in that country and around. I believe this is not. The targets of the war are in fact other: plunder the oil, establish the US military control over the Planet. Yet this is not always understood and some people tolerate if not legitimate this war. My point is that the type of war that we are facing not only in Iraq, but since 1990, in Yugoslavia, in Afghanistan, and in other places to come for sure, is operating in a frame which is very different from the frame of previous periods, which included also the use of war.

I submit that the pattern of war today is the result of the combination of two characteristics of the present system: one the one hand the moving of the system from a number of imperialist powers, plural, in conflict, to what I am calling a collective imperialism of the triad: US, Europe –Western Europe– and Japan. And on the top of that collective imperialism, the specific and particular project of US – not hegemony- but leadership. Now, what does it mean concretely? It means a lot. It means that the dominant segments of capital which in vulgar language could be called the transnationals, have a common interest beyond the conflicts between them, which is very usual ("Every capitalist is the enemy of all the others"). But common interest; why? Because the degree of centralization of capital, which has been reached today, goes far beyond what it was fifty years ago. And therefore those segments of capital need to have access to the global market; they cannot crystallize and be successful on the basis of "less than global market". And therefore they need to have common instruments and, to a certain extent, a common strategy, to operate at that level. This is the very strong basis for the intimate solidarity between capitalist ruling classes, whether Democrats or Republicans in the US, Right or Left as they are electorally, in Europe.

We ought to know it and to know that, therefore even if there are disagreements in the way this global system should be managed (and more particularly if Iraq should have been -or not- invaded) there is a common stand on fundamentals, which is expressed in the policies of the collective instruments of that collective imperialism. I refer here first to the economic instruments: IMF, which I'm calling a "collective colonial monetary authority", the WTO, which is not a trade organization but a "collective ministry of colonies", since it administers the division of labour and the organisation of production at all levels, globally, and the World Bank, which I think is a "ministry of propaganda" of the G7. I refer also to the political instruments of that collective imperialism which are the G7 and NATO, considered as more important than UN. This is why imperialism does not accept the very concept of the UN and rejects the rule of international law. On the top of that, we have the US specific project, which is not that of only the extreme Right of the Bush system, but reflects the view of the majority of the ruling class of the US, including the Democrats.

That US plan is not very new, it has started in '45. It was– and it is - a plan which – I will use a very short phrase to describe it - aims at “ extending the Monroe Doctrine to the whole world”. That is, not only govern the whole Western hemisphere according to the US own specific interests and deny the interests of the other peoples of the continent, but do the same at the global level. That plan was always based on the advantage of weapons. It started not in Yalta, but in Potsdam, because at Potsdam the US had the monopoly at that point in time of nuclear armament, which they used. Consequently that monopoly was broken by the Soviet military achievements and the US had to postpone further steps needed to implement their project. But very brutally, what we saw in 1990, with the breakdown of the Soviet Union, was a step forward in the implementation of the project. At that point in time, the

project was fully supported by the Europeans and the Japanese . This is what explains the 1990 war, the wars in Yugoslavia, etc, etc.

This plan is presented in an “attractive” way. The US pretend to be acting in the interest of “everybody”, i.e. the collective imperialism. Additionally they pretend that their intention is to expand the rule of democracy globally and that NATO being an organisation of “democratic nations” cannot do else.. This is far from truth: Salazar was one of the founding fathers of NATO, the Greek colonels and the Turkish generals, whom I doubt exemplary as democrats, have been strong allies and supporters. In fact the discourse on democracy is an ideological propaganda discourse . I do not think that the ruling classes believe in it, they are cynical enough not to do so; yet perhaps a number of intellectuals believe in that discourse but not power system people.

It is important to identify the weaknesses of the project in order to develop an efficient counter-strategy for an efficient alternative. The weakness is that the US are not in a hegemonic position. In the sense that if the rules of the game i.e. liberalism, transparent competition, were implemented, the US would not turn victorious in their competition with Europe in some segments of most modern industries, with China, India, Brazil and others for common industries, say, automobile , with Europe and the southern cone of Latin America for agricultural products, etc. Therefore, there is no choice for the US but to impose themselves through the military control of the planet with a view to occupying the areas which are providing strategic resources, particularly energy and oil. This is the reason for their choice of the Middle East as the target for the first blow, not the last one. Additionally the region is in the heart of the old continent, at equal distance from London, Singapur, Beijing, Johannesburg and Moscow. Therefore the US military control of the region makes very difficult an eventual Euro-Asian rapprochement. The axis which at some point in time seemed to be possible ( Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Beijing and Delhi), and would mean that "You Americans have nothing to do here! Go back to America!" , is made much more difficult. It is at that point that the political contradictions (a concept distinct from the contradictions between the interests of economic dominant capital in Europe and in the US) reemerge. I refer here to the eventual effects of the distinct political cultures of Europe, on the hand and of the US, on the other hand.

I derive some conclusions from this analysis . One, is that the US project is based on abrogating international law, a big step backward to before '45. This abrogation has been achieved thanks to many complicities including that of the Secretary General of the UN personally. That stands as an obstacle to the alternative, which ought to be based on the concept of a multipolar system, that is, a system in which globalization is negotiated on the basis of a recognition that the different interests are conflicting.. A multipolar system is the condition for associating social progress (I am not saying "Socialism"), immediate social progress everywhere and for everybody with democratization ( not a blue-print of the so-called democracy, which is a caricature in most cases) understood as a long process. That in its turn implies full respect of the autonomy of the nations and sovereignty of peoples.

This is the alternative for everybody including the Iraqis. What may or may not achieve the Iraqi resistance in that frame and how it should be supported should be discussed in that perspective.

The Iraqi resistance must be supported . As long as the Iraqis , which are the direct victims of the demential and criminal plan of the US and their Allies, feel that they are almost alone to face the aggression, many things negative could happen and continue to happen.

That leads me to my conclusion, which I am addressing to the jury of course. My conclusion calls for a much stronger solidarity with the Iraqi people (and some others like the Palestinians) To that effect I suggest organising a global campaign under the slogan "US go home!" which could be associated with a North American campaign, "US back home!" . The demand is that the US should quit every place they occupy irrespective of what could be the so called possible “negative effects” for the future of involved countries. I am not over-optimistic – I don't think that necessarily everywhere beautiful developments will happen. But it is for sure not the American military occupation which will help to solve any problem, big or small. Because the exclusive target of that occupation is to plunder the

natural resources , petrol, and through this plunder to exercise their domination over even their allies – in this case the Europeans and the Japanese. A global campaign, "US go home!", means also dismantling their military bases; and for the Europeans considering necessary the dismantling of NATO. And now how to start that campaign? I suggest a "Guantanamo Day" , a day like the 15th of February when tens of millions people walked down in the streets everywhere in the world . The slogan for this day would be: "Wherever the US military are, they are building Guantanamos!" .This is the way to re-construct the solidarity between the peoples of the world, including the people of the United States,. Re-building that solidarity and not leaving the Iraqi and the Palestinian resistance face almost alone the strongest and ugliest criminal enemy in modern history

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Thank you.