

Imperialism Must be Fought with Peaceful Resistance While Minimizing Possibilities of War

By [Bharat Dogra](#)

Theme: [History](#)

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For nearly five centuries western imperialism has been without doubt the most destructive force at the world level. It has caused more death and destruction than anything else in the entire history of humankind.

During the days of colonial rule there were anti-imperialism movements all over the world involving millions of valiant and determined people. Partly due to these and partly due to inherent self-destructive tendencies of imperialism, the forces of imperialism were weakened in the period around 1945, coinciding with the end of the Second World War, and several countries became independent one after another.

However several imperial powers tried their best to delay their departure, hanging on for a decade or two in some colonies, killing millions directly and indirectly even during the last years, dividing and weakening their former colonies before leaving, sowing seeds of hostilities but blaming it all on people they had exploited ruthlessly using divide and rule policies for centuries.

This as well as the subsequent conduct of the former colonial powers on matters relating to trade, debt and increasing power of multinational companies, covert actions and destabilization of other countries, revealed that the former colonial powers never truly repented or regretted their ruthless exploitation of other countries and people for centuries, and have in fact pursued similar interests in other ways, sometimes participating in highly destructive wars and proxy wars for this.

Of course this is not true of many citizens of these countries who are fine human beings committed to justice and fairness. We are not talking of common people or dissenting people of these countries (many of whom as farmers, workers and independent intellectuals have their own bagful of complaints from their governments or from 'deep state'). We are only opposing the unjust policies of most regimes of these countries and the continued pursuit of imperialism and neo-colonialism by them.

While the former imperialist powers had no real change of heart, in the new emerging situation the leadership of western imperialism was placed firmly with the USA **while some of the former big imperial powers were often reduced to being loyal followers or vassals**. While the USA led its followers into many highly destructive and unjust wars, often linked to control over oil, gas and other coveted resources or considered necessary for perpetuating or increasing western hegemony, some of the 'vassals' also continued with their own sub-imperialism agenda, generally under the US umbrella.

The USA used its power arrogantly, carelessly and foolishly on many occasions, but had many assets including dollar dominance- its currency being the world reserve currency,

ability to spend relentlessly on expensive wars without running the risk of economic ruin (so far), by far the highest military budget with arsenals to match, NATO with its increasing membership, high level of control over world communications, media and propaganda.

Ignoring possibilities of enlightened or disciplined use of such strengths, arrogance in pursuing imperial objectives resulted in policies and decisions that led to huge destruction and immense suffering in many countries, alienating many people. Around the same time that the leadership of western imperialism passed into the hands of the USA, the Soviet Union emerged as the leader of the communist world, exercising excessive unjustified control over many countries and the republics integrated within the Soviet Union. The Soviet leadership made many serious mistakes resulting in enormous distress for several of its own people and the people of other countries, even though there were also notable achievements in many areas like industry, infrastructure, science and technology, education and health facilities. However it is not fair to keep 'Soviet imperialism' in the same category as western imperialism as at one level the Soviet Union had also sought to provide support for several liberation struggles and for many victims of western imperialism. The Soviet Union had grown out of aspirations for alternatives to aggressive capitalism and many people had sacrificed their life for this. If the path of hope got derailed leading to tyranny, at least part of the blame rests with the highly aggressive policies pursued by the western imperialist powers towards the Soviet Union which actually strengthened the hands of those in the Soviet Union who wanted to centralize arbitrary powers in a few hands.

Anyway, the Soviet Union could not become the great alternative the world needed, and could not also win the deep affection and firm support of its people, so that when the western imperialist powers led by the USA engaged it in expensive competition for military superiority, the internally weakened Soviet Union started collapsing, a trend enhanced by mistakes like sending army to Afghanistan.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia became a victim of western imperialism during the decade 1990-2000 as forces of imperialism plundered it in collaboration with local elites and sought to weaken it further. However after Putin took over, Russia made significant recovery in its important human development indicators (UN figures) and also took important steps to safeguard its legitimate security interests from the relentless expansion of NATO which had been taken up in glaring violation of promises made earlier not to expand NATO an inch eastwards. The steps which Russia has taken to protect its security interests may have technically violated some international rules or laws (and in addition democracy here has been far from perfect) but nothing that has happened in recent times can add up to what some have called 'Russian imperialism'. The overall reality appears to be of Russia facing very aggressive and unjustified hostility from western imperialism and taking steps for its security. Yes, all wars are wrong particularly in these times and Russia has invaded Ukraine, but a careful study of all that has happened during 2008-2024 in this context would reveal that the Ukraine war has been instigated by western imperialism for its own reasons, causing enormous suffering to both neighbors.

China also emerged from the chaos of the Second World War as a very important communist power but the dream of providing a promising alternative to capitalism was soon lost here too as millions of innocent people lost their lives in very painful ways in the famine conditions of 'the great leap forward' and later in the so-called cultural revolution. Later, after making adjustments with world capitalism, China experienced very high economic growth for several years and increased its military might as well. China has been very

aggressive at some levels, but still it will not be proper to speak of Chinese imperialism as yet. There are signs of Chinese aggression that indicate that there can be Chinese imperialism in future, as China relentlessly seeks more and more resources elsewhere for its large middle and high income population, but it will be unfair to speak of full-blown Chinese imperialism at present, particularly as a lot of Chinese military efforts are aimed at protecting its own security from western imperialism plus its local allies closer to China.

Around 2015, or a little before or after, western imperialism realized that both Russia and China had strengthened themselves adequately to emerge as great powers. Several western strategic experts recognize them as great powers. Hence the unipolar world of 1990 became a multi-polar world with three great powers.

However western imperialism is based on achieving undisputed supremacy of the USA together with its close allies or vassal states. Hence increasingly during the last decade there has been talk of USA led or USA instigated wars or proxy wars against Russia and China. This can also lead to the Third World War and to nuclear war.

Hence to summarize we make two important points here from which we draw an important conclusion.

The first point is that today there are three great powers but only one full-blown imperialism which is western imperialism (although it has sub-imperialisms also of allies and vassals such as Israel and France some of which are in decline and some are becoming more aggressive).

Secondly, this imperialism is not only causing immense distress and destruction but in addition, and this is very important, this has also become an existential threat for the safety of the world. From this understanding we draw the conclusion that resisting western imperialism is of the highest importance today for the safety of the world but this resistance should be peaceful and should be taken forward in such a way that the possibility of war can be minimized. The resistance should take place in democratic and transparent ways, involving free debates and dialogues, and not in secretive and dogmatic ways. The broad-based opposition to imperialism at world level should be such that while defeating the present western imperialism, the possibilities of later-day emergence of any other force of imperialism can also be minimized at the same time.

Hence the peace movement, or rather justice-based peace movement has become very important today. The justice-based peace movement, including disarmament movement, should involve more and more people, and they must have an understanding that resisting imperialism is extremely important for creating a safer world based on justice-based peace.

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Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include *Protecting Earth for Children*, *Planet in Peril*, *Earth without Borders*, *Man over Machine* and *A Day in 2071*. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

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