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## One year into Scholz's "new era"



**Sources:** Rebellion

*If the nineteenth century was long, from 1789 to 1914, the twentieth, short, from 1914 to 1989, the twenty-first, the so-called "American century", has been a sigh; from 1989 to 2022.*

Three days after Russia's aggression in Ukraine, on February 27, Last year, the new German Prime Minister, Olaf Scholz, said that the The world was entering a "new era." At the same time, he announced the creation of of a €100 billion fund to modernise the army

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Germany, increasing the war budget to 2% of GDP and handing over to Ukraine of armaments to resist the Russian invasion.

To one year after this announcement of the "new era" of Scholz, all members NATO Europeans have followed the path that the US has been demanding For years, the increase in military expenditures, which puts the world in an arms race qualitatively superior to that of the cold war. At that time the race was limited to two powers, the The US and the USSR, which the others attended as spectators; Not today.

### **War vs. diplomacy: the UN, an empty shell**

The Current arms race spans the US, top spenders in military investments, China, the latter, Russia, and so on Reach the last country in the world. NATO members, for their part, that remained in the background, have taken a turn and at the Summit of Last June they agreed, one, the "360°" strategy, which is that NATO it can intervene anywhere in the world without the endorsement of the UN, two, increase its military expenditures to a minimum of 2% of GDP.

The "Cold War" was just that, a cold war that, like the "great game" of the XIX century between Britain and the Tsarist Empire, never reached a Direct confrontation, to a hot war. It was based more on movements and demonstrations of force than in open wars with a supranational "Bonapartist" body of "arbitrator", the UN. Not that. It means that there were none, but they were not direct between the Powers.

Alone In a moment it could reach the hands, when the crisis of the Cuba's missiles, but the policy of "peaceful coexistence" of the The Soviet bureaucracy did not aim at the clash with the United States, but at the agreement, which was what happened and "diplomacy" was imposed against the war.

In this picture of a "great game" between two great powers, the UN fulfilled the role that had been given to it after the pacts of Yalta and Potsdam, being the key vault of the correlation of forces that emerged in 1945, with the defeat of fascism and the strengthening of the two poles, U.S. imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy.

As the UN Founding Charter says in its first point:

"Maintain international peace and security, and to this end: take action effective collectives to prevent and eliminate threats to peace, and to suppress acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace; and achieve by peaceful means, and in accordance with the principles of justice and international law, the adjustment or settlement of disputes, or international situations likely to lead to breaches of peace"

The signatories of this Charter were looking for an organism that would serve as a ground of game to solve the contradictions that were very alive after the Second War, under a correlation of forces in which neither the imperialism could destroy the USSR by military means, as long as it was fostered the existence of such a supranational body as an expression of its policy of "peaceful coexistence" and pact with imperialism.

How The underlying social contradictions remained, both contenders They kept rearming themselves in order to "show" their teeth to the other.

But "Nothing lasts forever." The UN made sense while the economy it was growing on both sides of the Berlin Wall and the class struggle was redirected to syndicalism, in exchange for the renunciation of the revolution. Trade union and political bureaucracies, influenced by the politics of Peaceful Coexistence, they applied it in their states, in exchange for Social conquests that were called "welfare state".

This Balance between both sides broke with the crack of 67 and went to the Garete in the crisis of the 70s, to which Anglo imperialism The U.S. responded with the declaration of war that was the The savage neoliberalism of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations, and the papacy of John Paul II. A declaration of war that was not only against the national working classes, but against the symbols that States without capitalists were possible, the workers' states, to which A rhythm of economic attrition was imposed on them with the unequivocal objective of semi-colonizing them.

To the USSR imposed on it a level of military investment ("the war of the galaxies" of Reagan) that deepened the flaws of planning bureaucratic of the Soviet economy until its collapse. The end of the path is, by different paths (China is not the same as Russia, Cuba than Vietnam), the restoration of capitalism in all of them.

The The UN is beginning to lose its meaning, as the Yalta and Potsdam between the Soviet bureaucracy and the imperialism they gave it origin, they no longer have any validity. The world is no longer divided into Opposite "social camps", but all of it is a field, it is a world capitalist under American hegemony. After the First Gulf War it is Bush I, "the father," who declares the "pax americana."

### **2016, the key year**

The "pax americana", to put some date, lasts just over ten years, when the attacks on the Twin Towers occur, and the U.S. imperialism declares "war on terrorism." The "Pax Americana" concealed an ineluctable process that will mark the Present: They had won the "cold war" by restoring capitalism in the former workers' states, and with the contribution of raw materials and strength of specialized work sustained the growth of the

90s; but The decadence of Yankee imperialism came from before, from the crisis of the 70s when they had to break the Bretton Woods agreement and the "dollar-gold" parity.

In that moment the U.S. told the world, we can't be yours anymore. bankers, because we don't have enough gold reserves to make compared to the amount of dollars circulating around the world; to sustain The dollar we need another material, strategic for all States, because it is the one that moves them, oil. This is how the petro emerged dollar.

Already It is not the dollar-gold parity, but the obligation to make the payments of Oil in dollars which gave them solidity. In return, they pledged to guarantee the security of large oil producers, with Arabia Saudi at the forefront. That's why, when Iraq occupies Kuwait, I expect it to be The payment in spices for the war against the Iranian revolution that had taken place carried out in the name of imperialism, the US jumped as a They organized the First Gulf War: Saudi Arabia was untouchable For the "petro dollars".

No The country was opposed, at most they put themselves in profile. Russia was in chaos, China was emerging from the Tiananmen crisis and Europe was not even the The European Union was still a cage of crickets. Military power The U.S. was catalyzing its relative economic decline, and It allowed it to continue imposing its conditions on the world: the two wars of the The gulf, the war in the former Yugoslavia, were blows of hand to show that he was still dominant.

Of New, "Nothing lasts forever." China's growth, the stabilisation of Russia, the emergence of the EU is beginning to put in Evidence of this decadence, it is the appearance of what has been called "The multipolar world". That the USA remains the leading power, no one doubts this; But so is China's exponential growth, fostered by themselves with the "chinamerica", which has allowed the The emergence of a Chinese bourgeoisie supported by the monopoly of power by the P C Ch with its own interests, differentiated from those of imperialism.

Yes this process would have occurred at another historical moment, China would have become a semi-colony of imperialism; But it is not so, it is given At a time when the hegemonic power has been since the 70s of the twentieth century in retreat in its domination of the world and begin to open Large cracks in economic relations between states where Enter not only China, but Russia itself, which recovers its ambitions Imperial. To former semi-colonies such as Turkey, Brazil, Iran, South Africa, ... They ask for their "sphere of influence", some of them constituting the BRICS, under the military umbrella of the SCO (Organization for the Shanghai Cooperation), built around the Russian-Chinese alliance.

This It is, by the way, the "multipolar front" under which they are grouping. Sectors of the neo-Stalinist, Castro or Chavista left, to which They consider it an "anti-imperialist front" when it is nothing more than a Grouping of "aggrieved" by the Euro-American powers. As we will see below, it is a current within the left that it gives up the emerging imperialist powers at all costs, with China at the head, by confusing inter-imperialist contradictions with "Anti-imperialism".

The The year in which this emerging trend of Chinese capitalism crystallizes is 2016, when the yuan enters the basket of currencies with rights IMF special revolving specials, composed up of four World references: Dollars, Euros, Pounds and Yen. The Chinese capitalism, with all its industrial strength, enters the Division of Honor of imperialism and begins to compete in the financial field with the rest of the imperialist powers; Payments for materials Premiums, public debt, etc., can also be made in yuan. Thus, the recent agreement between Saudi Arabia and China for the payment of oil in the Chinese currency announces the emergence of the "petro-yuan", alternative to "petrodollar."

Already It is not only the factory of the world, but also one of its bankers and begins to establish "metropolis-semicolony" relations with entire continents, such as Africa or South and Central America. What does not have a military interventionist policy does not exempt you from complying that role of metropolis; the U.S. until 1945, and even after, was The champions of the "free world market" and "respect for the right to the peoples to self-determination" (it was they who introduced as a fundamental right in the UN Charter), as now China does.

The Political consequences of this change are not long in coming. In March 2018, the president of the United States at the time, Donald Trump announces intention to impose tariffs of 50 billion dollars to Chinese goods under Section 000 of the Trade 301. On May 19 2019, following orders from The US administration announces that it will stop providing updates of your Android mobile operating system to the owners of phones of this brand, and that the new units of Huawei won't be able to use basic apps to work

The June 1, 2018, after a similar action by the United States, European Union (EU) filed WTO legal complaints against China who accused it of employing trade practices that discriminated against foreign companies and undermined the rights of intellectual property of EU companies.

This Trade war between the three great economic powers of the world reached its peak, when the NATO plenary last June He stated "his concern about the growing strategic

partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation", 'since both Powers seek to undermine the rules-based international order, which is contrary to the values and interests of the Atlantic Alliance'.

The Big Bang of what happens today is located in that year of 2016, when China becomes a direct competitor of the imperialist powers and it is put in their sights. The UN in all this It is a cork in the storm, an empty shell that nobody asks or heeds, then, the "era" of diplomacy, of vetoes in the Council of Security, etc., have gone down in history.

### **The internationalization of the war in Ukraine**

What the conflict in Ukraine is part of this situation is something that no one He can deny, the act of war -terrorist, they would call him if he had been carried out others- which was the destruction of the Nord gas pipelines Stream in the Baltic, hundreds of km from Ukraine, proves it. From the 2008 the US adopts a policy for its progressive integration into the NATO, in such a way that, after the dismantling of the uprising Popular known as "the Maidan", it can be said that although "Ukraine it's not in NATO, NATO is in Ukraine."

The Conflict is internationalized from its origin, because it is the link weak of the inter-capitalist contradictions detonated in 2016. The Euro-American imperialist chain perceives its dominating Russia's imperial aspirations; For its part, the Russian Federation sees as aggression the expansion of NATO to the east, of that the incorporation of Ukraine was a further step, as agreed in the US-Ukraine bilateral convention in November 2021; while China is well aware that if Russia gives in, they will be next.

Of In fact, we cannot forget that the semi-colonization of Russia is a manifest objective since 21 nations attacked the nascent USSR after the October Revolution, to divide the territory into areas of influence, as they had done throughout the nineteenth century in Africa, China, Arab world, etc. That and no other was the intention of the German Barbarossa operation in World War II, and the same sense had all the policy raised by imperialism with the restoration of the capitalism in the 90s.

The Ukraine's war was a consequence of this growing tension between the imperialist chains, and regardless of who fired the first shot, It was born internationalized that has been fed throughout this year of hostilities. The sending of aid and systematic armament by all NATO countries, but controlled from the Pentagon, are not only It is limited to weapons, but includes the participation of "contractors", "advisors" and "volunteers", demonstrating the internationalization of the conflict.



What There are still no "boots on the ground" of Euro soldiers It is because NATO is not prepared for a direct confrontation with Russia. The Russian wardrobe (is a immense territory, with the rear protected by China), the Ignorance that the Atlanticists have of the real depth of the army Russian, and, above all, their own weakness, holds them back from being more aggressive, as the Baltic republics, Poland and Poland itself want. Ukrainian bourgeoisie.

The state of the Spanish Leopard tanks is paradigmatic of this Weakness to face a high-intensity war like the one that it would require the clash with Russia. The Spanish tanks, many of them, they are junk for such a case; But it is that the Spanish bourgeoisie He wants for something else, to maintain order inside. For example, they they would have been very useful if on October 1 in Catalonia the police were overflowing: 300 Leopards, still in poor condition, on the streets of Barcelona, They would be a very convincing deterrent.

The NATO is prepared – relatively, as demonstrated in the rout in Afghanistan-, to go to "low intensity" wars, against guerrillas or armies in scrapping like the Iraqi; but collide with a power that can take war to its own territory, to the USA or Western Europe, are big words.

In addition To occupy a country it is necessary, according to military manuals, a ratio of 3/1 soldiers to the opposing army, and today NATO does not He is capable of raising an army that guarantees that relationship. For its On the other hand, Russia can't do it either, so all the nonsense of The Borrells that Putin wanted to occupy Europe "until Lisbon" was a Hook pennant to justify the militarism that was coming. For this reason, because of the number of soldiers that Russia mobilized, 200 000, it is clear that they did not intend to occupy all of them either. Ukraine (Minsk agreements guaranteed national unity) Ukrainian, minus Crimea); He expected, at best, that the government of Zelenskiy will collapse and change the puppet from a pro-NATO to a pro-Russian one, or at least, neutral.

In Thirdly, Euro-American societies (such as Russia) do not They would endure the number of military and civilian casualties of a war of High intensity as it would be unleashed. Soon, they would be demanding the cessation of hostilities. Therefore, even though it is highly internationalized, the war in Ukraine continues to appear as a national war, between an aggressor power, Russia, and a nation attacked, Ukraine.

**Facing the 360° strategy: let's avoid World War III**

What Not being prepared today doesn't mean you don't want to be. This is The profound meaning of Scholz's words, the "new age" is that of The preparation for a new world war that has materialized in the NATO summit last June, with the "360° strategy".

Of in the same way as in "the Manifesto of the Fourth International on imperialist war and world proletarian revolution", it was said that "Regardless of who hit the first shot", we must analyze the forces in conflict to determine the character of a war. And if something is Of course, except for those who put on the "glasses" of camping among "the democrats and despots" or their left-wing version, "pro-imperialism vs. anti-imperialism", is that the war in Ukraine is the manifestation The bankruptcy of the capitalist system is that it cannot get out of the crisis and opening a new period of growth if it is not on the basis of of the resolution of three contradictions that grip it through the force, with the consequent generalized social impoverishment to which We are already attending:

one The tendency of the rate of profit to fall means that they carry more than A decade without being able to make investments profitable capitalists at the level they want. Since the crisis of 2007/8 the System has not found a productive sector sufficiently profitable to invest, replacing construction and new Technologies. The space and technological race unleashed among all They are part of the search for this sector/s to pull the economy as a whole, as in the past was the steam engine and coal, the combustion engine and oil, and computing and electricity.

Two objective limits on man's relationship with nature, brought to the brink of collapse by the absolute anarchy that results from the social relations of capitalist production. When working in function of the exchange value of the goods produced, let this be the extraction of raw materials or manufacture of products manufactured, the profitability or not of a new sector is not in function of the resolution of human needs, but of profit private. Nature, including the human being who is so much a part of you Like any other animal or plant, it is an exchange value, and as such they exploit it.

Three The end of an entire era of world market hegemony, the "century American" that began in 1945 after the defeat of the powers of the Axis (Germany, Japan and Italy) and the confirmation of the decline of the two great powers of the nineteenth century, Great Britain and France. The Maintaining, or not, the status quo in the hierarchy between states built throughout the twentieth century is the key to see who is becomes the beneficiary of the new process of capital accumulation which would be generated if the aforementioned contradictions were overcome.



Are Very powerful tectonic forces, rooted in social relations of capitalist production and their juridical-state forms, which push to make preparations to unleash a new World War.

The war in Syria, after the stagnation of the revolution in a Conflict that already had many international characters - at one time Given that in Syria there were, and are, Russian, Turkish, Israeli soldiers, Americans, Chinese and British- was part of this trend towards a greater confrontation, which we now see corrected and increased in Ukraine.

The war in the Sahara between the Saharawi people, with the support of Algeria, which has called for incorporation into the BRICS (the economic alliance) around the Russian-Chinese axis), and the occupying power, Morocco (EU semi-colony and strategic ally of Israel), is also part of the formation of two imperialist blocs in conflict, to which Russia has added fuel by recognizing the right to self-determination of the Saharawi people.

And above all, NATO's 360° strategy; All this shows that the tendency towards conflict resolution by military means is the sign of the "new age" of which Scholz speaks. Prepare for a High intensity war is what since the Madrid Summit they have Determined, and this is what humanity, if it does not want to be doomed to barbarism, he has to reject.

Pass whatever happens in Ukraine, unless the Ukrainian people convert a National war in the socialist revolution, expelling the Russian invader and to the Euro-American occupier, the tendencies to shock do not will modify: if Russia manages to leave Ukraine and stay in Crimea and the Donbass will feel stronger to challenge the NATO; the other way around, if the Zelensky government and its protectors, the US and the EU, defeat Russia and force it back to its borders, They will feel stronger for more ambitious companies, such as occupying the Russia itself or provoke the "elephant in the room", China.

Before A similar situation, "you cannot fatten the young imperialism in the face of decrepit imperialism," said Lenin; And this is what they do Those who invent a "multipolar front" supposedly Anti-imperialist only "fatten" those who ask for their share in the market some relying on economic and financial strength (China), others in their military might (Russia), but as good capitalists They only seek a hegemonic role in relations between states.

By on the other hand, and in line with the Manifesto of the Fourth International against The Second World War, "the task posed by history is not to support a Part of the imperialist system against another but to end the The whole system", those must be categorically rejected "progressives" such as the German Greens or sectors of Podemos in the Spanish State, who have become the most ardent defenders NATO warmongering in

the name of the fight against "despotism" Russian, as did the Second International in 1914, when it justified its vote to war budgets:

"We We are now faced with the iron fact of war. Are threatened by the horrors of enemy invasions. We don't decide today for or against war; we simply have to decide on the means necessary for the defense of the country. Much, if not all, It is at stake for our people and their freedom, in view of the Possibility of a victory for Russian despotism, which is dirtying itself even with the blood of the best of his own people.

'Of What is at stake for us is to ward off this danger and safeguard the culture and independence of our country. This is how we honor what we do We have always promised: in the hour of danger we will not give up. our Homeland. We agree with the International, which It has always recognized the right of every nation to independence. national and self-defence, as we condemn, also according to the International, any war of conquest. We demand that, as soon as the objective of security has been achieved and opponents show themselves ready for peace, this war End with a peace that makes it possible to live in friendship with the neighbouring countries.

"Guided by these principles, we will vote in favour of war credits."

The "new era" announced by Scholz is consistent with the imperialist policy of the Second International, that of the "old society" based on exploitation, oppression and war.

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