

## “Decolonization” ...and revolution

As is graphically illustrated by the situation in Palestine, there are still situations in the world today where people are subjected to direct colonial domination—and, wherever that is the situation, the ending of that colonization is a just, necessary and important immediate goal.

There is also the *terrible legacy* of colonialism in Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world, including the Americas, which involved the brutal conquest, and literally murderous exploitation and oppression, of masses of people.

But the *fundamental cause* of the terrible suffering of the masses of humanity *today* is not the colonialism of past centuries...nor the legacy of colonialism...nor even just the remaining situations of actual colonialism. *The fundamental cause is the system of capitalism-imperialism, which rules in this country and dominates the world. And the fundamental solution is a thoroughgoing revolution—not “decolonization”—especially not the notion of “decolonization” which accepts, and seeks to work within, the framework of the existing system of capitalism-imperialism.*

The dynamics of this system of capitalism-imperialism, with its domination of the world economy and of the relations among people and among nations, is the root cause, and the main means of enforcing, the terrible conditions of exploitation and oppression to which the masses of humanity, in all parts of the world, are subjected—and it is the main cause of the growing threat to the future, and even the very existence, of humanity through the accelerating destruction of the environment and the growing danger of war between nuclear armed imperialist powers.

In the nearly 80 years since the end of World War 2, there have been major changes in many parts of the world, and in the world as a whole. This includes the fact that most formerly colonized countries have become formally independent, and are no longer directly ruled by colonial powers. But this has *not* brought about real liberation for the *masses of people* in those countries, who continue to be brutally exploited and murderously oppressed. And it has not even brought about the end of the actual domination of those countries by the system of capitalism-imperialism and a handful of imperialist countries, above all the U.S.

(There is the particular case of China, where there *was* a thoroughgoing revolution which, in 1949, won real liberation—abolishing imperialist domination of the country—and then advanced beyond that, over the next several decades, building a socialist system with the goal of eliminating and uprooting relations of exploitation and oppression not just in China itself but finally in the world as a whole. But that revolution has been reversed, capitalism has been restored in China, and China has emerged as a major capitalist-imperialist power itself. It is very important to understand why and how this happened. This is beyond what I can get into here. At [revcom.us](http://revcom.us) there are works, by myself and others, which do get into this more fully and in depth. But an essential reality that is highlighted in this reversal of socialism in China is that, while socialist revolutions in particular countries are very important—in their own right and as part of carrying forward an emancipating revolution throughout the world—ultimately it is only with the final victory of that revolution, the *communist* revolution, in the world as a whole, that there can be the final and complete ending of all systems and relations of exploitation and oppression.)

It is also a fact that, in the nearly 80 years since the end of World War 2, in the context of a changing world overall, some historical forms of oppression in the U.S. itself—for example, some forms of “legal” segregation and discrimination—have been replaced by *new forms* of oppression which have brought about some cosmetic changes, but none of this has led to real liberation.

Only revolution can bring about complete emancipation for the masses of oppressed humanity, opening the way to advance on the road of finally abolishing the basis for any exploitation and oppression, of any people, anywhere. And there is this decisive point that I emphasized in message number Thirty-Three:

It is very positive, very important whenever the idea of “revolution” is “in the air.” At the same time, there is the crucial question of what “revolution” actually means, and what the *content* of a revolution should be: what are *its aims and objectives, its guiding principles and ideology*—and, flowing from that, *what must be (and not be) the methods and means of struggle* to bring about that revolution.

As I have also emphasized (particularly in message number Twenty-Two), it is only in the process of a truly thoroughgoing and emancipating revolution—*communist* revolution—going up against and finally overthrowing this system of capitalism-imperialism, and bringing something much better into being, that masses of people can also fundamentally change their way of thinking—breaking with the oppressive culture, “values” and mentality promoted by this system and taking up the emancipating values of the communist revolution aiming for a world without oppressive and exploitative divisions among human beings.

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