

FUNDAMENTALS OF ANARCHISM:

WHAT IS ANTI-MILITARISM?

War has been called a quarrel between two (or more) bullies who are too cowardly to do their own fighting. Wars force workers with no quarrel to kill each other in order to settle some ruling class dispute. All wars profit the ruling class at the expense of the working class. Wars are used to reduce surplus labor and even kill off political dissidents. Wars are typically fought for economic reasons like State control of resources, markets, or trade. Wars are popular because those who profit are rarely the same people asked to “die for their country.”

All people are entitled to self-defense [we are not Pacifists]. But wars are fought by politicians and officers who think of your life in terms like **acceptable losses** [like an accountant]. They are shown on television like a video game where innocent people don't die, your nation's armies are invincible, and real deaths and maimings are downplayed to the public. **Why are we fighting the wars of the rich and powerful rather than fighting to improve our own well-being?**

Militarism is the promotion of military culture in order to rationalize the creation and use of State violence by the ruling class: The State = Military + Police + Bureaucracy (Michael Bakunin). Military culture is the willingness of people to tolerate the use of resources [including ordinary people] to create and maintain “standing armies” [permanent professional military forces], and to use them as an instrument of international [and domestic] relations and ambitions.

In the beginning, it is the military which gives the ruling class its power. The capitalist class created parliamentary democracy to steal state power from military dictators called monarchs. They promised working people freedom to trick them into fighting for them, then took over the government and used it to protect their wealth and economic ambitions against working class freedom and equality. A Constitution is a service contract between the ruling class and The State. They profit at the expense of your freedom.

Preparedness is the diversion of resources to create and maintain standing armies. It is often the largest expenditure by governments. It creates a permanent **military-industrial complex** [interest groups: military industry, other industries which profit from war, and the officer corps and politicians who profit from war], who promote military expenditures and belligerence in peace time: The only thing more profitable to them than having the biggest and best armed military money can buy, is using it so its equipment needs to be replaced. Money spent on the military is diverted from public education, health, and infrastructure expenditures. Military consumption of resources increases the cost of living for consumers [by competing with civilian needs].

Peacetime armies have historically been used against striking or demonstrating workers [along with their wives and children] upon the request of local governments bought and paid for by big corporations in order to protect their profits and settle their disputes by force. One millionaire bragged that he could hire half the working class to murder the other half.

Patriotism is the propaganda campaign waged by the ruling classes to con the working class into paying for their standing armies and fighting their wars for them. The capitalist press is owned by capitalists who profit from war. Patriotism = Jingoism + Xenophobia. Jingoism is the promotion

of military belligerence as the solution to all national problems. Xenophobia is the paranoia against all things perceived to be foreign (or “different”): products, ideas, and people [incl. immigrants].

Patriotism tries to con working class people into believing that they have the same interests as the ruling class of their respective nations, rather than common class interests with workers of other nations who the ruling class of your country wants to conquer. Patriotism is used to discourage dissent and legitimize repression; to preserve ruling class advantages in the status quo and promote ruling class ambitions. It represents international competition as a sport to solicit working class support. It confuses the desire to protect family and friends with the promotion of Nationalism.

The structure of the military was designed to reflect the class system with officers primarily chosen from the upper classes and enlisted people from the working classes. Military academy applicants must be recommended by a legislator in the U.S.. Most working class people enlist because of the **poverty draft**: a lack of jobs back home, recruiter promises [a full stomach, job training], and an opportunity for plunder in war. In exchange, they give up their freedom and agree to live in a dictatorship [your enlistment can also be involuntarily extended if they want more bodies to fight].

Nationalism is the historic territorial and economic ambitions of the ruling classes. A nation-state is a territory protected by a particular State. States tend to compete with each other [and form alliances] to be the most powerful State, because ruling class factions compete with each other [and form alliances] to further their ambitions and profits at the expense of others.

Most governments invent propaganda excuses to go to war where they claim they were wronged and the war is some form of self-defense. There is a huge propaganda campaign in the capitalist press designed to manipulate peoples emotions. Working class people are more likely to die in wars, so they must be manipulated into romanticizing the war to trick them into participating. Or they are told that their war is a great humanitarian crusade for some greater good [like a “snipe hunt” for weapons of mass destruction].

Total War is the idea that modern wars involve all the resources within a nation-state. When the State can’t get enough volunteers, a **conscription** law [the draft] is used to force able-bodied people to fight against their will [violators are imprisoned or even executed]. The *levy en masse* means that the State assumes control over all resources in the economy for the purpose of making war. Labor actions are repressed to prevent any interruption of products to the battlefield. Information about the conflict or related problems on the home front is censored to discourage dissent. Wars decimate the environment along with soldiers and civilians who are killed, maimed, or diseased. The horrors of war led to treaties which pretend to govern how it should be fought so it is humanitarian. However, both sides are now accused of **war crimes** in some wars [winners are rarely prosecuted].

Protracted War is the extension of warfare beyond traditional battlefields and combatants and over extended periods of time. It was popularized by *wars of national liberation* in the 20th Century. It also included ethnic conflicts, private armies, and paramilitary “death squads” hired by landowners. The so-called “War on Terror” is an endless war fighting imaginary enemy combatants which does not pretend to obey any “law” of war regarding kidnaping, imprisonment without trial, torture, *etc.*

No War but, the Class War!: The exploitation of the working class is international, so working class resistance must be international. We can’t work together for freedom and equality if we are killing each other in war(s). We must each make an effort in our own country to oppose military culture, including: conscientious objection, counter-recruitment, and direct action against war(s)...