The Roots of the Refugee Crisis

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No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land - Warsan Shire, Somali-British writer and poet.

Human-Refugees versus Capital-Refugees

In recent years, across Europe one of the most frequently repeated pro-austerity sound bites of the global economic crisis has been 'If we tax the rich they will all leave the country, we will see a massive capital flight'. We heard this repeated by almost every mainstream media analyst, by wellknown economists and by every European government that inflicted massive austerity and cuts on majority working class people while bailing out private banks and protecting the wealth of the minority super-rich.

In plain English, what they were saying was - and still is - 'The rich will take their money and seek refuge in another country where their wealth is 'safe' from the 'dangers' of taxation and sharing the burden of the crisis in the interest of the wider public.' Irish governments and the corporate media have championed this argument to justify the protection of profits of big businesses and the wealth of the rich at a time when hundreds of thousands of people were forced into unemployment, homelessness and poverty.

The current 'human-refugee' crisis started renewed racist EU actions and debates on immigration and border controls. The EU governments had no hesitation in not welcoming the refugees, closing-down borders and not giving people any free-safelegal passage to Europe. But the suggestion to introduce economic 'border closures' and financial 'immigration controls' to stop capital flight and to make sure the wealth of 'capitalist migrants' is prevented from moving around, was quickly dismissed as 'radical left lunacy'.

In the capitalist world it is perfectly legal

- and widely accepted - for the rich to move their money, investments and assets around and seek refuge in other places if they don't get the protection they demand from their own governments against wealth and corporation taxes. But the suggestion to open borders to human migration and refugees is rejected outright as a ridiculous and dangerous idea.

For the rich to go around the world in pursuit of more profits and investment opportunities; to settle in any country they want is presented as a right of multi-national corporate life. But for the refugees to seek protection and safety and migrants to follow jobs across borders is always defined as a problem.

The capital migration, we are told, is a feature of the free-market rule of our 'global village' world. Make your profits in one place, invest your money in another country and pay your taxes - only if you have to - in a country of your choice that gives you the best discount.

Various sources define capital flight capital-refugees - as being 'when assets or money rapidly flow out of a country, due to an event of economic consequence. Such events could be an increase in taxes on capital or capital holders or the government of the country defaulting on its debt that disturbs investors and causes them to lower their valuation of the assets in that country, or otherwise to lose confidence in its economic strength.'

Human-refugees, on the other hand, occur when people rapidly flow out of a country due to an event of great social and life and death consequences. Such events could be wars, conflicts or environmental disasters or chronic poverty and starvation or the oppression of people by their government which is defaulting on democracy and human rights that disturbs people's lives and cause them to lose confidence in their safety and their future.

In this article I would like to argue that the relationship between capitalism and the ever worsening global refugee crisis is one of root-cause and effect and that the current refugee crisis is a direct result of a long running build-up caused by imperialist wars, oppressive regimes, chronic poverty, and in some cases climate change and environmental disasters.

The global refugee crises are directly linked to the global capitalist system and the worsening global impacts of it that have horrific consequences for the lives of millions of people, especially the most vulnerable.

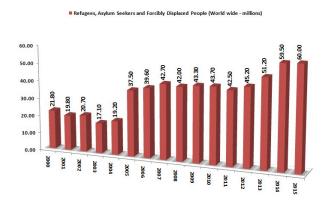
Throughout this article, I will use the term 'refugees' not only to refer to the legalistic definition of 1951 Geneva Convention but also to include internally and externally displaced people. While the legalistic definitions may be different for different groups I believe that the underlying causes and the sufferings of these people are the same, regardless what they are named.

History is littered with examples of forced displacement of people as a result of systematic persecutions or wars dating back to ancient times. But the decades following the World War II, and especially the last decade, have produced a sharp rise in global refugee numbers.

In 2015, the number of refugees worldwide has reached 60 million, a rise from 20 million in 2004. Since the early 2000s, the number has constantly risen to alarming lev-The current refugee crisis will be reels. membered as the biggest movement of people since WWII. It will also be remembered as one in which the most powerful and the richest states of the world turned their backs on the suffering of the people. It will be remembered by how this harsh response to the human suffering was wrapped in fake tears of politicians, official lies, cover-ups and institutional racism before being presented as a solution to the crisis.

Millions of ordinary people across the world who showed strong solidarity with the refugees and forced their own governments to at least act in little ways will also not be forgotten.

Almost every sharp rise in refugees can be linked to a specific event but a closer analysis show us that the reasons behind any refugee crisis are usually complex combinations of imperialist agendas, military interventions or conflicts, oppression by dictatorial regimes, human rights abuses, debt burden and poverty, social unrest and sometimes natural disasters as a result of climate change and the destruction of the environment. There are many examples of these.



The Palestinian Nakba

The Nakba (Arabic for catastrophe) in 1948 was the beginning of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians by Zionist forces.

In November 1947 the UN partitioned British controlled Palestine, granting the Zionists, who had been slowly colonizing the region, 55 percent of the land. Zionist forces used partition as a signal to move into action. In 1948, well-armed forces launched a war to ethnically cleanse the indigenous Arab population of Palestine.¹ Today we have around 5 million Palestinian refugees world-wide. According to the UN, Gaza with a population of 1.8 million may be uninhabitable by 2020 due to conditions created by Israel's ongoing war and siege.

Western Support to Dictators -An Example: General Idi Amin

In 1971, General Idi Amin, aka the 'Butcher of Uganda' sized power by a military coup. Amin's rule was characterized by human rights abuses, political repression, ethnic

¹'Israel and the Nakba, Chronicle of dispossession and resistance', *International Socialist Review*, Paul D'Amato

persecution, extrajudicial killings, nepotism, corruption, and gross economic mismanagement. The number of people killed by Amin is estimated to be between 100.000^2 and $500,000^3$. He spread propaganda about the country's minorities, focusing on the Indian and Pakistani communities and expelled 90,000. The British Embassy in Kampala wrote in July 1971, 'General Idi Amin Dada is a popular and a natural leader of men, but simple and practically illiterate; a man of the people'. Amin had a 'love' for Britain and wanted to build a pro-Western government. Celebrating the toppling of President Milton Obote by Amin's military coup, the British Foreign Office said, '[Obote is] one of our most implacable enemies in matters affecting Southern Africa' before concluding 'Amin needs our help' and recommending the sale of arms. Amin denationalised several of the British companies taken over under Obote. In 1971 he came to London where he had lunch with the queen and meetings with Prime Minister Edward Heath's cabinet.

There are many other examples where oppressive regimes and dictators were at some point supported by the Western powers; they include Assad, Saddam, Gaddafi, Pinochet, Suharto, Mubarak, and Royal Family of Saudi Arabia.

Colonialism, Capitalism, Wars, Famine and Refugees in Africa

The Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that the world produces enough food to provide every person with 2,700 calories per day (adults need 2,100).⁴ But in Africa famines in Rwanda/Burundi (1943-1944), Tigray, Ethiopia (1958), Nigeria (1967-1970), Sahel (2010), Ethiopia (1950-1973), Uganda (1980-1983), Ethiopia (1983-1985), Somalia (1991-1992), Sudan (1998), Somalia (2010-2012) have starved to death millions of peo-

ple and forced many more millions to become refugees. The history of Africa has been one of invasions, occupations, colonisations and annexations of territory by European powers. In 1870, only 10 percent of Africa was under European control; by 1914 it had increased to 90 percent of the continent. Rich land-water and human resources of the entire continent were at the disposal of colonial powers. Post-colonial African nations suffered Western supported dictators, military coups, massive corruption, huge arms spending, neo-liberal policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programs, with national resources, including water and land being privatized and sold off to multi-national corporations; plus a massive debt burden and poverty leading to conflicts and wars. The famines in Africa were not just natural disasters but direct results of these problems as were the millions of refugees created.

According to Friends of the Earth International (FOEI) and the international peasants' group La Via Campesina 'World Bank policies have pushed African governments to privatise land [...] The bank is playing a key role in the global rush for farmland by providing capital and guarantees to big multinational investors. The result has often been people forced off land they have traditionally farmed for generations, causing more poverty and greater risk of food shortages⁵. Current estimates suggest that up to 230 million hectares of land have been leased or bought in recent years, largely to produce food, feed or fuel for the international markets.

African nations have also been forced to implement massive water privatization programs. Corporations such as Nestlehave taken control of African water resources. African people are being disenfranchised and impoverished as multinational corporations exploit their water resources and commercialize natural spring water.⁶

²Human Rights and Economic Power: The United States Versus Idi Amin, Ullman, Richard H., April 1978

 $^{^{3}\}mbox{`Obituary:}$ Idi Amin'. The Guardian (London), Keatley, Patrick, 18 August 2003 $^{4}\mbox{fao.org}$

⁵theguardian.com/global-development/2012/apr/23/world-bank-land-grabs-africa

⁶'Africa: trapped in water privatization', New Internationalist, Sokari Ekine, 2011

U2's front man Bono had said, 'Capitalism takes more people out of poverty than aid'. This is absolute nonsense. It is the very same capitalism that exploited Africa for so long, created chronic poverty and hence millions of refugees.

The neo-liberal exploitation of Africa is As reported in Finanset to continue. cial Times (FT) 'In 2015, TPG, one of the world's biggest private equity houses, is making its first foray into Africa as it prepares to invest up to US\$1bn through a tieup with Sudanese billionaire Mo Ibrahim. TPG joins other large US private equity houses, including Carlyle and KKR that have turned to Africa for the first time in recent years. The new union owes its birth to the intervention of Irish rock star Bono, also an investor in TPG. At the request of TPG, Bono hosted a meeting between Mo Ibrahim and TPG Capital founders at his home in Ireland.⁷

More Wealth for the Rich -More Poverty and Displacement for the Poor - An Example: Nigeria

Almost every racist has something to say about African asylum seekers and refugees who are coming from many different parts of Africa but ignorantly referred to as 'Nigerians'.

Nigerian asylum seekers do make up a significant percentage of African asylum seekers in Europe and there are reasons for this. They come from a country pillaged by national/international capitalist exploiters with Western-US friendly corrupt governments at their service.

On one hand it is a country of vast gas and petroleum resources and on the other hand a country of massive poverty. It is a country of 180 million where the profits of petroleum giants such as Shell reached billions of dollars every year while up to 100 million people live on under a dollar a day. In 1980 23 percent of the 75 million lived in poverty. The poverty levels rose to almost 60 percent of 180 million in 2010. Of the 1.2 million young people applying for university, only 150,000 get a place. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends US\$34 health expenditure per capita. The figure in Nigeria is under US\$5. 6 percent of the global population living in chronic poverty are in Nigeria. The life expectancy is under 55 years.

The Nigerian government is pursuing an economic project called Vision 20:2020. Having failed to tackle chronic poverty, Nigerian governments are hoping to make the country even more profit friendly. As the Nigerian human rights lawyer Femi Aborisade puts it, 'Vision 20:2020 can only accentuate rather than attenuate poverty. Vision 20:2020 is hinged on rolling back the State and making the private sector, rather than the public sector, the engine of economic growth. A more apt concept for this philosophy is neo-liberalism'.

Refugees: Victims of the Imperialist Economic System

Australian socialist Ben Hillier argues in his article titled 'How imperialism drives the refugee crisis'⁸ that the economic relationships of imperialism are the root cause of great displacement of people. In his analysis, Hillier lists as one of the key factors the transfer-out of capital from under-developed (or so-called developing) countries.

According to Global Financial Integrity, a research and advocacy organization in the US, between 2001 and 2010 illicit financial outflows (capital flight) from underdeveloped countries totalled US\$5.9 trillion(!)⁹

A report entitled 'Africa: Rising for the few' published by Oxfam in June 2015 exposes how multinational companies cheat Africa out of billions of dollars. In 2010, Africa was cheated out of US\$11 billion through just one of the tricks - a practice called trade mispricing - used by multina-

⁷ft.com/cms/s/0/0026695c-1437-11e5-9bc5-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3q9rjI94B

⁸socialistworker.org/2015/09/24/whats-driving-the-refugee-crisis

⁹ Capital Flight Risk', *Finance & Development*, September 2013, Vol. 50, No. 3, Rabah Arezki, Gregoire Rota-Graziosi, and Lemma W. Senbet

tional companies to reduce tax bills.¹⁰ Today, many of the countries people flee from are under the tight grip of neo-liberalism, corrupt regimes or the brute force of imperialism.

From Afghanistan to the Balkans - More Wars, More Conflicts, More Arms and More Refugees

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979), the war in Balkans (1992), the war in Rwanda (1994) and Darfur (2003) and other conflicts across the world have all produced millions of refugees. Years later, as we are seeing a new crisis, many of the forgotten refugees of the past are still not able to return to their homes.

Towards the end of 2015, almost half a million refugees have entered Europe. Although the European states and media woke up to the realities of the crisis only in early 2015, it is a crisis that started a long time ago. As the refugees started to arrive to European borders in greater numbers, their immediate suffering was as a direct result of EU's closed border policies and the denial of any responsibility by the European governments in terms of humanitarian support. The EU had other ideas than humanitarian support.

From the beginning the refugees were described as 'waves', a 'flood', 'streaming' even as a 'swarm'. This language portraying Europe as the innocent victim of a sudden, unexpected 'disaster' was followed by a series of political deflections and blame games.

First of all, the refugees themselves were blamed for being refugees.

The limited sea search and rescue missions were identified as a 'pull factor' for refugees coming to Europe. According to the EU, opportunist people who otherwise seemingly - had normal lives somewhere far away wouldn't have come if they were not rescued at sea. Some EU leaders went as far as blaming the calm summer season in the Mediterranean for enabling the refugees to cross.

As the scaling down of the rescue operations gave rise to the deaths of hundreds of innocent people, we were told, that if there were no human traffickers there would be no refugees coming to Europe. The blame and debate shifted on neighbouring countries, including Libya, bombed by EU/NATO forces in 2011, for not stopping the refugees from leaving for Europe.

Far right and racist governments tried to show the refugees as social welfare tourists. They went further and started talking about the Islamisation and a Muslim invasion of Europe. Then we had the manufactured paranoia of thousands of ISIS fighters disguised as refugees coming to Europe.

All of these and the official lies were designed to do a number of things: Firstly to portray Europe as the victim of the crisis and persuade the public that the EU is doing its best to help the refugees.

Secondly, despite the loss of hundreds of innocent lives, to justify the meaningless tiny refugee quota and the closure of European borders to anyone who is not accepted as part of the resettlement program.

Thirdly, to keep the refugee debate as far away as possible from the real root-cause analysis and hope that we will not remember the reasons behind this crisis. But that is exactly what we need do, to remember how and why the refugee crisis began.

The current crisis pre-dates the chaos in Syria and goes back to the 'war on terror' invasion of Afghanistan and the war in Iraq that destabilised the whole Middle-East and beyond, caused total destruction and gave rise to dangerous new sectarian forces. The continuous sectarian conflicts and rising jihadist forces are the legacies of the 'war on terror' campaign. All of these gave rise to millions of refugees.

Currently, the main origins of refugees are countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, Yemen, Libya, Mali, Sudan and Syria. All of these countries have been in one form or the other the targets of imperialist inter-

¹⁰ Multinational companies cheat Africa out of billions of dollars', Oxfam, 2 June 2015 oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2015-06-02/multinational-companies-cheat-africa-out-billions-dollars

ests, wars and chaos, be it for access to cheap natural resources, like oil, or for territorial control and domination or other military interests. Many of these countries suffered under the rule of oppressive dictators which at various times were allies of the Western powers. Many of these countries have been great markets for Western arms sales while the people suffered under crumbling economies.

The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 created over 5 million refugees. Hilary Clinton had promised freedom and democracy to Afghani women but after billions of dollars spent on the war and 15 years later there are still more than 2.5 million Afghan refugees, many of them women. All NATO member states had contributed troops to this US and British led imperialist war. These included many of the European countries, such as Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, and Italy etc. Before Syria overtook it Afghanistan was the world's biggest source of refugees.

In 2003, the US-UK led war in Iraq was supported by many of the EU and NATO countries. The war caused the death of hundreds of thousands of civilians and created more than 2 million externally and 1.7 million internally displaced refugees. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees can still not return home as the sectarian conflicts continue. Iraq has also become the breeding ground for jihadist forces which today are part of the bloody conflict in Syria.

In 2004, the chaos and war in Afghanistan spilled over to Pakistan which resulted in up to 1 million refugees.

In 2011, the military intervention in Libya by EU/NATO countries completely destroyed the country. Under the pretext of 'getting rid of the dictator Gaddafi', this was in fact an intervention in order protect their own interests. The chaos in Libya has caused at least 300,000 refugees.

In Syria in 2011, the Assad regime responded to the popular and initially peaceful revolt with brutal military force. After the start of armed conflict between Assad and Syrian opposition forces, Syria was turned into a zone of proxy wars. The US, Britain and their loyal allies in the region such as Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and

Turkey on one side, Russia and Iran on the other side have supported and aided various warring factions and further fuelled the war. None of the above forces intervened in Syria for the sake of ordinary Syrian people but to advance their imperialist political and economic interests in the region. At the beginning of 2012 Syrians started fleeing the country. Today, as the entire country is torn apart by Assad's army, ISIS and other reactionary forces and the ongoing US/French/Russian bombing, there are now more than five million Syrian refugees. As the conflict continues the US, Britain, France and Russia are all bombing the region. The chaos has escalated into an international crisis with no easy resolution in sight. The mess imperialist bombs created will not be cleaned up with further imperialist bombs. A further devastated Syria will certainly give rise to many more millions of refugees.

Currently, the US, NATO and EU backed Saudi regime is bombing Yemen. According to a UN report 20 million people are facing food shortages. The ongoing war is likely to create hundreds of thousands of refugees. The Saudis are getting their weapons and their support from the West.

Obama, Cameron, Merkel, Holland and other leaders have followed the very same policies of Bush, Blair, Sarkozy and others. It is those policies that are a root-cause of the refugee crisis.

The Arms Industry and Refugees

On September 15 2015 at the height of the refugee crisis DSEi (International Defence and Security Exhibition) 2015 opened its doors to international customers. It is the biggest of its kind in the world, held in London every two years. The arms fair, which had 1,500 exhibitors and more than 30,000 visitors, is organised with the support of the Department for UK Trade and Investment as well as the British Ministry of Defence.

According to a DSEi official, 'the audience included top level international military staff, major procurement officials, and the entire industry supply chain, from large prime contractors to supplying companies. DSEi has a proven track record of bringing the entire supply chain together on an unrivalled scale.'

Among the official guests were 14 countries which have oppressive/ authoritarian regimes. Four of them are officially on the UK government's list of human rights concerns. There are active wars and armed conflicts in at least six of them. But the billions of dollars worth arms trade went on without any hesitation. It is those arms sold that will kill more people and cause more refugees. According to the report by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) conflicts around the world cost 14.3 trillion dollars in 2014, 13 percent of the world's GDP. That amount is equivalent to the combined economies of Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom. While nicely dressed gentlemen and ladies will exhibit their 'defence' systems in London, millions around the world suffer the consequences of these 'attack' weapons.

Climate Change and Refugees

Only a decade ago climate change claims were dismissed as alarmist academic outcries of a minority of scientists and radical environmentalists. Today, even the richest capitalist in the world, Bill Gates, admits the reality of climate change as well as the causes of it when he recently said 'the private sector is too selfish and inefficient to produce effective energy alternatives to fossil fuels.'¹¹

According to NASA, 'Multiple studies published in peer-reviewed scientific journals1 show that 97 percent or more of actively publishing climate scientists agree: climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities.'¹²

Droughts, lack of fresh water sources and cropfailures due to climate change have already created famine conditions and displaced millions of people in Africa. According to the Women's Refugee Commission, the drought in East Africa put 23 million people at risk.¹³ There were more than 900,000 refugees from Somalia who fled to neighbouring countries, Kenya and Ethiopia. At the height of the crisis in June 2011, the UNHCR base in Kenya hosted at least 440,000 people in refugee camps whose capacity was 90,000.

The UN Refugee Agency UNHCR reports, 'the Earth's climate is changing at a rate that has exceeded most scientific forecasts. Some families and communities have already started to suffer from the negative side of climate change, forced to leave their homes in search of a new beginning. The consequences of climate change are enor-Scarce natural resources such as mous. drinking water are likely to become even more limited. Many crops and some livestock are unlikely to survive in certain locations if conditions become too hot and dry, or too cold and wet. Food security, already a significant concern, will become even more challenging. People will have to try and adapt to this situation, but for many this will mean a conscious move to another place to survive. Such moves, or the adverse effects that climate change may have on natural resources, may spark conflict with other communities, as an increasing number of people compete for a decreasing amount of resources'.¹⁴

Capitalism has slowly come to accept the reality of climate change but most political and business leaders are not willing to do anything about it due to the competitive profit driven nature of capitalism and the holders of economic power. The world's biggest corporations have direct involvement and vested interest in petroleum/carbon based industries. In the competitive environment of capitalism, none of these are willing to give up their massive profits and move away from carbon/oil based industries. States are also in competition with each other in defending and protecting the profits

¹¹independent.co.uk/article/bill-gates-says-that-capitalism-cannot-save-us-fromclimate-change--b1xNpbL80_x

¹²climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/

¹³ Drought Crisis in East Africa Leads to Displacement', womensrefugeecommission.org/about/39protection/current-crises/878-drought-crisis-in-east-africa-leads-to-displacement

¹⁴'The Storm Ahead', UNHCR

of national corporations. In such an environment of political/economic competition it is an illusion to expect capitalism to solve the climate change problem.

Refugees are one of many problems caused by climate change. The worsening conditions in future will certainly give rise to new wave of climate refuges.

Is There an End to the Refugee Crisis?

The global political outlook is not positive. The situation in Syria is bloodier and more complex than ever. With various murderous groups, the brutal Assad regime and regional and imperialist powers all entangled in the fighting, there are no signs of an end to the chaos in the short term. The country is physically and economically ruined. Thousand of Syrians are still fleeing the country. There is no hope for the Syrian refugees to return home any time soon.

The situation in Iraq is not significantly better than what it was during the war. Bombings and mass killings are still part of the daily life. Thousands of Iraqi refugees still cannot return home.

Afghanistan is still in a political and economic turmoil. The Saudi bombing of Yemen is escalating by the day. Libya is a forgotten hell for the civilians. The economic and political conditions in the Middle-East and North Africa are open to new conflicts.

Millions of refugees are cramped in refugee camps in various countries in the region. Their conditions are getting worse by the day. Poverty, human rights abuses and oppressive regimes have not gone away. After all, the conditions of the past 15 years which gave rise to the refugee crisis in the Middle-East and Africa are still there, if not in some cases worse than before. Imperialism, wars, neo-liberalism, and exploitation haven't seized to exist. 2015 was also the year when thousands refugees from Bangladesh and Myanmar fleeing either poverty or persecution - were adrift on boats in the Andaman Sea in what was described as a spiralling humanitarian crisis. Refused refuge by neighbouring nations, the horrific conditions of Rohingya and Bangladesh refugees have not gone away.

But there is hope.

The Arab Spring and the Egyptian Revolution were great hope and extremely important revolutionary developments for the people of North Africa and the Middle-East. It deeply shook the Western powers and all of the authoritarian regimes in the region.

In Egypt, in just eighteen days of mass revolutionary struggle the revolution secured the downfall of a hugely powerful dictator, previously seen as the unassailable strongman of the region.¹⁵

In Egypt, and across the Middle East, there are now millions of people who have participated directly in revolution. They are currently dispersed, cowed and demoralized. But, [...] the time will come when that will change and when it does those people will remember and learn from the experiences of 2011-13.¹⁶ It is in the collective struggle of these people that the hope lies for ending the conditions that gave rise to the refuge crisis.

The refugee crisis is set to continue and it has also turned into a political crisis in Europe. The response of ordinary European citizens has generally been magnificent - much better than that of their governments. There are many refugee support initiatives across Europe. But we also need to have a firm political response to our government and combat misguided racist arguments in political campaigns, communities etc. aimed at dividing the ordinary people on this issue and giving rise to refugeemigrant hate and racist attacks. We must also continue our political struggle against imperialist wars, military interventions and the wider neo-liberal policies.

¹⁵'Lessons from the Egyptian Revolution', Irish Marxist Review, VOL 4, NO 13 (2015), John Molyneux, 2015 irishmarxistreview.net/index.php/imr/article/view/165/164 ¹⁶*ibid.*