

Danish Socialist Workers Party supports imperialist war in the Middle East

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The Pabloite United Secretariat (VS) is supporting the American war offensive in the Middle East. The cynical arguments it employs to justify this position make clear that this organization has nothing to do with left-wing, let alone socialist, politics, but is pursuing a right-wing, pro-imperialist course.

Last month, the Red-Green Alliance (RGA) in the Danish parliament voted unanimously for the deployment of an Air Force Hercules transport aircraft to Iraq. The flight will supply the Iraqi army and Kurdish groups with weapons, and is under US command. Copenhagen is providing 50 soldiers to that end.

The Danish section of the United Secretariat, the Socialist Workers Party (SAP), fully backed the decision in support of the war effort. It is an integral part of the RGA, an alliance of Maoist and Stalinist organizations. Michael Voss, a long-time cadre of the SAP and an executive member of the Red-Green List, justified the decision in *International Viewpoint*, the main publication of the United Secretariat. His article shows unmistakably that this is not a national deviation by the Danish section, but reflects the line of the entire Pabloite international.

Voss declares quite openly that there is a “temporary coincidence” between the interests of his organization and those of American imperialism. Just like the Pentagon’s propaganda department, he attempts to justify the military intervention with humanitarian arguments. He claims that the American government is defending human rights and those of women and workers in the region against the Islamic State (IS).

“I don’t think that much argument is needed to back the fact that revolutionary socialists also want to fight and stop IS,” Voss writes. “A victory for IS will set back any social, democratic, pro-women or anti-imperialist development that may have taken place in parts of Syria and Iraq.” For this reason, he asserts that socialists and imperialists have the same interests in the region in fighting the IS.

To extol US imperialism as a champion of human rights in the Middle East is unmitigated cynicism. The US invasion of

Iraq claimed more than a million lives. The United States does not support the rights of workers and women, but has rather destroyed large parts of the country and organized a brutal regime of occupation based on torture and mass murder.

In Syria and Libya, the US and its allies have systematically built up the Islamic extremists in order to use them against the regimes of Gaddafi and Assad, and against the workers of the Middle East. Now they are using the fight against these same forces as a pretext to intervene militarily in Syria.

The Pabloites are well aware of this connection. Their support for US imperialism is not a product of political confusion or an incorrect estimation of the situation. Rather, they are drawn to the ruthlessness and brutality of imperialism.

In his article, Voss summarizes the “many valid arguments” against the delivery of weapons that were discussed in the RGA executive. “Most basic was the problem of supporting a military action under the command of the US,” he writes. “The US government and military defend the interests of US big business and imperialism, Both in the narrow sense of gaining access to resources, markets and profits, and in the more general sense of geopolitical dominance.”

Moreover, US imperialism “has a big part of the responsibility for the existence of IS.” There is an indisputable risk of “being a part of a broader US military campaign that has quite other intentions than we have, and which will do much harm to the people of the region,” writes Voss.

He stresses that “everyone in the RGA leadership and the parliamentary group was aware of all this.” In other words: although, or because, they knew they were supporting an imperialist campaign, all the leading members of the RGA voted in favour of supplying weapons.

In order to cover up their own arrangement with US imperialism, the Paloites argue, that “all the progressive Kurdish forces” like the PKK in Turkey and the YPG in Iraq

begged the RGA to vote in favor of the Danish intervention.

The Kurdish organizations are not a “progressive” force, but now function as proxy ground troops for US imperialism. They have long sought support from imperialism, worked closely with Israel and now look to an US intervention in the region as a possible springboard to the realization of their project of carving out another bourgeois nation state in the Middle East.

The protracted movement to the right of such forces as the PKK has taken place in tandem with the direct entry into the camp of imperialism of the Pabloites themselves, who now invoke the pleas of the Kurdish nationalists as an alibi for their own support for war.

For the Pabloites, no argument is too absurd to be used to justify their backing of the imperialist offensive in the Middle East. To reject supplying weapons, “only because of the US command,” Voss argues, “would be as if Lenin had refused to travel in the sealed train supplied by German imperialism through imperialist Germany to Russia in the middle of the Russian revolution.”

This comparison is absurd. Lenin did not travel to St. Petersburg to support the German troops but in order to advance the socialist revolution in Russia and create the conditions for revolution in Germany and around the world. He did not make the slightest concessions to German imperialism. The claim that Lenin traveled to St Petersburg as a German agent, a variation of which is now echoed by the Pabloites, originates from Lenin’s opponents.

The Pabloites support the delivery of weapons that will be used to maintain imperialist domination in the Middle East. In doing so, they accept and bear responsibility for the destruction, torture and thousands of deaths that will follow. When Voss writes that his interests coincide with those of US imperialism, he openly expresses the social orientation of his political tendency.

The politics of the United Secretariat and its sections represent a narrow well-off petty bourgeois layer, whose interests are closely aligned with imperialism. They are responding to the deep crisis of capitalism by moving closer to the state, offering themselves as assistants in attacks on the working class and the implementation of the war policy.

In recent years, the United Secretariat has developed into a centre of imperialist war propaganda. The Pabloites supported the bombing of Libya by the US, France and Britain. “In the name of anti-imperialist principles one can’t oppose an action that will prevent the massacre of civilians,” declared Gilbert Achcar earlier in the pages of *International Viewpoint*. The Western intervention led to tens of thousands of deaths and the brutal assassination of President Gaddafi. Today, torture and murder are a daily occurrence in Libya.

When the imperialist powers fomented a civil war in Syria

to overthrow the government of Bashar al-Assad, the Pabloites glorified this as the “Syrian Revolution.” In April 2013, when the Islamist extremists, against whom Voss now wants to go to war, were being built up and armed by the US, Achcar condemned anti-imperialist positions as “conspiracy theories” and described the Islamist dominated rebels as fighters for democracy.

The euphoria with which the Pabloites support imperialist wars is accompanied by hostility to the working class and support for social attacks. This is particularly evident in the case of Voss. In the 1990s, his RGA played an important role in supporting the minority social democratic minority government of Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, which privatised large swathes of the public sector and prepared Denmark’s entry into the euro.

In 2011, the RGA officially supported the government of Helle Thorning-Schmidt; between 2012 and 2013 voting for strict budgetary measures. Even when Thorning-Schmidt locked out 70,000 teachers for weeks, in order to push through cuts in the education system, she could rely on the support of the RGA.

Pabloism emerged within the Fourth International in the early 1950s as a petty bourgeois and anti-Marxist tendency, which turned against the working class and integrated itself into the Stalinist and social democratic bureaucracies. For years, their work was to cover up these bureaucracies’ right-wing politics with left-wing phrases.

With the intensification of the capitalist crisis and the outbreak of imperialist militarism such manoeuvres are no longer possible. Political tendencies are forced to show their true colours. The United Secretariat now stands with both feet firmly in the camp of imperialism and has become a think tank for war policy. Its phrases about “socialism” or “revolution” are merely a pitiful attempt to cover over its reactionary positions.

The war propaganda of the United Secretariat vindicates the irreconcilable struggle against Pabloism waged by the International Committee of the Fourth International ever since its foundation in 1953. It underscores the fact that a new world war can only be prevented through the building of the ICFI as the leadership of the working class.



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