

Excerpt from
**“Internal Contradictions are Primary’:
A Key to Revolutionary Dialectics”**

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Developing Fascism

It is a fundamental fact about world capitalism that superpowers cannot retire. They fight to stay on top as long as possible, and finally end up as third-rate powers, like Spain, Britain, Turkey, or Portugal. War and fascism are necessary responses to the intensification of external challenges and internal weaknesses of imperial powers, as they attempt to stay on top a little longer. The U. S. now faces challenges from the Chinese economy and military, the threat of a renewed Cold War with Russia, challenges from Latin American nationalists and others who are encouraged by the U. S. weaknesses that are revealed by the war in Iraq.

Trying to deal with these external challenges, U. S. fascism is developing in a number of ways. Among the most important features of developing U. S. fascism are the following:

I. Winning or trying to win the population to support war, using patriotism, fear, and racism, including anti-Arab and anti-immigrant racism, etc.

II. Misleading and oppressing potential opposition, by elections, prisons, surveillance, wiretapping, immigration raids, torture, etc.

III. Lowering the working class’s standard of living to pay for war, cutting wages, welfare, pensions, Social Security, health care reimbursements, etc., and doing this in a way that particularly attacks black and Latin workers.

IV. Increased the size and capabilities of the military and building up war production industries.

V. Disciplining the capitalist ranks (Enron, Sarbanes-Oxley, Gov. Spitzer, etc.), and direct rule of capitalists over key institutions like schools (Gates and Broad foundations).

None of these are optional for the U.S. bosses. All are necessary responses to external threats and internal weaknesses of the U. S. empire. For example, much larger wars will have to be fought. McCain is singing about bombing Iran, Hillary has explicitly threatened to do it, and Obama is talking about intervention in Pakistan. Their problem is that most people are already fed up with the present wars, so patriotism, fear, and racism must be increased to try to gain support or at least tolerance of wider war. Elections are working out to be a good way for them to do this.

Since U. S. imperialism needs a bigger military, as all the presidential candidates say, and it can’t produce enough or steal enough even to pay for the military it has, the bosses must drive down the worker’s standard of living. You can fill in the reasons for the other features of U. S. fascism. It seems to have been true during the crises of the 1930s that U. S. capital could afford to make concessions to the working class. They can’t afford it now, so fascism is their answer. Whether the U. S. can develop fascism effectively is the whole ball game for U. S. capitalism. But while the growth of fascism prepares for war, it also

intensifies the internal contradictions of the U. S. capitalism, and provides opportuni-

ties for the growth of the communist movement.