

Rather than engage in routinized protests that threaten no one or begging the rulers for concessions, we envision a militant anti-imperialist movement that throws wrenches in the gears of the war machine, develops anti-imperialist consciousness far and wide, deprives the empire of loyal soldiers, and aims to stop new imperialist wars through mass resistance. We will give a platform to people who now have anti-imperialist consciousness: anti-war activists, courageous religious people of conscience, Rastas, punk rock kids, Palestinian activists, diaspora rebels, and people fighting for national liberation for their homelands and/or people. Crucially, we will reach out broadly and strategically to sections of people that, with consciousness and organization, could become a powerful anti-imperialist force within the US:

Immigrants and refugees who have firsthand experience with the horrors of the empire. Black, Latino, Indigenous, poor, and working-class high school students who can refuse to become cannon fodder or joystick jockeys for the war machine and can be mobilized to expel military recruiters from their schools. Among active-duty soldiers and their families, we need to find the conscious and critical thinkers and raise doubts to resistance.

Through popular education (not just memes or slogans), we will break through the complicity, government lies, and media silence and expose the crimes of the war machine, celebrating resistance and building public opinion against ongoing and future wars. We will oppose the demonization of whole countries, peoples, and cultures; instead we will promote a culture of resistance. We will deprive the empire of willing soldiers by driving the military and CIA recruiters and military contractors off campuses and out of neighborhoods. We will disrupt and embarrass the war makers, profiteers, and their scribes when they appear in public. We will defend and promote courageous resisters like Chelsea Manning and the Kings Bay Plowshares activists. We will support those military veterans who speak out against US empire and reach out to veterans more broadly to engage in dialogue and struggle about the morality of the US military. All of this will lay the groundwork for mass militant opposition to future wars and interventions.

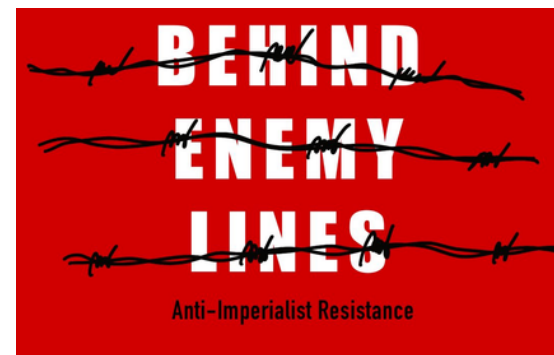
By choosing to side with the people of the world, we situate ourselves within a historic continuity: with the people who burnt their draft cards to resist the Vietnam war, with the dockworkers who refused to load ships bound for Apartheid South Africa, and with the religious people who illegally gave sanctuary to Central American refugees in the 1980s. By choosing the side of the people of the world, we align ourselves with millions of people, from Gaza to Caracas, from Haiti to the Philippines, against the US empire and its local lackeys.

**The empire is the enemy.
From the belly of the beast,
we choose to resist it.**

Since the events of 9/11/2001, the efforts of the US empire to remake the world have meted out death and destruction across countries and continents; they have also abjectly failed in their goals. After waging the longest war in US history, the US government has negotiated a truce with the Taliban in Afghanistan. In 2003, George W Bush declared that the Iraq war was a “Mission Accomplished,” yet the US is still dropping bombs on Iraq, having murdered—directly and indirectly—hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and creating the conditions for the rise of ISIS. Since the US-led NATO destruction of Libya, that country has not had a stable government, but it is home to open-air slave markets.

Despite the humanitarian nightmares and strategic failures, the US is determined to remain the single most powerful empire in an increasingly multipolar world. From airplanes and drones, the US rains down death and destruction, conducting political assassinations without a hint of respect for due process or international law and bombing civilian infrastructure and weddings alike. This includes the heinous practice of double-tap drone strikes that first appeared under Barack Obama. The US supplied much of the weaponry that its close ally, Saudi Arabia, used to bomb school children in Yemen and destroy Yemen’s infrastructure, leading to a vast cholera outbreak. The starvation and health crisis that Yemenis now live with is a direct consequence of US foreign policy.

US drones and planes are launched from aircraft carriers and a network of more than 500 overseas military bases in every corner of the globe. In many countries, these bases are against the will of the local people and prop up repressive governments. In many cases, they bring an increase in sexual violence. The US military and CIA increasingly conduct their operations in secret “dirty wars,” carrying out raids and assassinations outside of the purview of journalists or lawmakers and with zero accountability.



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MISSION STATEMENT

The US war machine is fed by an outrageous military budget, estimated at \$732 billion in 2020, an abhorrent allocation of potential and resources towards death and domination. Through training, joint exercises, and arms sales, the US influences and bolsters brutal and repressive governments of every stripe. US arms can be found enforcing criminal occupations in Jammu and Kashmir as well as being used to murder environmentalists in Colombia and urban poor residents in the Philippines. Perhaps most odious is the historic and ongoing US political, economic, and military support for the state of Israel (including a \$3.3 billion US military aid package in 2020) and its ongoing settler-colonization, occupation, and dispossession of the Palestinian people. Back in the United States, the same guns and military equipment used to murder people overseas are sent to the police, who use them to gun down Black people, brutalize Indigenous Water Protectors at Standing Rock, and repress protest.

Through coups, sanctions, and puppet regimes, the US empire has attempted to strangle every opponent and potential opponent. After decades of murder and torture through proxy wars, coups, and military dictatorships in Central and South America, the US has turned towards overthrowing governments it doesn't like in the region through judicial and electoral coups, with military coups always on the table. The latter option was used in Honduras in 2009, when the elected president was overthrown in a US-backed military coup and replaced with a man widely suspected of being a drug trafficker. In 2019 in Bolivia, the Organization of American States provided the justification for the coup that ousted the government of Evo Morales and installed a far-right evangelical government that almost immediately massacred Indigenous protesters. More than a third of the people in the world find themselves under some form of US sanctions, a form of economic warfare and collective punishment that keeps people from accessing essential food and medicine. The wars, bombings, interventions, coups, and economic and ecological devastation carried out or caused by US empire have forced millions to flee their homelands in search of safety and stability.

In history and practice, the US empire echoes the old colonialism, with its relentless focus on securing access to natural resources and trampling on the sovereignty, national independence, and liberation of the subjugated countries. In fact, the US maintains an entirely colonial relationship with a network of overseas territories, most appallingly in the domination of Puerto Rico, an archipelago where the US has tested chemical weapons, conducted forced sterilization, and brutally repressed the resistance movements and their just demands for independence and liberation.

A very modern version of that same colonial logic animates even the most liberal of US foreign policy thinking today. Unable to counter rising imperialist powers such as China and Russia economically, the US has attempted to block their growth militarily. To counter Russia, the US expanded the NATO alliance under Bush and Obama and, in the 2010s, armed proxies—including fascists and religious fundamentalists—in Ukraine and Syria. In Syria, the US has also engaged in a murderous aerial bombing campaign. US attempts to oppose rising Chinese imperialism have included the so-called pivot to Asia of the Obama years, with the ludicrous claim that the US has the right to send aircraft carriers to the South China Sea, and the creation of AFRICOM in 2007, which has resulted in the drone murders of shepherds in Somalia and other atrocities. These deployments, proxy wars, and bombings raise the specter of even more destructive inter-imperialist military conflict in the future, including the potential of nuclear annihilation.

Without the large-scale invasion and occupation that characterized the Iraq war (and the photographs of coffins on the front page of the newspaper), the discussion of war and empire has been relegated to back pages, where it exists at all. Because the hegemony of American imperialism is by and large agreed on by both political parties, it isn't part of the mainstream political discourse. Dominating other countries is so deeply built into the DNA of the US that for most Americans, passively acquiescing to the empire and receiving its benefits goes without any recognition.

Arundhati Roy says that “The great danger is that, time and time again, the storm of rage that builds up gets defused and co-opted into yet another election campaign” and that instead, “We all need to become seriously mutinous.” It's precisely in the spirit of becoming mutinous to the empire that we call this project Behind Enemy Lines. The first step in building anti-imperialist resistance is to declare that our allegiance is not to this empire but with the people of the world. People who live in the United States must betray the imperial consensus and refuse to accept the legitimacy, normalcy, and permanence of the empire.

