

When Wars Converge

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When Ukraine carried out a military strike on an Iranian commercial vessel in the Caspian Sea on July 25th, 2026, killing one sailor and injuring another, under the pretense that the ship was transporting arms to Russia, some mainstream media pundits pondered aloud whether two major wars were converging. Namely, the war that Russia has been waging against Ukraine since 2014 (escalating in 2022) and the war that America and Israel started with Iran in 2026 (growing out of the war that Israel launched against Palestine in 2023, expanding to target Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Iraq and Iran as the years dragged on.)

On July 29th, 2026, Ukraine's allies Saudi Arabia and America carried out a series of coordinated strikes on Iraqi state-affiliated militias, killing 20 militia members and injuring another 32.

Back in the 2000s, Ukraine participated in the American and British led invasion and occupation of Iraq, but Ukrainian forces were eventually ousted by Iraqi insurgents defending their territory. In the 2010s and '20s, Ukraine sold arms to wealthy Saudi Arabia, helping to facilitate its aggression against impoverished Yemen. Also in the early 2020s, Ukraine purchased various kinds of Israeli weapons (already battle-tested against Palestinians), helping pad the wallets of Israeli arms makers and enabling them to produce more weapons for use against Palestine, Lebanon and Iran, etc.

Before the two big wars even began, they'd already long been brewing together in the cauldron of Western imperialism, which doesn't excuse Russian aggression any more than it does its Israeli counterpart.

In July of 2026, Saudi Arabia also carried out its first airstrikes on Yemen since March of 2022, breaking a four-year long ceasefire. Back in 2015, Saudi Arabia (with the backing of America, Canada and the United Arab Emirates) launched a war and blockade against Yemen. Now, in 2026, the war between the two main factions in Yemen is back on, the one faction being backed by Saudi Arabia but losing ground to the other, aligned with Palestine and Iran, and expanding the territory it controls down the west coast of Yemen, giving it greater positioning over the global shipping route of the Red Sea, which it had previously blockaded in solidarity with Palestine starting in late 2023.

Back in 2025, when Israel and America engaged in more limited airstrikes on Iran, Ukraine restricted itself to making public statements in support of the aggression, but in 2026, Ukraine has shifted to a more active role. In addition to the aforementioned attack on an Iranian commercial vessel, Ukraine has been making alliances with and supplying drones to the Gulf monarchies that host American military bases and thereby facilitate American and Israeli aggression against Iran and other countries in South West Asia.

Ukraine's alliance with the UAE, which includes the previously mentioned drone sales, also implicates Ukraine in the genocide in Sudan, since the UAE arms and otherwise backs the Rapid Support Forces there. One of Ukraine's most staunch allies, Canada, has already seen its weapons end up in the hands of RSF fighters via Canada's arms sales to the UAE.

In March of 2026, Iran even claimed it had struck a Ukrainian drone depot in the UAE. In May, the Washington Post revealed that the UAE and Saudi Arabia had been secretly carrying out numerous attacks on Iran since the beginning of the war.

In early 2026, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the sidelines of international security meetings twice met with Reza Pahlavi, the son of the last Shah of Iran, only further confirming Zelenskyy's total lack of concern for either democracy or imperialist aggression as such. Not to mention liberal Ukraine's appeasement of its own fascists (already covered in one of

my previous articles, Fascism, Militarism and Anarchism), or its unethical and anti-civilian use of anti-personnel landmines and depleted uranium rounds in warfare (already mentioned in my article, The Downward Spiral of Militarism.)

Social Struggle and Internationalism

Back in 2024, an anonymous Israeli settler anarchist, in an article titled ‘Gaza, My Love’ and published by the American anarcho-liberal website CrimethInc, claimed that a different kind of convergence was occurring, a convergence of social struggles, specifically that the “Ukrainian resistance to Russian imperialism” is connected to “all struggles for freedom and liberation”, namely the movements in Palestine, Rojava (part of Kurdistan), Iran and Myanmar, among others.

The Israeli writer further claimed that “we draw inspiration, strength, and lessons from each other.”

Neither the Israeli author nor the editors at CrimethInc made any distinction in the article between Palestinians being a stateless Indigenous people (Israelis and Brits being their colonizers) and Ukrainians being the ethnically predominate people within their own state, a state that has in fact occupied the territories of Indigenous peoples such as the still unrecognized Gagauz of southwest Ukraine and the Crimean Tatar people of the southeast, the latter not being officially recognized by Ukraine until it was already too late, after Russia had taken Crimea in 2014.

The Ukrainian state in fact never redressed, while it had the chance to do so, the oppression of Crimean Tatars by both the Soviet Union and independent Ukraine. Back in 2007, Ukraine had abstained from voting on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and when Crimean Tatars at various times held protests for their rights, Ukraine responded with police violence.

The Israeli author and their editors at CrimethInc also made no mention in their article of Ukraine’s purchase of Israeli weapons over the past decade, nor the 2023 Ukrainian-conducted poll indicating that Ukrainians are much more anti-Palestinian and pro-Israeli than Brits or even Americans, nor the school textbook that Ukraine has introduced portraying Israel as being victimized by Arabs.

Nor did they make any mention of Ukraine’s history of helping occupy Iraq (and getting kicked out by Iraqis), arming Saudi Arabia, purchasing Turkish drones (aiding reinvestment in the further oppression of Kurdish people), and arming Myanmar during both the Rohingya genocide and the 2021 military coup. Nor did they deal with Russian and Ukrainian conscription, either economic or more forcible, which disproportionately harms and kills the Indigenous peoples whose territory is occupied by Russia.

In a 2026 book chapter on the connections between Syria and Ukraine, Lebanese-Palestinian writer and another friend of CrimethInc’s, Elia Ayoub, even went so far as to uncritically highlight Syrians’ celebration of Russian military deaths in Ukraine, with no regard on the part of Ayoub (or the Syrians as far as we know) for the disproportionate impact of the war on Indigenous peoples in Russia, or for the fact that Ukrainians are not Indigenous but rather the predominate ethnicity in a state that colonizes other peoples who actually are Indigenous.

Crimean Tatars had been mentioned in passing by the Ukrainian leftist soldier Taras Bilous in a podcast interview with Ayoub in 2022 (in an episode referenced by Ayoub in his 2026 book chapter), but only to the extent of referring to their previous expulsion by the USSR, not a single

word being offered by anyone on the podcast about the Crimean Tatar's lack of redress and recognition by the independent Ukrainian state. And this on an episode billed as dealing with "indigenous and decolonial futures."

In 2024, another one of CrimethInc's favorite correspondents, Antti Rautiainen, an anarcho-liberal writer from Finland, took a position to the right of the present-day Ukrainian state and United Nations, in an article translated for the online Freedom magazine, when he referred to the Crimean Tatars as merely an "ethnic minority" rather than the Indigenous people that they actually are.

When it comes to CrimethInc and some of their friends, they're not ones to let pesky details of very real oppression get in the way of a good heroic fantasy story of state soldiers and their valor under fire. CrimethInc are like car salesmen, and it's all up to you to make sure you don't buy a lemon from them, one that might even get you killed, or might have already killed other people.

This is explained by the fact that CrimethInc are unethical clout-chasers and campists, more than willing to lie and make up excuses for a colonial Ukrainian state that they would never make for a state like Russia or Iran, because Ukraine is European and is aligned with America, the country they've been raised since birth to believe in.

CrimethInc now even white-washes the oppressive history of America in their appeals to the liberal nationalists who run and attend No Kings protests. If they're willing to throw Native and Black resistance to America under the bus in order to recruit white liberals, it's no great surprise that CrimethInc doesn't really care much for oppressed peoples in Ukraine or the rest of the world either.

When Wars Come Home

As mentioned in my article *Fascism, Militarism and Anarchism*, "ironically, during the recent Minneapolis immigration raids, the Ukraine/NATO side of the war that American anarchists like CrimethInc [...] have been supporting really did come home to them, in this case in the form of the armoured vehicles made by Roshel, a Canadian company with both Ukrainian and Israeli connections."

"Run by a former member of the Israel Defense Forces, Roman Shimonov," as I further explained, "the company has been profiting off sales to the Canadian government for aid to Ukraine and re-investing in expanded production for American law enforcement, including immigration enforcement."

For people in Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark and Croatia, the Russia-Ukraine war has already come home to them as well, given that military conscription has been reintroduced in those countries in recent years, under the pretense of potential Russian aggression. Militarism is an always spreading plague that cannot be guarded against with anarchist aesthetics alone. Your CrimethInc patch will not save you when the army recruiters scoop you off the street and throw you into an unmarked van.

The mere possibility of Russian aggression has been a boon to the Israeli arms industry too, since NATO countries like Canada and Germany have bought Israeli weapons as deterrence (for use in Latvia in Canada's case, and consisting of the biggest arms purchase in Israel's history in Germany's case.)

Despite the current trade war and annexation threats that have marred relations between traditional allies Canada and America, Canada has still committed to buy almost a billion dollars in American weapons for Ukraine, as part of the NATO-American program called the Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL.) Roshel also appears to still be going forward with their take over of a factory in America.

Zelenskyy, in a recent visit to Canada implied that the country should just get over American aggression and talk it out, the opposite of his own approach to Russian aggression. But from his perspective, this makes sense, because he wants Canada to keep buying American weapons to send to Ukraine, and he is not opposed to imperialist invasion and occupation as such, he's only opposed to it when it happens to his own country.

National Liberation and Imperialism

If we are to really “draw inspiration, strength, and lessons from each other,” as CrimethInc’s Israeli settler friend urges us to, we will have to start by acknowledging some very basic facts of reality that they themselves ignored, such as who’s actually Indigenous (as a category imposed by colonialism) and who’s the dominant ethnicity with a state of their “own,” so to speak.

We will have to recognize the reality that no state, whether Ukrainian, Russian, Israeli, Iranian, American or otherwise can ever truly be part of “all struggles for freedom and liberation,” even if those states may often impact those struggles, for better or worse. And we will have to acknowledge the imperialist linkages and alliances between states, and between states and the international capitalist arms industry.

Ever since the days of Mikhail Bakunin and Joseph Déjacque anarchists have supported self-determination for all peoples, as well as wars of national liberation, while at the same time denouncing nationalism and militarism as forms of statism. Self-determination logically extends to the Ukrainian and Jewish peoples as much as any others, but it does not extend to any people the right to a state and military that oppresses other peoples both within and outside of their state’s borders.

We must take care not to fall back into the mistake that Peter Kropotkin made by knowingly brushing aside the colonialism of the Allies in World War I, when he proclaimed that defending Belgium and France from German invasion took precedence over everything else, not mentioning that this meant abandoning Africans to the earlier invasions by Belgium and France that had yet to end.

It’s past time to reclaim anti-authoritarianism from those Western campists who soft-pedal the Ukrainian state and its military, ridden with fascists and liberal appeasers, under the pretense that Russian imperialism is the world’s greatest evil, or at least the greatest evil from the perspective of the peoples under Russia’s thumb. Evils do not cancel each other out, nor is the greatest evil from one perspective always the greatest evil from another.

If it’s right for Ukrainians to prioritize their own resistance to Russian imperialism (or to Ukrainian conscription) and for Iranians to do the same with their resistance to the repression of their own state (or resistance to Israeli and American imperialism), it certainly can’t be wrong for Americans or Canadians to prioritize resisting their own country’s imperialism, especially given those countries’ unending and widespread history of imperialism since birth.

Ukrainians and the Indigenous peoples whose territory Ukraine claims can never be liberated by pacifism, any more than they can be freed by Ukrainian militarism and NATO firepower. The peoples of the world can only be liberated by a struggle that is truly their own and really in solidarity with all the other oppressed peoples of the world.

We need, as American anarchist Voltairine de Cleyre suggested, a revolutionary internationalism that embraces struggling peoples even if they aren't anarchists. And we need a revolutionary internationalism that recognizes the need to address the condition of the colonies, as the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist Confederation of Labor suggested, referencing the need to liberate Morocco from Spain, and explaining that "we would be counter-revolutionaries if in obtaining freedom for the workers of the [Iberian] Peninsula we were to maintain under siege the Moroccan zone, entrusted years ago to monarchical Spain."

In 1914, the Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta, an opponent of his own country's aggression against Libya and Ethiopia, proclaimed that "for an anarchist, the primary enemy is the oppressor who is closest to him, and against whom he can fight more effectively."

This is obvious enough for a country directly experiencing war. For the average Ukrainian, the enemy "at home" could be both the Russian invader and the Ukrainian conscription agent.

But for the people of relatively "safe" imperialist countries like America and Canada, it is particularly important to realize that the best thing one can do in solidarity with the peoples of Iran, Lebanon and Palestine, etc., is not to win an argument online with a Western leftist authoritarian who has no real power, but rather to do something about one's "own" government and one's "own" arms industry. Settlers and people otherwise of the Western imperialist countries cannot dodge their responsibility to deal with their own state by pointing the finger at another state and saying, "well, all states are bad, but especially Russia and Iran" (disturbingly close to shouting "All Lives Matter" at a Black Lives Matter protest.)

When your upstairs landlord is a serial killer it does no good, when asked about it by a neighbor, to engage in whataboutism by pointing out that there's also a landlord who killed a couple of people on the other side of town, and saying, "we must amplify the voices of people in that neighborhood." Real solidarity demands that we deal with our own problems and those of our immediate neighbors in order to truly be in solidarity with people abroad.

Real solidarity demands that we recognize that America and Britain backed a dictatorship in Iran as long as it was aligned with their camp, and that Ukraine and its Western backers still align themselves with the Gulf monarchy dictatorships today. The West has never been a friend to the many oppressed peoples of the world, as history teaches us.

With the West caught up in yet another imperialist quagmire, Malatesta's insight about the "primary enemy" (not the "only" enemy), the enemies that can be fought "more effectively" being the ones at home, seems to have greater relevance than ever.

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