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USA

Trump's Imperialism—Working for American Dominance, but Failing

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President Donald Trump is trying to reassert U.S. global dominance, leading to a greater threat of wars that could endanger what little stability remains in international relations.

The United States was from its founding always making war and expanding its territory. It warred against the native American peoples, against Mexico (taking half its territory), then against Spain, taking Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. The United States had become a great power by the outbreak of World War I and the dominant world power at the end of World War II. In the post-war period, it carried out coups in Iran, Guatemala, and Chile and waged war in Vietnam.

But in the twenty-first century, the United States was challenged economically by China everywhere and militarily by Russia in Europe. Trump is now trying to restore the United States to its former power, to Make American Imperialism Great Again. But so far, he is failing

In the big picture, at the level of global inter-imperialist conflicts, Trump is engaged in trying to stifle the Chinese economy and to maneuver Russia into some sort of partnership. Trump hit China with an astronomical 50 percent tariff and restricted technology transfers while China responded with restrictions on rare earths. But Trump has not forced China to submit.

The United States and NATO took no action when Russia took Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and failed at first to respond to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The United States has reaffirmed its commitment to NATO whose member nations are rearming. Meanwhile Trump failed to end the Russian war on Ukraine and repeatedly tried to flatter, entice, and bluff President Vladimir Putin of Russia, with no success—and now Russian drones are flying not only over Ukraine and Moldova, but also over Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark, Norway, Romania, Poland, Germany and France. The war goes on in Ukraine with the ever-present threat of a European nuclear war breaking out.

Hoping to reestablish U.S. dominance in the Middle East, Trump brokered the Abraham Accords, initially signed by Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Morocco in 2020. But Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel—killing 1,139 people and kidnapping about 200—detonated Israel's two-year genocidal war on Gaza with 67,000 Palestinians known to be dead, 20,000 of them children, and thousands more under the rubble. Trump, after the U.S. provided at least \$21.7 billion to Israel for the war, is now being lauded for ending the conflict. But the war, which may not actually end, sabotaged Trump's plan for the reorganization of the region.

In Latin America, where China is a big competitor and Russia a small one, Trump has made some of his strongest moves to take control. He recently ordered the destruction of four boats in the Caribbean, saying it was an "armed conflict" with "narco-terrorist organizations" but without proof that they carried drugs, murdering 21 people in violation of international law. This seems to be preparation for overthrowing the government of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela, on whose head he has put a \$50 million bounty. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Maria Corina Machado, a far-right politician who has encouraged Trump to invade, may make a U.S.-backed coup easier. Mexico, which Trump has threatened to bomb to destroy drug cartels, watches warily. Trump, intervening in Brazil's internal politics, has placed a 40 percent tariff on the country because its courts convicted far-right former president Jair Bolsonaro of organizing an armed coup to overthrow the government of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. And in Argentina, to support another far-right president, Javier Milei, who is up for reelection, Trump is arranging a \$20 billion bailout for his government.

Trump is attempting to once again make the United States the top dog, but so far, he is failing.

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