

Israel's war crimes and the hypocrisy of "human rights" imperialism

Bill Van Auken
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US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's appearance Wednesday at a State Department press conference provided an object lesson in the absolute cynicism of the "human rights" imperialism with which he is identified.

Blinken used the event, which was ostensibly called to present a report on "international religious freedom," to denounce China for committing "crimes against humanity and genocide against Muslim Uyghurs."

He was echoed by the State Department's point man on "religious freedom," Daniel Nadel, who declared, "[I]t is absolutely clear what horrors are taking place in Xinjiang, being perpetrated by the PRC Government. And we will continue to speak out because we must."

These two representatives of US imperialism spoke as airstrikes in Gaza were claiming scores of victims, including 17 children, while terrorizing the entire population of the impoverished occupied territory by toppling high-rise buildings with missiles.

Within Israel itself, the corrupt and unstable right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is unleashing the kind of repression previously reserved for the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank against an unprecedented revolt by Palestinian Israeli citizens. Several hundred protesters have been injured by riot police and mounted units. The government is sending border troops and possibly even regular army units to suppress internal resistance, while Netanyahu said Thursday he is prepared to institute "administrative detention" against "rioters," allowing for indefinite imprisonment without charges or trials.

No one at the State Department is particularly troubled by or compelled to "speak out" against these war crimes and "horrors."

On the contrary, Blinken and other US spokesmen endlessly mouth the mantra that "Israel has the right to

defend itself," while insisting that there can be no comparison between the Zionist state's "targeting the terrorists" and the "terrorist" Hamas "indiscriminately raining down rockets" on Israel.

President Joe Biden declared on Thursday that "there has not been a significant over-reaction" on Israel's part, providing an unmistakable green light for the escalation of the slaughter of Palestinians and an assurance that the flow of US money and arms that makes it possible will continue uninterrupted.

Indeed, there is no comparison between the primitive Gaza rockets and the high-tech killing machine of the Israel Defense Forces. As in virtually every such confrontation over the past 15 years, the deaths of Palestinians in Gaza outnumber those of Israelis by more than 10 to one. Once again, basic infrastructure in what has justifiably been described as the world's largest open-air prison is being smashed to pieces, condemning the population to even deeper poverty.

Secretary of State Blinken and his deputy tacked onto their defense of Israel's airstrikes a pro forma statement that Palestinians have the right to "safety and security." Yet that right is systematically denied by the Israeli occupation, which routinely shoots, kills and maims Palestinians, imprisons them—including children—without due process, seizes their land and bulldozes their homes to make way for the malignant spread of Zionist settlements and denies them freedom of movement.

The US used its veto power in the United Nations Security Council this week to suppress even a nonbinding resolution supported by the rest of the body's members because it suggested that curbing the most egregious of these crimes was necessary to prevent a march to war.

Can there be any doubt as to the reaction of Blinken

and his State Department cohorts if Beijing were carrying out in Xinjiang even a fraction of the violence meted out by the Israeli state? Washington has already insisted that China's policy toward the Uyghurs constitutes "genocide," a deliberately inflammatory allegation.

While undoubtedly Beijing employs methods of state repression in Xinjiang as it does elsewhere in China, there exists no evidence to support the charge of genocide, and Washington, whose victims over the course of 20 years of uninterrupted wars in Afghanistan and the Middle East number in the millions, is hardly in a position to point the finger.

But the State Department pursues the strategy outlined by chief Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels: "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

This propaganda campaign against China receives unstinting support—and embellishment—from the corporate media. Case in point was the November 2019 article written by *Washington Post* editorial page editor Fred Hiatt titled, "In China, every day is Kristallnacht."

The reference is to the bloody events of November 9-10, 1938 in which Nazi stormtroopers launched a vicious pogrom against Jews across Germany. A total of 1,400 synagogues were set ablaze. Thousands of Jewish businesses were destroyed, homes looted, people attacked and cemeteries desecrated. Approximately 30,000 Jews were locked up in concentration camps and around 1,500 murdered, initiating a process that would end in the extermination of millions.

The best that Hiatt could come up with to support the charge that something similar is happening "every day" in Xinjiang was testimony from one Bahram Sintash that mosques had been demolished and cemeteries bulldozed.

Sintash is an operative of the Uyghur Human Rights Project, a branch of the World Uyghur Congress and American Uyghur Association, both of which are funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), an agency created to carry out publicly funding operations that were previously conducted covertly by the CIA. The NED boasted in 2020 that it had provided nearly \$9 million to Uyghur separatist groups since 2004. Tied to extreme right-wing forces in the US and internationally, these groups seek to carve out an ethno-

state in Xinjiang and openly call for the "fall of China."

In other words, the evidence of "genocide" is supplied by elements directly funded by Washington, a circular state propaganda operation in which papers like the *Post* and the *New York Times* serve as willing conduits.

Meanwhile, those who expose the crimes of Israel are branded as "anti-Semites" in an exercise that twists that term beyond recognition into a calumny against anyone who expresses the disgust and anger felt by people all over the world, including millions of Jews, over the ongoing war crimes in Gaza. Indeed, this definition is itself anti-Semitic, identifying Jews everywhere with the criminal policies of a state that rules in the interest of a narrow Israeli financial and corporate oligarchy.

The vast gulf separating the indifference of US imperialism toward these crimes and its "horror" and invocation of "human rights" in relation to Xinjiang proves once again that all morality is class morality. The moral indignation of imperialist operatives like Blinken is activated only when it is needed to justify wars of aggression and plunder and advance the interests of the US financial oligarchy.

That the filthy banner of "human rights" previously raised to justify wars in the Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa is now being unfurled as part of the preparations for "great power" conflict with China and Russia is a measure of the extreme tensions and dangers in the global situation. The events in Gaza and the increasingly uncontrollable crisis in Israel itself have the potential to set a match to this tinderbox, paving the way to a catastrophic war.



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