G7 foreign ministers summit in Liverpool threatens Russia, China

Alex Lantier
13 December 2021

A foreign ministers summit of the G7 imperialist powers in Liverpool, Britain, ended yesterday with the issuing of a bellicose communiqué threatening both Russia and China. The foreign ministers of the United States, Germany, Japan, Britain, France, Italy and Canada denounced Russia, warning it of "massive consequences" for allegedly preparing to invade Ukraine.

"Russia should be in no doubt that further military aggression against Ukraine would have massive consequences and severe cost," the summit communiqué said. It added, "We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the right of any sovereign state to determine its own future."

The communiqué also denounced China, declaring: "On China, we discussed a range of issues and challenges, such as the situations in Hong Kong and Xinjiang, in the East and South China Seas and the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. … We also expressed our concern about coercive economic policies."

The communiqué is a reckless political provocation amounting to a barely veiled threat of war against Russia and China, which are both major nuclear-armed powers. Over the last weeks, US intelligence agencies have issued wildly varying claims, ranging from 94,000 to 175,000 for the number of troops Russia is supposedly amassing near the Ukrainian border. At the same time, it is arming Ukraine with a large arsenal of missiles that can easily reach Moscow and planning to also admit Ukraine into the NATO alliance.

The G7's posturing as a defender of peace and democracy against Russia is a fraud. Whatever troops Russia is deploying are within its borders, while Washington and its allies are marching a powerful

arsenal up to Russia's very doorstep that could unleash a devastating attack on Moscow.

As for China, it faces a media slander campaign accusing it of lying about the origins of COVID-19 and carrying out a genocide of Uighurs in Xinjiang while supposedly threatening free navigation of US and allied warships off China's coasts. These are, again, politically motivated lies.

China has sought to implement a policy of eliminating the circulation of COVID-19 which has limited the pandemic to 100,000 cases and less than 5,000 deaths. The G7 countries, in contrast, implemented a policy of "living with the virus" that has led to over 85 million cases and just under 1.4 million deaths of COVID-19. Had the Chinese regime wanted to commit a genocide of the Uighurs, it could have simply used in Xinjiang the policies the G7 countries have implemented, with flagrant contempt for human life, against their own populations.

The Liverpool summit communiqué served to align the G7 with the violent war propaganda coming from Washington and the NATO alliance, especially against Russia. As COVID-19 deaths mount in the G7 countries, currently running at around 2,500 each day, the denunciations of Russia and China become ever more hysterical and unhinged.

Last week, US Senator Roger Wicker insisted that the United States must be prepared to launch a nuclear war with Russia and a ground assault. "Military action could mean that we stand off with our ships in the Black Sea, and we rain destruction on Russian military capability," he said, adding: "It could mean that we participate, and I would not rule that out, I would not rule out American troops on the ground. We don't rule out first-use nuclear action."

He added that US troops from the states of California

and Mississippi are already in Ukraine.

On Saturday, President Joe Biden said that in a phone call last week, he had "made it absolutely clear to [Russian President Vladimir] Putin … that if he moves on Ukraine, the economic consequences for his economy are going to be devastating, devastating." This followed Biden's pledge last week to deploy US troops to NATO countries in Eastern Europe if Russia carries out what Washington declares to be hostile action against Ukraine.

In Liverpool Sunday, UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss boasted that the G7 was united around such threats against Russia. "What we have shown this weekend is that the world's largest economies are united," she said. "We have sent a powerful signal to our adversaries and our allies. We have been clear that any incursion by Russia into Ukraine would have massive consequences for which there would be a severe cost."

Truss also warned Iran that talks in Vienna are its "last chance to come to the negotiating table with a serious resolution," after the Trump administration unilaterally scrapped the 2015 Iranian nuclear treaty negotiated with Washington, the European powers, Russia and China.

Denouncing China's allegedly "coercive economic policies" in Africa and the Middle East, Truss announced a "Build Back Better World" investment initiative to compete with Chinese trade there. "And what we want to do is build the investment reach, the economic trade reach of like-minded, freedom-loving democracies," Truss said. "That is why we are stepping up our investment into low- and middle-income countries."

In reality, the conflict over Ukraine is bound up with the deepening crisis both of the G7 powers' COVID-19 policies and of their decades-long wars across the Middle East. Chinese trade plays an increasingly central role in the economies of countries including Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria that have been devastated and lost millions of lives in US-led wars. It was after Russia intervened alongside Iran to block US military action to topple Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2013 that Washington backed the February 2014 coup in Ukraine.

This coup toppled pro-Russian Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, bringing to power a far-right regime including the Svoboda Party, which the European Union condemned in 2012 for racist and anti-Semitic views. It pledged to ban the Russian language and murder ethnic Russians. As far-right militias launched raids into Russian-speaking areas of eastern Ukraine, like the Donbass and the Crimea, these regions voted to secede.

As COVID-19 deaths mount across Eastern Europe and in the imperialist powers themselves, the G7 countries are giving a green light to the far-right regime in Ukraine to mount more aggressive action and stoke an explosive political crisis with Russia.

Last month, Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov categorically denied NATO allegations that Russia is planning a land invasion of Ukraine. "Russia doesn't threaten anyone. The movement of troops on our territory shouldn't be a cause for anyone's concern," Peskov said. "We take measures to ensure our security when our opponents take defiant action near our borders."

At the same time, the Russian defense ministry accused Washington of encouraging the far-right regime in Kiev to again attack eastern Ukraine. Calling US military activity in the Black Sea region around Ukraine a "threat to regional security and strategic stability," i.e., actions that could provoke war, it said: "The real goal behind the US activities in the Black Sea region is exploring the theater of operations in case Kiev attempts to settle the conflict in the southeast by force."

Urgent warnings are in order. Amid a new surge of COVID-19, after the entire NATO alliance has suffered nearly 2 million COVID-19 deaths, the NATO powers are pressing ahead with a murderous policy to "live with the virus." Deeply destabilized, they are at the same time looking for external targets against which to lash out, hoping to turn them into targets of mounting anger. The decisive question under these conditions is to mobilize the working class in an international movement against war and for a scientific policy to eliminate the virus and end the COVID-19 pandemic.

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