

US accelerates troop deployments as Biden threatens “world war” with Russia

Alex Lantier, Johannes Stern
12 February 2022

As Washington and its NATO allies work to militarily surround Russia, US officials yesterday declared that a US-Russia war is imminent.

Yesterday, Washington announced the deployment of 3,000 troops from the 82nd Airborne Division to bases in Poland, which borders Ukraine. Britain and Germany will send hundreds of soldiers to strengthen NATO battlegroups in Estonia and Lithuania. This comes after NATO countries have for weeks delivered Javelin anti-tank missiles, Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and Turkish TB2 Bayraktar drones to the Ukrainian regime in Kiev.

The narrative NATO is peddling—that it is acting to defend Ukraine from Russia—is a pack of lies. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has publicly declared that Russia’s military posture is not consistent with plans for an all-out invasion of Ukraine. Moreover, when reporters challenged US claims that Russia is preparing an attack, State Department spokesman Ned Price could do nothing but argue that undisclosed “intelligence information” meant his claims were true.

Nearly two decades after Washington invaded Iraq based on lies that it had “weapons of mass destruction,” US imperialism and its NATO allies are concocting a strategy to trigger a war with Russia, a nuclear-armed power, under conditions where they can blame Russia for it. Reports of mounting Ukrainian military activity in the Donbass region suggest that a NATO-backed military provocation can be staged there to trigger the war.

Yesterday, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said Russia is “in a position to be able to mount a major military action” and refused to give any further details, stating: “I will not comment on the details of our intelligence information. But I do want to be clear, it could begin during the Olympics, despite a lot of speculation that it would only happen after the Olympics.” On this basis, Sullivan urged US citizens in Ukraine to “leave as soon as possible.”

Significantly, Sullivan added that the NATO alliance had concluded very detailed planning for a confrontation with

Russia. He said, “We have achieved a remarkable level of unity and common purpose from the broad strategy down to the technical details. If Russia proceeds, its long-term power and influence will be diminished, not enhanced by an invasion. It will face a more determined transatlantic community.”

This followed a statement by Biden the day before calling on US citizens to leave Ukraine, adding that “things could go crazy quickly” and that a US-Russian conflict would be “world war.”

This strategy is coordinated with the European powers. Yesterday, Biden’s emergency call went to Prime Ministers Boris Johnson (UK), Justin Trudeau (Canada), and Mario Draghi (Italy); Presidents Emmanuel Macron (France), Andrzej Duda (Poland) and Klaus Iohannis (Romania), German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and EU and NATO officials. According to a White House report, they pledged “to impose massive consequences and severe economic costs on Russia, should it choose military escalation, and to continue reinforcing the defensive posture on NATO’s eastern flank.”

US officials insist war could begin next week, *Der Spiegel* reported, stating that “both the CIA and the US military informed the German government and other NATO states on Friday that they feared, based on new information, that the attack could take place as early as next Wednesday.”

At the same time, NATO is holding several major military exercises. The “Dynamic Manta 22” anti-submarine exercise begins on February 20 in the Mediterranean, followed by the “Dynamic Guard” exercise in Norway two days later. Both transition into “Cold Response,” the largest “war game” in Norway since the 1980s, involving 35,000 troops from 28 countries.

Yesterday, at Romania’s Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg promised to reinforce Eastern Europe. About an upcoming Madrid summit, he said, “next week, NATO Defence Ministers will meet and discuss how we can further strengthen our presence in the Eastern part of the Alliance, including with

new battlegroups. And I welcome France's offer to lead a NATO battlegroup here in Romania."

A war would be the product not of Russian aggression but of the imperialist powers' aggressive response to the Stalinist dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Over the last 30 years, Washington sought to establish its global primacy by dominating the Middle East and Central Asia. NATO waged wars, notably in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria, that cost millions of lives and trillions of dollars.

Russia and, increasingly, China's rising economic weight have become major obstacles to this strategy. In 2013, Russian warships based at Sevastopol in the Crimea confronted NATO warships that were threatening to bomb Syria, after which NATO backed down. Alongside Iran, Russia then intervened and defeated NATO-backed Islamist militias in Syria, whose government has now joined China's "Belt and Road" global industrial infrastructure project.

In 2014, shortly after Russia helped prevent direct NATO intervention in Syria, the NATO powers backed a putsch in Kiev, where far-right militias toppled a pro-Russian Ukrainian president and set up a NATO puppet regime. As these militias backed by NATO mercenaries attacked Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine like Donbass and Crimea, these areas broke off from Ukraine, with Crimea voting to rejoin Russia. Since then, far-right Ukrainian militias have faced off against Russian troops in Crimea and Russian-backed militias in the Donbass.

NATO's conflict with Russia has been escalating again after last year's humiliating NATO defeat in Afghanistan. The alliance is now redeploying towards Ukraine, bidding to seize a vast swath of territory around the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. This would allow them to isolate and threaten Russia, cut off Russian military aid to the Middle East, and intervene in Central Asia up to China's western borders. This plan is being set into motion in Ukraine.

Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine are reporting highly advanced NATO war preparations. Yesterday, Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) leader Denis Pushilin cited Biden's call on US citizens to leave Ukraine, warning that war was imminent. "The US President, probably, given US influence in Ukraine, has information that allows him to make such statements and take such a position. ... Ukraine may attack at any moment. Ukraine has everything ready for that: the concentration of forces and means makes it possible to do it at any moment, as soon as a political decision is made."

On February 9, the DPR Militia's Deputy Chief Eduard Basurin said Ukrainian tanks are taking positions only 15 kilometers from theirs, near Avdeyevka, Gorlovka and Novgorodskoye. Yesterday, Basurin said Ukrainian forces

also deployed an S-300 missile system.

Such deployments violate the 2015 Minsk accords, which temporarily froze the Ukraine conflict and sent the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to monitor the front line. Basurin said, however, that Kiev regime forces are using electronic jamming to prevent OSCE observers from using drones to observe these deployments. "It seems that OSCE observers are quite content with a situation where it is impossible to record violations by Ukraine," he said.

Significantly, DPR forces last month warned, based on their sources in Kiev, that they expect an attack to come as soon as Ukrainian armored assault brigades are assembled and in position.

On January 28, Basurin said: "According to our intelligence, the Ukrainian General Staff under the guidance of US advisers at the Ukrainian Defense Ministry is putting final touches to a plan for offensive operations in Donbas. The date of aggression against the people's republics will be set when the attack groups have been created and the operation's plan approved by Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council."

These are conditions in which NATO could goad Russia, a nuclear power, into war. Were such an attack to begin, DPR forces would likely require Russian military assistance to avoid being overrun by far-right Ukrainian militias, which call for killing Russians and have bombed Russian-speaking Ukrainian cities near Russia's borders. If Moscow intervened against this, however, it would provide grounds for NATO war propaganda, denouncing Russian aid to the DPR as an "invasion" of Ukraine.

The decisive question more than ever is the building of an international movement in the working class against the mounting danger of a nuclear world war. It cannot be opposed based on Russian nationalist militarism, to which imperialism offers only the alternatives of total capitulation or all-out war. The broad opposition to militarism in the working class must be mobilized on an international basis, in a struggle against imperialism and for socialism.



To contact the WSW and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact