On the anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, US seeks to escalate conflict with Russia

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Ahead of "Victory Day" on May 9, when Russia celebrates the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II—to which the Soviet Union's Red Army made the decisive contribution—the United States and its NATO allies are systematically working to escalate their war with Russia.

On Sunday, the G7 group of imperialist countries announced plans to end the import of Russian oil and gas.

In their statement, the G7 drew an absurd parallel with the US-led effort to break up Russia and turn the country into a semi-colonial protectorate of imperialism with the struggle against fascism during the Second World War.

"Today, on 8 May, we, the Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7), alongside Ukraine and the wider global community, commemorate the end of the Second World War in Europe and the liberation from fascism and the National Socialist reign of terror, which caused immeasurable destruction, unspeakable horrors and human suffering," the statement said.

In reality, the measures proposed by the G7 are fundamentally aimed at bringing Russia under imperialist domination. In the words of *New York Times* reporter Roger Cohen, the goal is to bring "the Russian economy to its knees."

While the Stalinist bureaucracy destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991 and restored capitalism in Russia, ultimately these policies of the imperialist powers today stand in the tradition of the war aims pursued by German imperialism when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union 81 years ago.

Today, 77 years after the end of the Second World War, the world is once again teetering on the brink of a worldwide military conflagration.

In a statement on the G7 Summit, the White House boasted, "Our unprecedented sanctions are already exacting an immense toll on Russia's economy, and our export controls have strangled Russia's access to critical technology and the supply chains."

These actions are "projected to wipe out the last 15 years of economic gains in Russia." The statement added, "Almost 1,000 private sector companies have left Russia, and reports indicate that more than 200,000 Russians, many of whom are highly skilled, have fled the country. All of these costs will compound and intensify over time.

"We commit to phase out our dependency on Russian energy, including by phasing out or banning the import of Russian oil," the G7 said in its statement.

The aim, in the words of the White House, is to cut the "main artery" of Russia's economy. The US has already banned imports of Russian oil, and the European Union is actively discussing a similar proposal.

The G7 made its announcement after meeting by video with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

In its communique, the G7 said it had provided Ukraine with $25 billion in arms and other assistance since the war started.

This announcement came after White House officials told leading US publications that the United States was actively involved in the killing of Russian generals in Ukraine and the sinking of the Moskva, the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet.

The same day as the G7 Summit, First Lady Jill Biden traveled to Ukraine to meet with President Volodymyr Zelensky's wife, Olena; Canadian

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President Justin Trudeau also traveled to Ukraine on Sunday.

The Guardian reported that “On a busy day for VIP visits in Ukraine, the Canadian prime minister, Justin Trudeau, toured Irpin, a Kyiv suburb and scene of some of the worst early attacks by Russia. The president of the German Bundestag, Bärbel Bas, and the Croatian prime minister, Andrej Plenkovi?, met Zelenskiy in Kyiv on Sunday.”

In his contribution to the G7 Summit, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson praised the actions of the G7 members in supplying Ukraine with “military equipment that allowed them to not just hold ground in Ukraine, but [to] recapture it.”

Johnson, according to the Prime Minister's office, agreed that “the world must intensify economic pressure on Putin in any way possible, and said the West must not allow the war to turn into a stalemate.”

The US, meanwhile, is ramping up arms shipments to Ukraine. On Friday, US President Joe Biden announced an additional $150 million weapons package for Ukraine. He urged Congress to pass the tens of millions of dollars in weapons and other assistance for Ukraine that he proposed, urging, “Congress should quickly provide the requested funding to strengthen Ukraine on the battlefield.”

The US has already provided $3.4 billion in weapons to Ukraine since the start of the war, including anti-tank weapons, kamikaze drones, anti-aircraft weapons, as well as tanks and aircraft. On Sunday, Lockheed Martin announced that it would work to double its production capacity for javelin missiles.

The US also announced a series of new sanctions on Sunday, cutting off Russian media outlets from receiving US advertisements, as well as blocking Russian companies from using US consulting services. In addition, the US is imposing visa restrictions for thousands of Russian and Belarusian officials, as well as sanctions on Gazprombank, through which many European countries purchase Russian gas.

“Preventing Russia from accessing the United States' valuable professional services increases the pressure on the Kremlin and cuts off its ability to evade sanctions imposed by the United States and our partners,” US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said in a statement.

“Taken together, today’s actions are a continuation of the systematic and methodical removal of Russia from the global financial and economic system. And the message is there will be no safe haven for the Russian economy,” a White House official said.

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