After six months of NATO proxy war in Ukraine

German Chancellor Scholz announces new arms deliveries to Kiev for war against Russia

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Half a year after the Russian invasion of Ukraine provoked by the imperialist powers, they are continuing to escalate the NATO proxy war—even though this raises the danger of a third world war.

On Tuesday, the White House revealed that it would provide Kiev with another $3 billion to support and train the Ukrainian military. Wednesday, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz followed suit. In his video statement on the 31st anniversary of Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union on August 24, 1991, he expressed his solidarity with the war against Russia, underlined the central role of Germany and promised new arms supplies.

"We think of the heroes of Ukraine, of the men and women who have been bravely defending their homeland against the brutal aggressor for six months now," he said. "Your courage impresses us all. Ukrainian soldiers who are currently being trained here in Germany on anti-aircraft guns, and on tanks that we are supplying to Ukraine. And we will continue to deliver weapons, from the self-propelled howitzer to the anti-aircraft system, month after month."

Kiev is to receive three more Iris-T anti-aircraft systems, twelve armoured recovery vehicles and 20 rocket launchers mounted on pick-ups, a government spokesman said. All in all, the additional weaponry is worth significantly more than half a billion euros. The weapons are to be delivered "predominantly in 2023," but "some" also "much earlier." The official list of the German government on "military support for Ukraine" is thus becoming longer and longer. Last week alone, Germany delivered the following weapons to Ukraine:

- 54 M113 armoured troop transporters with armament (systems from Denmark, retrofitting financed by Germany)
- 53,000 rounds of flak ammunition
- 20 laser target illuminators

The following items have been added to the section "Support services in preparation/implementation":

- heavy machine gun M2 spare parts
- 167,000 rounds of handgun ammunition
- 12 M1070 Oshkosh heavy-duty semitrailers
- 12 frequency scanner/frequency jammers
- field hospital (Roller 2)

Military support also includes 255 shots of the 155-millimeter "Volcano" artillery ammunition. According to a report by *Der Spiegel*, the precision-guided projectiles are supposed to "be able to strike with an accuracy of 1 metre" and "with a range of around 70 kilometres, they would also have a significantly greater range than conventional artillery projectiles, which usually fire at a range of around 40 kilometres." In other words, the ammunition is made for attacks on sensitive Russian targets and infrastructure in eastern Ukraine and possibly also in Russia itself.

Scholz repeatedly boasted in his video message about how far-reaching the German war participation is. "We will continue to train Ukrainian soldiers on the latest European military equipment. We will continue our sanctions. We will support Ukraine financially and help rebuild the destroyed towns and villages. Our trains will continue to load Ukrainian grain and transport it to Europe's ports. Our hospitals will continue to treat wounded Ukrainian soldiers," he said.

Then the chancellor assured that Germany would continue to "help" as long as "Ukraine needs our support." It is the declared aim of the imperialist powers to defeat Russia in Ukraine and to conquer the Russian-occupied parts of the country militarily. This message emerged from the second meeting of the so-called Crimea Platform on Tuesday in Kiev, attended by both NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and leading representatives of the imperialist powers.

In his opening speech, Zelensky stated that the "reconquest" of Crimea was Ukraine's most important military goal. "I know that Crimea belongs to Ukraine and is waiting for our return," he said. "I want you all to know that

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we will return. We must win the battle against Russian aggression. That is why we must free Crimea from the occupation."

Scholz, who took part virtually along with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, agreed: "We condemn Russia's attempts to forcefully integrate parts of Ukrainian territory. Our message is clear: any sham referendum or other attempts to alter the status of parts of Ukrainian territory will never be recognized and ... such steps preclude any negotiation approaches."

Nobody explained exactly what this means. The "reconquest" of Crimea would be a genocidal project in every respect. It would threaten the lives of the majority Russian-speaking population on the peninsula, which, after the pro-Western Maidan coup in Kiev in 2014, supported the Russian annexation by a large majority and rejected the right-wing, anti-Russian regime in Kiev.

An all-out attack on Crimea would lead to a third world war. "For us, Crimea is part of Russia. And that means forever," warned the former Russian President and Prime Minister and current Deputy Head of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, in the Russian weekly *Argumenty i Fakty* at the end of June. "Any attempt to invade Crimea is a declaration of war against our country," he added. "And if this is done by a NATO member state, it means a conflict with the entire North Atlantic Alliance. World War III. A complete catastrophe."

NATO leaders know what they are risking with their policies. As long ago as April, Scholz stated in a *Der Spiegel* interview that everything had to be done "to avoid a direct military confrontation between NATO and a highly armed superpower such as Russia, a nuclear power." The aim was "to prevent an escalation that would lead to a third world war. There must be no nuclear war."

These warnings are now a thing of the past. The leaders of the NATO powers are prepared to risk the destruction of the entire planet in order to assert their geostrategic and economic interests. Yesterday, British Conservative leader Liz Truss declared during a campaign appearance in Birmingham that she was "ready" to start a nuclear war, even if it meant "global annihilation." At the end of June, the Air Force Inspector (commander-in-chief) Ingo Gerhartz threatened Russia with the "implementation of nuclear deterrence if necessary."

Such threats and extermination fantasies expose the NATO powers as the actual aggressors and warmongers. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is reactionary, but ultimately a desperate response by the capitalist Putin regime to the explosion of imperialist war over the past 30 years. The imperialist powers have left a trail of devastation in the Balkans, the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union by the Stalinist bureaucracy, NATO has also systematically encircled Russia with the aim of subjugating and exploiting the resource-rich country. In 2014, Washington and Berlin orchestrated a right-wing coup in Ukraine to establish a right-wing, anti-Russian regime in the former Soviet Republic. Subsequently, the Ukrainian military and far-right militias in the country were comprehensively upgraded and the current proxy war systematically prepared.

The incessant propaganda in the media and from the political establishment about the Russian "aggressor," "war terror" and "backward-looking imperialism" (Scholz) cannot conceal the fact that the ruling class is reviving its old imperialist great-power policy of war. In the 20th century, in two world wars, German imperialism tried to annex Ukraine and subjugate Russia militarily. Berlin is now attempting to do so once again.

Resistance is growing among the population, which has not forgotten the terrible crimes of German imperialism and is now being forced to bear the costs of the insane war policy once again. According to a recent survey by the market research institute INSA, 62 percent of the respondents are "dissatisfied" with the work of the chancellor and only 25 percent are "satisfied." An even higher 65 percent are dissatisfied with the traffic light coalition government of the Social Democrats, Greens and Free Democrats.

"The working class will inevitably come into conflict with the traffic light coalition and all the parliamentary parties," declared the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) following the federal election last autumn. This situation has now been reached and demands a clear anti-capitalist strategy and perspective. The policy of war and the associated attacks on social and democratic rights can only be stopped by the independent intervention of the working class on the basis of an international socialist program.

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