

Ukraine attacks Poland: A deliberate provocation

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One day after a series of explosions took place in a Polish farming village, it has become clear that Ukraine fired at least one missile into Poland, killing two Polish civilians.

While Ukraine's imperialist backers acknowledged that it was Kiev that launched the strike, they have claimed, without a shred of evidence or plausibility, that Ukrainian air defenses accidentally carried out a precision airstrike dozens of miles in the wrong direction.

If the Ukrainian air force was attempting to intercept Russian missiles, flying from the east, why were its missiles aimed to the west, at Poland? And why were they able to precisely target an inhabited building in a sparsely populated rural area? Why did Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and an unnamed "senior U.S. intelligence official" falsely blame Russia for the attack before Polish authorities had even publicly confirmed details about the strike?

The claims that the missile was fired from a "defensive" weapon have no credibility because the S-300 missile system has a well-known capability of striking land-based targets.

In reality, the missile strike was a calculated provocation by Ukraine, possibly with the assistance of factions within the American state, intended to accelerate direct NATO involvement in the conflict and preclude any discussion of a ceasefire or negotiated settlement of the war.

Ukraine's attack on Poland took place as the G20 was meeting in Bali, Indonesia, with the United States seeking to whip other countries into line against Russia. It also takes place amid reported conflicts within the US government about the extent and pacing of US involvement in the war, and suggestions from

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley that the United States might initiate a ceasefire or peace negotiations over the winter.

Critically, both NATO as a whole and individual NATO members have now acknowledged that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that attacked Poland, with Ukraine continuing to insist that the strike came from Russia.

A diplomat from a NATO country in Kyiv told the *Financial Times*: "This is getting ridiculous. The Ukrainians are destroying [our] confidence in them. Nobody is blaming Ukraine and they are openly lying. This is more destructive than the missile."

On Wednesday morning, NATO published a statement declaring that the "incident was likely caused by a Ukrainian air defense missile fired to defend Ukrainian territory against Russian cruise missile attacks." It added, "This is not Ukraine's fault. Russia bears ultimate responsibility as it continues its illegal war against Ukraine."

The White House echoed the statement by NATO, adding, "Whatever the final conclusions may be, it is clear that the party ultimately responsible for this tragic incident is Russia, which launched a barrage of missiles on Ukraine specifically intended to target civilian infrastructure. Ukraine had—and has—every right to defend itself."

In blaming Russia for what could only have been a deliberate attack on a NATO member by Ukraine, the United States is following the pattern set by a whole series of provocations, from the killing of Russian fascist public figure Daria Dugina in Moscow, to the bombing of the Nord Stream gas pipelines and the Kerch Bridge. Each of these actions, carried out through the combination of Ukrainian forces and factions within the US state, was aimed at intensifying the US involvement in the war with Ukraine. All,

though kept at arm's length, were ultimately defended by the US and its media.

The United States has chosen, this time around, not to fully embrace the false narrative being promoted by Kiev. That is because to do so would draw the United States into a full-scale war with Russia for which it is not yet prepared. The Biden administration is, however, making far-reaching preparations for such a conflict, pumping tens of billions of dollars of weapons into Ukraine and constructing a NATO battlefield along Russia's entire European border.

The same day that the strikes took place, the White House requested that Congress approve \$21 billion in additional weapons. This figure would more than double the total amount spent on US weapons shipments to Ukraine, which have up to this point amounted to \$18.2 billion.

In remarks on Wednesday, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Milley quashed any discussion of a ceasefire over the winter, as had been mooted in the press over the past several weeks.

Asked if Milley was "pulling back from your comments from last week, that you see an opportunity for negotiations with the Russians," both Milley and Austin said that they see the war continuing and even intensifying through the winter. "I think winter fight favors the Ukrainians," Austin said.

Austin added, "They're going to continue that fight into the winter as best we can tell, and we, the United States, on the direction of the president and the secretary of defense, we will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes to keep them free, sovereign, independent with their territory intact."

Whatever the tactical twists and turns of US military policy, the overall direction of the United States is a clear and unequivocal tendency toward military escalation in what it has called the "decisive decade."

Writing about German rearmament in the 1930s, Leon Trotsky published an essay entitled "Hitler the Pacifist," in which he explained that German imperialism's loud proclamations that it is seeking peace were merely a cover for a systematic program of rearmament with the aim of preparing a world war:

[Hitler] carries on his work in the direction of

a radical change in the relationship of military forces. It is precisely now, when this work has already begun but is still far from having given decisive results, that Hitler must employ the greatest caution in the European arena. Do not frighten anyone, do not irritate anyone; on the contrary, open wide the arms. Hitler is ready to cover the walls of the war factories with pacifist speeches and non-aggression pacts. Paris vaut bien une messe! (Paris is well worth a mass!) If a clear, simple, non-diplomatic formula of the pacifist offensive is necessary, it is the following: For the next two or three years Hitler must painstakingly avoid a preventive war on the part of his opponents. Within these limits his pacifism is absolutely sincere. But within these limits only.

Today, the declarations by the United States that it is not seeking war either with Russia or China are a ruse, aimed at buying time while it carries out the military and diplomatic encirclement of both countries and masses troops on their borders. The war that has broken out in Ukraine is seen by US military planners as an opening skirmish in a much broader global war.

The fact that the war has now expanded to Poland must be treated as a warning: This war must end! On December 10, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality will hold an online meeting entitled "For a mass movement of youth and students to stop the war in Ukraine!" We urge all workers, students and young people to attend and promote this critical meeting.



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