

NATO recklessly escalates war against Russia

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The rapid escalation of the conflict in Ukraine has shattered the claim that NATO is not a party to the war against Russia.

Not a week goes by without a major new expansion of NATO involvement:

- On December 10, a US official told the *Times of London* that the US had officially endorsed Ukrainian attacks deep inside Russia, declaring, “We’re not saying to Kyiv, ‘Don’t strike the Russians [in Russia or Crimea].’”

- On December 21, the Biden administration announced that it would send a battery of Patriot missiles to Ukraine, the most advanced weapons system sent to date.

- On December 29, Biden signed into law the appropriation of another \$50 billion for the war, doubling with the stroke of a pen the level of US involvement in the conflict.

On January 4 and 5, France, Germany and the United States announced they would send tanks and armored fighting vehicles to Ukraine.

These are the very actions that Biden and other NATO leaders previously asserted would lead to a direct war between the US and Russia.

In March, Biden said, “The idea that we’re going to send in offensive equipment and have planes and tanks and trains going in with American pilots and American crews... that’s called World War III.”

To buttress his claim that “we do not seek a war between NATO and Russia,” Biden wrote an op-ed in the *New York Times* in May that stated, “We are not encouraging or enabling Ukraine to strike beyond its borders”—a position that is now openly contradicted in press statements by US officials.

In June, French President Emmanuel Macron declared, “We are not entering the war... Thus, it has been agreed not to supply certain weapons—including attack aircraft or tanks—and President Zelensky is aware

of this agreement.”

In internal publications, the strategists of US imperialism admit that the Ukrainian army has been effectively hired as a mercenary force by the United States, with the aim of destroying the Russian military.

“In cold, geopolitical terms, this war provides a prime opportunity for the US to erode and degrade Russia’s conventional defense capability, with no boots on the ground and little risk to US lives,” wrote Timothy Ash of the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA).

“US spending of 5.6% of its defense budget to destroy nearly half of Russia’s conventional military capability seems like an absolutely incredible investment,” Ash added, concluding, “The US military might reasonably wish Russia to continue deploying military forces for Ukraine to destroy.”

Increasingly, the physical destruction of the Russian state is being articulated as a goal of NATO policy. Luke Coffey of the Hudson Institute, the think tank founded by nuclear war advocate Herman Kahn, said that “the war in Ukraine... will likely mark the dissolution of the Russian Federation (the legal successor to the Soviet Union) as it is known today.”

The United States and NATO have instigated, prolonged and escalated the war. The Russian government, in a colossal and reactionary blunder, attacked Ukraine in the hopes of working out a security agreement with the US and Europe. Instead, it fell into NATO’s trap, with catastrophic consequences.

With every escalation, the US and NATO are betting that they can push further than the last time without a major response. Last month, the *New York Times* explained this rationale by pointing to “the sense widespread in Kyiv among officials and civilians that, short of nuclear intensification, Russia cannot do much more to Ukraine that it is not already doing.”

But gambling that Russia will not respond to what it perceives as an increasingly existential threat is just

that—a gamble with the lives of millions of people.

Who gave the Biden administration the authority to take the US into war with Russia, with all its catastrophic consequences? An undeclared war, accepted by Congress and both parties of the ruling class, is being implemented without even the pretense of an authorization vote.

Biden should take off his mafia sunglasses and tell the world what the consequences of his actions are. A “conventional” escalation of the war threatens the deaths of hundreds of thousands, or millions, of people throughout Europe. A nuclear escalation threatens the annihilation of the world’s major cities and the collapse of human civilization.

In its New Year statement, the *World Socialist Web Site* wrote: “As the war enters its second year, the logic of military escalation proceeds inexorably, fueled by the need to achieve a decisive breakthrough, based on unrealistic goals and disastrous miscalculations...”

It is not clear whether the Biden administration is seeking to provoke a drastic Russian response or whether it believes that the Putin regime will avoid escalation of the war with NATO. But whether through deliberate provocation or an incorrect appraisal of Russian policy, the White House is taking risks that could lead to a global disaster.

The logic of military escalation will expand the scope and geographical extent of the war. How long before Belarus is involved, and then Poland? All of Eastern Europe, the Aegean and the Baltics, and then the rest of Europe and the world will be drawn in. How long before a Russian airstrike kills US troops that are already deployed inside Ukraine, prompting demands for “boots on the ground”?

With every new weapons shipment, the prestige of NATO is more and more at stake. The weapons being poured in by NATO will require not only training and direction, but a sweeping and expansive logistics network, involving an increase in the number of US troops already deployed in Ukraine.

On the part of Russia, the fiction of the Putin government that it is carrying out a “special military

operation” is giving way to the reality of full war mobilization. Moreover, NATO’s escalation will only further intensify pressures from within the Russian military and extreme nationalist elements for a major counteroffensive, or even a direct attack on NATO.

At a certain point, escalation begets escalation, creating a chain reaction that cannot be contained, even if those involved want to stop it.

The relentless escalation of the war is being propelled by a mounting social, political and economic crisis in every country. The United States is a social powder keg, and the sclerotic American political system is rotting on its feet.

America’s ruling elite and affluent upper-middle class are gripped with war frenzy. They vainly believe that they can, by plundering the resources of the former Soviet Union, stave off the sweeping domestic crisis gripping American society.

The reality is that there exists no broad popular support for this war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s address to the US Congress last month, for all the hoots and shouts of the assembled congressmen, had no impact whatsoever on broader public opinion.

But widespread opposition in the population, as of yet, finds no organized political expression. This is what must be changed. The one force can stop the looming catastrophe is the international working class, united in a struggle against imperialism, militarism, the historically obsolete nation-state system and the capitalist social order.



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