

American imperialism demands new bloodbath in Ukraine

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As the death toll surges in the Ukraine war, the United States is demanding a renewed military offensive by Kiev. The American ruling class is determined to fight to the last Ukrainian.

To date, the NATO powers have sent over \$150 billion in weapons and other aid to Ukraine, equal to three-quarters of Ukraine's pre-war GDP. After earlier declaring they would not provide offensive equipment, the NATO powers have flooded the country with hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles, as well as the most advanced missile systems in NATO's arsenal.

Now, the imperialist powers are demanding that this weaponry be put to use in the hands of newly conscripted Ukrainian troops, many of them grabbed off the street, to be thrown at heavily fortified Russian positions. The US and NATO have precluded any negotiated settlement of the war, declaring that negotiation can only take place once their war aims are achieved.

The only certain outcome of the much hyped counteroffensive will be a further massive loss of life, Ukrainian and Russian.

The death toll is already staggering. In November, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that "100,000 Ukrainian military personnel have died to date." With hundreds of troops dying every day, the real death toll among Ukrainians is likely in excess of 200,000.

With Ukrainian troops attempting to shift to the offensive, this death toll will only swell, with casualties among attacking Ukrainian troops vastly outnumbering those of the Russian forces on the defensive.

The Zelensky government is taking increasingly repressive measures as it dragoons tens of thousands of young men to their deaths. All anti-NATO political parties are banned in Ukraine, and any dissent from

Kiev's pro-war line is sharply punished. These actions have been covered up by the US media, which lyingly proclaims that the Zelensky government is fighting for "democracy."

Reports published Sunday in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* testify to the extent to which Washington is pressuring its client state in Kiev to launch the planned offensive.

"Ukraine is feeling immense short-term pressures from its Western backers, as the United States and its allies treat the counteroffensive as a critical test of whether the weapons, training and ammunition they have rushed to the country in recent months can translate into significant gains," declared the *Times*.

Commenting on the plans for the offensive, the *Post* wrote, "The buildup ahead of the assault—the details of which remain secret—has left Ukrainian officials grappling with a difficult question: What outcome will be enough to impress the West, especially Washington?"

Here, the relationship of forces driving the offensive is stated plainly. "Washington," that is, American imperialism, is directing the offensive. It is demanding an adequate return on its investment. How many Ukrainian youth will die to "impress the West, especially Washington"?

The Biden administration, with its approval ratings plummeting, and with the war increasingly unpopular, is seeking to use what it can call a "breakthrough" in the Ukraine war to mobilize its political base in the affluent upper-middle class ahead of the upcoming presidential election.

This social layer has been whipped into a pro-war frenzy, fueled by hysterical anti-Russian hatred. But having whipped up this militaristic hysteria, what will be the response of the United States to a potential

failure of the offensive?

In interviews with both the *Times* and the *Post*, Ukrainian officials sought to warn that the planned offensive, however bloody, would not lead to a decisive success.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksi Reznikov told the *Post*, “The expectation from our counteroffensive campaign is overestimated in the world.” He added that “most people are... waiting for something huge,” which he feared might lead to “emotional disappointment.”

Reznikov raised the prospect that “success” could be as little as the capture of “ten kilometers.”

In an interview with the *Guardian*, Czech President Petr Pavel warned that for the US and NATO, “It might be a temptation to push them, for some, to demonstrate some results.” Pavel stated, “It will be extremely harmful to Ukraine if this counteroffensive fails, because they will not have another chance, at least not this year.”

The Biden administration has staked its entire credibility on the war. The prospect that the offensive will not have the desired outcome, or even fail completely, only intensifies pressure for direct NATO intervention.

The war fever gripping the US political establishment was exemplified by the cover story in *The Atlantic* by Anne Applebaum, headlined “The Counteroffensive.”

Applebaum demands the “total liberation of Ukraine,” calling for Ukraine to reconquer “all of the territory lost since February 2022” as well as the Crimean Peninsula. In the plans for this offensive, Applebaum declares that “America’s position in Europe, indeed America’s position in the world are all at stake.”

It is becoming increasingly clear that the sweeping goals of the United States cannot be achieved outside of a massive escalation of US-NATO involvement in the war.

This is the only explanation for last week’s drone attack on the Kremlin and attempted assassination of Putin, a reckless provocation whose aim was to provoke retaliation by Russia.

After the drone strike, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was asked, “What is the United States’ position on such attacks on leadership during this war by Ukraine?”

In response, Blinken explicitly sanctioned the

legitimacy of assassinations, declaring, “We leave it to Ukraine to decide how it’s going to defend itself.”

These statements testify to the enormous recklessness that prevails in the White House. In endorsing the potential assassination of the Russian president, who controls the world’s second largest nuclear arsenal, the Biden administration is playing with the lives of not just Ukrainians and Russians, but the whole world.

The United States, proclaiming this the “decisive decade” for securing US geopolitical domination, is preparing for global war on a scale that will make the vast body count in Ukraine look like a down payment.

Unless they are stopped, the imperialists are preparing to repeat the horrors of the First and Second World Wars, but on an even greater and deadlier scale.

Stopping the war plans of the imperialists requires the conscious political intervention of the working class. Throughout the world, from Sri Lanka to France and the United States, workers are entering into struggle against governments that are declaring workers’ living standards must be slashed to pay for rearmament. These struggles must be unified on the basis of the perspective of international socialism, taking up as a central demand the struggle to end the war in Ukraine.



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