

Washington demands renewed bloodbath in Ukraine

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This week, Ukraine began a major new phase of its offensive in the US-NATO war against Russia, resuming armored attacks against well-defended trenches.

The *New York Times* reported, based on statements from US officials, that “the main thrust of Ukraine’s nearly two-month-old counteroffensive is now underway.”

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday, “I can confirm that hostilities have intensified in a significant way,” saying a “large number” of Ukrainian armored vehicles were used, incurring “heavy losses.”

Following a bloody debacle in the first phase of the offensive, which had forced a temporary pause of Ukrainian attacks, Ukrainian conscripts are once again being thrust into well-defended front lines, dying by the thousands in minefields and trenches.

Ukraine has suffered enormous human losses, and the war continues only because it is being massively armed by NATO. Whatever meager gains Ukraine is making in isolated areas of the vast front have required a reckless expenditure of lives. Ukrainians are dying for no other purpose than to advance the interests of the imperialist powers.

The latest escalation follows the NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, where NATO members pledged to deploy tens of thousands of troops to Russia’s western borders and to massively increase military spending to finance the conflict with Russia and China.

With the war going badly and public opposition in Ukraine growing, Ukrainian President Zelensky was given his marching orders at the summit: The offensive must continue, no matter the cost in human lives.

For months, the US media had promoted the “spring offensive” as a decisive turning point in the war that would deliver a shattering defeat for Russian forces.

But the debacle has been so enormous that even the US media has been forced, after weeks of silence, to acknowledge it as a disaster.

Last week, the *Wall Street Journal* reported, “When Ukraine launched its big counteroffensive this spring, Western military officials knew Kyiv didn’t have all the training or weapons... that it needed to dislodge Russian forces. But they hoped Ukrainian courage and resourcefulness would carry the day.

“They haven’t. Deep and deadly minefields, extensive fortifications and Russian air power have combined to largely block significant advances by Ukrainian troops.”

The *New York Times* was even more direct in an article that was first buried, then heavily redacted. It reported on a Ukrainian unit with a “200 percent” casualty rate, meaning that all of its members were killed or injured, then replaced with recruits, all of whom were also killed or injured.

It described young soldiers killed *en masse*, with “replacements often being older recruits who were forced into action.”

In Ukraine, much of the entire able-bodied population is under arms, compelled to fight by a draconian regime of conscription.

The war is being directed by the US and NATO powers, and the bloodletting must continue. The *Economist* wrote on Thursday (“The Ukrainian army commits new forces in a big southward push”), “Some American and European military officials argue that Ukrainian commanders have in fact been too slow to strike with their new brigades, a mistake that they think Ukraine committed last year in Kherson...”

It quoted US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley as stating, “The various wargames that were done ahead of time have predicted certain levels

of advance,” but that “has slowed down.”

Pressed by the imperialist powers, Ukrainian generals have decided to “throw in fresh legs,” a euphemism the *Economist* uses to describe Ukrainian soldiers, young and old, being sent to their deaths.

As the war progresses, the pretense that the US is fighting in the name of “democracy” is falling away.

On Thursday, US President Joe Biden met in the White House Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Biden declared, “Italy and the United States are also standing strong with Ukraine, and I compliment you on your very strong support in defending against Russian atrocities, and that’s what they are.”

Meloni is an open admirer of Italian fascist dictator Benito Mussolini. She notoriously declared, “I think Mussolini was a good politician,” adding, “Everything he did, he did for Italy.”

In a speech following the end of this month’s NATO summit, Biden declared, “Our commitment to Ukraine will not weaken. We will stand for liberty and freedom today, tomorrow, and for as long as it takes.” “Liberty” through an alliance with fascists, in Ukraine as well as in Italy, and “freedom” through mass slaughter.

This commitment to endless war entails endless escalation. On Thursday, Reuters reported that US M1 Abrams main battle tanks would begin arriving in Ukraine in August and September, to be followed by F-16 fighter jets by the end of this year.

This is the outcome of a series of escalatory measures by the United States throughout the past year. The year began with the announcement that the US would send Bradley armored fighting vehicles to Ukraine, followed soon after by the sending of main battle tanks. In May, the White House announced it would send F-16 fighters, followed by cluster munitions.

According to leaked Pentagon documents made public earlier this year, there are hundreds of US and NATO active duty military and intelligence personnel on the ground, accompanied by what are likely hundreds, or possibly thousands, of “volunteers” from NATO countries.

On Wednesday, the Biden administration ordered the US government to begin handing over documents to the International Criminal Court to facilitate the prosecution of Putin.

This move follows extensive internal debate over whether this action would open up the United States,

which has killed millions of people in criminal wars of aggression, to prosecution by the court, whose jurisdiction it does not recognize.

The White House has decided, however, to move ahead with the prosecution, with the aim of upping the ante in the military conflict. A military defeat for Russia would mean, in other words, the prosecution of Putin at the hands of the American victors.

The goal of this action is to preclude any negotiated settlement, which the United States has opposed from the beginning. The US is determined to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia as a precursor to moves to dominate and subjugate China.

Whatever the outcome of the latest offensive, it will be a catastrophe for the people of Ukraine, Russia and the world. If the offensive continues as a bloody debacle, it will mean the deaths of countless thousands of Ukrainian conscripts sent against the front as cannon fodder. If Ukraine succeeds in breaking the Russian front line and driving through to cut off the Crimean Peninsula, it could generate enormous political pressure on the Russian government to escalate through the use of nuclear weapons.

This war, which has already killed hundreds of thousands of people, must be stopped! The escalation of the war corresponds with the eruption of a global strike wave, including dock workers in Canada, US actors and screenwriters, and looming battles at UPS, Yellow Freight and the North American auto industry.

It is necessary to combine the growing struggle by workers in defense of their social rights with the fight against war and militarism.



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