

Amid debacle of Ukrainian offensive, US demands the bloodbath continue

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Against the backdrop of the debacle of Ukraine's summer offensive, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken traveled to Ukraine Monday to reaffirm US involvement in the Ukraine war "for as long as it takes" and as many deaths as needed. Perfectly timed for Blinken's arrival, a missile strike in the city of Kostyantynivka which killed 17 people was declared by the Zelensky regime to be a Russian attack. There are reliable reports that the missile was fired from the West, which is entirely controlled by Ukrainian forces.

Blinken's visit was intended to send a message that, no matter the death toll, the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine—paid for with the lives of Ukrainians and Russians—will continue.

Ukraine's offensive had been hailed by the US media as the equivalent of the D-Day landings in Normandy during World War II. But amidst a staggering loss of life, Ukraine's advances, to the extent that they exist, are measured in mere yards.

No official figures about the death toll from the war—now in its 19th month—have been published by Kiev or Washington. But according to the *Washington Post*, 50,000 or more Ukrainians have become amputees. Reliable reports place the number of Ukrainian soldiers killed in action at between 350,000 and 400,000. More deaths are expected by the Ukrainian regime, which, in return for endless amounts of loot, has placed the country's youth at the service of US imperialism. A military cemetery for up to 600,000 soldiers is now under construction.

In the face of this disaster, the United States has made clear its commitment to continue to fund and inflame the war. Blinken's trip accompanied the announcement by the US of another \$1 billion in weapons and well-placed bribes. The Biden administration is currently working to pass a bill in Congress authorizing another

\$20 billion in funding for the war.

Publicly, neither Blinken nor Biden has made any admission of the scale of the disaster. Last month, however, the *Washington Post* reported that US intelligence agencies have concluded that the offensive will fail to reach its main objective of driving to the Azov Sea in order to cut off the "land bridge" to the Crimean Peninsula.

Over the past month, US military and Biden administration officials have made statements to the press attributing the military failures to the Ukrainian leadership being too sparing with the lives of Ukrainian troops.

Comments in the US media, based on statements by US officials and generals, now state that the war will continue for many more years to come.

In an op-ed in the *Washington Post* last week, columnist Max Boot wrote, "Ukraine may have a better chance to win in 2024." Boot cited US Army Brig. Gen. Mark Arnold, who declared that he is "very skeptical that a decisive battle will occur this year that makes a material effect toward Ukrainian victory." Arnold added that he is "more optimistic about the prospects for decisive operations next year."

Former British Army General Richard Barrons wrote in the *Financial Times*, "Ukraine cannot win against Russia now, but victory by 2025 is possible." He continued, "Ukraine's current counteroffensive will not throw Russia out—not that anyone expected it to. Nor is it likely to cut the occupation in half before the winter, which might have been one of the more optimistic aims. It has, however, shown how the Russian army can be beaten. Not in 2023, but in 2024 or 2025."

The *Economist*, for its part, quoted one "senior American intelligence official" as saying, "If you look at the battlefield in five years' time, it could look

broadly similar.”

If the war is allowed to stretch on for that long, the death toll will be in the millions. But for the American ruling class, which is directing the war, this is a matter of complete indifference.

In a speech calling on the Senate to approve Biden’s \$20 billion military spending bill, Republican Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell urged his colleagues not to go “wobbly” on Ukraine. McConnell said that funding Ukraine means “weakening one of America’s biggest strategic adversaries without firing a shot” and “detering another one [i.e., China] in the process.”

He continued, “It means investing directly in American strength, both military and economic.”

McConnell’s statements reveal nakedly the actual aims driving the war and its relentless escalation. It has nothing to do with “democracy” in Ukraine, which is rife with corruption and ruled by a criminal oligarchy. Washington deliberately provoked the war and is directing it to advance US strategic interests by undermining and ultimately dismantling Russia, not only because it holds rich deposits of critical minerals and energy resources, but also because it is seen as an impediment to a military assault on China. The war is about increasing the global “military and economic” sway of American capitalism, purchased with the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, Ukrainian and Russian.

The war is being carried out in alliance with the right-wing regime in Kiev and far-right governments throughout Eastern Europe.

In an article entitled “Fears of Peace Talks with Putin Rise Amid US Squabbling,” the *Hill* notes that the governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are among those most aggressively demanding an escalation of the war. During the Second World War, these countries were aligned with Nazi Germany, with much of their military and intelligence apparatus complicit in the Holocaust. Today, they are ruled by rabidly anti-Russian regimes that, especially in the case of Lithuania, openly glorify their Nazi-collaborating ancestors.

With so much of American imperialism’s global credibility hanging on the fate of the conflict, there exists a significant danger that the US, faced with a collapse of its Ukrainian proxy forces, will massively escalate its involvement in the conflict, potentially

including the direct involvement of NATO troops or the deployment of nuclear weapons to Ukraine.

American imperialism, driven by a profound domestic crisis and desperate to offset the long-term decline in its global position, has instigated a military conflict whose death toll will be incalculable. Opposition to the war within the United States is mounting, and the Biden administration is increasingly desperate to secure military victory.

For its part, the oligarchic Putin government, having been lured into its desperate and politically bankrupt invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, is engaged in a futile effort to strike a bargain with its imperialist “partners,” who are committed to the subjugation and ultimate dismantling of Russia as a prelude to conflict with China.

This war must be ended. In opposition to the Biden administration and its NATO allies, the media mouthpieces of the imperialist intelligence agencies, the hysterically pro-war upper middle class, and the pseudo-left apologists of imperialism, the International Committee of the Fourth International and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality call for the building of a mass anti-war movement of workers and young people.



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