

US inflames war throughout the Middle East

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The United States, whose military has killed over one million people during illegal wars in the Middle East over the past quarter-century, is using Israel's assault against the Palestinians to provoke a wider war throughout the region.

The US is surging troops, warships and aircraft to the Middle East. At least 10,000 sailors, soldiers and airmen have already been deployed to the region, and an unspecified number of troops—possibly in the tens of thousands—have been told to make ready to deploy.

The Biden administration has given its full support for Israel's genocide against the Palestinians which is taking place through the mass bombing of civilians, killing between 300 and 400 people every single day, as well as the deliberate starvation and dehydration of the population.

At the same time, it is providing the weapons with which Israel is simultaneously carrying out attacks on Lebanon, Syria and the West Bank.

Israel's genocide against the Palestinians, using American weapons and with American political, military and logistical support, is just one component of the US military escalation throughout the region.

On Saturday, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin announced steps to "strengthen" the US military's "posture in the region," citing "escalations by Iran." Austin said he was putting US missile defense systems on alert throughout the region and had placed an "additional number of forces on prepare to deploy order."

The US military has asserted that over the past week troops stationed in Iraq have come under attack from what it claims are Iranian proxy forces.

"Iran is closely monitoring these events and, in some cases, actively facilitating these attacks and spurring on others who may want to exploit the conflict for their own good or for that of Iran," said Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby on Monday.

In an interview on Sunday, Secretary of State Antony Blinken declared, "We expect that there's a likelihood of escalation, escalation by Iranian proxies directed against our forces, directed against our personnel. We are taking steps to make sure that we can effectively defend our people and respond decisively if we need to."

Blinken insisted, "This is not what we want, not what we're looking for. We don't want escalation." He added, "We've also deployed very significant assets to the region, two aircraft carrier battle groups, not to provoke, but to deter."

Blinken, as always, is lying. The escalation is on the part of the United States, which is flooding the Middle East with troops and weapons.

The United States, via its proxy, Israel, is bombing Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon and Syria in a deliberate effort to provoke Iran. It is surrounding Iran with warships and aircraft and threatening that any alleged attack against them will be used as a pretext to attack Iran.

The US maintains thousands of troops in Iraq following its brutal and illegal 2003 invasion of that country. US troops are similarly deployed illegally in Syria, in defiance of the Syrian government. All of these troops are poised to strike Iran at a moment's notice.

Israeli officials continue to make threats against Lebanon. During a visit with troops on the border with Lebanon Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned of "devastating consequences to Hezbollah and the state of Lebanon," adding, "We'll hit it with a force it can't even imagine." Israel has ordered the evacuation of over 200,000 people from its northern border.

On Sunday, Nir Barkat, Israel's economy minister, threatened that if the war spills over into Lebanon, "We will not just retaliate to those fronts, but we will go to

the head of the snake, which is Iran.”

The US and other imperialist media are, meanwhile, agitating for a direct military conflict with Iran. In an op-ed in *The Economist*, David Schenker, former US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, openly called for a military conflict with Iran. “More effective than financial tools, however, is military might. ... Unfortunately, to forestall a widening of the war in Gaza, Washington may have no choice but to engage militarily.”

In his prime-time speech on Thursday, Biden presented a messianic vision of American global domination, claiming that American military and economic overlordship is the unifying principle in the world. “American leadership is what holds the world together,” Biden said.

He was more explicit in a campaign reception the next day, declaring, “We were in a postwar period for 50 years where it worked pretty well, but that’s sort of run out of steam. It needs a new world order in a sense, like that was a world order.”

To say that the “postwar period” is over is effectively to declare a new period of world war. The Biden administration is escalating the war in the Middle East and threatening to directly attack Iran as part of what it sees as a globe-spanning conflict for world hegemony, stretching from Eastern Europe to the Middle East and the Pacific. American imperialism, confronted with the economic rise of China and the global decline of the US economy, sees war as the means to assert world domination.

The United States worked to provoke the war in Ukraine, with the aim of drawing Moscow into a proxy conflict aimed at “bleeding Russia white.” But two years on, Ukraine’s latest offensive has failed, and the United States is desperately seeking to escalate the conflict in order to inflict a “strategic defeat” on Russia. At the same time, Washington is instigating a conflict with China over Taiwan and attempting to economically strangle China by blocking its access to advanced computer technology.

Biden’s call last week for \$105 billion in additional military spending for all of these fronts marks a major step in the escalation of what is, in fact, the initial stages of a third world war.

The United States is confronting Russia and China,

which are both nuclear-armed powers. Israel also possesses nuclear weapons, and at least one member of Israel’s parliament, Revital “Tally” Gotliv, has called for the use of the “doomsday weapon” in the present conflict. Washington’s escalation of military violence threatens human civilization.

But American imperialism’s stoking of world war confronts broad popular opposition. Over the past weekend, millions of people demonstrated on every inhabited continent in opposition to the US-Israeli genocide against the Palestinians. In London, 300,000 people took part in the city’s largest antiwar rally since the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

This developing anti-war movement must be deepened and expanded. The growing movement against war must be fused with the global strike movement by workers fighting to defend their jobs, wages and living standards. This requires the building of a socialist leadership in the working class, fusing the fight against war with opposition to the capitalist profit system.



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