

# NATO risks nuclear catastrophe with attack on Russian airports

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The destruction of strategic bombers deep inside Russia by the Ukrainian secret service SBU shows that NATO will stop at nothing to escalate the war with Russia, even if it means provoking a nuclear catastrophe.

On Sunday, around 120 Ukrainian drones, which had previously been smuggled into the country, attacked four Russian military airfields in a coordinated operation. Two of the airfields—Belya in Eastern Siberia and Olenia near the Finnish-Russian border—are thousands of kilometers away from Ukraine.

President Volodymyr Zelensky personally boasted on X about the “absolutely brilliant success” and announced that it had been a long-planned coup: “One year, six months, and nine days from the start of planning to effective implementation.”

The SBU released videos of the attacks. According to its information, more than 40 combat and reconnaissance aircraft were destroyed, about 34 percent of Russian bombers capable of launching cruise missiles. Well-informed Russian bloggers estimate a lower number, but even according to their information, around a dozen aircraft went up in flames.

It is inconceivable that NATO was not informed and closely involved. Such a complex operation, prepared over a long period of time, cannot be carried out without reconnaissance data that only the US has at its disposal. Military and intelligence officials from NATO and Ukraine are in constant, close contact, and President Zelensky exchanges information with the heads of government of NATO countries on an almost daily basis.

The action was obviously designed to humiliate and provoke the Russian government. The following day, the second round of direct talks between Russia and Ukraine took place in Istanbul, which ended after only

an hour without any significant results.

In Moscow, the attack will be interpreted as a NATO attack on strategic targets within Russia, and the regime will respond accordingly. Official sources have so far remained cautious. The Russian Ministry of Defense merely stated that “some aviation equipment had caught fire” and that “all terrorist attacks” had been repelled.

But bloggers close to the Russian military are calling the attack “Russia’s Pearl Harbor.” In December 1941, the Japanese air force destroyed parts of the American Pacific Fleet in the Hawaiian port. The following day, the US declared war on Japan and entered World War II.

The widely read channel “Dva Majora” accused NATO of “directly undermining the nuclear strategic balance” and “reducing our country’s nuclear protection.” The Telegram channel “Rybar,” with 1.3 million subscribers, called for an end to talks with Ukraine and a “new level of escalation of the conflict.” The newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, the second largest in the country, described June 1 as a “black day for Russia’s long-range and military transport aircraft” and called for the same “determination and harshness” against Ukraine as Israel has shown against Hamas.

President Putin will respond to the growing pressure, and NATO’s experienced strategists know this very well. Attacks on NATO targets outside Ukraine that have a similar strategic significance to the destroyed Russian bombers cannot be ruled out. The danger of further escalation and expansion of the war in Ukraine, including the use of nuclear weapons, is greater than ever before.

What is prompting NATO to take this risk? Why is it continuing to escalate a war that has already cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian and

## Russian soldiers?

The history of the war in Ukraine itself provides an answer. This was never the “unprovoked Russian war of aggression,” as portrayed by the media. The Russian oligarchs, who had become rich by plundering the social property of the Soviet Union and whose interests Putin represents, always sought admission into the circle of capitalist “great powers.” Putin himself was therefore celebrated with a standing ovation by the German Bundestag in 2001.

But neither the US nor the major European powers wanted to share with the Russian oligarchs. Driven by mounting economic and financial crises and the pursuit of raw materials, markets and profits, they broke one agreement after another that they had made since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and pushed further and further eastward economically and militarily. After NATO had annexed all of Eastern Europe and the former Baltic Soviet republics, it also reached out to Ukraine and Georgia, aiming to destroy Russia.

While the NATO powers were still primarily preoccupied with their imperialist wars in the Middle East in the first decade of this century, they turned their attention increasingly toward Russia in the second decade. In 2014, they helped a pro-Western regime come to power in Kiev with the help of a right-wing coup and then systematically armed Ukraine.

Putin responded with a military attack on Ukraine. It was a bankrupt and reactionary attempt to put pressure on the imperialist powers in order to reach a new agreement with them. But the war provided them with a welcome pretext to intensify the confrontation with Russia and to arm themselves massively.

Since then, Germany has doubled and tripled its military spending and set itself the goal of building the strongest army in Europe. As in the First and Second World Wars, it is expanding eastward again. For the first time in its history, the German Armed Forces are permanently stationing a combat brigade in another country—in Lithuania, which borders the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad. This greatly increases the risk of direct military confrontation with Russia. Britain, France and Poland are also using the war in Ukraine as an excuse to intensively rearm.

The European powers are responding to Donald Trump’s return to the White House by attempting to break away from their military dependence on the US

and to confront Russia on their own. Trump vacillates between offers and threats toward Russia while menacing Europe with trade war measures. Nevertheless, the US continues to form the military backbone of NATO, which was created during the Cold War against the Soviet Union. It is intensifying the confrontation with Russia, as shown by the Ukrainian attack on Russian military airports, which could not have taken place without a green light from Washington.

Even as NATO escalates the war against Russia, the imperialist powers, led by the US, are escalating their conflict with China. Over the weekend, US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth declared that a war with China, ostensibly over Taiwan, was “potentially imminent.”

The war in Ukraine and the danger of nuclear escalation can only be stopped through the independent intervention of the working class. It is the working class that bears the consequences of war and militarism and has no interest in supporting either side in this war. The workers of the US, Europe, Russia, and Ukraine must unite in the struggle against war and its cause, capitalism.



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