Moscow terrorist attack kills 3, injures 21

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A terrorist attack on a high-end Italian restaurant, Balzi Rossi, in Moscow on the evening of Saturday, August 1, killed at least three people. As of this writing, 21 others are reported to have suffered injuries of varying severity. The restaurant is located on Kudrinskaya Square, less than a 30-minute walk from the Kremlin.

According to Russian media, the bomb was a self-made explosive. An unidentified woman carried the device to the restaurant, where a private wedding banquet with 50 invitees was held. A report in the Russian business daily *Kommersant* suggested that the woman may have been unaware that she was carrying an explosive device. The bomb was detonated remotely after a security guard outside the restaurant prompted the woman to open a box she wanted to hand over as a gift. The woman, the security guard and one visitor were blown to pieces as a result of the blast. Had the woman been able to enter the restaurant, the number of dead would have likely been significantly higher. *Kommersant* reported that the force of the explosion was equivalent to a kilogram of TNT and that the device was packed with metal pellets.

Russian authorities have initiated an investigation into what they described as a "brutal act of terror."

While they have not officially established a link to the war in Ukraine, it is likely that such a link exists. Ever since the beginning of the NATO-provoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, terrorist attacks on Russian soil have formed a critical part of the NATO-Ukraine war strategy. Terrorist attacks have killed Darya Dugina, a prominent far-right figure, several generals and well-known pro-Kremlin journalists. In a major terrorist attack on the Moscow Crocus City Hall in March 2024, over a hundred people were killed.

The restaurant bombing occurred as Ukraine has dramatically stepped up its long-range drone strikes on Russian territory. During the day of the Moscow terrorist attack alone, Russian authorities reported to have shot down 743 drones and 15 aerial bombs. In the following 24 hours, another 635 drones were downed over 18 Russian regions, the Black Sea and the Azov Sea.

The strikes were carried out with AI-guided Hornet drones, which have been developed and produced by a US company owned by former Google CEO Eric Schmidt, who is one of the richest people in the world, with a net worth of $63.4 billion, and is highly connected in the US military, intelligence and Democratic Party establishment.

In the past two weeks, Ukraine has shifted toward aggressively targeting warehouses of the Russian online retail giant Wildberries. So far, at least 15 warehouses in several regions, including Moscow, St. Petersburg, Belgorod, Volgograd and Samara, have been hit or evacuated. Over 12 workers have died with dozens more injured. The strikes have hit warehouses as far as 1,300 kilometers (808 miles) from the Ukrainian border. They have destroyed goods produced by companies from Russia, China, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Uzbekistan, and around 20 percent of the company's warehouse space, according to the German newspaper *Die Zeit*.

Ukraine has also been targeting oil refineries, ports and other energy hubs, creating an immense fuel crisis within Russia. Despite being one of the largest energy exporters in the world, Russia has now been forced to begin importing oil to address the domestic fuel shortage. The destruction caused by the strikes, along with the US war on Iran, have also contributed to spiking oil prices on the world market.

On Sunday, Ukrainian drones downed a Russian container ship in the Black Sea, which was carrying civilian goods, such as frozen food and construction materials, according to Russian authorities. One drone

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hit a civilian car in the north of the Udmurt Republic, killing three people. Two more, including a child, were hospitalized.

Ukraine's intensification of drone warfare comes as the front lines have, by and large, stalled with soldiers on the battlefield locked in a war of attrition. Hundreds of thousands have died already in the war, with many more wounded and maimed.

The strategy to escalate the war behind the front lines is central to the fundamental aims of the war: the destabilization of the Putin regime and its eventual overthrow and the carve-up of the entire region of the former Soviet Union. The imperialist powers seek to bring the vast energy, material and human resources of Russia and other former Soviet countries, including Ukraine, under their direct control.

There are signs that this strategy is producing considerable tensions within the ruling oligarchy in Russia. Since a failed coup attempt by mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin in 2023, very few signs of these conflicts have emerged into the open. However, in mid-July, one of the country's richest men and owner of critical Russian industries, Andrey Melnichenko, published a lengthy piece in *The Economist*, one of the most important outlets of international finance capital. In contrast to ex-oligarchs, such as Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who have long been attempting to organize a palace coup from outside and are openly aligned with NATO, Melnichenko, with an estimated net worth of $20.4 billion, has been considered part of the inner circle of pro-Kremlin oligarchs. It is unclear whether Melnichenko, who has met with Putin personally, spoke with *The Economist* for 60 hours with or without the approval of the Kremlin. However, there have been no reports of him subsequently having suffered repercussions.

In a lengthy essay entitled, "A Plan for Russia," Melnichenko warned that the West's plans for Russia would all end in disaster—leading to a "collapse into anarchy," the transformation of Russia into a vassal state of China, or a "permanent state of war" of Russia "against the world." Instead, Melnichenko pleaded, the West should recognize Russia's "sovereignty," "step back from the abyss" and negotiate a settlement. He indicated that "Russia's business community" was prepared to participate in such discussions. *The Economist* comments, "Implicitly, he wants Mr Putin to relinquish one-man rule and devolve power. But he does not talk about democracy." *The Economist* described Melnichenko's essay and lengthy discussion with the journal as a sign that "he and his fellow tycoons can no longer afford to ignore the rot in a country they watched descend into tyranny."

Yet the true fear of Russian oligarchs such as Melnichenko is not "tyranny" but social revolution. The Russian oligarchy's primary concern, more so than "sovereignty" in the face of imperialism, is its class rule over the working class. Between the threat of both imperialist subjugation and a social revolution by the working class, it is the latter which it fears the most.

The Stalinist bureaucracy's reaction against the 1917 October Revolution culminated in the 1991 destruction of the Soviet Union. The Russian oligarchy is haunted by history. They remember all too well that the defeat of Russia in the war against Japan in 1905 and the First World War resulted in revolutionary upheaval. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, co-led by Lenin and Trotsky, the movement of workers and peasants in 1917 established the first workers' state in history.

From the standpoint of the working class, any scenario that is unfolding based on the policies and interests of the imperialist powers and different sections of the Russian oligarchy portends disaster. Driven by their own domestic crises, the imperialist powers cannot accept a settlement which leaves the resources of large portions of the Eurasian landmass in the hands of the oligarchs.

The Ukraine war, already, is part of a metastasizing conflagration in which the imperialist powers seek to redivide the world. Workers in Russia can only oppose this war by uniting with their class brothers and sisters in Ukraine, Europe, Asia and America, to oppose imperialism and the capitalist system as a whole.

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