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German Chancellor Scholz on war mission in the US

Less than 24 hours after the Republicans in the US Senate blocked additional military aid to Ukraine once again, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz flew to Washington on Thursday. Scholz is on a war mission. He intends to strengthen his support for President Joe Biden and ensure that the costly and dangerous war against Russia continues at all costs.



President Joe Biden, right, with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the Oval Office of the White House, Friday, February 9, 2024 [AP Photo/Andrew Harnik]

One day before his trip, Scholz stated in a guest article for the *Wall Street Journal*: “We have to do our utmost to prevent Russia from winning.” Directly addressing the billionaire investors of the world’s largest stock exchange, he wrote, “The long-term consequences

and costs of failing to stop Mr. Putin's aggression would dwarf any of the investments that we are making now.”

Scholz boasted that “... the European Union and its member states have been Ukraine's largest financial supporter, having contributed more than \$91 billion since the beginning of the war, followed by the U.S. and Germany.”

Germany's military support comes second to that of the US: “Since the war began, my government has earmarked, procured and delivered military equipment, including tanks, artillery and high-value air-defense systems, worth more than \$30 billion. This has come on top of Germany's nonmilitary support, including welcoming over one million Ukrainian refugees, and our share of the EU's support.”

Scholz met with politicians from both parties and business representatives in Washington to press for more US billions for the Ukraine war. This work is expected to continue next week at the Munich Security Conference in Germany, where high-ranking US government officials and around 70 members of Congress are expected to attend.

On Friday afternoon, Scholz held a one-on-one meeting with President Biden, which—like a similar meeting in March 2023—was not followed by a press conference. Scholz and Biden do not want the public to know what they are secretly agreeing to.

Scholz's war mission is morally, politically and legally criminal. He is committed to the escalation of a war that has already killed and crippled hundreds of thousands of soldiers on both the Ukrainian and Russian sides and threatens to destroy Europe with nuclear weapons.

Scholz does not even hint at the idea of a negotiated solution or a ceasefire. Like Hindenburg, Ludendorff, Joffre, Pétain and other World War I generals who were willing to sacrifice the last man to achieve their imperialist goals, NATO today accepts any risk to subjugate Russia. Only there were no nuclear weapons in the First World War!

Scholz claimed in the *Wall Street Journal* that a Russian victory in Ukraine would “mean the end of Ukraine as a free, democratic and independent state” and would “deal a severe blow to the liberal world order.” Who is he trying to fool?

The fact that Ukraine is neither free nor democratic or independent is proven by how its state budget and the war are fully financed by the NATO powers. As in Russia, corrupt oligarchs dominate the economy and politics. The government erects monuments to fascists and Nazi collaborators, such as Stepan Bandera. Media outlets and parties that make even the slightest criticism of the war are banned and suppressed.

Even in the event of a military victory, Ukraine would not be “free.” It would have to repay war debts to international banks for decades, its cheap raw materials and labor would be exploited by global corporations, and it would be a military base for NATO’s further expansion to the east.

As far as the threat to the “liberal world order” is concerned, there is an essential truth in Scholz’s statement when the word “liberal” is replaced by “imperialist.” The war against Russia follows more than three decades of imperialist wars in which the US and its European allies destroyed large parts of the Middle East and North Africa after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

As in the First and Second World Wars, at stake is the redivision of the world among the imperialist great powers, for whose economy the existing nation-state system has become too narrow. The US is trying to make up for the loss of its economic hegemony through military force, while Germany is returning to its old great power policy.

Frank-Walter Steinmeier, then foreign minister and now federal president and, like Scholz, a member of the SPD, had already announced in 2014 that Germany was “too big to merely comment on world politics from the sidelines.” He was personally involved in organizing the coup that brought a pro-NATO regime to power in Kiev that same year and set the course for the current war.

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And the Ukraine conflict is not the only war in which Germany and the US are cooperating closely. Scholz also discussed with Biden two other topics, according to the Chancellor’s official website: the situation in the Middle East and the future of NATO, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary in Washington in July.

Washington and Berlin are the main supporters of Israel, which could not carry out the genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza without their military, financial and political aid. Germany is also supporting the US in expanding the war against Iran and its allies and sparking a conflagration across the region.

A few hours before Scholz flew to Washington, the largest German warship, the frigate *Hessen*, set sail for the Red Sea. It is to participate in the EU military mission

Aspides, which so far neither Brussels nor the Bundestag have definitively decided, and to support the fight against the Houthis in Yemen. The deployment was deliberately chosen so early to strengthen Scholz's position in the US.

The topic of NATO is above all about securing the future of the military alliance. "Officially, Scholz and Biden do not want to talk about the 'elephant in the room' at their meeting," *Handelsblatt* writes. "So what happens if Trump wins the election, what precautions need to be taken, especially within the NATO alliance. But the conversation will also revolve around these questions, insiders say."

According to *Handelsblatt*, if the US withdraws its support for Ukraine, "Scholz would also have a completely new role to play. All eyes in the Western defense alliance would be on the head of government of the largest European country, especially when it comes to supporting Ukraine."

Scholz has already made it clear that Germany is prepared to invest even higher sums in the war against Russia, and has called on other European governments to do the same. In an op-ed for the *Financial Times* on January 31, he wrote, "We need to strengthen our resolve and redouble our efforts to ensure we maintain our support for as long as necessary."

This disastrous course can only be stopped by an independent movement of the international working class against war and its cause, capitalism. The enormous costs of war and rearmament are paid for by spending cuts to education, health, the environment and social welfare. The working class and the youth bear the brunt of militarism—in the form of wage cuts, social cuts and layoffs, as cannon fodder and casualties of war. The struggle against this must develop into a conscious socialist movement, and the Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee of the Fourth International must be built as a party of the international working class.

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