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## ***Biden escalates toward disastrous war against Iran***

The United States and Israel stand on the verge of a direct attack on Iran, with the most far-reaching and catastrophic consequences for the Middle East and the whole world.



The aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and the fast combat support ship USNS Supply transit the Strait of Hormuz on December 14, 2023. [Photo: Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Keith Nowak]

Using Iran's attack on Israeli military infrastructure Tuesday as a pretext, the White House has effectively given Israel carte blanche to carry out an illegal attack against the second most populous country in the region (after Egypt).

"We'll be discussing with the Israelis what they're going to do, but all seven of us [referring to the G7 nations] agree that they have a right to respond," Biden said Wednesday. Reuters commented in a news report, "[T]he US is not pressing Israel to refrain from retaliation."

One year after the start of the Gaza genocide, it has become clear that Israel seized upon the events of October 7 to implement long-held plans to ethnically cleanse and annex all Palestinian territories. This is part of a regional war throughout the Middle East to conquer what the Zionist state claims to be its biblical borders.

For the United States, it has been a means to cement imperialist control over the oil-rich Middle East region and to establish the Middle East and Central Asia as a firm base for US military operations in order to press ahead with its confrontation with Russia and China.

It is high time to put an end to the myth that Israel is an actor independent of the United States. Israel's primary function is to serve as an attack dog and instrument of the interests of American imperialism throughout the entire region.

As always, neither the US government nor the media is making any effort to inform the public about the monumental consequences of the plans now underway.

During the first and only vice presidential debate between Democrat Tim Walz and Republican JD Vance on Tuesday, moderator Margaret Brennan asked both candidates, "Would you support or oppose a preemptive strike by Israel on Iran?"

Walz said, "We will protect our forces and our allied forces, and there will be consequences."

Vance added, "Look, it is up to Israel what they think they need to do to keep their country safe. And we should support our allies wherever they are when they're fighting the bad guys."

After the candidates delivered their one-line responses, no one bothered to note, first, that such an attack would be completely illegal, and second, that it would have monumental and historic consequences for the entire world.

The developing US-Israeli war with Iran threatens to engulf the entire region in flames. This week, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan warned, "The Israeli government is acting in the illusion of a promised land, with religious fanaticism. After Palestine and Lebanon, our homeland will be the place they look at. Everything is aimed at this now." Erdogan's statement is an indication of the extent to which the actions of Israel and the US are provoking alarm throughout the region and the world. There is a growing sense that the United States and its Israeli attack dog are out of control.

The US media is presenting a looming Israeli attack on Iran as a response to the strikes launched by Iran on Israeli military bases on Tuesday. In fact, Iran's attack was a response to a series of US-Israeli bombings, murders and terrorist attacks that have killed thousands of people throughout the Middle East.

Iran's missile strike on Israel took place just one day after Israel launched a ground offensive in Lebanon, following days of escalating air bombardments that left thousands of people dead. On Saturday, Israel assassinated Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, using 85 US-supplied 2,000-pound bombs that completely leveled high-rise residential buildings, killing hundreds. It follows Israel's assassination of the head of Hamas's political wing in Tehran, who was an official guest of the Iranian government.

The Iranian regime has repeatedly adopted an attitude of restraint to these US and Israeli provocations. There was no significant response to the murder of Qasem Soleimani in 2020, and Iran's regime has tolerated repeated assassinations of scientists, and most recently, an Israeli bombing in Tehran itself. The president of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian, speaking for the Iranian ruling class, has repeatedly adopted the most conciliatory attitude toward the imperialist powers. These efforts at conciliation have now failed, and the Iranian regime is coming under increasing pressure to resist and retaliate.

The leaders of American imperialism believe that through launching a bloodbath of violence in the Middle East and blowing past all "red lines," they will be able to undo the consequences of the debacles suffered by US imperialism over decades. They are deluding themselves. What leads them to believe that war with Iran, a country of 90 million people and a highly sophisticated society, will have any better outcome than the invasion of Iraq?

The *World Socialist Web Site* wrote in 2003, in the run-up to the Iraq war:

Whatever the outcome of the initial stages of the conflict that has begun, American imperialism has a rendezvous with disaster. It cannot conquer the world. It cannot re-impose colonial shackles upon the masses of the Middle East. It will not find through the medium of war a viable solution to its internal maladies. Rather, the unforeseen difficulties and mounting resistance engendered by war will intensify all of the internal contradictions of American society.

These words are no less true today. The global war launched by American imperialism will solve none of the problems confronting American capitalism. Rather, it will only intensify all of its internal contradictions, draining the treasury, undermining the position of the dollar, and most of all, fueling the class struggle.

The escalation of preparations for war against Iran is an expression of deepening crisis, not of strength. The 2008 financial crisis and the massive upward redistribution of wealth that followed it vastly intensified the crisis of American capitalism, which was taken to new heights by the eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, accompanied by a corporate bailout on an even greater scale.

The immediate context of the US-Israeli escalation against Iran is the debacle for the United States and NATO in their war against Russia in Ukraine. On Wednesday, Ukraine announced that it withdrew from yet another city, amid an accelerating Russian advance throughout the Donbas. But the United States' response to the disaster in Ukraine is escalation, if not directly against Russia, then in the Middle East. They are pivoting from disaster in Ukraine to catastrophe in Iran.

One year after the start of the Gaza genocide, the lesson must be drawn: The escalating global war will not be stopped by appeals and protests. It can only be stopped by the building of an anti-war movement oriented to and based on the international working class.

As the United States is on the verge of war with Iran, tens of thousands of dockworkers have gone on strike throughout the East and Gulf coasts, joining tens of thousands of Boeing workers on the West Coast. It is the working class that will be made to fight and die in the global war the imperialist powers have launched, and it is workers who will be told to sacrifice their living standards in the name of the war effort.

The critical task in the struggle against war is to unite the economic struggle of the working class with the political struggle against war in the fight for socialism. There is no time to lose. The global war launched by US and European imperialism, having already claimed hundreds of thousands of victims, is on the verge of a new and ever-bloodier stage.

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