

French Morenoites cover up US-NATO escalation against Gaza, Iran

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Révolution Permanente (RP), the news site run by French Morenoites tied to the Argentine Socialist Workers Party (PTS) and Left Voice in America, is covering up the escalating imperialist war in the Middle East. Trying to disorient workers and youth amid an international explosion of mass protests against the Israeli war on Gaza, it falsely presents Washington as a force for peace in the Middle East.

Its piece by Julien Anchaing and Wolfgang Mandelbaum, titled “Palestine: Washington covers the massacre in Gaza while seeking to avoid regional conflagration,” turns reality on its head. They claim US policy in regard to the genocidal Israeli onslaught against Gaza is determined by “the need to curb any risk of conflagration in the region, particularly in Lebanon and Iran, while Washington’s vital strategic interests now lie in the Indo-Pacific.”

This complacent and false analysis masks the central issue facing the working class in France and around the world: a massive regional and global escalation of imperialist war is imminent. The task facing workers and youth is to build an international movement against the emerging Third World War instigated by Washington and its NATO allies, including Paris. They can only build such a movement by mobilizing on an international scale, independently of the union bureaucracies to which RP is oriented, and which negotiate with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Even as Washington bombs Iranian-aligned forces in Syria and threatens Hezbollah, RP claims that behind closed doors, Biden is opposed to Israeli aggression against Gaza, for fear of involving Hezbollah and Iran in the conflict. The authors assert, “Biden seeks at all costs to temper the Israeli offensive, in search of an agreement or a discussion.”

If Israel did not immediately invade Gaza after the October 6-7 uprising, it claims, this is because of “the fear

that the situation in Gaza will trigger a conflagration of the entire region, particularly in the case of a complete commitment of Hezbollah, supported by Iran, [to intervene] in the conflict... If relations between Iran and the United States have been poor for decades, Washington’s current priority is to avoid the opening of an Iranian front, while the military resources of the United States are deployed towards Ukraine, with the aim of weakening Russia.”

In reality, Biden does not want peace at “all costs,” but war. On October 13, the *Huffington Post* reported on a memorandum distributed to US diplomats in the Middle East. It instructed them to refrain from using the terms “de-escalation/ceasefire,” “end to violence/bloodshed,” and “restoring calm” in press releases.

Since returning from his tour of the Middle East, Biden has made a \$105 billion funding request to arm Israel and Ukraine. On Wednesday, Biden also confirmed he “did not demand” that Israel delay a ground invasion, though Iran and Hezbollah have warned that they will be compelled to intervene militarily to try to halt a genocide, should a ground invasion begin. On Friday, Washington bombed military bases in Syria, claiming they were used by Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The NATO imperialist powers’ support for Israel’s denial of responsibility for its bombing of Al-Ahli hospital is a warning: no crime against humanity by the Israeli regime will be too horrific for NATO to support.

Ignoring imminent preparations for a major military escalation by all the major imperialist powers, Anchaing and Mandelbaum claim US desire for peace flows from a focus on China. They write:

Ultimately, it is neither Ukraine nor the Middle East that the United States wants to focus on. Washington’s strategy is to refocus all its

diplomatic and military resources in its conflict with its main adversary, China. ...

It is therefore vital for Biden, as well as for the geopolitical interests of the United States in the broad sense, that the Middle East does not flare up and “force” the United States to re-engage in a region in which it has sworn never to set foot again after their set back in Afghanistan.

Not one of these statements is true. The US does not need to “re-engage” in the Middle East: it never disengaged in the first place. 2,500 US troops were in Iraq and 900 in Syria before the Palestinian uprising on October 7. Washington keeps bases in Turkey, Egypt, Kuwait and Pakistan. By sending aircraft carrier battle groups, missile defenses, and 11,000 more troops to the region, Washington is preparing for a massive escalation not only against the civilian population of Gaza, but above all against major regional powers, including Iran.

US imperialism has not turned into a force for peace in the Middle East or in Europe because it is trying to assert its global hegemony against China. Isolating Iran from China, which has signed a military alliance with Iran in the context of its Belt-and-Road global infrastructure initiative, is in fact a key goal of US-NATO policy. Given this alliance, moreover, if Washington launches a war with Iran, it could also lead to war with China.

RP’s pro-imperialist lies reflect the material interests of layers of the affluent middle class and of student youth who work in the milieu of the union bureaucracy and its academic periphery. Until 2021, it functioned as a faction of the petty-bourgeois Pabloite New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA). It is oriented in particular to the Stalinist bureaucracy of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) union, which it claimed could adopt a “revolutionary” orientation as France’s union bureaucracies strangled the mass strike movement against Macron’s pension cuts this spring.

In the period since the Stalinist dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the unbridgeable class gulf separating RP from the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), the leadership of the world Trotskyist movement, has become evident. At the outset of this period, CGT bureaucrats closely allied to the counterrevolutionary Soviet bureaucracy in the Cold War era declined to openly endorse imperialism. They postured as friends of the Soviet Union, who had played the central role in World War II in the defeat of Nazism.

Over the last three decades, however, as the union bureaucracies’ dues base collapsed and as they became ever more dependent on corporate funding, their pseudo-left political allies ever more openly embraced imperialism. The NPA endorsed the NATO wars for regime change in Libya and Syria that began in 2011 as part of a struggle for “democratic revolution.” The NPA and RP both endorsed the subsequent NATO war with Russia in Ukraine.

The ICFI and its French section, the Parti de l’égalité socialiste (PES), were alone in exposing and attacking from the outset NPA-RP support for imperialism. This flowed from a Trotskyist perspective: the Stalinist dissolution of the Soviet Union, against which Trotsky had warned, had not resolved the mortal crisis of capitalism. The PES maintains irreconcilable opposition to imperialism which still seeks to re-conquer Russia, China, Iran, and any other territory that escaped its direct political control in the course of revolutionary struggles in the 20th century.

The PES calls on workers and youth to oppose the NATO-backed Israeli onslaught on Gaza and a broader NATO war on Iran. They must stop the eruption of a third global war involving nuclear-armed powers. Workers and youth cannot wait for the union bureaucracies or middle-class groups like RP to organize such a struggle, which they will do not do. Those opposed to the war must mobilize independently, in workplaces, schools and working class neighborhoods to alert the working class as broadly as possible on the enormous dangers posed by the war.

Building an international anti-war movement among the mass protests erupting in America, Europe and the Middle East requires consciously opposing the pro-imperialist complacency of RP. Its name cynically refers to Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, but RP works with French national union bureaucracies not to build, but to block an international socialist revolution by the working class against capitalism and imperialist war. The Trotskyist opposition in France that must be built against the type of pseudo-left politics represented by the NPA and RP is the PES.



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