

Political and media accomplices of Gaza genocide condemn Russian missile strike on Ukrainian hospital

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Leading political figures from the imperialist powers and international media outlets were full of moral outrage this week over a Russian missile strike on a children's hospital in Ukraine. The accomplices of Israel's genocide in Gaza which has claimed over 186,000 lives, according to an estimate by the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*, accused Russia of violating international law and demanded the holding of leading officials to account for war crimes.

A UN investigation found that there was a "high likelihood" that a Russian cruise missile struck the Okhmatdyt children's hospital in Kiev, destroying the toxicology ward and killing two people. A further 16 were injured in the strike, part of missile attacks across the country claiming at least 38 lives. A statement from the Russian government blamed a projectile fired by Ukrainian air defence systems for the explosion at the hospital.

The United States and Britain were among several Western countries to call for an emergency UN Security Council meeting to condemn the attack. Newly elected British Prime Minister Keir Starmer denounced Russia for "attacking innocent children," among the "most depraved of actions." UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy stated, "We must hold those responsible for Putin's illegal war to account." European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell denounced Russia for "ruthlessly targeting Ukrainian civilians."

Major international media outlets, including the *New York Times* and CNN in the US, and *The Guardian* and BBC in Britain, had prominent coverage on the missile strike, with accompanying photo and video reportage. Timing, as they say, is everything. The images of half-naked patients rushed out of a hospital building, some still connected to oxygen and other medical equipment, coincided perfectly with the beginning of the NATO summit in Washington. The announcements that NATO would massively escalate the war with Russia by establishing a permanent office in Ukraine and assuming direct control of the supply of

weaponry to Kiev were framed against the backdrop of the "barbarism" of Russia's targeting of hospitals and children.

The hypocrisy involved here is astounding. The far-right Israeli regime, with weapons supplied by American and German imperialism, has massacred about 8 percent of Gaza's population and laid waste to its civilian infrastructure. Hospitals have been turned into war zones and mass graves, schools and universities obliterated, and the majority of the enclave's housing units either flattened or damaged.

Yet none of the politicians or editorial scribblers demanding consequences for Russia have criticised the Netanyahu government's genocidal onslaught. On the contrary, they have adopted draconian methods of state repression to silence anti-genocide protesters and smeared all opponents of Israel's barbaric onslaught as "antisemites."

No country comes close to the criminal Israeli regime, apart from perhaps the United States, when it comes to destroying health care facilities. In October 2023, Israel bombed the al-Ahli hospital in Gaza City, killing close to 500 people. Far from responding with calls for war crimes charges, the imperialist powers went into overdrive to deny Israel's involvement in the massacre. US President Joseph Biden said in the aftermath of the attack that he had "no confidence in the number [of deaths] that the Palestinians are using."

One month later, Israel raided the al-Shifa hospital, Gaza's largest prior to the war. Dozens were left dead as Israel Defence Force (IDF) soldiers rampaged through the facility, pulling patients from their beds and detaining medical personnel. After repeated raids, the hospital was reduced to an empty shell. Several months later, the al-Nasser hospital in Khan Younis was the scene of mass graves, including corpses with wounds suggesting that the IDF carried out mass executions.

At no time did the US or British governments see fit to call

a UN Security Council meeting to condemn Israel's war crimes, which unlike Monday's alleged Russian missile strike, were proven beyond any doubt. Nor did any major newspaper publish editorials or comments along these lines. On the contrary, when the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his defence minister, Yoav Gallant, they denounced the ICC openly in the case of the Biden administration or kept quiet.

Hypocrisy on such a grotesque scale is not simply to be explained by the personal traits of its leading exponents. Rather, it has deep social roots. The imperialist powers are engaged in a violent redivision of the world in order to secure the lion's share of raw materials, pools of labour and markets for "their" ruling class. This struggle caused US imperialism and its NATO allies to goad Russia into invading Ukraine in order to unleash a long-planned war aimed at subordinating Russia to the status of a semi-colony. It also includes the backing of Israel's genocide in the Middle East by the North American and European imperialists.

Washington in particular views the subjugation of Iran as critical to consolidating its control over the energy-rich region and undermining its rivals, above all China. The Asia-Pacific is yet another theatre in the rapidly developing third world war, where the US and its allies are recklessly escalating towards war with Beijing.

The obscene double standard applied to wars and war crimes around the world invariably corresponds with the imperialist powers' global ambitions. The level of moral outrage expressed by their political and media representatives depends upon whether the actions concerned advance or conflict with ruling class policy.

This explains the fact that while Russian President Vladimir Putin is castigated as a war criminal and monster who bears sole responsibility for the war in Ukraine, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, drenched in the blood of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, will travel to Washington D.C. in less than two weeks to address a joint session of Congress and meet with Biden. While the former heads a state that the imperialists want to impose a "strategic defeat" on and carve up so they can seize its natural resources, the latter leads a government that serves as American imperialism's main attack dog in the Middle East.

The social classes who benefit from imperialist war, the bourgeoisie and privileged sections of the middle class, actually believe, or have at least convinced themselves to go along with, the pro-imperialist war propaganda. They have backed over 30 years of uninterrupted US-led wars that have been waged in the name of protecting "human rights" and "democracy" but have actually laid waste to entire societies from Serbia to Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. But their

propaganda has reached a qualitatively new level. They now claim to be standing up for Ukrainian "democracy" against Russian "dictatorship," while simultaneously endorsing the Zionist regime's "final solution" of the Palestinian question.

The fact that bourgeois propaganda is at such glaring odds with social reality only goes to show that the material interests of these layers, based as they are on robbery, plunder, and swindling at home and abroad, are irreconcilable with those of the vast majority of the world's population, the working class. The capitalist profit system, upon which their interests rest, is historically obsolete and has nothing more to offer modern society but the descent into barbarism.

The ruling class and its hangers-on propose a redivision of the world in their interests, which can be accomplished only by means of world war. Its predecessors constructed monstrous lies in the 20th century to legitimise two world wars that claimed millions of lives. These included German imperialism's claim during World War I, trumpeted by the Social Democrats and leading intellectuals, that the Hohenzollern monarchy was leading a crusade for the defence of "culture" and "civilisation;" and British and French imperialism's insistence that they were waging a war for "democracy" in alliance with the Russian tsar.

A repetition of the horrors of the two world wars on an even greater scale, threatening the very survival of humanity with the deployment of nuclear weapons, can only be averted by the international working class taking up the struggle for a socialist transformation of society.

Combatting the duplicity and cynicism of the ruling class's pro-war propaganda is an essential component of the fight to politically mobilize the international working class against genocide and imperialist war. Only if the working class is freed from the influence of bourgeois "public opinion" with its hypocritical moralising can the workers recognise the real social interests behind such falsehoods and counterpose their own solution to world war and genocide: the programme of world socialist revolution.



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