

Prime Minister Trudeau and Canadian political establishment back Israeli attack on Iran

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3 October 2024

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has joined his imperialist partners in backing a direct Israeli attack on Iran in response to Tehran's missile strike on Israeli military infrastructure Tuesday. Far from being the chief destabilizing force in the region, as Trudeau, Canada's establishment parties, and their US imperialist ally claim, the Iranian regime was goaded into retaliating to a series of provocative attacks by Israel over the last several weeks.

Denouncing Iran as a "terrorist regime," Trudeau told reporters, "Obviously, Israel has the right to defend itself against these attacks."

While he couched his statement with the claim that he was seeking to avoid a "wider war" in the Middle East, Trudeau's remarks are a clear green light to Israel to escalate its ongoing war on multiple fronts in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, in addition to opening a direct conflict with Iran. The formula "Israel has the right to defend itself" has been repeatedly used by the imperialist powers to justify support for the Gaza genocide, which has likely claimed the lives of over 186,000 Palestinians. Trudeau now reiterates this statement as leading US political figures are openly discussing an Israeli attack on Iran's oilfields or nuclear facilities, an attack which could only take place with American imperialist approval and military and logistical support.

Trudeau's statement on Wednesday followed a discussion with the other G7 leaders from France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. According to US President Joe Biden, they agreed on Israel's "right to respond" to Iran. On Thursday, Biden told reporters he had not ruled out supporting air strikes to destroy Iran's oil facilities.

Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly

"unequivocally" condemned Iran's missile attack Tuesday and demanded that Tehran stop taking actions which risk "all-out war."

Nearly one year after it launched its ongoing genocidal onslaught against the population of Gaza in response to Hamas' October 7 uprising, Israel is already waging a wider war.

This includes the turn to the open use of assassination as a weapon of war, killing Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in a massive airstrike last month on a southern Beirut suburb that resulted in hundreds of casualties, and the murder of Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas, while he was in Tehran as an official guest at the inauguration of new Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Now Israel has launched an invasion of Lebanon following a mass terror attack in which it blew up booby trapped pagers and walkie talkies, killing hundreds and injuring thousands. It has also been carrying out airstrikes on the Houthis in Yemen and military bases in Syria.

Canadian imperialism has been fully on board every step of the way with Israel's rampage across the Middle East as it functions as an attack dog for the United States and its allies.

At an emergency parliamentary debate Tuesday night on the situation in Lebanon and Israel, the assembled MPs squabbled over how to present their support for Israel while joining together to condemn Iran.

True to form, New Democratic Party (NDP) foreign affairs critic Heather McPherson opened the debate by regurgitating the pro-Israel propaganda blaming Iran for the escalating conflict. She declared, "Every member of the House must unequivocally condemn this horrific escalation by Iran." McPherson is a vociferous cheerleader of the US-NATO war on Russia in Ukraine.

The NDP and Bloc Quebecois (BQ) MPs called on the Liberal government to repair Canada's threadbare facade as a peacekeeping nation by pressing for it to take up a discussion on two-way arms embargo and sanctions on the Israeli government. While the Liberals rejected this proposition and reasserted its support for Israel to "defend itself," i.e., wage war on multiple fronts, carry out terror attacks and assassinations, the Conservatives denounced this as being insufficiently pro-Israel. Former Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer demanded the government assert the right of Israel "to destroy Hamas and Hezbollah," and openly celebrate the Netanyahu regime's recent assassination spree.

Last March, parliament passed an opposition motion introduced by the NDP which was initially promised to be a denunciation of the Israel Defence Forces' (IDF) genocide in Gaza. After backroom rewrites in coordination with the Liberals, the NDP agreed to turn the motion into an endorsement of Israel's onslaught, declaring the Zionist regime's "right to defend itself." It made the demand for a "ceasefire" conditional on "the release of all hostages, and Hamas ... lay(ing) down its arms," a proposal which Netanyahu could agree to.

Those in the political establishment who have spoken out against the genocide and with sympathy for the Palestinians have been subject to attack. Ontario MPP Sarah Jama was kicked out of the Ontario NDP caucus and censured by the provincial legislature in October 2023 after she called for an end to Israel's occupation of Palestine. More recently, CUPE Ontario president Fred Hahn was subject to a campaign demanding his resignation or removal as an "immediate threat to Jewish members" for sharing a video which criticized Israel's indiscriminate bombing in Gaza.

Meanwhile, protests against the genocide—which have seen tens of thousands turn out across the country to demand the government back a ceasefire—have been smeared as antisemitic and violent. In February, when a peaceful protest in Toronto passed by the Mount Sinai Hospital, the entire political establishment seized on this to slander protesters and call for new restrictions on the right to protest. Trudeau called the protest "reprehensible" and a "display of antisemitism." Protesters have also been subject to far-reaching police surveillance, raids and infiltration aimed at breaking up demonstrations.

With the Gaza genocide approaching its one year anniversary, and now rapidly metastasizing into a regional war, it is clear that the perspective of pressuring the

Canadian ruling class and its imperialist allies through protests into enforcing a ceasefire on Israel is a political dead end.

Having propped up the minority Liberal government since 2019 and with a formal confidence-and-supply agreement from March 2022, the NDP has played a key role in politically supporting Canada's alliance with the far-right regime in Kiev as it wages war on Russia, and the shipping of military equipment to and political support for the Zionist regime. NDP leader Jagmeet Singh's cynical "ripping up" of the confidence-and-supply agreement, a decision taken to better position the NDP to smother popular opposition to the hated Trudeau government and avert an electoral debacle, in no way changes the fact that the NDP-union alliance is complicit in its support for Israel, something which their professed support for a two-way arms embargo cannot hide. The NDP also continues to fully support the war against Russia in Ukraine, the growing military offensive against China in the Indo-Pacific and the buildup of the Canadian military in preparation for waging world war. To the extent that it criticizes Israel, the party's aim is to keep opposition to war under the wing of the political establishment and trapped within the confines of piecemeal parliamentary maneuvering.

While the NDP-union alliance takes a Canadian nationalist track by seeking to revive Ottawa's tattered image as a "peacekeeper" with their proposal for an embargo, the BQ and the Quebec separatists seek to funnel opposition to the federal government's pro-war positions into Quebec nationalism.

It is clear that the fight against war requires the mobilization of the working class in Canada—English, French and immigrant—and internationally, independently of all the pro-capitalist parties in a movement aimed at overturning the root causes of war: the capitalist system and its division of the world into competing nation-states.



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