

I. International

From Cluster Bombs to Nuclear Bombs

by Paul Gallagher

July 13—At last the very stones began to cry out. Even Democratic members of the U.S. Senate, who had sat like stones for a year while NATO brought world war with Russia and China closer and closer, could not sit still for the Biden White House decision to send 3.2 million civilian-killing, child-killing cluster bombs—banned by treaties and 123 nations around the world—to Ukraine. Only two years ago, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said that Russian use of cluster munitions “would potentially be a war crime,” while admitting the White House had no evidence of such use by Russia.

U.S. President Joe Biden hit this new low in announcements of “wonder weapons” for Ukraine, on July 6. Revulsion against it should energize and enlarge the rallies and demonstrations around the world for peace on Aug. 6, the day which commemorates America’s nuclear bombing of Hiroshima, Japan.

Immediately on July 7, Democratic senior Senators Patrick Leahy and Jeff Merkley published a *Washington Post* [op-ed](#), “Supplying Ukraine with cluster munitions would be a terrible mistake.” They wrote:

Knowing that these



The White House

On July 6, President Joe Biden, shown here in Kiev with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, set a new low in announcements of “wonder weapons,” in deciding to ship 3.7 million cluster munitions to Ukraine. Insert: An M77 dual-purpose improved conventional munition (a cluster bomb).



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weapons cause indiscriminate terror and mayhem, both of us—like many others in the international community—have worked for years to end their use.... Using them would compound the already

devastating impact of the war on civilians and Ukrainian troops, with effects lasting for years to come.



National Guard/Erich B. Smith

In a *Washington Post* *op-ed*, reflecting a rising revulsion in Congress against the use of cluster munitions, Sen. Patrick Leahy wrote: “Supplying Ukraine with cluster munitions would be a terrible mistake.”

Two Democrats and two Republicans brought a resolution into the House of Representatives trying to block defense budget spending for the cluster bombs, whose use had been restricted by every Defense Authorization Act since 2011. Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-Vermont) gave notice to

expect a similar move in the Senate.

LaRouche independent Senate candidate Diane Sare in New York challenged New York's two Democratic Senators:

Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, who both serve on the Senate Intelligence Committee, ... should know that use of cluster munitions is considered a war crime by 123 nations, including many NATO members, but neither has voiced any opposition to this policy.

Human rights organizations across the world denounced the U.S. move. Officials of major NATO nations in Europe—even extreme war-hawks like German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock—tried to slide away, uttering mortified apologies: “We would not do this; it’s the United States’ decision.... We cannot get in the United States’ way...”; etc. For most NATO leaders and governments have rightly named using cluster bombs a “war crime” in recent years.

NATO’s current, arrogant Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, a long-time opponent of cluster munitions, is pathetically claiming that the “NATO Alliance takes no position” on cluster bombs and has no involvement; only “individual allies” (i.e., the United States) make their own decisions to use them! We are moral bankrupts, Stoltenberg advertises.

Only months ago, at the Munich Security Conference, when Ukraine’s neo-fascist leaders demanded cluster bombs and phosphorus bombs, Stoltenberg told the German television channel NTV on Feb. 18:

NATO does not recommend or supply these types of weapons. We supply artillery and other types of weapons, but not cluster bombs.

Killing Farming, Civilians, Children

Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche, speaking to a conference of hundreds of the Institute’s collaborators in Strasbourg, France July 8, de-



EIRNS/Chris Lewis

Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche, keynoting an international peace conference in Strasbourg, France, denounced Biden’s decision to send cluster munitions to Ukraine. Their residual lethality will maim and kill Ukrainians for a half century to come.

nounced Biden’s decision and pointed to the case of Cambodia, where cluster munitions dropped by the United States a half century ago are still killing people, particularly children. She pointed to an extraordinary horror:

Now, the number of cluster bombs [being sent to Ukraine—ed.] will be 3.7 million cluster bombs, with each having 80 sub-bombs; so you have to multiply 3.7 million by 80 and you can imagine what kind of destruction it will mean in Ukraine, if all these bombs are thrown out and detonated.

If even 1 million munitions are dropped and even 2% of the sub-munitions

do not detonate when dropped, 2-3 million will lie in the fields of Ukraine waiting to be stepped on or disturbed, and kill. Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia today, cried out on July 9:

It has been more than half a century. There have been no means to destroy them all yet. I appeal to the U.S. President as the supplier, and the Ukrainian President as the recipient, not to use cluster bombs in the war, because the real victims will be Ukrainians.

And retired Marine Capt. Scott Ritter, known as the UN Weapons Inspector who told the truth that there were *no* weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before the American invasion, explained what will happen in Ukraine, in a hard-hitting op-ed in *Sputnik*. Ritter started with the claim, made by Jake Sullivan and the Pentagon, that the M864 cluster munitions the U.S. is sending to Ukraine will have a “dud rate” less than 2%. The testing was done under lab conditions, Ritter said; in war the unexploded sub-bombs will be up to 20%.

Rough terrain, mud, soft soil, trees, and bushes all conspire to prevent the sub-munitions from detonating. Moreover, given that the lifespan of a 155mm artillery shell is 20 years, and that pro-

duction of the M864 round, which began in 1987, terminated in 1996, the vast majority of the M864 artillery shells being provided to Ukraine have reached or exceeded their expiration date, which means that there is an increased probability that many of these shells will not perform as designed.

In Germany, the *Bundesausschuss Friedenratschlag* (Federal Advisory Committee for Peace)—one of many organizations now planning to demonstrate on Aug. 6 and make the connection to Hiroshima—attacked the German government’s embarrassed silence, and warned:

Cluster munitions not only represent an escalation of belligerent terror against the civilian population, but in Ukraine will lead to the large-scale contamination of arable land that is particularly valuable there and is also relevant for global food security.... It is frightening that in the meantime, demands are being voiced to arm Ukraine with nuclear weapons, which will make it hard to prevent a nuclear war.

The two U.S. Presidential candidates most popular with Americans right now denounced the cluster muster. People around the world should realize that these are Republican former President Donald Trump, and Biden’s Democratic primary opponent, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. In a statement on his website July 11, Trump said:

These unexploded cluster munitions will be killing and maiming innocent Ukrainian men, women, and children for decades to come, long after the war—we pray—has ended.

Three days earlier Kennedy had made his own statement, in two Twitter posts:

Last year, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki called the use of cluster bombs a “war crime.” Now President Biden plans to send them to Ukraine.... Stop the ceaseless escalation! It is time for peace.

Nothing But Banned Weapons Left To Send?

The Biden Administration says its hand was forced by Ukraine’s constantly escalating necessities for new

means to attack and “defeat” Russia; 20- to 40-year-old cluster bombs was what America had in stock, and so cluster bombs had to be given. Biden tried to say this in a Fareed Zakaria *CNN* interview Sunday, July 9, but incoherently: “And they’re running out of that [155 mm] ammunition, and we’re low on it”; White House spokesmen half-denied it the next day. But U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken laid it out clearly to Andrea Mitchell in an *NBC News* interview July 11, and *Politico* wrote it down:

The stockpiles around the world, and in Ukraine, of the unitary munitions—not the cluster munitions—were running low. They’re about to be depleted. The hard but necessary choice to give [Ukraine] the cluster munitions amounted to this: If we didn’t do it—if we don’t do it—then they will run out of ammunition. If they run out of munitions, then they will be defenseless.

If this is true, then NATO has pushed itself right to Russia’s borders to provoke superpower war, but can’t sustain production of the means for that war because the NATO countries have financialized, ecologized, shrunk their productive workforces and deindustrialized their economies. If this is true, NATO has pushed, armed, and trained its warrior proxy Ukraine to fight and “defeat” Russia, but rendered that proxy warrior “*defenseless*” *without banned weapons, defenseless without resorting to war crimes.*

But this “we had no other ammunition to give” claim is simply an immoral excuse. American neo-conservatives used just such an excuse for the nuclear bombings that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945: “We couldn’t afford an invasion of Japan, we would have lost a million troops...”; and have used it ever since, although the world knows it is false.

The real drivers of the “Ukraine war” towards world war, are the British government and London elite—who care nothing that the UK signed and ratified the 2008 [Convention](#) on Cluster Munitions prohibiting their use. They don’t bother with the Biden “excuse” for America throwing cluster munitions into the unceasing escalation toward nuclear war.

The only British concern is that the “Ukrainian counteroffensive” was supposed to show real advances by the time of the NATO summit in Vilnius, Latvia July 11-12, six weeks after its launch. It has not shown such advances. So Royal United Services

Institute (RUSI) fellows Dr. Jack Watling and Prof. Justin Bronk wrote the following [Commentary](#) in RUSI's website July 23 that cluster bombs are the next “wonder weapon”—and their use *by Ukraine* is actually humanitarian:

Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munition provision will not only increase Ukrainian military effectiveness against dug-in Russian forces, but will also help alleviate Ukrainian and wider NATO ammunition shortfalls and barrel constraints. Since Russia's current strategy relies on outlasting Western military sup-



CC/Ian J. Saunders

War crimes be damned, the UK's elite Royal United Services Institute demands escalation of the war: “Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munition provision will not only increase Ukrainian military effectiveness ... but will also help alleviate Ukrainian and wider NATO ammunition shortfalls.” Here, a RUSI conference in London.

port capacity, improving the sustainability of Ukraine's artillery capabilities would also increase the incentive for Russia to end the conflict. Therefore, the US is justified in providing Ukraine with DPICM to help liberate its territory, which is the only assured means of restoring the right of Ukraine's civilian population to live in peace.

Biden National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and British billionaire Prime Minister Rishi Sunak have used the same “humanitarian cluster-bomb use” absurdity, in stressing that Sunak and Biden are absolutely together on this NATO decision. (In fact, the UK, leveraging Poland and the Baltics, pushed Biden into it.)

Where the Escalation Ends

The warmongers in London who organized the drive for F-16 fighter-bombers to Ukraine will not stop with cluster munitions, nor will they be stopped by failure of Ukraine's counteroffensive, or by the July [report](#) that 30% of all UK households will be “insolvent” by the end of 2023 under the kingdom's war economy.

F-16s can be armed with nuclear bombs; Russian defenses will not know whether they are or not, and will have to try to strike them where they take off, including in NATO countries. Ukraine may not be “in NATO” yet, but NATO is fully in Ukraine, striking with all of NATO's weapon systems to pursue its stated objective, a “strategic defeat of Russia.” Already last year the Royal United Services Institute [gamed out](#) a “Crimean Missiles Crisis” to force Russia into a nuclear-war confrontation.

NATO leadership has known since 2008, when it “opened the door” to Ukraine membership, that it was *provoking* civil war in Ukraine and Russian military intervention—the U.S. Ambassador to Russia at that time, William J. Burns, said it then in a Feb. 1 diplomatic cable. That [cable](#) made clear that a Russian military intervention in Ukraine would not be—and is not—“unprovoked.”

So there is little prospect that NATO running short of weapons, or Ukraine's counteroffensive failing, will stop the escalation to world war, nuclear war—even Biden obviously can see it, though he fatuously believes that by going along with it, he can keep his thumb on it.

The growing resistance of the “neutral” nations of the developing world, if allied to the increasing opposition within populations of the NATO nations, has the chance to stop it. That opposition is rising with the revulsion at bringing back justly-banned cluster bombs yet again. It is up to the most alert and mobilized citizens of the NATO countries, in rapidly growing actions for peace now focused on “Hiroshima Day,” to stop global NATO on the road to destroying human civilization.