

Biden administration and Republicans use war crisis to push phony “national unity”

Eric London
19 February 2022

As the Biden administration escalates its provocations against Russia in Eastern Europe, the Democratic and Republican parties are utilizing the war crisis to carry out a reactionary global agenda through the promotion of a phony “national unity.” The foreign policy aim is to accomplish American imperialism’s decades-long goal of subjugating Russia. The domestic aim is to protect corporate profits and suppress social opposition as inflation rises and US COVID-19 deaths near the 1 million mark.

In his White House remarks yesterday on the crisis, Biden portrayed the United States as a national community united in opposition to “Russian aggression.” Referencing concerns over social divisions, Biden said: “There are many issues that divide our nation and our world, but this is not one of them. The American people are united. Our political parties in this country are united.”

In reality, polls show the overwhelming majority of the population do not want the United States to fight a war with Russia. In its February 14 statement “Oppose the US-NATO drive to war with Russia in Ukraine!” the International Committee of the Fourth International wrote:

At a press conference last month, Biden remarked that it was questionable if US democracy would survive the decade. No other country has such levels of social inequality, or a ruling class so indifferent to the most basic needs of the population. The United States is a social powder keg. War is a means to artificially unify and redirect crises outward.

The Biden administration is placing central emphasis on its appeal to the anti-Trump faction of the Republican Party. On Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Jan Psaki boasted that the administration has done an “enormous amount” of engagement with Republicans, adding, “This is an issue in our view, that should not be partisan.”

A joint delegation of Democrats and Republicans, spanning the “progressive” left to the fascistic right, traveled to Europe for the Munich Security Conference beginning yesterday. The delegation is led by Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and former Trump ally Republican Senator Lindsay Graham. Democratic Representatives and Progressive Caucus leaders Barbara Lee and Ro Khanna will attend, alongside Republicans who voted to challenge the election results on January 6, including Republican Representative Ronny Jackson (Trump’s former doctor) and Senator Tommy Tuberville.

Democratic Senator Chris Murphy said, “I’m glad to be part of this bipartisan congressional delegation traveling to Europe to show Putin that the United States and our allies stand united in support of the Ukrainian people.”

In a statement announcing the bipartisan delegation, Nancy Pelosi declared, “At the Munich Security Conference, our delegation will reaffirm America’s ironclad commitment to the transatlantic partnership, especially in the face of worldwide challenges to democracy and the rise of autocratic threats.” This pretense of fighting against “autocratic threats” is exposed by the fact that the delegation is going out of its way to visit apartheid Israel en route to Munich, to shore up the two countries’ “mutual security.”

Also this week, Republicans and Democrats passed a resolution condemning Russia and calling for sanctions

in the event of a Russian invasion. The resolution is sponsored by Democratic Senators Jean Shaheen, Dick Durbin and Robert Menendez, as well as Republican Senators Rob Portman, John Cornyn, and Jim Risch.

“It’s important that Congress speaks with one voice,” Portman said Wednesday. “I would hope every member would allow us to have a voice vote on it and get this done.”

The Biden administration is also using the war crisis to drive a wedge between the wing of the Republican Party led by the arch-reactionary Mitch McConnell and Trump. The method is to present the Trump wing as pacifist stooges of Russia and Putin.

Press Secretary Psaki said Wednesday, “There are some from the Republican Party who have not voiced support for that.” Such Republicans are “just digesting Russian misinformation and parroting Russian talking points” and are “not aligned with long-standing, bipartisan American values.” As during the course of Trump’s presidency, the Democratic Party opposes Trump only on a right-wing, pro-imperialist basis.

Meanwhile, there are indications that the Biden administration and the Democratic Party are preparing to carry out a substantial rightward shift in domestic policy as part of the “national unity” consensus with Republicans. Yesterday the Senate passed a continuing resolution extending the national debt ceiling, postponing the upcoming budget debate by several weeks.

On Thursday, right-wing Democratic Senator Joe Manchin was granted a meeting with White House Chief of Staff Ron Klain where the senator appealed for cuts to social spending under the guise of fighting inflation and left very satisfied by the discussion. “The White House made it very clear that inflation and costs is [sic] a burden on a lot of people,” Manchin said.

On Friday, leaks revealed that the upcoming 2023 defense budget proposal from the Biden administration would include a massive increase in funds to the military. AP reported that “Biden is expected to ask Congress for a U.S. defense budget exceeding \$770 billion for the next fiscal year as the Pentagon seeks to modernize the military, according to three sources familiar with the negotiations, eclipsing the record budget requests by former President Donald Trump.”

The Hill referenced an unnamed source as saying the budget would focus on “research and development of

military capabilities that could match those of China and Russia in any potential future conflict,” as well as “shipbuilding, new space capabilities ..., better missile warning systems and an update of nuclear submarines, bombers and missiles.”

News of this proposal follows a talk given by Republican Senator Roger Wicker and Democratic Senator Shaheen at the Wilson Center this week. Wicker declared that “Russian kids will go home in body bags” and said Putin is “the neighborhood bully who’s always got an excuse. And whatever we do, this time we have to give him a bloody nose.” When he called for a massive increase in military spending to send a message to Putin, his Democratic counterpart said, “You’re absolutely right. Putin’s thinking, ‘Boy, they can’t even pass a budget, never going to be able to unite against our actions,’ and China is looking at that as well.”

Democratic Socialists of America members like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have remained silent about the US war provocations and have downplayed the danger of war. In a recent interview with *New Yorker* magazine, Ocasio-Cortez made no reference to the US war drive. In a television interview earlier this month, she said she opposed direct US military intervention but added, “the Biden administration is well within their right to counter Russia’s aggression diplomatically.” *Jacobin* magazine’s front page features no statement addressing the US actions.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact