Biden’s new “forever war”

Andre Damon
28 March 2022

On Saturday, US President Joe Biden ended his week-long tour of Europe to mobilize NATO for conflict with Russia with a belligerent rant in Warsaw, Poland. Media coverage of Biden’s speech was focused on its final passage, apparently ad-libbed, in which the American president said that Russian President Vladimir Putin “cannot remain in power.”

But an even more important aspect of the speech went largely undiscussed: Biden’s declaration of a “commitment” by the United States to “decades” of war.

Against the backdrop of the largest land war in Europe since World War II, Biden declared, “We must commit now to be in this fight for the long haul. We must remain unified today and tomorrow and the day after and for the years and decades to come.”

To what “fight” is Biden committing the United States?

Just nine months ago, when Biden announced the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, he said, “We’ve been a nation too long at war. If you’re 20 years old today, you have never known an America at peace.” He declared, “It’s time to end the forever war.”

Now, Biden is committing the American population to a new perpetual war—one that he said will have immense “costs” and “will not be easy.”

In his speech, Biden declared that the decades-long “fight” the US is initiating is a “great battle for freedom: a battle between democracy and autocracy, between liberty and repression, between a rules-based order and one governed by brute force.”

Biden picked a strange place to launch a struggle for “democracy.” This year, the Berlin-based Civil Liberties Union for Europe accused the Polish government of “seizing further control of the justice system, civil society and media, while cutting basic human rights and fuelling divisions by scapegoating migrants and other minority groups.”

The Polish government is controlled by the ultra-right, chauvinist, anti-Semitic and authoritarian PiS party. President Duda—Biden's constant companion during his warmongering crusade—heads a government that has completely banned abortion as a form of family planning, persecutes the LGBT community, and criminalizes the exposure of Polish complicity in the Holocaust.

As with the “war on terror,” which saw the most grievous violations of democratic rights in American history, Biden’s new decades-long war invokes “democracy” as a throwaway line that no one is to take seriously.

In his speech, Biden himself made clear the extent to which the United States had provoked Russia’s invasion by arming a NATO proxy on Russia’s border.

“In the years before the invasion, we, America, had sent over $650 million, before they crossed the border, in weapons to Ukraine, including anti-air and anti-armor equipment. Since the invasion, America has committed another $1.35 billion in weapons and ammunition.”

Everything that Biden has done over the past week has been intended to stoke up the US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine. He called the Russian president every name imaginable, from “butcher” to “murderous dictator” to “war criminal” to “thug.” He has poured weapons into Ukraine and doubled the forces deployed on Russia’s borders. As Edward Luce of the *Financial Times* commented, “US liberals are at least as hawkish as conservatives.”

Biden’s speech in Poland followed the conclusion of the NATO summit in Brussels, Belgium, where the leaders of the NATO alliance plotted out a major escalation of the conflict. At the summit, NATO announced a doubling of its forces on Russia’s border, and the *New York Times* reported plans by the US for full-scale war with Russia.

© World Socialist Web Site

The actual causes of this new "forever war" are to be found in the documents of US military planners.

In 1991, amidst the dissolution of the USSR, then US President George H. W. Bush declared that the Gulf War against Iraq would usher in a "New World Order" led by the United States.

The following year, the Pentagon published a Defense Planning Guidance, termed the "Wolfowitz Doctrine," proclaiming that the United States' "first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere, that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union."

The outpouring of US militarism initiated by the first invasion of Iraq was followed by three decades of perpetual war, including the bombing and breakup of Yugoslavia, the destruction and occupation of Afghanistan, the invasion and occupation of Iraq, the overthrow of the Libyan government and the years-long regime change in Syria.

Now, these wars are metastasizing into a direct US conflict with Russia and China, with potentially incalculable consequences.

The 2018 National Defense Strategy announced a pivot from US military engagements in the Middle East to efforts to combat Russia and China. "Inter-state strategic competition," it proclaimed, "not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security."

In this context, it is clear that Biden's withdrawal from Afghanistan was nothing but a redeployment of forces in preparation for military conflicts on an even greater scale.

Despite the efforts by the White House to walk back Biden's statement, Biden's ad-libbed declaration was the inescapable conclusion of the entire speech. Biden's statements clearly reflect the actual US policy, the aim of which is the military isolation and economic ruination of Russia, the ouster of its government and the installation of a puppet regime that would turn it into a rump state.

Biden's declaration of a new, decades-long commitment comes just days after his proclamation before leaving for Europe, that "there's going to be a new world order out there, and we've got to lead it."

Seven years ago, in his preface to *A Quarter Century of War: The US Drive for Global Hegemony 1990-2016,* WSWS International Editorial Board Chairman David North wrote:

> The last quarter century of US-instigated wars must be studied as a chain of interconnected events. The strategic logic of the US drive for global hegemony extends beyond the neocolonial operations in the Middle East and Africa. The ongoing regional wars are component elements of the rapidly escalating confrontation of the United States with Russia and China.

The events of this week make one thing abundantly clear. The US's plans for "great-power conflict" with Russia and China are leaving the planning stage and are being put into practice. Having instigated the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the United States is seizing upon it to carry out plans, decades in the making, to assert US hegemony through military means against nuclear-armed adversaries.

The only way out of the disaster threatening mankind is the building of a movement of the working class against war, aiming to unify the working classes of Russia, Ukraine, Europe, and the Americas against the capitalist system that is the root cause of war.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site