

Biden warns of nuclear “Armageddon” as Zelensky calls for “preventive strikes” on Russia

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US President Joe Biden said Thursday that the world is at risk of nuclear “Armageddon,” implying that the rapid escalation of the war in Ukraine could lead to nuclear war between the United States and Russia.

The American president said that Russian President Vladimir Putin was “not joking when he talks about the use of tactical nuclear weapons.”

Biden said, “We have not faced the prospect of Armageddon since Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” saying that Putin threatened to use nuclear weapons “because his military is—you might say—significantly underperforming.”

Biden added that he did not think “there’s any such thing as the ability to easily (use) a tactical nuclear weapon and not end up with Armageddon.”

In February, Biden denied that the war could escalate to a nuclear conflict, saying, “Well, I don’t think [Putin] is remotely contemplating using nuclear weapons.” In March, Biden said that the United States would not “send in offensive equipment” to Ukraine because it would lead to “World War III.”

But since making these statements, Biden has massively expanded US involvement in the war, sending so many high-end weapons to Ukraine that US armories are running low. US generals have directed Ukrainian missile strikes, including attacks on Russian territory, assassinations of Russian generals, and the attack on the Moskva, the flagship of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. And US paramilitary forces are directly operating on the ground in Ukraine.

The United States has sent Ukraine hundreds of armored vehicles, as well as the country’s most advanced anti-aircraft system, anti-ship system and medium-range ground-based missile launcher, the

HIMARS.

In an article published in September entitled “Why the US is becoming more brazen with its Ukraine support,” *The Hill* concluded: “The Biden administration is arming Ukraine with weapons that can do serious damage to Russian forces, and, unlike early in the war, US officials don’t appear worried about Moscow’s reaction.”

Over the past week, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Security Council Head Dimitri Medvedev, and head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov have all warned that Russia could use nuclear weapons in the conflict.

Earlier this week, *The Times of London* reported that a train operated by the division of the Russian military that handles nuclear weapons was making its way toward the front line.

When asked about the report, a US Defense Department spokesperson replied, “I’m aware of those press reports. I don’t have anything on that.”

The Times of London also reported that NATO members have been secretly advised that Putin intends to carry out a nuclear test near Russia’s borders or over the Black Sea.

On Thursday, before Biden’s comments, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky at a meeting of an Australian think tank called for NATO to carry out preemptive strikes on Russia to prevent the “possibility of Russia using nuclear weapons.”

“What should NATO do? Eliminate the possibility of Russia using nuclear weapons,” Zelensky said. “We need preventive strikes, so they know what will happen to them if they use nukes, and not the other way around.”

As has become standard practice any time a NATO-aligned leader blurts out what is being discussed behind the scenes, Zelensky's office claimed that the Ukrainian president was referring to "preemptive sanctions" and that the actual words that came out of the president's mouth should be ignored.

Against the backdrop of these events, the extent of direct US involvement in the war is becoming clear.

On Wednesday, the *Intercept*, in an article by veteran National Security journalist James Risen, reported that Biden has authorized clandestine CIA operations inside Ukraine, likely meaning that American special forces are actually deployed in the country.

"The clandestine American operations inside Ukraine are now far more extensive than they were early in the war," Risen reports. "There is a much larger presence of both CIA and U.S. special operations personnel and resources in Ukraine than there were at the time of the Russian invasion in February.

"Secret U.S. operations inside Ukraine are being conducted under a presidential covert action finding, current and former officials said. The finding indicates that the president has quietly notified certain congressional leaders about the administration's decision to conduct a broad program of clandestine operations inside the country."

Meanwhile, sections of the US political establishment are calling for an even more aggressive US intervention, providing Ukraine with missiles that would be able to strike into the heart of Russian territory.

"ATACMS [Army Tactical Missile Systems] would give the Ukrainians the capability to make Crimea untenable for the Russian Black Sea Fleet and for the Russian Air Force and logistics in Crimea," retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, the former commander of U.S. Army Europe, told the *Wall Street Journal*. "That would be a significant step in the eventual liberation of Crimea... ATACMS would accelerate the collapse of Russian forces."

Washington Post columnist George Will called Wednesday on the United States to provide armed drones to Ukraine, including the Gray Eagle (the successor to the Predator) and Reaper drones.

"The immediate imperative is to supply Ukraine with the most sophisticated and dangerous U.S. unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), a.k.a. drones, which can be

force-multipliers for Ukraine's hard pounding of the Russians," Will said.

Will effectively declares that Ukraine is a de facto member of NATO, calling for Ukraine to be given "weapons that will help it produce battlefield results commensurate with its future status as a member of the European Union and, 'formally or not,' NATO."

The rapid escalation of the war confirms the warnings of the *World Socialist Web Site* of the immense dangers posed by the desperation and recklessness gripping both Moscow and Washington. As we wrote earlier this week,

The reckless actions of governments that are leading the world to disaster must be countered by a global mass anti-war movement of the working class and youth.

The working class must demand the immediate end to this reactionary war. It is necessary to unify the struggle by workers in defense of their social and democratic rights with the struggle against war.

The building of a new anti-war movement must be based on the perspective of international socialism, rejecting all forms of nationalism and xenophobia and fighting for the unity of workers in every country.



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