
What Joe Biden — Thinker and Strategist — thinks

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Former US Vice President Joseph Biden delivered an impassioned speech which alternated between attacking Russia and praising the US-led world order, while omitting the essence of the ongoing Cold War redux.

Biden, a former senator and America's second-highest official for two terms, took to the podium at the Munich Security Conference (MSC) on Friday evening to deliver a moving speech about the threat posed by Russian President Vladimir Putin to the "liberal world order." He said NATO members must oppose these "malign activities" and stick to their values, even though the US did not do this under the administration he was part of.

Russia-bashing is a popular game for Western politicians nowadays. Biden was not the first speaker at the MSC to focus on the menace of the East, although unlike Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, he didn't address his anti-Kremlin rally cry to a nearly deserted hall. On the contrary, it was packed full, including by some former Obama officials like John ["you don't invade a country on phony pretext"](#)Kerry, the ex-Secretary of State.

And the audience heard a lot about how the Kremlin is so weak that it threatens the very core of the world order (don't ask, just take his word for it).

Russia is a "nation in a serious decline," Biden said, and it suffers from the stranglehold oil and gas have on the economy (Russian energy exports were 11.78 percent of GDP in 2016, amid the oil price crisis, compared to 20.32 in 2000). Russia maintains a "network of partnerships solely through coercion," said the former vice president of a nation which has over 1,000 military bases throughout the world. Russia's population is "aging and shrinking" (Russia's demographic situation is typical among countries in which women can make careers, birth control is not frowned upon, and people are not forced to rely on their children in old age, although it is enduring a birth gap stemming from three generations ago, when 26 million people were lost in World War II).

The Kremlin is dealing with its weakness by undermining the West in general and "democratic ideals" on its borders in particular, the former VP believes, because "any alternative that can attract support jeopardizes the wealth, power and privilege of those oligarchs in charge." For instance, Ukraine – which could be called Biden's pet project – supposedly chose those "democratic ideals" in 2014, when armed mobs kicked out its democratically-elected president who already submitted to the demands of the opposition leaders. And then, the new Kiev went after Ukrainian people in the east who didn't share such ideals, sending tanks against unarmed civilians and later shelling cities engulfed by rebellion.

But at least the government in Kiev enjoys a steadfast protection of its sovereignty – another value that

Washington holds in great regard, according to Biden, and Moscow sees as nothing but a nuisance. The vice president can attest to that personally. He [ordered](#) Poroshenko to sack his prosecutor general or else kiss US-backed credit goodbye. But, well, the man was allegedly a “corrupt son-of-b***h.”

So how exactly is the Kremlin “abusing its power,” according to Biden? “By using its hard military power,” said the man who helped oversee the NATO destruction of Libya, once Africa’s most socially developed and richest nation. By “manipulating energy supplies” said Biden, a staunch opponent of having more gas pipelines from Russia to Europe – which would undermine Ukraine’s ability to blackmail Russia and Europe by holding its gas transit hostage, and incidentally prevent LNG (from America and Qatar) from being a more attractive alternative source for Europe. By “weaponizing corruption,” said the man whose son joined the board of directors of Burisma – a Ukrainian oil company – shortly after the US supported the Euromaidan.

But, of course, the biggest offense is Russia’s alleged election meddling all around the world. He berated Russians for buying political advertising on Facebook, which, according to the FBI, had no tangible effect on the outcome of the election. Biden called the ads “thousands of attempts to meddle” in the 2016 campaign.

“They have no damn right!” he roared. “No right whatsoever. It’s our sovereign right to be able to conduct our elections unfettered. Period!”

Yes, we know. American intelligence officials [believe](#) meddling in other nations’ elections is their job and won’t allow anyone else to cut in. America first!

But Biden has a few ideas on how to deal with the ‘weak-yet-very-dangerous’ Russia. The West needs more NATO, more cybersecurity, and more sanctions on Russia – sanctions which the US, conveniently, is not damaged by, unlike European nations. The West also needs to inform the public about how bad Russia is – because they are apparently not convinced that heating their homes with Russian gas or hearing what Russian media have to say compromises their ‘core values.’

The West also needs to “tell the Russian people the truth and where we stand,” which, Biden believes, will erode public support for the “small group in the Kremlin willing to do whatever it take to protect themselves and keep their illegal grip on power.” Because, again, this worked so well for the Ukrainians, who are now governed by honest, liberal-minded officials accountable to their people. Mikhail Saakashvili, Washington’s darling, used the term [“mafia state”](#) to describe them in a recent interview, but he may have a chip on his shoulder after being kicked out of Ukraine.

“I am still hopeful that the time will come – it may not come in the near future – but eventually the people of Russia will look West and out of that deep black hole they have been staring into for the last 150 years or longer,” Biden mused.

But Russians have been looking West for quite some time. And they have even been led “by the power of the US example,” as the whole world has been told to do. They are now simply ignoring the stipulation to “do as we say, not as we do.”

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