

Next on the US Agenda: War with China?

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In 2014, Lew Rockwell [wrote](#), “Clearly the empire is targeting China...The U.S. seeks to encircle China and make it bow down before the hegemon. The increasing prosperity and freedom of China threatens the empire’s self-image.”

America’s new Cold War with China is a bi-partisan imperial project. In 2011, former President Barack Obama began it in earnest, dubbing it the “[Asia Pivot](#).” The ‘pivot’ entails [surrounding](#) China with hundreds of bases and shifting two thirds of all U.S. naval and air forces to the Asia-Pacific, the greatest military buildup since World War II.

Putative outsider Donald Trump took office and sizably enlarged the U.S. military’s footprint in what is now referred to as the “Indo-Pacific” region and significantly [increased](#) provocations of China.

Now [President Joe Biden](#) and his [hawk infested administration](#) are escalating tensions with Beijing to heights previously unseen.

Biden has said bluntly that the U.S. is in “[extreme competition](#)” with China. In his first address to Congress, Biden said we are competing with China to “[win the 21st century](#).” Space Force has plans for the [moon](#) to be a “[militarized front](#).” They see it as a venue for a future war. Washington is [spending more](#) on the military and so called “defense” than at any time in the nation’s history. The Republican Party’s [neocons](#) say that even Biden’s 2022 national security budget request for [more than \\$750 billion](#) is not enough to counter China and are demanding that number be increased by tens of billions.

The Pentagon’s [excuse](#) for its record high spending is Beijing, the so called “pacing threat.” China poses a threat to the hawks’ world domination, at least that is what has been said by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley. [According to the general](#), since the end of the previous Cold War, America has held “unchallenged global military, political and economic power. With the rise of China, that is changing and changing fast.”

The U.S. Military Is Incessantly Goaded China

Last year, while Americans were distracted by the COVID-19 crisis, Trump’s war cabinet seized the opportunity to dramatically expand military activity around China. U.S. [warships](#)

and [aircraft carrier group strike forces](#) sailing in the [South China Sea](#) were reported [constantly](#). In July 2020, according to the South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative (SCSPI), a Beijing based think tank, the U.S. flew record numbers of [aerial surveillance flights](#) in the South China Sea and near China's coast. The number of reconnaissance flights averaged three to five per day. In the same month, the Trump administration formally [rejected](#) almost all of China's claims to the waters in the South China Sea. This policy has since been [reaffirmed](#) by the Biden regime. Under both administrations, the U.S. has been challenging China, using the Navy's Seventh Fleet, inserting itself into disputes between regional actors there whom all have [overlapping claims](#) on the waters including over various, sometimes unmanned, rocks, reefs, islands, islets, and archipelagos.

Even if it means war with China, Biden's administration has pledged that the U.S. will defend [Japan's](#) claims to the disputed Senkaku Islands. The Senkaku Islands are claimed by Beijing, Tokyo, and Taipei. Similarly, Washington has [promised](#) the U.S. military will come to the [Philippines'](#) defense in the event of a violent conflict with China, including in the South China Sea, potentially over the disputed Whitson Reef. The Whitson Reef, the site of recent tensions, is claimed not only by China and the Philippines but by Vietnam as well.

The Navy routinely conducts what it calls [Freedom Of Navigation Operations \(FONOPS\)](#), in the waters surrounding China, sailing warships through the waters, particularly in the South China Sea, usually [provocatively close](#) to Chinese [controlled](#) or claimed islands. Biden's regime just conducted its fourth FONOP. Under Trump, in 2020 the U.S. conducted a record high total of nine FONOPs poking China.

In September 2020, record numbers of [U.S. warplanes and spy planes near China's coast](#) were spotted and recorded. There were at least 60 flights including over the South China Sea, the East China Sea, and the Yellow Sea. The U.S. was sending refueling aircraft from Guam to replenish the spy planes enabling them to continue their operations. As Dave DeCamp, news editor at Antiwar.com, has written, the SCSPI interprets these sorties as the U.S. potentially "[preparing for long-distance attacks on targets in the South China Sea.](#)" In February 2021, [75 U.S. reconnaissance aircraft flights in the South China Sea](#) were documented.

Indeed, the Chinese Defense Ministry has declared that since Biden took office, the volatile situation in the region has considerably worsened.

As the South China Morning Post [reported](#),

On the day that Biden targeted Beijing in his first speech to a joint session of Congress, Chinese defence ministry spokesman Wu Qian said operations had increased by more than 20 per cent for US warships and 40 per cent for planes in and around waters claimed by China, compared with the same period last year under Donald Trump's administration.

During the current administration's reign, U.S. aircraft carrier [strike groups](#) have been repeatedly [sent](#) to the [South China Sea](#), including, in one instance, for [dual carrier drills](#).

As Patrick Macfarlane, writer and podcaster at the Libertarian Institute, has [elaborated](#),

In February, 2021, U.S. a reconnaissance plane flirted with the same airspace as [a sortie of Chinese warplanes](#). More recently, on May 14, 2021, the U.S. Navy announced

the deployment of two MQ-4C Triton drones from Guam to Northern Japan, the first such deployment of high-altitude long endurance unmanned aerial vehicles (HALE-UAVs) to Japan.

These drones spy on the Taiwan Strait, Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) bases on the coast, and military installations in the South China Sea.

In March, a U.S. Air Force RC-135U [flew within 25.33 nautical miles](#) of the Chinese coast, closer than any U.S. military plane recorded yet. In April, an American destroyer [conducted close surveillance](#) of a Chinese aircraft carrier the *Liaoning* as it was taking part in exercises in the South China Sea. The U.S. often deploys military aircraft to shadow Chinese drills as well.

The U.S. Navy even [released a photo](#) of officers on the deck of a guided missile destroyer, the *USS Mustin*, staring down the *Liaoning*. Also in April, satellite imagery revealed that another U.S. guided missile destroyer actually [entered into the Liaoning's strike group](#) and sailed with it for a time, the aircraft carrier was returning from a deployment in the South China Sea to the East China Sea. DeCamp has [explained](#) that considering such reconnaissance can be accomplished with the use of satellites, the goal of these hyper-aggressive maneuvers is solely to ramp up tensions.

In July, reports indicated the Navy has been quite busy this year establishing an almost nonstop deployment of surveillance ships in the South China Sea.

As DeCamp has [reported](#),

...U.S. Navy ocean surveillance vessels were operating in the South China Sea for at least 161 days out of 181 days in the first half of this year. The U.S. has five of these vessels stationed in Japan, which are typically active in the South China Sea for more than 10 days at a time, and there is virtually no time between deployments.

The SCSPI report said that the primary purpose of these deployments is “to monitor the dynamics of China’s underwater forces, analyze the scope of submarine activities in key waters and their entry and exit routes, and provide intelligence support for anti-submarine operations.”

Allies Increasingly Join the Pivot

In his aforementioned first Congressional [address](#), Biden boasted he “also told President Xi that we will maintain a strong military presence in the Indo-Pacific just as we do with NATO in Europe...”

Thus, Washington’s allies are getting in on the Asia Pivot. The British will soon be sailing their new aircraft carrier the *HMS Queen Elizabeth* and its strike group which includes an American destroyer and warplanes as well, into the South China Sea. The warship *HMS Defender* is already there. London will soon [permanently deploy](#) two warships in Asia. This was declared in a joint statement with Japan.

Japan is a part of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, otherwise known as the Quad, along with the U.S., India, and Australia. The hawks hope to make the Quad into an East Asian NATO style alliance.

Financial Times was [told](#) by a source “familiar with the strategy,” that “[t]he Biden administration is making the Quad the core dynamic of its Asia policy.”

Last year, in an unmistakable message to China, the Quad’s navies held war [drills in the Bay of Bengal](#), their largest such exercises in more than a decade.

Tokyo has recently been hyping up the threat to Taiwan posed by China. In the event of a “major incident” in Taiwan, [Japanese Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso](#) went so far as to say that “Japan and the US must defend Taiwan together.” With more than 50,000 troops, Japan [hosts](#) the largest overseas U.S. military presence.

The End of “Engagement?”

In May, Biden’s top Asia official Kurt Campbell, head of Indo-Pacific Affairs on the National Security Council, was speaking at an event hosted by Stanford University where he portentously [stated](#) that our “engagement” with China is over. [Campbell](#) is known as the architect of Obama’s Asia Pivot.

“The period that was broadly described as engagement has come to an end,” Campbell says, “the dominant paradigm is going to be competition.”

“For the first time, really, we are now shifting our strategic focus, our economic interests, our military might more to the Indo-Pacific,” he added.

Taiwan, Nuclear War, and the Neocons

In 2016, on 12 occasions, Obama sailed warships through the [sensitive Strait of Taiwan](#). Trump beat Obama’s record last year by sending warships through the strait 13 times. Biden has been in office for just over six months and has already sailed warships through the strait [seven times](#).

After the latest passage, China protested. The PLA’s Eastern Theatre Command issued a statement saying, “[t]he US is the biggest destroyer of peace and stability...and the biggest maker of security risks across the Taiwan Strait.”

Carlos del Toro, Biden’s nominee for Secretary of the Navy, recently [vowed](#) to the Senate Armed Services Committee that, if confirmed, he will “exclusively” focus on China and “...moving our maritime strategy forward in order to protect Taiwan and all of our national security interests in the Indo-Pacific theater.”

Republican Senator Josh Hawley [asked](#) Del Toro if it’s “vital” for the U.S. to be able to prevent an attack on Taiwan by China, the nominee ominously responded “absolutely.”

In the worst case scenario, this [policy](#) could [kill millions](#) of people or more. This fact apparently did not mean nearly as much to Del Toro as his own petty career advancement.

As Senior Fellow at Defense Priorities and Retired Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis [has explained](#),

It is crucial to understand that for China, the Taiwan issue is not merely a [core interest](#), but an [emotionally charged](#) one. They are far more willing to pay extraordinary costs, sacrifice many men, and could risk it all to eventually compel unification with Taiwan.

The issue does not directly affect our national security unless we get involved.

If we eventually choose war with China over Taiwan, we will at *best* suffer egregious losses in ships, aircraft, and troops; in a worst-case, the war could deteriorate into a nuclear exchange in which American cities are turned into nuclear wastelands, killing millions.

America should *never* take such risks unless our security and freedom are directly threatened. Fighting China for any reason short of that would be a foolish gamble of the highest order.

Although designed and overseen by liberal hawks such as Campbell, and led officially by Democrats like Biden, Obama and Hillary Clinton, the [Asia Pivot](#) as well as its ancillary [exploitation](#) of the [Taiwan issue as a means to goad China](#) has roots in infamous neoconservative circles. That is, namely the now defunct, [Project for a New American Century](#) (PNAC) think tank, founded by [Bill Kristol and Robert Kagan](#).

For instance, PNAC's notorious September 2000 document "Rebuilding America's Defenses" [contains](#) an outline of the Asia Pivot;

Raising U.S. military strength in East Asia is the key to coping with the rise of China to great power status.

Reflecting the gradual shift in the focus of American strategic concerns toward East Asia, a majority of the U.S. fleet, including two thirds of all carrier battle groups, should be concentrated in the Pacific. A new, permanent forward base should be established in Southeast Asia.

These are the same neocons who led the push for war in Iraq, in which maybe more than a million Iraqis were [killed](#).

The New (Psychological) Cold War

[As is the case with Russia](#), Washington is also hyping up the threat of China's cyber-attacks on the U.S. using unsubstantiated allegations spread like wildfire by the imperial press. This is likely done to create a state of hysteria amongst our domestic population. But it serves more than one purpose. In March, Andrei Illnitsky, an advisor to Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, [accused](#) the U.S. of executing a "new type of warfare," a "mental war," a war being "waged for people's minds."

[Without sufficient evidence](#), Moscow is [endlessly](#) accused of [election interference](#), hacking the DNC, paying [bounties](#) to the Taliban to kill American soldiers, poisoning Alexi Navalny or the [Skrripals](#), the [SolarWinds](#) hack, as well as assorted ransomware attacks.

These unsubstantiated accusations are deliberately capitalized on by America's hardliners and used often as grounds for the [eschewing](#) critical diplomacy such as [arms control talks](#). This tactic is also deployed to garner support for further expansion of NATO, the mass expulsions of diplomats, [cyber-attacks](#), internet censorship, and more [sanctions](#).

Similarly, the sadistic, ultra-hawkish Mike Pompeo, in one of his last acts as Secretary of State, formally accused the Chinese of "genocide" against its Uyghur Muslim population. Antony Blinken, our current Foggy Bottom chief and Pompeo's neoliberal analogue, has

since reaffirmed this position. This [claim is circulated all over the media again and again with weak evidence](#) that relies on [“flagrant data abuse and outright falsehoods,”](#) as well as [highly questionable sources](#). The [hype](#) is used by Washington to justify [multilateral sanctions](#) and increasingly its selective decoupling from China in regions like Xinxiang.

Decoupling from China is an option that is talked about more often all the time by neocons in government like Senator [Tom Cotton](#) and others. It would drastically increase the likelihood of war.

Beijing is now being accused by Washington, NATO, the U.K., and others of hacking [Microsoft’s Exchange Server](#), an email platform used by various corporations and governments worldwide. This hacking allegation dates back a few months and, in keeping with the established pattern with the claims against Russia, no evidence has been brought forward yet. The claim is unproven but may be exploited to levy more sanctions on China. Alarming, NATO recently included cyberattacks among other things that could trigger the invocation of the Article 5 mutual defense clause. And Biden is now [saying](#) cyber-attacks could be used as a pretext for a [“real shooting war with a major power,”](#) eyeing Beijing and Moscow.

[Ali Abunimah](#), of the *Electronic Intifada*, has [noted](#) these unverified claims against China over Beijing’s suspected involvement in the Microsoft hack have been amplified and endorsed by western governments and the corporate press. Whereas in contrast, so many of these same entities seem unconcerned about Washington’s satellite Tel Aviv and its direct responsibility in the massive Pegasus spyware scandal.

Microsoft, incidentally, is a major donor to the Center For A New American Security (CNAS), the anti-China, neoconservative foreign policy think tank founded by the likes of [Asia Pivot architect Campbell](#) and [war criminal Michele Flournoy](#). Flournoy has openly stated her desire for the Pentagon, in the event of a war, to acquire the ability to completely destroy China’s entire civilian merchant and military fleet within 72 hours. Before former Raytheon board member Lloyd Austin was chosen, Flournoy was considered a shoe in to head Biden’s War Department. She was failed candidate Hillary Clinton’s pick for the post as well.

As this columnist has [written](#) previously, CNAS holds enormous sway over the Biden administration, with many of its hawkish co-founders, associates, former CEOs, and members proliferating throughout the regime in several key positions. CNAS is also [funded](#) by a veritable who’s who of the ruling elite including, among others, the U.S. State Department, [Taiwan’s de facto embassy](#), Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Comcast, Exxon, Mastercard, the Japanese Embassy to the United States, Citigroup, Facebook, Georgetown University, Google, and Raytheon.

The Hawks and Their Death Toll

On the world stage, the American Empire is rapidly losing any vestiges of credibility it has left. While [mass murderers](#) like America’s top diplomat [Antony Blinken](#) and National Security Advisor [Jake Sullivan](#) condemn China’s alleged violations of the so called [“rules-based order that maintains global stability,”](#) Washington backs some of the most criminal, [genocidal](#), and totalitarian regimes flagrantly violating [international law](#) today, such as [Saudi Arabia](#) and [Israel](#). The U.S. ruling elite relentlessly wages economic warfare against weaker nations like [Syria](#) and [Iran targeted](#) by the above “allies” as well.

Washington also maintains bipartisan crushing [sanctions](#) still levied against other impoverished nations, posing zero threat to the American people, like Cuba, Venezuela, and North Korea. Under these sanctions, just within Venezuela, experts say [more than 100,000 people](#) have been killed, many deprived to death of their vital medicines.

Robert Kagan's wife [Victoria Nuland](#), now the [highest ranking member of the Foreign Service](#), along with [then Vice President Biden](#), led a 2014 [coup](#) in Ukraine that put neo-Nazis in power on Russia's doorstep. Paraphrasing Robert Parry, the late investigative journalist and founder of *Consortium News*, the '[mess Nuland made](#)' caused the ongoing war in the east of the country which has [claimed](#) the lives of well over [ten thousand](#) people, mostly civilians and militiamen murdered by Kiev's forces. The bipartisan U.S. policy now includes piling sanctions on Moscow, sending hundreds of millions dollars' worth of arms to Kiev, and [constantly conducting military exercises in the Black Sea](#). This has largely led to the current state of affairs, the worst U.S.-Russian relations since the previous Cold War.

Americans can no longer ignore that it is, in fact, their government, the world empire, [with some 800 bases in 70 countries](#), that [began](#) this new Cold War and remains the aggressor. The U.S. Empire is the single greatest threat to peace and global stability. After all, it was Washington that unilaterally withdrew from major 20th century arms control pillars such as the [Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty](#), the [Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty](#), and [Open Skies](#). It is these jingoistic moves which have triggered a [nuclear arms race](#) in the 21st century.

The U.S. government has still not been held responsible for its recent atrocities including George W. Bush's torture program, the devastating 20-year Afghanistan war, the [Iraq War](#), as well as the ongoing U.S.-Saudi [total war and siege](#) on Yemen, the world's [worst humanitarian crisis](#). At the highest levels, Washington has even committed outright [treason](#) against the American people taking the side of al Qaeda and its affiliates notably in the wars on [Libya](#), [Syria](#), and [Yemen](#). Hundreds of thousands of people have been slaughtered in these conflicts alone.

As Martin Luther King Jr. [said](#) during the Vietnam War, in which successive U.S. regimes butchered millions, it is *this* government that is "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today."

Getting Off the Path to War

There is no reason for war and brinksmanship, nor this mammoth buildup. "[Renewed Power Competition](#)" with [Russia and China](#) is a project of neoconservatives and other American imperialists. These hawks are ideologically [bent](#) on global primacy and "full spectrum dominance." Their chosen brand of "competition" serves doubly as a gargantuan public works project for the military, particularly the Air Force and the Navy, and is a multi-trillion-dollar corporate welfare scheme for the military industrial complex. However, America is broke and \$30 trillion in debt. This "competition" is at our direct expense, it undoubtedly will further impoverish and imperil the American people. The new Cold War era will also surely suffocate any and all of our remnants of liberty.

To avoid the coming calamity, Americans and especially libertarians of all stripes can no longer afford to sit on the sidelines while their corrupt ruling class recklessly drives us towards war with Beijing and Moscow. At a minimum, we must promptly regain control of our foreign policy and, in the spirit of the [Ron Paul](#) Revolution, unceasingly pursue

diplomacy, free trade, free travel, and cultural exchange. We can still choose peace.

China has not attacked us, but has been surrounded by myriad American warplanes, warships, submarines, missiles, and hundreds of military bases.

For what ultimate purpose do we suppose these hawks, who have killed so many, intend to use those warplanes, warships, submarines, missiles, and bases?

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