

Where Are the Realists? US Foreign Policy Endangers Americans without Delivering any Benefits

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*Sometimes it seems that when it comes to international relations Russian president **Vladimir Putin** might be the only head of state who is capable of any rational proposals. His recent negotiating positions conveyed initially by **Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Rybakov** to step back from the brink of war between his country and the United States over Ukraine are largely eminently sensible and would defuse the possibility that Eastern Europe might become a future Sarajevo incident that would ignite a nuclear war. [Per Putin](#),*

“We need long-term legally binding guarantees even if we know they cannot be trusted, as the US frequently withdraws from treaties that become uninteresting to them. But...something [more is needed], not just verbal assurances.”

Putin and President Biden discussed the Russian proposals and other issues in a phone conversation on December 30th, in which Biden called for diplomacy, and both he and Putin reportedly took steps to defuse the possible confrontation. In the phone call the two presidents agreed to initiate bilateral negotiations described as “strategic stability dialogue” relating to “mutual security guarantees” which have now begun on Sunday, January 9th, in Geneva. That will be followed by an exploratory meeting of the NATO-Russia Council on Wednesday and another meeting with the Organization for Security and Cooperation on Thursday.

Pat Buchanan, who is somewhat skeptical about Russian overreach, [has summed up](#) the Putin position, which he refers to as an ultimatum, as “Get off our front porch. Get out of our front yard. And stay out of our backyard.” Putin has demanded that NATO cease expansion into Eastern Europe, which threatens only Russia, while also scaling back planned missile emplacements in those former Warsaw Pact states that are already members of the alliance. He also has called on the US to reduce harassing incursions by warships and strategic bombers along the Russian border and to cease efforts to insert military bases in

the five 'Stans along the Russian federation's southern border. In other words, Russia believes that it should not have hostile military forces gathering along its borders, that it should have some kind of legally guaranteed and internationally endorsed strategic security zone such as the United States enjoys behind two oceans with friendly governments to north and south.

Buchanan concludes that there is much room for negotiating a serious agreement that will satisfy both sides, observing that the US now has through NATO untenable security arrangements with 28 European countries. He notes how "The day cannot be far off when the US is going to have to review and discard Cold War commitments that date to the 1940s and 1950s, and require us to fight a nuclear power such as Russia for countries that have nothing to do with our vital interests or our national security."

Secretary of State Tony Blinken [has been openly skeptical](#) about the Russian proposals, arguing that Moscow is a threat to Europe, though the extent that the Biden administration will play hard ball over the details is difficult to assess. Blinken and NATO [have already declared](#) that they will continue their expansion into Eastern Europe and the White House is [reportedly preparing](#) harsh new sanctions against Russia if the talks are not successful. To be sure, Administration pushback may be a debating technique to moderate or even eliminate some of the demands, or there may actually be hard liners from the Center for New American Security who have the administration's ear who want to confront Russia. Either way, both Blinken and Biden have warned the Russians "not to make a serious mistake over Ukraine," also stating that there would be "massive" economic consequences if there were any attack by Russian troops. After a meeting with Germany's new Foreign Minister, Blinken [asserted last week](#) that there would be no progress with in diplomatic approaches to the problem as long as there is a Russian "gun pointed at Ukraine's head." In reality, of course, Moscow is 5,000 miles away from Washington and the truly dangerous pointed gun has been in the hands of NATO and the US right on Russia's doorstep.

To be sure, fighting Russia is popular in some circles, largely a result of incessant negative media coverage about Putin and his government. Opinion polls suggest that half of all Americans [favor sending troops](#) to defend the Ukrainians. The Republicans, notably **Senators Ted Cruz, Tom Cotton and Marco Rubio**, appear to be [particularly enthusiastic](#) regarding going to war over Ukraine as well as with China over Taiwan and openly advocate both admitting Ukraine into NATO as well as sending troops and weapons as well as providing intelligence to assist Kiev. They argue that it is necessary to defend American democracy and also to maintain the US's "credibility," the last refuge of a scoundrel nation, [as Daniel Larison observes](#), since Washington frequently "goes back on its word." And then there are the crazies like Ohio **Congressman Mike Turner** [who says that](#) US troops must be sent to Ukraine to defend American democracy. Or Republican Senator from Mississippi **Roger Wicker** [who favors](#) a possible unilateral nuclear first-strike to "rain destruction on Russian military capability," leading to a global conflict that wouldn't be so bad as it would only kill 10 to 20 million Americans.

Russia has a right to be worried as something is brewing in Kazakhstan right now that just might be a replay of the US-supported NGO-instigated successful overthrow of the Ukrainian government in 2014. The Collective Security Treaty Organization members Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Armenia, have sent soldiers responding to the Kazakh government's request for help. Unfortunately, US foreign policy is not only about Russia. The Taiwan issue continues to fester with a similar resonance to the Ukraine crisis. China, a

rising power, increasingly wants to assert itself in its neighborhood while the US is trying to alternatively confront and contain it while also propping up relationships that evolved after the Korean War and during the Cold War. The status quo is unsustainable, but US moves to “protect” Taiwan are themselves destabilizing as they make the Chinese suspicious of American intentions and will likely lead to unnecessary armed conflict.

And let’s not ignore America’s continued devastation by sanctions and bombs of civilian populations in Venezuela, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan and Yemen to punish the governments of those countries. And, of course there, is always Israel, good old loyal ally and greatly loved by all politicians and the media, Israel, the Jewish state. Biden continues to waffle on reentry into the Iran nuclear non-proliferation agreement, which is good for the US, under pressure from Israel and its domestic “Amen chorus.” Just last month, speaking at a Zionist Organization of America Gala, former CIA Director and Secretary of State **Mike Pompeo** [intoned that](#) “There is no more important task of the Secretary of State than standing for Israel and there is no more important ally to the United States than Israel.” Add to that Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi’s [unforgettable bleat](#) about her love for Israel, “I have said to people when they ask me if this Capitol crumbled to the ground, the one thing that would remain is our commitment to our aid...and I don’t even call it aid...our cooperation with Israel. That’s fundamental to who we are.”

You might ask how any American leader could so blatantly state that US interests are subordinate to those of a foreign country, but there we are. And it is tragic that our president is willing to sacrifice American military lives in support of interests that are completely fraudulent. The truth is that we have a government that in bipartisan fashion does everything ass backwards while the American people struggle to pay the bills and watch their quality of life and even their security go downhill. Again citing Vladimir Putin’s wisdom on the subject, [one might observe that](#) as early as 2007 at the Munich Security Conference, the Russian president said that the “lawless behavior” of the United States in insisting on global dominance and leadership did not respect the vital interests of other nations and undermined both the desire for and the mechanisms established to encourage peaceful relations. He got that right. That is the crux of the matter. There is neither credibility nor humanity to American foreign policy, and everyone knows that the United States and allies like Israel are basically rogue nations that obey no rules and respect no one else’s rights. This has been somewhat true since the Second World War but it has become routine practice in nearly all of America’s international relations since 9/11 and the real losers are the American people, who have to shoulder the burden of an increasingly feckless and hopelessly corrupt political class.

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