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## **Biden's State of the Union Address Exposed by US**

### **Intelligence Threat Assessment**



President Joe Biden presents copies of his speech to Vice President Kamala Harris and House Speaker Mike Johnson before delivering his State of the Union address, Thursday, March 7, 2024, in the House Chamber at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

President Biden used the bully pulpit of the annual State of the Union Address to describe a world that significantly differed from the picture presented just a month earlier in the Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community.

Information fed to the general public is deliberately spun to sell the imperial project. In contrast, intelligence assessments for elite policymakers are designed to sustain the endeavor. That the president's pronouncements diverge from the conclusions reached by his own

intelligence community highlights the chasm between what is foisted on the public compared to what is understood within the bowels of the state.

Unlike Biden's bullish and bellicose pronouncements about "our leadership in the world," the Assessment's view was less triumphal. It states: "The United States faces an increasingly fragile global order."

The fraying US-imposed "rules-based order" and its discredited neoliberal economic system are more and more being challenged by "states engaging in competitive behavior," according to the Assessment. The report adds, fallout from the Gaza crisis, in particular, serves to "undermine" the US.

Both pronouncements, however, have similar biases. Biden's address to the nation was overtly political, accusing Trump of "bowing down" to Putin. But the supposedly neutral and objective "collective insights of the Intelligence Community" were likewise predisposed in favor of Democratic Party memes. Both blame Russian electoral interference for Trump's ascension to the Oval Office in 2016. As proof, the so-called intelligence community again offered nothing more than its own assessment, lacking better evidence.

### **"Ambitious" China**

Biden bragged in this address: "For years, all I've heard from my Republican friends...is China's on the rise and America is falling behind. They've got it backward!" Contrary to his bravado about "we're in a stronger position to win the competition for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century against China," the World Bank predicts 4.5% GDP growth in China compared to 1.6% for the US in 2024.

China has surpassed the US as the largest world economy by purchasing power parity. The Assessment forecasts slowed – but still greater than for the US – economic growth in what it labels as an "ambitious" China.

The Assessment reports that China "now rivals" the US in DNA-sequencing and is the "world leader" in voice and image recognition and video analytics. Biden's claim that, "I've made sure that the most advanced American technologies can't be used in China," is contradicted by the Assessment's finding that China is "making progress" in producing advanced chips on its own.

The Assessment notes: "China views Washington's competitive measures against Beijing as part of a broader US...effort to contain its rise." In this context, the Chinese perceive an increased likelihood of a US first-strike nuclear attack, according to the Assessment. Nevertheless, China has shown growing "confidence" in its nuclear deterrent capabilities against US aggression, also according to the Assessment.

China is disadvantaged militarily, according to the Assessment, because it “lacks recent warfighting experience,” something the US has in excess. US intelligence estimates that China will only “fully modernize” its national defense by 2035 and will not become a “world-class military” until 2049.

The Assessment anticipates increased Chinese push-back over Taiwan. Although Biden claimed that the US is “standing up for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait,” the US has done the opposite by continuing to destabilize and militarize the region. To wit, Biden said in his address, “I’ve revitalized our partnerships and alliances in the Pacific.”

### **“Confrontational” Russia**

The Assessment labels Russia “confrontational,” projecting Washington’s own posture. In a fit of made-for-popular-consumption Russophobia, Biden warned in his address: “Putin of Russia is on the march...If anybody in this room thinks Putin will stop at Ukraine, I assure you, he will not!”

While the Assessment warns of many threats, Russian expansionism – as Biden fear mongered – is not one of them. In fact, the Assessment notes that Russia stepped down from intervening in neighboring Azerbaijan regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh territory. The Assessment assures us: “Russia almost certainly does not want a direct military conflict with US and NATO forces.”

The Assessment notes that Russia “maintains the largest and most diverse nuclear weapons stockpile.” But it adds that Russia sees its stockpile as “necessary for maintaining deterrence” (presumably from a US first strike). The Assessment, while describing Russia as a “capable and resilient adversary,” takes the contrary view to Biden’s, seeing Russia’s posture as mainly “defensive.”

As the US proxy war against Russia drags on, Biden continues to campaign for expanding the US funding for Ukraine with no hint of a peace. For its part, the Assessment does not contest what it describes as Putin’s belief that Russia is winning the war in Ukraine.

Rather, the Assessment sees no victory in sight for the US: “This deadlock plays to Russia’s strategic military advantages and is increasingly shifting the momentum in Moscow’s favor.” Not surprisingly, this huge admission of the futility of the US war effort in Ukraine coming from its own intelligence institutions has not been prominently reported by the follow-the-flag corporate press.

The Assessment describes how Russia is strengthening and leveraging ties with China, Iran, and North Korea. Russia is mitigating the impacts of US-led sanctions, while “rebuild[ing] its

credibility as a great power.” Russia’s deepening ties with China in particular have afforded it significant “protection from future sanctions.”

Despite US-led coercive economic measures, the Assessment projects “modest” Russian GDP growth. Moscow has “successfully diverted” its oil exports and largely evaded the US/G7 price caps, retaining “significant energy leverage” as the second-largest supplier of liquefied natural gas to Europe. In short, Russia is “offsetting its decline in relations with the West” with a pivot to the Global South.

### **Other global flashpoints**

Biden’s policy of “containing the threat posed by Iran” is elaborated in the Assessment. US-led sanctions are credited with putting “brakes on” Iran’s economy. In response, the Assessment reports, Tehran has “expanded its diplomatic influence” by improving ties with Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

The Assessment correctly notes that Iran uses its nuclear program “to build negotiating leverage and respond to perceived international pressure,” pointing out that Iran would “restore JCPOA limits if the United States fulfilled *its* JCPOA commitments [emphasis added].”

On the one hand, the Assessment preposterously accuses Iran of seeking to “block a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians.” On the other, Iran is absolved of orchestrating or having any foreknowledge of the Hamas attack on Israel. This is a notable admission.

The Gaza conflict, according to the Assessment, poses the “risk of escalation” into regional interstate war. Uncle Sam’s “key Arab partners,” the Assessment laments, face hostile domestic sentiment because their citizens (correctly) see the US and Israel as responsible for “the death and destruction.” Although the US is recognized as the “power broker” that could “end the conflict,” the Assessment (also correctly) implies that the US has not played that role.

The Assessment foresees Israel needing to confront “armed resistance from Hamas for years to come.” While acknowledging that Hamas enjoys “broad support,” the Assessment questions Israeli President Netanyahu’s “viability” and “ability of rule.”

Similar to the case of Iran, the Assessment explains, North Korea’s nuclear program is pursued as a “guarantor of regime security” and to “deter outside intervention.” North Korea’s missile launches, the Assessment admits, are responses to counter hostile US-South Korea military exercises. North Korea’s development of nuclear capabilities, the Assessment

further acknowledges, are defensive to “enhance second-strike capabilities” in the contingency of a first strike by the US and its allies.

In regard to immigration, Biden touts his “comprehensive plan to fix” our system. Given the current dysfunction on the US border, claiming credit there sounds more like a Republican talking point than one favoring the incumbent. Largely ignored in Biden’s address, the Assessment is concerned with global warming and its potentially destabilizing effect on the US-imposed global order by generating climate refugees.

“Poor socioeconomic conditions and insecurity” further drive cross-border migration, warns the Assessment. While admitting that “lack of economic opportunities” are among the factors that drive Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan emigration, the Assessment incredulously rejects blaming US sanctions for driving people away from their homelands.

### **Conclusion**

Unlike the upbeat “greatest comeback story never told” of the State of the Union address, the Assessment cautions:

“Strains in US alliances and challenges to international norms have made it more difficult...to tackle global issues.... The world that emerges from this tumultuous period will be shaped by whoever... [is] most effective at advancing economic growth and providing benefits for more people, and by the powers...that are most able and willing to act on solutions to transnational issues and regional crises.”

Meanwhile, the Assessment reports that Putin’s “Russia has increased social spending...and increased corporate taxes.” Also reported, Xi’s China is prioritizing “a more equitable distribution of wealth – replacing the focus on maximizing GDP growth.” Back home, Biden promised in his address “to end cancer as we know it” and prophesized that he will “save the planet from the climate crisis.” (For starters, I would settle for just stopping the genocide in Palestine and a negotiated peace in Ukraine.)

Roger Harris is on the board of the [Task Force on the Americas](#), a 32-year-old anti-imperialist human rights organization.

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