

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نپاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

Joe Lauria

22.09.2024



Joe Lauria

## *The Madness of Antony Blinken*

Two years after the Pentagon shot down his ploy for a no-fly zone against Russia in Ukraine, the U.S. “top diplomat” has been at it again pushing an even more insane idea, writes Joe Lauria.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on April 24, 2024. (Official State Department photo/Chuck Kennedy)

On March 7, 2022, two weeks after Moscow entered the civil war in Ukraine, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told CBS News from Moldova that the U.S.

would give NATO-member Poland a “green light” to send Mig-29 fighter jets to Ukraine to enforce a no-fly zone against Russian aircraft.

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer then also backed the no-fly zone. But within days the Pentagon shot down the idea as it engaged in a consequential battle with the State Department and members of Congress to prevent a direct NATO military confrontation with Russia that could unleash history’s most unimaginable horrors.

A no-fly zone “could result in significant Russian reaction that might increase the prospects of a military escalation with NATO,” according to then Pentagon spokesman John Kirby.

President Joe Biden was caught in the middle of the fray. Pressure on the White House from some members of Congress and the press corps was unrelenting to recklessly bring NATO directly into the war.

Biden ultimately sided with the Defense Department, and he couldn’t be more explicit why. He opposed a NATO no-fly zone over Ukraine fighting Russian aircraft, he said, because “that’s called World War III, okay? Let’s get it straight here, guys. We will not fight the third world war in Ukraine.”

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin backed him up:

“President Biden’s been clear that U.S. troops won’t fight Russia in Ukraine, and if you establish a no-fly zone, certainly in order to enforce that no-fly zone, you’ll have to engage Russian aircraft. And again, that would put us at war with Russia.”

(The administration plan was, and apparently still is, to bring down the Russian government through a proxy counteroffensive and an economic and information war, not a direct military one.)

Blinken, who stepped out of line to speak above the heads of the president and the Pentagon, lost that round. It’s surprising he kept his job. But he survived and now he’s come back for more.

### **Relentless**

Blinken’s recklessness emerged yet again last week when he peddled a story — eagerly picked up by *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* — that Biden would approve a British request to fire its Storm Shadow missiles deep into Russia.

*The Guardian* story on Sept. 11 said:

“The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, gave his strongest hint yet that the White House is about to lift its restrictions on Ukraine using long-range weapons supplied by the west on

key military targets inside Russia, with a decision understood to have already been made in private.

Speaking in Kyiv alongside the UK foreign secretary, David Lammy, Blinken said the US had ‘from day one’ been willing to adapt its policy as the situation on the battlefield in Ukraine changed. ‘We will continue to do this,’ he emphasised.”

To fire British Storm Shadows, Ukraine would have to depend on British technical soldiers on the ground in Ukraine to actually launch them and on U.S. geolocation technology. German Chancellor Olaf Shulz revealed those British soldiers are already in Ukraine.

In other words, it would be a NATO attack on Russia, dressed up as a Ukrainian one. It would mean the U.S. and Britain were at war with Moscow, something Blinken seems to want and said was going to happen.

The next day Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that launching such missiles into Russia “will mean that NATO countries — the United States and European countries — are at war with Russia. And if this is the case, then, bearing in mind the change in the essence of the conflict, we will make appropriate decisions in response to the threats that will be posed to us.”

Nevertheless, *The New York Times* ran a story on the same day with the headline: “Biden Poised to Approve Ukraine’s Use of Long-Range Western Weapons in Russia.”

*The Guardian* added:

“British government sources indicated that a decision had already been made to allow Ukraine to use Storm Shadow cruise missiles on targets inside Russia, although it is not expected to be publicly announced on Friday when Starmer meets Biden in Washington DC.”

Blinken’s words evidently raised British Prime Minister Keir Starmer’s hopes that he would satisfy his desire to strike Russia with his nation’s arsenal of long-range missiles, despite Putin saying that meant direct war with NATO.

Blinken and the British are trying to lead us to the brink.

### **Sanity in Arlington**

Except that the Pentagon, the purveyor of the most monstrous violence in world history, has pulled the world back from it.

For at least the second time — publicly known — the Department of War secured peace from neocon recklessness fronted by Blinken.

Starmer was sent back on his chartered British Airways flight from the White House meeting licking his wounds. He’d evidently been led by Blinken to believe that it was a done deal: the

U.S. would let Britain attack Russia with its long-range missiles using U.S. technology — even if the U.S. wouldn't allow its own long-range ATACMS to be used.

*The Times* of London reported that Biden withholding approval “surprised British officials who had listened closely to hints from Antony Blinken, the US secretary of state, that America was edging towards authorising Storm Shadow, an Anglo-French weapon which relies on American GPS guidance systems.”

Starmer's mania to strike Russia illustrates the British elite's continuing pathological hatred of Russia, extending back centuries, compared to a perhaps more tempered, though determined, American geostrategic rivalry with Moscow.

### **Biden's Limits With the Neocons**

Biden has proven himself a supreme warmonger, his advocacy for the illegal invasion of Iraq and his complicity in the genocide in Gaza as the most egregious examples.

Like the two presidents before him, Biden allowed neocons to worm themselves into positions of power in his administration. But the extent to which Biden himself is a neocon, as opposed to a traditional warmonger, is subject to question.

As a creature of Washington of more than half a century, he seems to respect the military's judgement about military matters and, on his good days, understands that even America has limits.

Barack Obama let Hillary Clinton, the “Queen of Warmongers,” bring Neocon Queen Victoria Nuland into his administration. Donald Trump let neocons John Bolton and Mike Pompeo into his. And Biden has Blinken (and for a time Nuland too.)

Instead of banishing these people, they are allowed to linger and drag the U.S. into evermore perilous failures: Iraq, Afghanistan, Gaza and Ukraine, leaving behind a mountain of squandered dollars and an ocean of blood.

As a careerist, Blinken said what he had to say to get to where he is. Obama in 2015 wisely decided against arming Ukraine after the Nuland and Biden-led 2014 coup because he did not want to antagonize Russia, for whom he said Ukraine was a vital interest, while it was not for the U.S. Obama also feared U.S. arms would fall into the hands of “thugs” — meaning neo-Nazi Azov types, whom Obama was well aware of.

Blinken at the time was Obama's deputy secretary of state. To support the president's position, he told a conference in Berlin:

“If you're playing on the military terrain in Ukraine, you're playing to Russia's strength, because Russia is right next door. It has a huge amount of military equipment and military

force right on the border. Anything we did as countries in terms of military support for Ukraine is likely to be matched and then doubled and tripled and quadrupled by Russia.”

But once he was freed of the restraints of Obama, he joined Biden’s aggressive Ukraine policy at the top of the State Department. From that position, and with a power vacuum in the White House because of Biden’s dementia, Blinken has been openly pushing the neocon agenda, laid out plainly in the 2000 report of the Project for a New American Century.

And what is that agenda? In another age, before it became a dirty word, it would have been proudly proclaimed as imperialism. It contains all of the hubris and sense of invincibility and impunity of any empire in history.

PNAC plainly promulgates that no power or alliance of powers will be allowed to rise up to stand in the way of the neocons’ mad quest to harness American power to achieve world domination. An alliance of powers such as that of China, Russia and the BRICS countries, which has only accelerated in opposition to unhinged, neoconservative adventurism.

No matter the many disasters piling up, notably Iraq, Palestine and now Ukraine, the neocons are undeterred and unrestrained. It’s about power and murder but it is made palatable to themselves with flowery language about America saving the world for democracy.

Their belief in their own supremacy, cloaked in an American flag, remains fanatic, no matter the death and destruction they cause. They do not understand that American power has limits and to test that, they risk everything.

In 2019, Blinken teamed up with arch-neoconservative Robert Kagan to write a *Washington Post* op-ed arguing for more aggressive use of U.S. power abroad and against U.S. domestic trends towards non-interventionism.

With Kagan’s wife Nuland out of the Biden Administration and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan crucially siding with the realists, Blinken has emerged as the undisputed leader of who George H.W. Bush called the “crazies in the basement.”

That was 30 years ago. The neocons are in the penthouse now and only the restraint of the Pentagon and Sullivan’s persuasion brought Biden back from the brink.

This time.

**Joe Lauria is editor-in-chief of *Consortium News* and a former U.N. correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, and other newspapers, including *The Montreal Gazette*, the *London Daily Mail* and *The Star* of Johannesburg. He was an investigative reporter for the *Sunday Times* of London, a financial reporter for *Bloomberg News* and began his professional work as a 19-year old stringer for *The New York Times*. He is the**

**author of two books, *A Political Odyssey*, with Sen. Mike Gravel, foreword by Daniel Ellsberg; and *How I Lost By Hillary Clinton*, foreword by Julian Assange.**

**By Joe**

**Lauria**

*Special to Consortium News*

September 20, 2024