

Biden's press conference and the war hysteria of American imperialism

Barry Grey
12 July 2024

The media commentary following US President Joe Biden's press conference Thursday has been dominated by discussion over whether or not he proved himself capable of maintaining his position as the Democratic Party's nominee in the 2024 elections.

Far more significant than the semi-senility of Biden, however, is the political madness expressed in his policies and his statements. But this is a madness shared by the entire ruling class political establishment, along with the corporate media.

Biden began the news conference with an eight-minute war-mongering rant, beneath the banner of NATO, the military alliance that is the spearhead of American imperialism's global war. He declared the NATO summit in Washington a great success and credited himself with leading it.

The summit effectively ended the pretense that NATO is not directly at war with Russia by establishing a NATO Command based in Germany, placing NATO officers in Kiev, and agreeing to deploy long-range missiles in Germany capable of hitting major cities deep inside Russia, including Moscow.

Referring to Putin, Biden declared, "Once again a murderous madman was on the march." The only solution to countering this "monster," Biden said, is massive military escalation. In fact, the Russian invasion of Ukraine was provoked through the relentless expansion of NATO. It has been utilized, as Biden himself boasted, to increase the membership of the military alliance and bring it even further to Russia's doorstep.

At one point, Biden declared in relation to Ukraine's use of weapons to attack Russian territory that "we've allowed Zelensky to use American weapons in the near term," but that it wouldn't make "sense" for Ukraine to strike the Kremlin with them.

Not that a decision to use long-range weapons to attack Moscow would trigger nuclear war and the death of millions, if not billions, but that it does not, at present, make "sense," that it "wouldn't be the best use of the weapons he has." No one in the media bothered to follow up by asking what Biden was doing to prevent the escalation of the war into a nuclear apocalypse.

In fact, the entire policy of the United States, endorsed by the other NATO powers at the summit, seems intended at provoking a response from the Putin government that would be used to justify a further escalation—including the direct deployment of NATO troops into the conflict.

At another point, Biden declared rhetorically, "Every American must ask for himself or herself: Is the world safer with NATO? Are you safer? Is your family safer?" The answer to these questions is clearly "no." The entire policy of the Biden administration and the NATO powers is driving mankind to the brink. But no one in the press questioned the assertion that escalating global war is in the interests of the "American people."

While Biden may be senile, his questioners at the press conference are blighted by the disease of ignorance and stupidity. They were more concerned about the latest pronouncements of millionaire actor George Clooney and the Democratic Party's donors than the consequences of the escalation of the war against Russia.

Virtually nothing was said either by Biden or the press about the ongoing genocide in Gaza. There was no mention of the recent article by *The Lancet* calculating the death toll of Gazans in the US/Israeli war at 186,000 or higher, i.e., at least 8 percent of the pre-war population. However, in response to the question that was asked, Biden

reiterated his full support for Israel and made the lying statement, “I’m not building 2,000 pound bombs” for Israel. “They cannot be used in Gaza or any populated area without causing great human damage.”

But just two weeks ago Reuters published an article reporting that Biden has sent Israel more than 10,000 of the city block-destroying 2,000 pound bombs since October.

The press, what used to be called the “Fourth Estate,” is thoroughly integrated into the intelligence apparatus. There was no challenge to Biden’s presentation of the war in Ukraine and the need to “win” it.

Instead, David Sanger, the chief foreign affairs commentator for the *New York Times*, cited bellicose language directed against China in the NATO communiqué and demanded to know what NATO was doing to “disrupt” the relations between China and Russia and whether a reelected President Biden, three years on, would be able to “hold his own” in a meeting with President Xi.

The press conference had been described as a “make or break” moment for Biden following his debate debacle against Trump two weeks ago. Shortly after it concluded, five more House Democrats issued statements calling on Biden to end his candidacy in order to replace him with a Democrat who could defeat Trump in November. That brought the number as of Friday morning to 18, plus one sitting senator, Peter Welch of Vermont.

Socialist Equality Party presidential candidate Joseph Kishore noted in a statement published on X yesterday, “What is most striking in the discussions over Biden’s fate as the candidate of the Democratic Party in the 2024 elections is the absence of any actual policy differences. All factions support the massive escalation of imperialist war, which threatens catastrophe for all mankind.”

Kishore added:

Particular note should be made of the position of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and other members of the Democratic Socialists of America, who have taken the most aggressive position in defense of Biden. Whatever their insincere and hypocritical criticisms of the genocide in Gaza, the DSA is fully behind the

policy of American imperialism. It is nothing more than a faction of the Democratic Party.

If the Democratic Party does end up changing its candidate, it will not be to implement a change in policy, but to ensure that the extreme recklessness on display at Biden’s press conference is carried out in a more effective manner.

It is not a matter of glorifying the Democratic Party of the past, but it is worth recalling that in run-up to the 1968 elections, the intense conflict and crisis within the Democratic Party was bound up with conflicts over the course of the Vietnam War. No such differences exist today.

The whole electoral process is dominated by the principle of oligarchy. All decisions, including on Biden’s personal fate, are made by a handful of billionaire donors, along with the figures who dominate the military-intelligence-state apparatus. The interests of the vast majority of the population, the working class, are entirely excluded.

Within this political situation, the essential task for the working class is to articulate its independent interests, in opposition to the Democrats and the Republicans and the entire capitalist system.

The *World Socialist Web Site* and the Socialist Equality Party are sponsoring a rally and meeting on July 24 in Washington D.C. on the occasion of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s address to a joint session of Congress. The purpose of this rally is to set forward the political orientation and strategy for a mass movement against the Gaza genocide and US imperialism.

We urge all workers and youth to make plans to attend by filling out the form below.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact