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Regime change has been the US goal in Russia for years

For all the damage control that followed Biden's 'Putin cannot remain in power' remark, that's exactly what Washington wishes for



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It was the culminating event of a four-day trip planned at the last minute for the purpose of rallying Europe to the cause of standing up to Russia’s military incursion into Ukraine. Speaking before a large and enthusiastic crowd in the Polish capital of Warsaw, US President Joe Biden concluded his remarks by going off-script. After condemning what he called his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin’s “brutality” in Ukraine, Biden uttered nine words that, in a blink of an eye, made moot whatever else had been accomplished on this trip: *“For God’s sake, this man [Putin] cannot remain in power.”*

Biden departed the venue and headed straight for Air Force One, which was standing by to fly him back to the US. Before his plane could get off the ground, the White House was scrambling to contain the damage done by Biden’s most recent gaffe. *“The President’s point,”* an unnamed White House official explained to the press, *“was that Putin cannot be allowed to exercise power over his neighbors or the region. He was not discussing Putin’s power in Russia, or regime change.”*

When Biden arrived back in the US, he was asked if he was, in fact, calling for regime change in Moscow. Biden offered a terse one-word answer: “No.”



But the off-the-cuff statement continued to haunt Biden, who was compelled to later offer a more detailed explanation for his outburst, telling the press *“I was expressing the moral outrage I felt...[at] the actions of this man [i.e., Putin],” Biden said. “I wasn’t then, nor am I now, articulating a policy change.”*

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Apparently enough people were concerned about that very issue to prompt diplomats in the US and Europe to go into overdrive to explain otherwise. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken declared that the US had “repeatedly” stated that “we do not have a strategy of regime change in Russia—or anywhere else. For us, it’s not about regime change,” he explained. “The Russian people have to decide who they want to lead them.”

Josep Borrell, the EU’s chief diplomat, also stepped up to explain away Biden’s remarks. “[In the EU] we are not after a regime change, that is something for the Russian citizens to decide, if they of course could decide that.”

Unfortunately for both Blinken and Borrell, the evidence seems to suggest otherwise. According to British journalist Niall Ferguson, a senior Biden administration official was quoted as saying, prior to Biden’s slip of the tongue, that in the aftermath of the Russian military incursion into Ukraine, “The only end game now is the end of Putin regime. Until then, all the time Putin stays, [Russia] will be a pariah state that will never be welcomed back into the community of nations.”



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Neither the sentiment (i.e., Putin has to go) nor the mechanism of regime change (that the Russian people will force him out) represent new thinking in terms of the West’s approach to the current Russian government. In fact, both are well known to Russia. According to

Michael McFaul, the US Ambassador to Russia from 2012-2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin believes that the US works hard to foster regime changes around

the world, including in so-called “color revolutions”

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Back in 2005, McFaul himself wrote [an entire paper](#) on US efforts at regime change in the former USSR. This was one of the reasons that President Barack Obama's decision to send him to Moscow proved so unpopular with the Russian side.

The Kremlin accused the US of engaging in such action in Russia following the December 2011 Russian Duma election, narrowly won by then-Prime Minister Putin's party. At a meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, former US Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton following the 2011 Duma election](#), expressed her *"serious concern about the conduct of the elections,"* and called for a *"full investigation of all reports of fraud and intimidation,"* adding *"The Russian people, like people everywhere, deserve the right to have their voices heard and their votes counted. And that means they deserve free, fair, transparent elections and leaders who are accountable to them."*

Putin in turn accused Clinton of giving *"the signal"* to opposition leaders to undertake mass unrest to undermine the Russian elections. *"[Opposition leaders] heard the signal and with the support of the US state department began active work,"* [Putin said after Clinton's comments](#). *"We are all grownups here. We all understand the organizers are acting according to a well-known scenario and in their own mercenary political interests."*

McFaul underscored the concern on the part of Putin when it came to Clinton's remarks. *"He was genuinely worried about this mobilization against him,"* [McFaul said later](#), *"and that's when he pivoted hard against us. For Putin, this was confirming his theory of US foreign policy."*

McFaul would know, given the fact that he was the architect of the so-called "Russia reset" policy undertaken by the administration of President Barack Obama in 2009. [The real purpose of this reset policy, however, was regime change](#)—to facilitate the empowerment of

President Dmitry Medvedev, the Minister who had swapped places with Putin, and the Russian Constitution limiting Putin to two consecutive

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terms in office (the Constitution has since been amended), to permanently replace Putin as President.

Under McFaul's influence, the White House limited contact with Putin, placing all its attention on Medvedev. This full-court press for preventing Putin's return to the Kremlin as President extended to Joe Biden, who at the time was Obama's Vice President.

During a trip to Moscow in March 2011, Biden allegedly urged Putin not to seek reelection, telling a group of Russian opposition leaders that it would be better for Russia if Putin did not run for re-election **Read more:** MSNBC deletes next year. *"At the end of the meeting,"* Boris Nemtsov, a leading opposition figure [who was murdered in Moscow](#) on February 27, 2015, [noted in his blog](#), *"Biden said that in Putin's place he would not stand for president in 2012 because this would be bad for the country and for himself."*

Putin, of course, ignored Biden's "advice", and went on to re-take the presidency in the March 2012 election.

The Russian government has long held that Western intelligence services had been using "democracy promotion" as a front to organize political opposition to Putin with the goal of removing him from office—i.e., regime change. One of the most public aspects of this effort [was the discovery by Russia of a so-called "spy rock" used by the British](#) intelligence agency, MI6, to communicate with its agents in Moscow. At the same time this object (in reality, a covert electronic device used to facilitate communication), the Russian intelligence service secretly funding Russian political opposition groups.

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Incidents such as the ‘spy rock’ led the Russian government to crack down on foreign-funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs), [first passing laws](#) which compelled groups that receive foreign funding and are deemed to engage in political activities to register as “foreign agents,” before [barring NGOs altogether](#) if they were deemed to pose a threat to Russia’s constitutional order, defense or security. The list of banned organizations included USAID, prompting the Obama administration [to withdraw from the Civil Society Working Group of the US-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission](#). Thomas Melia, the group’s American co-chair, observed that the *“recent steps taken by the Russian government to impose restrictions on civil society...called into serious question whether maintaining that mechanism was either useful or appropriate.”* His sentiments were echoed by State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland, who told the press that *“the working group was not advancing the cause of civil society in Russia.”*

Left unspoken was the reality that what the US called *“advancing the cause of civil society in Russia”* was seen by Russia as little more than thinly disguised efforts at regime change through foreign-funded “color revolution.”

While the overt and covert efforts of the US and its western allies to undermine and overthrow the Putin government by facilitating internal political opposition inside Russia took a hiatus during the four years of the Trump administration, the election of Joe Biden

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in 2020, and the advent of the current Ukraine crisis, has led to the re-engagem

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attempt to weaken Putin's hold on power and, ultimately, to remove the long-serving Russian President from office.

The Biden administration has taken to the artifice of speaking to the people of Russia directly to foment internal unrest inside Russia. *"We know many of you want no part of this war,"* Secretary of State [Antony Blinken recently said](#), addressing the people of Russia. *"You—like Ukrainians, like Americans, like people everywhere—want the same basic things: good jobs, clean air and water, the chance to raise your kids in safe neighborhoods, to send them to good schools, to give them better lives than you had. How in the world does President Putin's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine help you achieve any of these things?"*

Left unsaid was what Blinken expected the Russian people to do about it.

Blinken's comments followed those made by Joe Biden in the days leading up to the Russian military incursion into Ukraine when, on February 15, [the US President addressed the Russian people directly](#): *"To the citizens of Russia: You are not our enemy,"* Biden said. *"And I do not believe you want a bloody, destructive war against Ukraine—a country and a people with whom you share such deep ties of family, history, and culture."*

The State Department has taken to sending out tweets in the Russian language encouraging public demonstrations against the war. *"The open protest of Russians against President Putin and his war is a very courageous act,"* [one such tweet declares](#). *"As President Biden said, the people of Russia are not our enemy. We blame this war on President Putin, not them."*

The Biden administration has gone out of its way to make sure that its program of communicating directly to the Russian people to promote domestic discontent inside Russia is part and parcel of an overall strategy to remove

Putin from office. Biden himself underscored in his February 15 remarks [addressed to the people of Russia](#).

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But some in the US elite are, in fact, calling for the removal of Putin from power.

"Is there a Brutus in Russia?" Senator

Lindsey Graham, a Republican (from South Carolina)

known for his anti-

Putin sentiment, [wrote in a March 3 tweet](#). **Read more: US senator repeats call to assassinate Putin**

there a more

successful Colonel Stauffenberg in the Russian military? The only way this ends is for somebody in Russia to take this guy out. You would be doing your country—and the world—a great service."

When called out for his tweet, [Graham doubled down](#).

"He [Putin] needs to be dealt with by the Russian people," Graham said. *"I'm not asking to invade Russia to take him out. I'm not asking to send American ground forces into Ukraine to fight the Russian army. I am asking the Russian people to rise up and end this reign of terror."*

The Biden White House was quick to push back against Graham's March 3 tweet. *"No, we are not advocating for killing the leader of a foreign country or a regime change,"* [White House spokesperson Jen Psaki noted](#).

"That is not the position of the United States government and certainly not a statement you'd hear come from the mouth of anybody working in this administration."

Then Joe Biden, the President of the United States, gave voice to that very same sentiment during his Warsaw address: *"For God's sake, this man [Putin] cannot remain in power."*

There simply is no other way to spin that statement.

Whether spoken or unspoken, it is clear to all that the official policy of the United States has been since 2009, regime change

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called “democratic reform” (i.e., mass unrest) to oust President Putin.

Unfortunately for Biden, Blinken, Graham and their fellow regime-change travelers, an opinion poll from Levada (recognized as a foreign agent in Russia) showed that the Russian leader’s approval rating was over 71%. The chances of their regime-change fantasy coming true at this stage in the game are exactly zero.

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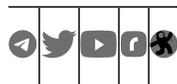


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