

White House press conference [via CNN]

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8 minutes and 28 seconds

CHRIS MEGERIAN: Do you have any plans to speak with President Putin at this point and what interactions have you had with the Russian government

BIDEN: I heard the first part. Do I have any plans to speak with Putin at this point and what —

MEGERIAN: What communications have you had with the Kremlin as far as military ops in Ukraine and making sure this is not spiraling into a larger conflict.

BIDEN: Well, it's a large conflict already. The way we're going to assure it's not going to aspire to a larger conflict is by providing all the forces needed in the eastern European nations that are members of our NATO. NATO is more united than it's ever been and I have no plans to talk with Putin. [REPORTERS SHOUTING] Ah, *Wall Street Journal*. Tarini.

TARINI PARTI: Mr. President, you didn't mention SWIFT in your sanctions that you announced. Is there a reason why the U.S. is not doing that? Is there a disagreement among allies regarding swift and if Russia should be a part of it?

BIDEN: The sanctions that we have proposed on all their banks are of equal consequence, maybe more consequence than SWIFT, number one. Number two, it is always an option, but right now, that's not the position that the rest of Europe wishes to take. Um — um Cecilia Vega — Vega, ABC.

CECILIA VEGA: Sir, sanctions clearly have not been enough to deter Vladimir Putin to this point. What is going to stop him? How and when does this end? And do you see him trying to go beyond Ukraine? And a second question I'll just give to you now — this statement that he gave last night, will that — the threat he gave — the west will face consequences greater than any you have faced in history. Is he threatening a nuclear strike?

BIDEN: I have no idea what he's threatening. I know what he has done, number one. Number two, no one expected the sanctions to prevent anything from happening. This has to — it's going to take time and we have to show resolve, so he knows what is coming and so the people of Russia know what he's brought on them. That's what this is all about. This is going to take time. It's not going to occur — he's going to say oh, my god. These sanctions are coming. I'm going to stand down. He's going to test the resolve of the west to see if we stay together and we will. We will and it will impose significant costs on him.

VEGA: Will he go beyond Ukraine, sir? Do you see him going beyond Ukraine?

BIDEN [TO DOOCY]: Yes.

PETER DOOCY: Thank you. Two topics just really quick. First, markets are down and gas prices are up. I know you always stress the difference between Wall Street and main street, but everybody seems to be in for some economic pain. How economically painful is it going to get for people in this country? And I do have one more question.

BIDEN: First of all, there's no doubt that when a major nuclear power attacks and invades another country that the world is going to respond and markets will respond all over the world. So there's no doubt about that, number one. Number two, the notion that this is going to last for a long time is highly unlikely as long as we continue to stay resolved in imposing the sanctions we're going to impose on Russia. Period. What's the next question? I'm sorry.

DOOCY: The next question is, did you underestimate Putin? And would you still describe him the way you did in the summer as a worthy adversary?

BIDEN: At the time, he was — I made it clear he was an adversary and I said he was worthy. I didn't underestimate him. And I've read most of everything he's written. Did you read the — I shouldn't — I'm not being a wise guy. You — you heard the speech he made. Almost an hour's worth of speech of why he was going into Ukraine. He has much larger ambitions than Ukraine. He wants to, in fact, reestablish the former Soviet Union. That's what this is about and I think that his — his ambitions are completely contrary to the place where the rest of the world has arrived.

DOOCY: And [INAUDIBLE] you're confident that these devastating sanctions are going to be as devastating as Russian missiles and bullets and tanks?

BIDEN: Yes. Russian bullets, missiles, and tanks in Ukraine. Yes, I am.

KAITLAN COLLINS: Thank you, President Biden. If sanctions cannot stop President Putin, what penalty can?

BIDEN: I didn't say sanctions couldn't stop him.

COLLINS: You've been talking about the threat of these sanctions for several weeks now.

BIDEN: Yes, but the threat of the sanctions and imposing the sanctions and seeing the effect of the sanctions are two different things. They're two different things and we're now going to — he's going to begin to see the effect of the sanctions.

COLLINS: And what will that do? How will that change his mindset here given that he's attacking —

BIDEN: Cause it will —

COLLINS: — Ukraine as we speak.

BIDEN: — so weaken his country that he'll have to make a very, very difficult choice of whether to continue to move toward being a second-rate power or, in fact, respond.

COLLINS: You said in recent weeks that big nations cannot bluff when it comes to something like this. You recently said that the idea of personally sanctioning President Putin is on the table. Is that a step that you're prepared to take and, if not —

BIDEN: It's not a bluff. It's on the table.

COLLINS: — sanctioning President Putin?

BIDEN: Yes.

COLLINS: Why not sanction him today, sir?

PETER ALEXANDER: Mr. President?

WHITE HOUSE PRESS AIDE: Last question.

COLLINS: Why not sanction him today?

ALEXANDER: Mr. President, if I can, you detailed some severe and swift new sanctions today and said that the impact it will have over time, but given the full scale invasion, given that you're not pursuing disconnecting Russia from what's called SWIFT — the international banking system — or other sanctions at your disposal, respectfully, sir, what more are you waiting for?

BIDEN: Specifically with the sanctions we've imposed exceed SWIFT. The sanctions we've imposed exceed anything that's ever been done. The sanctions we've imposed have generated two-thirds of the world joining us. They are profound sanctions. Let's have a conversation in another month or so to see if they're working. [TO STEVE HOLLAND] Yes.

ALEXANDER: Can I ask about Zelensky? Sir, you spoke to Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday, sir.

STEVE HOLLAND: What's the — what's the risk we're watching another beginning of another Cold War? And is there now a complete rupture in U.S. and Russia relations?

BIDEN: There is a complete rupture right now in U.S./Russian relations, if they continue on this path that they're on. And in terms of a cold war, that depends. If you have the vast majority of the rest of the world in total opposition of what he's doing from Asia to South America to Europe to around the world and so it's going to be a cold day for Russia. The idea you don't see a whole lot of people coming to his defense.

HOLLAND: And are you — are you — if I could follow up, sir. Are you urging China to help isolate Russia? Are you urging China to help isolate Russia?

BIDEN: I'm not prepared to comment on that at the moment. [POINTS TO TYLER PAGER]

WHITE HOUSE PRESS AIDE: Last question. Last question.

BIDEN [TO PRESS AIDE]: Wait, no, no. Yeah. No. No. He's had his hand up a long time.

TYLER PAGER: Thank you, Mr. President. How concerned are you that Putin wants to go beyond Ukraine into other countries and the U.S. will have to get involved, if he moves into NATO countries?

BIDEN: Well, if he did move into NATO countries, we will be involved. We will be involved. The only thing that I'm convinced of, if we don't stop now, he'll be emboldened. If we don't move against him now with these significant sanctions, he will be emboldened. Look, you know, every — well, anyway.

PAGER: And can you talk anything more about your conversation — [REPORTERS SHOUTING] [WHITE HOUSE STAFF SHOUTING] — can you — [REPORTERS SHOUTING] [WHITE HOUSE STAFF SHOUTING] Mr. President —

UNIDENTIFIED REPORTER: Why not — why not sanction Putin directly today?

[REPORTERS SHOUTING] [WHITE HOUSE STAFF SHOUTING]

BIDEN: I'm sorry I can't hear you.

LALIT JHA: Sir, India is a major defense partner of the United States. Is India with — fully with you on the issue on Ukraine and Russia?

BIDEN: Does the Defense Department of the United States?

JHA: India is one of your major defense partners. Is India fully in sync with the United States on — on Russia?

BIDEN: We're going to be — we're in consultation with — with India today. We haven't resolved that completely.

JHA: One more question —

[REPORTERS SHOUTING] [WHITE HOUSE STAFF SHOUTING]

BIDEN: Okay. Thank you all very much.