



RED DRAGON MENACING

Chinese Communist Party(CCP) Exposed

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671. Not Only Russia, but China Is to Blame for Threats Against Ukraine



*A convoy of Russian armored vehicles moves along a highway in Crimea on Jan. 18, 2022.
(AP Photo)*

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Beijing is coordinating with Moscow and backing it economically



Anders Corr

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Any Russian invasion of Ukraine will depend upon economic depth in China, and diplomatic appeasement by Germany and France. Beijing is likely encouraging Moscow to invade, which serves the purposes of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

While NATO should be pivoting to address the China threat, Russia is using 100,000 troops on the border with Ukraine to pressure NATO for “legally binding security guarantees” that Ukraine will not join the alliance.

Moscow seeks the withdrawal of NATO military infrastructure to 1997 positions, when the two powers signed an agreement. These are impossible demands that would mean rolling back democracy in Eastern Europe, and the expansion of Beijing and Moscow’s illiberal influence globally. If NATO appeases Russia by abandoning Ukraine today, China will double down on its demand for Taiwan tomorrow. Giving into a bully only encourages the others.

Already, some Eastern European countries are vetoing the European Union’s measures against Beijing’s human rights abuse and territorial aggression, including in the South China Sea. Germany and France, which are weaker on China and Russia than is President Joe Biden, are looking for diplomatic escapes that require throwing Ukraine under the bus.

For example, Germany opposes letting Estonia gift Soviet-made artillery pieces to Ukraine, because they were based in East Germany at reunification, from which they were sent to Finland, and then Estonia. As noted by The Wall Street Journal, “Germany’s refusal could be read by Moscow as another sign of division in the West’s ranks.”

This is not the time for division among democracies. Estonia should hand the howitzers over to Ukraine anyway, accompanied by a speech about Germany’s cowardice.

Russia's military buildup is already visibly distracting and disuniting NATO alliance members. Biden mistakenly revealed that NATO members recently disagree on the proper response to various types of Russian invasion.

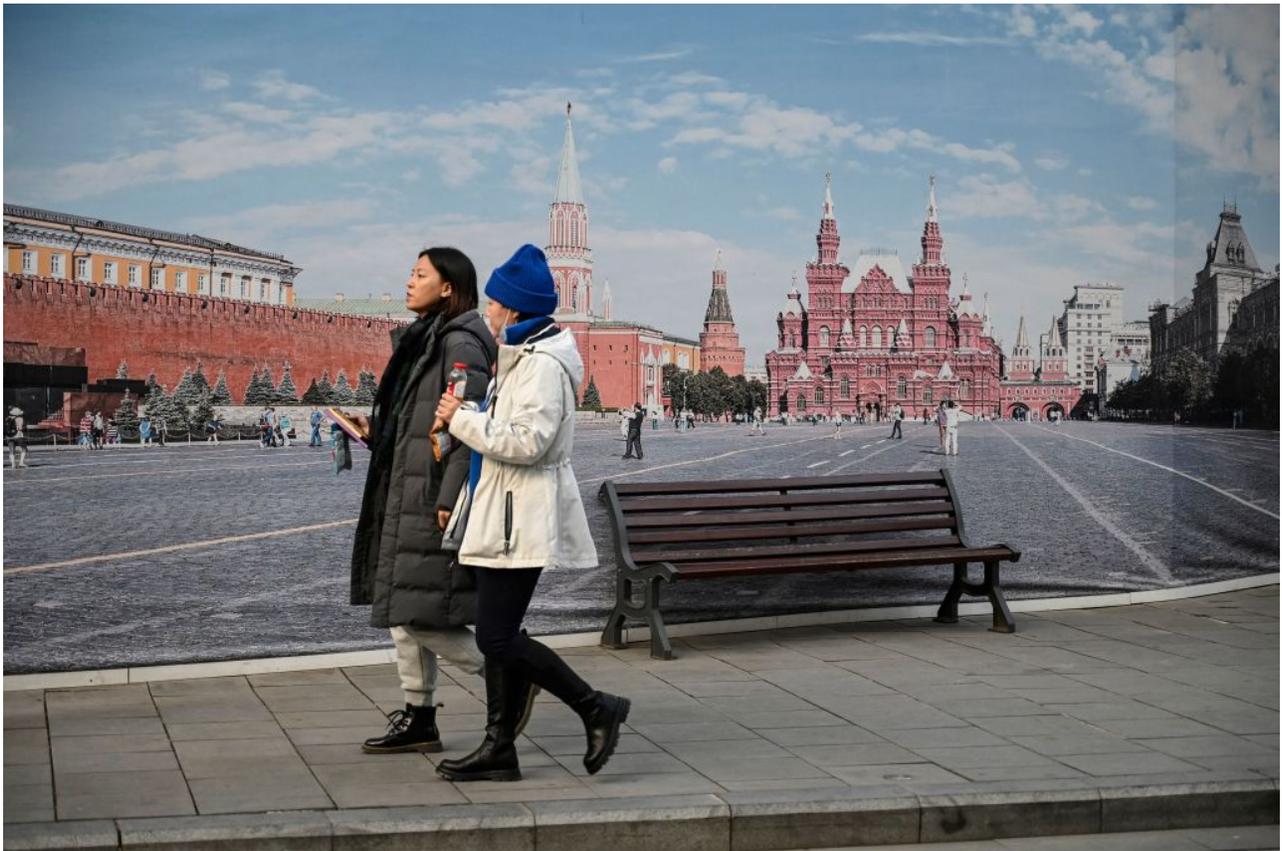
But sanctions, at least, are sure. Any deeper border incursions past what Putin already took—Crimea and effectively, the Donbass region of Eastern Ukraine—will turn Vladimir Putin and his cronies into not just the leaders of a rogue state, as currently, but into absolute pariahs.

Even democratic allies that are not being tough enough on Russia and China are losing esteem. A Washington Post editorial by historian Katja Hoyer has a title that says it all: "Germany has become a weak link in NATO's line of defense." Hoyer argues that "Germany cannot be depended upon when it comes to imposing sanctions on Russia."

Sanctions will send Russia deeper into China's cold embrace, which has swallowed so many countries after they egregiously break international law, for example, through genocide or the invasion of neighboring countries. Thereafter entirely dependent upon trade with China to evade Western sanctions, they all but lose their sovereignty.

Burma (commonly known as Myanmar), North Korea, Cambodia, Laos, Venezuela, and increasingly, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Russia are falling into Beijing's orbit through too much illiberal trade.

A redirection of Russian trade from the United States and Europe to China is already occurring, and provides evidence for Russians and the world that Beijing stands behind Moscow's aggression.



People walk past a wall decorated with a mural of Moscow's Red Square, in Beijing on Dec. 8, 2021. (Jade Gao/AFP via Getty Images)

In 2021, according to a report by Dimitri Simes in the Nikkei Asia Review, annual trade increased between Russia and China by over 35 percent, to a record of over \$146 billion. The two countries plan to add another \$200 billion in trade by 2024.

But Russia's economy is approximately one-tenth that of China, and its trade with the country is lopsided, giving Beijing the upper hand economically and, therefore, politically.

While approximately 40 percent of Russia's trade has over the years been with the European Union, this has not yielded similar political influence for Europe because democracies shy away from economic bullying. The CCP, on the other hand, is a checkbook diplomacy impresario.

Putin is already showing his fealty to Beijing by attending its disgraced Winter Olympics, dubbed the "Genocide Games" by human rights advocates. The Biden administration is wisely instituting an Olympic diplomatic boycott, honored by many of our most important allies.

There are unfortunate exceptions. The Polish president is one of the few U.S. allied heads of state to fink and attend, putting into question his allegiance to democracy over profits to be made in China.

Xi Jinping is coercing Putin to ski the same fake slopes, by delaying high-profile deals for signature in Beijing, including the final contract for a natural gas pipeline, called the Power of Siberia-2, that will further connect the two illiberal behemoths.

As noted by Simes, “Analysts say the standoff between Russia and the West over Ukraine, which could bring new sanctions against Moscow, is likely to tighten the Kremlin’s bond with Beijing even more.”

Nikkei quotes international relations professor Artyom Lukin, at a university in Russia, as saying that “Putin likely received some guarantees from Xi that if a crisis erupts over Ukraine and the West imposes major sanctions against Russia, then China will stand shoulder to shoulder with Russia.”

Chris Devonshire-Ellis, of an Asia investment advisory firm, told the outlet, “If further trade sanctions are placed on Russia, Moscow will need to increase Russia’s sourcing capabilities elsewhere, with China being one avenue.”

Russia has, since 2010, increasingly depended on China for energy exports, including through two pipelines costing \$80 billion, and a \$13 billion gas processing plant.



Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin attend a signing ceremony for a monumental, multi-decade gas supply contract in Shanghai on May 21, 2014. (Alexey Druzhinin/AFP via Getty Images)

If Russia invades Ukraine, U.S. and allied sanctions should be immediate and tough, including against Putin, his closest associates, Russia's biggest business people, all of their immediate families, the country's sovereign debt, access to the SWIFT international banking system and U.S. technology, the top Chinese companies doing business in Russia, and the Nord Stream-2 energy pipeline to Germany.

Germany bears special responsibility in avoiding a war, and if it does not stop dragging its feet on Russia, it should face economic repercussions.

As noted by Hoyer, "everything depends on Berlin. ... If Germany continued to trade with Russia while other NATO nations applied sanctions, the economic bite would be much reduced. That would force Germany's Western allies to either escalate the situation with military intervention or to step back, allowing Putin yet another land grab."

To extricate itself from the moral morass that is its relationship to Moscow, Germany should spend the money necessary to rid itself of its environmentally destructive habit: dependency on Russian gas. This can be achieved by returning to cleaner nuclear energy.

Germany should also seek layered energy security by tripling its port and storage facilities for American and allied liquified natural gas to replace the 1.7 billion cubic meters it currently buys from Russia.

Germany's defense posture is also too weak. "[Olaf] Scholz is no more willing to shoulder a share of the weight of collective Western security than his predecessor Angela Merkel was," according to Hoyer.

And Germany wants talks with Russia to follow the "Normandy format," which includes just Russia, Ukraine, Germany, and France. That would essentially break up NATO on the eve of an invasion against a fellow democracy seeking admittance to the alliance.

France has also been weak on Russia, proposing that the European Union negotiate separately with Moscow, fracturing the NATO defense against its belligerence. Germany and France, two of the world's most powerful democracies, are thus eliciting an ethically unforgiveable and strategically short-sighted cowardice in the face of threats and potential bluffing by Russia.

If Germany and other allies do not do their part in containing Russia, protecting the new and democratic state of Ukraine, and shoring up democracy globally, economic repercussions should be considered against not only China and Russia, but against our free-riding allies as well.

No democratic ally should be able to shirk its duty of robust defense expenditures and a unified opposition to the world's dictators and their aggression against fellow democracies. If Germany and France really wish to tread that crumbling path of alliance disunity, they could pull an unwilling but tough America with them onto an autocratic landslide.

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 **COMMUNISM EXPOSED 2**