

U.S. targets TikTok in escalating economic war against China

written by Gary Wilson
March 15, 2024



Supporters of TikTok at the Capitol in Washington, as the House passed a bill that would lead to a nationwide ban of the popular video app.

TikTok has emerged as a dominant force in social media, reshaping not just online

culture but also extending its influence beyond the digital realm. Since its launch in 2016, TikTok has become one of the most popular social media platforms in the world, surpassing Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube in terms of downloads and engagement.

Through its unique format of short, audio-driven videos curated through algorithms, TikTok has propelled numerous artists, like Lil Nas X and Noah Kahan, into the mainstream spotlight. Music from Africa has gained a global audience. Even the Biden campaign is on TikTok with “BidenHQ,” hoping to appeal to a younger audience than its base of retirees and Wall Street bankers.

Facebook is considered to be TikTok’s biggest competitor.

“Meta clearly sees itself in a battle against TikTok for the hearts, minds, and attention spans of millennials, a significant chunk of the social media market. TikTok has experienced a staggering growth of users since the onset of the global pandemic, taking over a huge chunk of its competitor’s audience,” [the Guardian reported](#).

So why do the Biden administration and Congress want to ban TikTok?

Are they all just fans of Mark Zuckerberg? Or in Zuckerberg’s pocket? For sure, they’ve all probably had a few clubhouse dinners with Meta.

But this goes beyond Facebook. The target, and they clearly say this, is China. The ban passed by the House of Representatives is called the “Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act.” China is the “foreign adversary.”

A day after the House passed the bill, former U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin (under Donald Trump) announced he is putting together an investor group to take over TikTok. “This should be owned by U.S. businesses,” he said.

TikTok's only "crime" is beating out Facebook and the others. They claim TikTok is somehow working with the Chinese military, but there isn't even a sliver of evidence of that.

Facebook has ties to the Pentagon (google "Fake Facebook and Instagram accounts promoting U.S. interests had ties to U.S. military" or "Big Tech Has Made Billions Off the 20-Year War on Terror"). Maybe we should ban Facebook. But that's another discussion.

Trump, Biden both target China

The U.S. government, under both the Trump and Biden administrations, has been escalating its economic war against China by imposing sanctions and restrictions on Chinese tech companies. The goal is to eradicate socialist China's entire system of advanced technology.

Reuters just reported on March 14 that while he was president, "[Trump launched CIA covert influence operation against China](#)." Reuters says that Trump had also given the CIA greater powers to launch offensive cyber operations against China and Russia. "Sources described the 2019 authorization uncovered by Reuters as a more ambitious operation."

The anti-TikTok propaganda is part of what Reuters calls a "covert messaging" operation.

"Covert propaganda campaigns were common during the Cold War," Reuters adds.

Some call it the New Cold War. However, the New Cold War cannot reproduce the old Cold War. China has emerged as a major manufacturing power, including in advanced technology, and is the largest trade partner for 70% of the world's countries. The U.S. no longer has the same dominant position in the global market.

The global landscape has changed dramatically since the Cold War era, but capitalism's fundamental contradictions persist today, mirroring those of the 1960s during the Vietnam War.

Financially and militarily, the U.S. empire is dangerously overextended.

Before the genocidal invasion of Gaza, the Biden administration was seeking to consolidate its dominance in the region by brokering Saudi Arabia's recognition of Israel. Now, the U.S. is spending billions of dollars on bombs and weapons systems for the Zionist regime's war on the Palestinian people.

For two years, the U.S. has engaged in the largest arms transfer in history, sending to Ukraine some \$113.4 billion in "emergency funding" over and above the regular Pentagon budget. Growing war fatigue, however, has now reduced the funds.

[The New York Times](#) puts it this way:

"American support has sharply declined. House Republicans have blocked additional aid to Ukraine, and the Biden administration cannot send many more weapons. (The \$300 million package announced this week will likely help Ukraine for only a few weeks.)"

In fact, the Times almost says, it is only U.S. weapons and ammunition that started this war and have kept it going. "It falls on the U.S. to supply Ukraine," the Times says. "The war is at a stalemate." The funds have run out.

U.S. imperialism considers socialist China's economic rise as its most significant contemporary challenge. It is resolute in thwarting Chinese industry from dominating the global markets. This ongoing "New Cold War" raises the specter of a potential war in the Pacific.

Gary Wilson is the author of [War and Lenin in the 21st Century](#).

