US President Joe Biden’s week-long tour of Europe in the first half of June this year was a rather remarkable event. Mainly because of the number of different events held in a short period of time with his (and the accompanying team’s) participation.

The sequence of these events was as follows: talks with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, participation in three consecutive summits (G7, NATO, US-EU), and finally, the meeting in Geneva with Russian President Vladimir Putin, which deserves a separate comment. The first two events were held in the county of Cornwall in the southwest of England, the third and fourth at NATO and EU headquarters in Brussels.

The guests at the G7 summit included the leaders of India, Australia, the Republic of Korea and South Africa, which fits with the concept of forming a “Democratic Alliance” proposed last year by Boris Johnson.

Recall that a month earlier in London there was a meeting of G7 foreign ministers, whose guests also included India, Australia, the Republic of Korea and South Africa, as well as the ten countries of Southeast Asia, members of the regional association ASEAN. It is likely that the latter, whose leaders were not invited to the G7 summit, are seen as the second echelon of the future “Democratic Alliance”.

Note, by the way, that the lineup of guests at the events in London and Cornwall clearly demonstrates the special interest of G7 members in the processes taking place in the Indo-Pacific region. Which is sparked by a rather obvious circumstance, namely the fact that the current largest geopolitical opponent (China) of the G7 leader, i.e. the United States, is located in the IPR. China, on the other hand, was identified as the main problem in all of the documents...
Among the documents mentioned, the communiqué, adopted at the end of the G7 Summit, is of the greatest interest in terms of filling it with new conceptual and semantic content. It is the communiqué that is associated with the emergence of the Cornwall Consensus on the prospects for the world economy, as a possible successor to the Washington Consensus.

Recall that the Washington Consensus, formulated at the end of the Cold War, with its central (“Thatcher-Reagan”) idea of relegating the state to the status of “night watchman” of the economic organism, was far from harmless. One of India’s leading experts, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, lists all the negativity experienced by those who blindly, with almost religious ecstasy, followed the recommendations of the Washington Consensus.

Above all, the Third World countries were affected by these woes. However, perhaps the most significant victim of the Washington Consensus was “post-Soviet” Russia in the 1990s. As early as the beginning of the 2000s, this concept was virtually abandoned by its authors.

Meanwhile, the process of China’s transformation into a new global power (previously predicted only by experts) in the early 2000s should also come to the political surface, that is, to the public eye. Not only because of its own impressive economic achievements, but also because of the increasing scale of economic aid to the same Third World countries.

In early 2013, the group led by Xi Jinping, which came to power in China, united individual areas of economic activity in other countries into a single Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Its rapid expansion, especially in the Third World, has contributed to a dramatic increase in China’s political influence in the world as a whole. In Africa, for example, China is today without exaggeration the most influential world power. This happened, it should be stressed, without a single shot being fired and, moreover, with the full approval of the objects of such “expansion”.

Let’s also give credit to the current US administration, for it has finally grasped the nature of China’s growing prestige in the world. It turns out that today it is not so much the violence that brings success, but rather the entirely peaceful tools. In order not to finally lose ground in those same Third World countries that make up the majority of today’s world community, Washington needed to initiate a “democratic” analogue of the BRI with a conceptual justification directly opposed to the Washington Consensus.

The ambitious “infrastructure” project announced by Biden in early April, involving $4 trillion in funding, already had a foreign policy component. This was confirmed in a subsequent telephone conversation between the US president and the British prime minister.

The discussion continued in Cornwall, first in bilateral talks and then on the G7 platform. The content of the document adopted as a result of the second event gives some experts grounds to speak of the appearance of the Cornwall Consensus.

It should be noted that in complete contradiction to the spirit of the Washington Consensus, the G7 communiqué runs through the thesis of the role of the state in almost all spheres of socio-economic activity. To achieve the various, mostly worthy, goals (under the generalized “Build Back Better World” meme), $40 trillion is supposed to be spent. However, the question immediately arose as to where this money would come from. But the drafters of the document apparently did not bother with such “details”.

Commentators on the G7 communiqué (the Cornwall Consensus) are unanimous in their opinion of its anti-Chinese orientation. This impression is reinforced by the content of the other two documents adopted at the summits held further in Brussels, where Biden was solving one of the key (self-assigned) tasks to “restore transatlantic relations”.

Naturally, China has been closely watching the European tour of the president of its main geopolitical opponent. In particular, the prospects of a “democratic BRI” are dubious.

The same low opinion in China is held regarding the level and durability of the unity that the almost every member of the notional “West” who gathered in Cornwall and Brussels tried to demonstrate. In the form of an artistic image, this view is reflected in a “variation” (which quickly spread on Chinese social media) on the theme of Leonardo Da Vinci’s Last Supper.

Recall that at the Last Supper, two thousand years ago, one of the participants turned out to be a traitor. Of the seven principal participants in the Cornwall-Brussels Evening, however, anyone can be one, as the author of this
artistic analogy suggests. And there are good reasons for such an allegation, assuming that the colors are “darkened”. In spite of the outward unanimity emphasized by the participants of this supper.

Indeed, there is reason to believe that the artificial political construct called “the West,” once again (and in a hurry) pulled together in Cornwall-Brussels by political “duct tape,” is more or less doomed to collapse in the foreseeable future. For objective reasons, not because of anyone’s (Putin’s and Xi Jinping’s) “machinations”.

Note, for example, that contrary to the popular (but irrelevant to reality) thesis about the “American occupation” and “complete dependence on the United States” of Germany and Japan (that is, the current main G7 members and the “West” as a whole), so far the beneficiaries have been the “occupied” themselves. Who probably have long been aware of the petty nastiness of “big brother”, in the form, for example, of all-out eavesdropping on allied partners: “This ‘hegemon’ can’t seem to do anything more useful. Let them have their fun, as long as they buy our Mercedeses and Toyotas, avoid interfering with the construction of Nord Stream 2 and let us cheat them out of dozens and hundreds of billions of dollars in trade every year.”

In this regard, there seems to be a hidden iron in the words of the commentator on the European trip of the American president, who said that “Biden rallies NATO support ahead of confrontation with Putin”. In response, one can still hear the American president grunting softly: “Supporters, you know. They don’t like being eavesdropped on, you see. Can’t take your eyes off these weasels, the likes of which the world has never seen. Give them a chance, they’ll immediately escape to the Chinese”.

The growing awareness of the unacceptable nature of the US long-established format of relations with allies explains the “Trump phenomenon,” which has understandably affected the entire “West” category with its key element in the form of “transatlantic solidarity”. Biden can rhetorically deny Trump’s “legacy” all he wants, but historical processes unfold irrespective of one’s subjective preferences.

As for the prospects and viability of the Cornwall Consensus (as an alternative to the Washington Consensus), isn’t it a bit too late to correct the “expenses” of the flawed political and economic course initiated thirty years ago (by the same authors) in a state of euphoria from the victory in the Cold War?

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