



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on February 18, 2023

Bipartisan Group of Lawmakers Wants Biden to Send Ukraine F-16s

Republicans and Democrats seem to have no problem putting aside party differences and coming together to take actions that have nothing to do with fulfilling their constitutional obligations to the American people.

In what would be a major escalation of the United States' involvement in the Russia-Ukraine conflict if implemented, a bipartisan group of members of the House of Representatives is [urging Joe Biden](#) to send Ukraine F-16 jets.

The five lawmakers contend that handing over the war planes "could prove decisive for control of Ukrainian airspace this year." Kiev has requested the fighter jets, but so far the administration has not given in.

The call to support Ukraine with the F-16s was made in a letter to Biden penned by the representatives and obtained by Politico.

The signatories to the letter were Democrats Jared Golden (Maine), Jason Crow (Colo.), and Chrissy Houlahan (Pa.). They were joined by Republicans Tony Gonzales (Texas) and Mike Gallagher (Wis.).

"The provision of such aircraft is necessary to help Ukraine protect its airspace, particularly in light of renewed Russian offensives and considering the expected increase in large-scale combat operations," the lawmakers wrote.

They further argued that the war planes, be they the Lockheed Martin-manufactured F-16s or something of similar capability, would be of more assistance to the Ukrainian military than ground-based artillery.

"F-16s or similar fourth generation fighter aircraft would provide Ukraine with a highly mobile platform from which to target Russian air-to-air missiles and drones, to protect Ukrainian ground forces as they engage Russian troops, as well as to engage Russian fighters for contested air superiority," the letter reads.

The politicians added that, given the time needed to train Ukrainian pilots, a decision on the fighter jets "must be made quickly."

They went on to assert that since many Ukrainian pilots trained with the American military prior to the outbreak of the war, sending the jets "represents a sound strategic investment in bolstering Kiev's military capability and bringing this conflict to a just conclusion."

Kiev has been asking for F-16s for a year now. Biden [appeared to say "no"](#) to such a move last month, but [later said](#) he would talk about it further with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.



F-16 (U.S. Air Force)



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At the Pentagon, the idea of sending Ukraine F-16s is very popular. As Politico [reports](#):

As Ukraine prepares to launch a new offensive to retake territory in the spring, the campaign inside the Defense Department for fighter jets is gaining momentum, according to a DoD official and two other people involved in the discussions. Those people, along with others interviewed for this story, asked not to be named in order to discuss internal matters.

Spurred in part by the rapid approval of tanks and Patriot air defense systems — which not long ago were off-limits for export to Ukraine — there is renewed optimism in Kyiv that U.S. jets could be next up.

“I don’t think we are opposed,” said a senior DoD official about the F-16s, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive debate. The person stressed that there has been no final decision.

Ukraine may still be able to get American fighter jets even if the United States does not send them directly. Western nations that possess the American-manufactured fighters could transfer them over to Kiev, although that would require approval from Washington.

Lawmakers have also floated the idea of the U.S. sending F-16 to eastern European nations, which would in turn send their old MiGs to Ukraine. Although this idea gained some bipartisan support in Congress, it never came to fruition.

Yet the unwavering support for Ukraine from the Washington establishment is curious given that the war between Kiev and Moscow is anything but black-and-white.

It has been widely [reported](#) that Ukraine has made prominent use of the Azov Battalion, which is openly known to be a neo-Nazi unit.

The UN’s Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in a 2016 report, accused Azov members of rape, torture, and other forms of sexual violence. In 2019, Facebook, under its Dangerous Individuals and Organizations policy, banned praise for Azov, but after the Russia-Ukraine War began reversed that policy, stating: “For the time being, we are making a narrow exception for praise of the Azov Regiment strictly in the context of defending Ukraine, or in their role as part of the Ukraine National Guard.”

Even Wikipedia describes the Azov Battalion as “a neo-Nazi unit,” and notes the prominent use on Azov uniforms of the Nazi Wolfsangel insignia, which was the symbol of Hitler’s feared SS troops.

Yet the Western powers continue to not only prolong the war, but also escalate it with greater and greater amounts of material support, making ridiculous their claims that they are not at war with Russia.

The problem will be when Moscow decides it’s had enough and ceases to tolerate the United States and other countries helping Ukraine.

It’s the internationalists in the Beltway who are playing with fire in Ukraine. But it’s the American people who will be burned if things go wrong.



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