



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on December 19, 2022

## U.S. Defense Contractors Sponsor Party at Ukraine's D.C. Embassy

Defense contractors who are raking in big bucks arming Ukraine at American taxpayers' expense sponsored a December 8 party at the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, [Vox](#) reported Friday.

Although the Ukrainian ambassador and defense attaché were the ones officially inviting D.C. bigwigs to a reception "on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the armed forces of Ukraine," the invitation stated that the event was "sponsored by" four U.S. defense contractors — Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, Pratt & Whitney, and Lockheed Martin — whose logos collectively occupied more space on the card than the official Ukrainian emblems.



David Monniaux/Wikimedia Commons

It's easy to see why these companies would be thrilled with Ukraine's armed forces right now: Those forces need weapons, and they're getting most of them from American defense contractors, courtesy of U.S. taxpayers.

President Joe Biden, who has said his administration will support Ukraine for "as long as it takes" to beat back the Russians, has already convinced Congress to send Kyiv \$68 billion, and is asking for another \$38 billion.

Meanwhile, he has also sent Ukraine [\\$19.3 billion](#) worth of direct military assistance, much of it in the form of supposedly excess weapons. Biden claims the power to do this under "presidential drawdown authority," which allows the chief executive — under "emergency" conditions — to transfer unneeded weapons, then replenish the stocks at taxpayer expense.

"Contractors have accelerated production to backfill the weapons the US has been sending to Ukraine," wrote Vox's Jonathan Guyer. "The Javelin missile, for example, has become a meme in Ukraine. It's so in-demand that Lockheed said it will go from manufacturing 2,100 a year to 4,000." Lockheed has also added \$1.6 billion to its bank account to replenish two missile-defense systems that Biden supplied in quantity to Ukraine.

Thus, even in a very sluggish economy, Lockheed is doing quite well. On the company's October earnings call, CEO James Taiclet said, "We are confident in long-term growth as domestic and international demand for a wide range of our products and services remain strong."

Raytheon, of which Pratt & Whitney is a subsidiary, is also performing nicely despite the economic slowdown. The company co-produces the Javelin missile, for which it was awarded a \$624 million contract in May, and it "just won a \$1.2 billion contract for six surface-to-air-missiles," reported Guyer. CEO Greg Hayes recently cited the "Ukraine conflict" as a reason for the "significant global demand for advanced air defense systems."



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Northrop Grumman, which produces ammunition, doesn't have any big, attention-grabbing contracts yet, but CEO Kathy Warden said she expects "demand" for munitions "to grow even more with the conflict in Ukraine."

Still, sponsoring an event honoring a foreign military whose conflict is generating billions in taxpayer-funded profits for one's company might not be the greatest public-relations move.

"I've never quite seen this kind of public embrace of a country and the weapons contractors as is happening with Ukraine," Bill Hartung of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft told Guyer. "I can't imagine another situation where the contractors would sponsor an event for a country that they're arming in the middle of a war."

While the Ukrainian Embassy was happy to publicize the reception on its [Facebook page](#), where it even thanked "representatives of the defense industry," Guyer found that

No one wanted to talk about the party invite, however. A senior official from the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington confirmed that the companies' logos appeared on the invitation but declined to speak on the record. They directed me to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, which did not immediately respond. Lockheed declined to officially comment and deferred to Ukraine House, an embassy-linked entity that was also listed on the invitation. Raytheon also declined to comment. Emails to Northrop Grumman and Pratt & Whitney were not returned.

The embassy also expressed its gratitude to the White House, Congress, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley. It even "salute[d]" Milley's firm assurance that "this war will come to an end. And it will end if and only if Ukraine remains a free, sovereign, independent country with its territory intact."

With their future assured as long as Biden and like-minded interventionists remain in power, why should defense contractors care what the public thinks?



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