

# War Hawks Use Israel's Gaza War To Restore Funds for Ukraine Proxy War

by Harley Schlanger

Oct. 20—President Biden used a nationally televised [address](#) on Oct. 19 to make the case for an escalation of U.S. support for wars to defend “democracy.” He spoke following his return from Israel, where he bolstered Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and met with Israel’s war cabinet, to demonstrate U.S. support for Netanyahu’s goal of “exterminating Hamas.”

Biden made the case for linking aid to Israel to providing more funds for the proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, which has come under fire in the Congress. The ouster of Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy on Oct. 3 has plunged the House into chaos. The issue identified by those behind his ouster was made by Rep. Matt Gaetz, who criticized McCarthy for failing to keep his pledge to address the accelerating budget deficit, and for going behind the backs of Republican opponents for more war spending, to cut a deal with the Biden administration to provide more funds to the Ukraine war. This battle led to a budget deal which rejected Biden’s proposed \$24 billion increase in allocation of funds to Ukraine, with no new money appropriated by Congress.

In his speech to the nation, Biden lifted his talking points from the Atlantic Council’s “Summit for Democracy,” which describes the central battle in the world as that between “democracies,” supposedly led by the U.S. and its NATO allies, and “authoritarian” states, such as Russia and China:

Hamas and Putin represent different threats, but they share this in common: They both want to completely annihilate a neighboring democracy. American leadership is what holds the world together. American values are what makes us a partner that other nations want to work with. To put all that at risk if we walk away from Ukraine,



The White House  
*U.S. President Joe Biden addresses the nation, Oct. 19, 2023.*

if we turn our backs on Israel, it’s just not worth it.

History has taught us that when terrorists don’t pay a price for their terror—when dictators don’t pay a price for their aggression—they cause more chaos and death and more destruction. And the cost and threats to America and the world keep rising.

Biden’s assertion that U.S. leadership is key at this moment, which he described as “an inflection point in history,” is unlikely to convince those leaders rejecting the U.S. as the sole hegemon, to fall in line, especially as his call for accountability for “dictators [who] don’t pay a price for their aggression” could be applied to U.S.-NATO countries for their murderous, unjustified wars against Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, and the devastation of Ukraine, which is being sacrificed by the West to weaken Russia.

## Opposition to Ukraine War Growing

Three days after the ouster of House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, *The New York Times* published an [article](#) asserting that the \$113 billion allocation of funds by Congress in February 2022 for the war in Ukraine might soon run out. With no Speaker to pull the House in line to restore funding, the chaos in Congress threatens to pull the plug on the war. The *Times* noted that though \$6 billion is still available, the fear that the U.S. might pull back from its commitment was expressed by war hawks in Washington, by EU and NATO officials, and by the corrupt panhandlers in Kiev, who depend on those funds not just for weapons, but for providing minimal government services, and to line their pockets.

There is growing concern in the political establishment about the loss of support among the people for the war. The failure of the much-hyped counter-offensive, and the pledge to continue funding “as long as it takes,” has produced a growing “Ukraine fatigue,”

which is seen in polls which show that 55% of Americans oppose more funding. This can be seen in growing support for anti-war candidates, with Donald Trump far ahead of his neocon opponents for the Republican nomination, and the surge of support for Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. (RFK), following his announcement that he would run for President as an independent. Exacerbating these fears has been the failure of the U.S.-NATO war party to keep nations of the Global South in line, as most have refused to support the war against Russia.

On October 7, Hamas, ironically, delivered an early Christmas present to the War Hawks.

### The Cynical Strategy Behind Linkage

The attempt by Biden to portray Hamas and Putin as dual threats against western “democracy” is an obvious desperate reaction to the loss of support for the Ukraine gambit. On his return from Israel, the Biden administration proposed a new \$100 billion war package, to provide \$10 billion to Israel, with the bulk of the rest slated for Ukraine, with as-yet unspecified allocations included to build for a war with China, and for border protection, both to sweeten the pot for Republican neocon support.

This strategy was embraced by Democratic Party war hawks. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer applauded Biden’s plan, saying “We are going to do everything in our power to ensure the Senate delivers the support for Israel and the rest of the package.” Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Ben Cardin concurred, saying the linkage has bi-partisan support, and is “our best shot to get it done now.”

This was acknowledged in media coverage. For example, *ABC News* reported that, by tying together support for Israel and Ukraine, “the White House would make it harder for GOP hardliners—who are staunch allies of Israel—to reject it.”

### Where Is the Opposition?

There are demonstrations worldwide against the U.S. for supporting Netanyahu’s “extermination” policy, including a rally inside the U.S. Congress’s Cannon Office Building rotunda of Jewish activists—who were denounced as “anti-Semites” by the ADL, which has thus far remained silent on the tumultuous ovations given to a real Nazi in the Canadian parliament. However, there have been few expressions of opposition in official Washington, with the *Huffington Post* [reporting](#), “Mu-

tiny Brewing’ Inside State Department Over Israel-Palestine Policy,” characterizing the fear of being sidelined for speaking out as reflecting a “Culture of Silence.”

One notable success for the Biden administration strategy has been the reversal of former President Trump, whose supporters march behind placards declaring “He kept us out of war.” After initially stating that he thinks Netanyahu has made some mistakes, he pivoted to a full endorsement of Netanyahu’s war. In a campaign address in Iowa, he proclaimed full support for Israel. “I stood with Israel like no President in history,” adding that he recognizes “Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights,” territory seized from Syria in



Wafa

*A lone Palestinian amidst the rubble following an Israeli airstrike on the El-Remal area of Gaza City, Oct. 9, 2023.*

the 1967 Six Days War.

At another event—as the Israel Defense Forces aerial bombardment was killing more civilians in Gaza—Trump stated “There was no better friend or ally of Israel than President Trump.” In addition to bragging about his decision to kill Iran’s Revolutionary Guard leader Qasem Soleimani in 2020—taken by some as tacit support for escalation of U.S. actions against Iran—he posted #IStandWithIsrael and #IStandWithBibi on his “Truth Social” site, casting doubt on the sincerity of his insistence that he opposes the War Hawks and neocons.

At the same time, RFK, Jr., who has taken a strong stance against the war in Ukraine, has stated his full support for Netanyahu’s actions, and for Biden’s support for Israel, meaning that, at present, there are no candidates for the U.S. Presidency with a chance for success who stand as opponents of the permanent war agenda.