

\$40 Billion War Fever Grips Congress as US Escalates Ukraine War

It's time for negotiations, not arms shipments, to end the Ukraine/Russia war.

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The House of Representatives May 10 approved \$40 billion of aid to Ukraine 368-57. All Democratic representatives voted yes.

Previously antiwar Democrats like Reps. Ayanna Pressley, Jim McGovern, Barbara Lee, and Pramila Jayapal, who should know better, have uncritically embraced the Administration’s escalating war against Russia to the tune of \$40 billion.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine must be condemned. But the Administration has been telegraphing for weeks that its war aims now go well beyond defending Ukraine. President Biden said that President Putin cannot remain in power. Secretary of Defense Austin said the U.S. seeks to weaken Russia. And Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that we are fighting until “victory”.

“We’re not just at war to support the Ukrainians; we’re fundamentally at war, although somewhat through a proxy, with Russia, and it’s important that we win,” commented Rep. Seth Moulton on Sunday. This is the war that Massachusetts House members voted to fund.

The Biden Administration has not outlined a strategy for ending the war—only one for hitting back at Russia. Secretary of State Blinken has not met with Russian Foreign Secretary Lavrov since the Russian invasion started more than two months ago. There is no off ramp. There is no diplomacy.

In fact, Ukraine and Russia were reported to be close to a diplomatic settlement in late

March. Ukraine would be declared a neutral country. It would not join NATO but other guarantees would be provided for its security. The status of Russophone parts of Ukraine would be decided by internationally supervised referenda at a later date. There is no reason not to pursue a deal along these lines.

Russia is a nuclear weapons power. The danger of nuclear war has risen substantially during the Ukraine crisis, and escalations on the US side are pushing us closer to the brink. This war must be settled at the negotiating table—not on the battlefield!

The House did not impose any traceability or conditionality on the more than \$20 billion of military aid it voted yesterday. Will arms go to the neo-Nazi Azov battalion and other far-right elements of the Ukrainian armed forces? Will they go to the international arms black market? Nobody knows or seems to care.

House Democrats dropped their goal of securing funding for COVID relief in their rush to support the US proxy war in Ukraine. They left the 93,413 Americans who contracted COVID yesterday in the lurch in their rush to war. The United States has suffered far more deaths and far more cases from COVID than any other country in the world. But to Congress, war is a higher priority.

Democrats have long forgotten about their goal of passing a Build Back Better program which would begin to seriously address the world's climate emergency and rampant inequality at home.

The cost to eliminate homelessness in the United States would be \$20 billion, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Politicians must return to their senses and put war fever aside. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is terrible. So is the US/Saudi war in Yemen. So is the continuing US occupation of part of Syria. So is the US-supported oppression of the Palestinians by Israel. So are US sanctions on Cuba, Venezuela, Iran, Nicaragua, and more. Wars rarely end with one side vanquishing the other and achieving all its aims. They end with a compromise. It's time for negotiations, not arms shipments, to end the Ukraine/Russia war.

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