



## Biden Says “No” To US Providing F-16 Jets For Ukraine (..For Now)

### Description

**Update(1634ET):** Speaking to reporters about a potential upcoming trip to Poland on the South Lawn of the White House Monday afternoon, President Biden said that the US will not be sending F-16 jets to Ukraine, at a moment pressure has been growing from some corners of Europe, and reportedly among a cadre of officials within the Pentagon itself.

Biden says “no” to US sending F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, AFP is reporting, after he was asked about the issue by reporters.

We should note that this is likely a very tentative “no”... given what he said about tanks last March...



Here's Biden during those March [comments](#):

*"The idea that we're going to send in offensive equipment and have planes and tanks and trains going in with American pilots and American crews — just understand, don't kid yourself, no matter what y'all say, that's called World War III," Biden told a gathering of House Democrats in Philadelphia.*

So it's perhaps just a matter of time before we see the same dangerous flipflopping on F-16 jets.

\* \* \*

The Ukrainian presidency's office is saying that it is already engaged in expedited negotiations with the US regarding the possibility of supplying Kiev forces with long-range missiles and military jets. This despite German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who was key in the decision of Berlin and Washington to approve tanks, earlier saying that sending jets is not an option.

Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Zelesnky, was cited in *The Associated Press* on Saturday as [saying](#) that **“fast-track” talks are taking place for jets**, and which also focus on long-range missiles “to drastically curtail the key tool of the Russian army” by providing the ability to attack weapons warehouses far behind front lines.



*F-16 file image, US Air Force*

Simultaneously, reports emerged in US media over the weekend signaling that a movement within the Pentagon is now gaining steam to press the Biden administration into signing off on jets for Ukraine.

**“A contingent of military officials is quietly pushing the Pentagon to approve sending F-16 fighter jets** to Ukraine to help the country defend itself from Russian missile and drone attacks, according to three people with knowledge of the discussions,” *Politico* wrote.

“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,” the report described, and quoted a defense official as follows:

***“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.*

The White House meanwhile, has given the typical ‘nothing off the table’ response when asked about the possibility of transferring jets to Kiev:

*A White House spokesperson declined to comment for this story, but pointed to remarks by deputy national security adviser Jon Finer. He said the U.S. would be **discussing fighter jets “very carefully”** with Kyiv and its allies.*

***“We have not ruled in or out any specific systems,” Finer said on MSNBC Thursday.***

But standing in the way will be Germany – though we should note that the Germans caved rather quickly when pressure from half a dozen or more influential NATO allies came to bear on the tank issue earlier this month.

There’s also the question of US public opinion, which remains very much divided on just how far America’s role in this mess needs to be pushed. The unhinged ravings of politicians like Mitt Romney are certainly not going to help the hawks’ cause in the eyes of average Americans (but it’s not as if beltway warmongers ever actually listened to the public will)...

Mitt Romney blows right past all the usual platitudes about “democracy” and “territorial integrity” and admits US policy in Ukraine is ultimately geared toward “weakening Russia” — which he declares to be a “very good thing.” By extension, Romney boasts, this also weakens China [pic.twitter.com/n3NG8gBuev](https://pic.twitter.com/n3NG8gBuev)

— Michael Tracey (@mtracey) [January 27, 2023](#)

Scholz said in a fresh [interview](#) as the jet debate emerges: “I can only advise against entering into a constant competition to outbid each other when it comes to weapons systems.”

He insisted that Berlin will not be equipping Ukraine’s military with warplanes. “The question of combat aircraft does not arise at all,” Scholz stressed according to [Politico](#). The only question that remains as a new round of pressure builds (similar to the way the tank issue played out), is whether Germany will hold out and stick to its (purported) principles this time.

by Tyler Durden

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