

Biden Okays F-16s for Ukraine, US Weapons to Attack Crimea

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The Biden administration has signed off on both F-16s for Ukraine and attacks on Crimea using US-made weapons. Both of these moves have drawn dire warnings from nuclear-armed Russia, and both would have been unthinkable a year ago.

In a [Sunday interview](#) with CNN's Jake Tapper from the G7 summit in Hiroshima, Biden's National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan made it clear that Washington would approve of US weapons being used in an offensive to recapture Crimea, a [horrifying prospect](#) that [many experts](#) have agreed is the [most likely scenario](#) to lead to nuclear warfare in this conflict. Sullivan told Tapper that while the US has forbidden the use of American weapons to attack Russia, the US considers Crimea to be part of Ukraine, not Russia.

Here's CNN's [transcript of the exchange](#):

TAPPER: In February on this show, you would not say whether the U.S. would support Ukrainian efforts to recapture Crimea. That's one of the concerns that has been expressed about whether or not the Ukrainians are given the ability to hit Russian targets in Crimea. Do you think that Crimea is part of Ukraine?

SULLIVAN: Of course.

TAPPER: So, what would be the objection of giving...

SULLIVAN: Crimea is Ukraine.

TAPPER: Right.

SULLIVAN: I mean, that's a very straightforward thing.

TAPPER: Well, yes you answered it directly. I mean, Russia doesn't think so, obviously. But do you think that Ukraine should have weapons that can reach Russian targets in Crimea?

SULLIVAN: Yes. We have not placed limitations on Ukraine being able to strike on its territory within its internationally recognized borders. What we have said is that we will not enable Ukraine with U.S. systems, Western systems, to attack Russia. And we believe Crimea is Ukraine.

TAPPER: OK.

Also refreshing clarity from NSA Jake Sullivan "We have not placed limitations on UKR being able to strike within its international recognised territories... we will not enable UKR with US systems Western systems to attack Russia and we believe Crimea is Ukraine" pic.twitter.com/ffVYGilCr8

— Rym Momtaz ريم ممتاز (@RymMomtaz) [May 21, 2023](#)

Moscow has considered Crimea a part of the Russian Federation since its annexation in 2014, meaning efforts to recapture it would — at least in theory — be treated the same as an invasion of any other part of Russia. It was only by way of an [arbitrary bureaucratic fluke](#) that Crimea wound up a part of Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union, and Crimeans [overwhelmingly prefer](#) to be a part of the Russian Federation. That we may soon be staring down the barrel of a nuclear third world war over something so pedantic is a very dark shade of absurd.

In the same interview, Tapper questioned Sullivan about the Biden administration's [policy shift](#) toward approving F-16 fighter jets to be sent to Ukraine, demanding to know why the war planes weren't approved sooner.

"President Biden told the G7 leaders that the United States is going to support this joint effort to train Ukrainian pilots to fly F-16 fighter jets," said Tapper. "As you know, just a few months ago, the president said there was no basis militarily for giving Ukraine jets and that Ukraine didn't need them at all. What changed? And would these jets not have been more effective if Ukraine had been trained and had them in time for the upcoming counteroffensive?"

It's so obnoxious how the only time you ever see these mass media propagandists challenging the US government on its warmongering is when they're pushing it to be *more* warlike and demanding answers on why it isn't warmongering *more*. This creates the illusion of brave adversarial journalism, when in reality these empire cronies are just manufacturing consent for the increased aggressions the US wants to wage anyway.

CNN's [@jaketapper](#) asks National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan why President Biden changed his stance on providing Ukraine F-16 jets. Watch his response below. [#CNNSOTU @CNNSotu pic.twitter.com/fl4vJXTSw](#)

— State of the Union (@CNNSotu) [May 21, 2023](#)

These escalations have drawn stern warnings from Moscow, which have just been casually hand-waved away by Biden like he's rejecting jello for dessert. In an article titled "Russia Says West Providing F-16s to Ukraine a 'Colossal Risk'", Antiwar's Dave DeCamp writes the following:

A Russian official said Saturday that the Western plans to provide Ukraine with American-made F-16 fighter jets [bring "colossal risks"](#) after the US announced it would sign off on European countries delivering the aircraft.

"We see that Western countries are still adhering to the escalation scenario. It involves colossal risks for themselves," said Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko, according to TASS.

"In any case, this will be taken into account in all our plans, and we have all the necessary means to achieve the goals we have set," Grushko added.

During the last day of the G7 Summit in Hiroshima, Japan, [President Biden was asked](#) about Russia calling the F-16 plan a "colossal risk." He replied, "It is for them."

Deciding to bring the world one step closer to nuclear war while in Hiroshima, how appropriate <https://t.co/zuUOuTTpdM>

— Dave DeCamp (@DecampDave) [May 20, 2023](#)

As Tapper noted, both the F-16 decision and the Crimea decision marked a sharp policy shift by the Biden administration in just a few months. This proxy war just keeps escalating and escalating, with aggressions once deemed unthinkable due to their likelihood of sparking a nuclear exchange now becoming commonplace. Every time a new once-unthinkable escalation is enacted, the hawks are already pushing for the next one.

As we've [discussed previously](#), this pattern of continually escalating nuclear brinkmanship in Ukraine has built-in incentives for Russia to ramp up its own aggressions against NATO itself. Every time the west ramps up its brinkmanship and crosses another once-taboo line in the sand without Moscow responding with direct military confrontation, the west takes this as a sign that it can ramp up the escalations again. This has put things on a trajectory toward more and more direct western-backed attacks on the Russian Federation unless Russia lashes out at NATO powers in some way to show them it's not worth it. Which would be about as dangerous an occurrence as you could possibly imagine.

It is not okay for our rulers to play games with our lives like this. It is not okay for them to keep rolling the dice on nuclear escalation more and more often in the name of [securing US unipolar hegemony](#). These people are making it abundantly clear that sanity and level-headedness are not in the driver's seat here. Everyone on earth should be shouting a loud, unequivocal "no" to this at the top of their lungs.

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