

# A Looming Elephant in the Room: Inflation

US Foreign Aid: The Gift That Keeps on Giving

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*With rising inflation, ever-present shortages, and the legacy media recommending Americans tighten their belts, let's take a look how much the federal government has been spending on foreign aid, and on what.*

With Thanksgiving and Black Friday in the rearview mirror, American families are now preparing for the Christmas season, buying gifts and planning trips with family and friends. Despite our efforts to keep the holiday cheer, there will be a looming elephant in the room: [inflation](#). Currently at 7.75 percent, there seems to be no stopping the price hikes, let alone the shipping delays.

On top of that, average [gas prices](#) are still around \$3.50-3.60 (and likely to rise again). Many individuals are dipping into their [savings](#) accounts to deal with these price hikes, and the government has still not solved the [baby formula shortage—a problem it created](#)—yet news outlets have deemed it too unimportant to continue to report on.

In order to combat these woes, legacy media has come up with countless articles and how-to videos, educating Americans on how they can stretch their dollars. Earlier this year, Bloomberg [published](#) an article recommending that families making under \$300k a year should switch out meats for vegetables like lentils stating: "Though your palate may not be used to it, tasty meat substitutes include vegetables (where prices are up a little over 4%, or lentils and beans which are up about 9%)..." The author also recommends taking the bus instead of driving, not buying food in bulk, and forgoing pets' medical bills. This seems perfectly logical; why halt an ever expanding bureaucracy from [printing billions](#) of dollars or raising the [federal interest rate](#) when the average American can contribute by tightening their belts, and buying less for themselves and their families?

As the Director of Research of the Economic Policy Institute Josh Biven has [stated](#), "...Inflation is largely a global, geopolitical phenomenon that is just not under the Biden

administration's control..."

Then let's see what steps the federal government and the Biden Administration have been taking in order to contribute to the alleviation of this global phenomenon of inflation, and in turn help Americans with pricing at home.

## 'It's OK, We Have a Budget'

With the war in the Ukraine, labor strikes, social unrest, and, yes, still Covid on the tongues of many world leaders, the Biden Administration has taken on the herculean responsibility of providing/continuing foreign aid to various countries with the hopes of mending trade relations and to help get the globe back to some sense of economic normalcy.

In fiscal year 2022, the total amount of foreign [obligations](#) the federal government committed to disburse throughout the world was \$44 billion dollars—a \$9 billion increase from the previous year. The Biden government is distributing taxpayer dollars to many regions and for many purposes: from humanitarian aid, to military funding, to green initiatives.

Let's focus on some of the salient contributions.

## Ukraine

With Russia's invasion of Ukraine now reaching its tenth month, the US government hasn't wavered in providing military and humanitarian aid to the latter. According to the US State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, the United States has [invested](#) about \$19.3 billion for "security assistance" since January of 2021. However, this doesn't paint a full picture of exactly how much Biden sent to Ukraine this past fiscal year.

According to [research](#) conducted by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, from January 24 to October 3, the United States committed and dispersed \$52.3 billion to Ukraine—\$10.8 billion more than every other participating country and global institution combined (\$41.5B).

Any portion of this could have made considerable strides towards fixing the 'crumbling infrastructure' [dilemma](#) this president and his predecessors have been campaigning on for decades, or to providing tax relief to Americans. The amount of aid we are funding to Ukraine may very well rise again soon, with Biden recently [asking](#) Congress for an additional \$37 billion in "emergency aid" while Russia continues to fight in the Donbass.

## Afghanistan

One would assume that after the August 15, 2021 takeover of Kabul, the US would halt aid to a country now dominated by the Taliban. However, on top of the [billions](#) in military and transportation equipment left behind, the [deaths](#) of 13 US service members, and the countless women and young girls now being [forcibly](#) married and raped by militants, Biden has made sure to continue [funding](#) 'humanitarian aid' to Afghanistan in the form of \$3.79 billion for fiscal year 2022.

Unfortunately, all federal information regarding the exact types of projects or initiatives these funds are reportedly supporting has been redacted in accordance with the exceptions outlined in the Foreign Aid Transparency Act of 2016—ironic to say the least. What we do

know is that said monies are allotted for emergency disaster relief and “basic education.”

Considering how the Taliban commands with Sharia Law, dictates what is being taught and shared with the public, and outright [bans](#) girls from attending school, it begs the question of where exactly all this foreign aid is going. Why would the US continue to support a country which violates UN human rights agreements and is one of America’s largest enemies?

Let’s keep in mind that these payments were taking place while American citizens experienced exploding inflation, unemployment, price hikes, and a deadly [opioid epidemic](#) with no end in sight.

## Our Generous Government

This is by no means an exhaustive list; one could write a white paper on the subject of US foreign aid allotments just in 2022. However, I wanted to highlight a handful of other expenses since 2020.

1. As part of the 5,593 page, \$1.4 trillion [Omnibus](#) bill passed in December 2020, “up to \$15,000,000 may be made available for assistance for Sri Lanka for the refurbishing of a high endurance cutter” (aka speedboat) for the [purpose](#) of “instruction in human rights.” Considering how the Sri Lanka government has been under investigation for human rights abuses and land confiscations, such a hefty donation to progress “human rights” seems questionable.
2. In the same bill, \$15 million was [allotted](#) to “democracy programs,” \$10 million to “gender programs” in Pakistan, and millions more to other countries’ defense budgets.
3. In Ecuador, from September 30, 2022 until August 31, 2023, the US State Department is spending [\\$20,600](#) on 12 drag queen theater performances, 3 workshops, and a 2-minute documentary in order to “promote diversity and inclusion”. The State Department [told](#) the Washington Examiner via email that this funding is “...to promote tolerance and ... provide new opportunities for LGBTQI+ Ecuadorians to express themselves freely and safely”—during a time when Ecuador is currently taking in [hundreds of thousands](#) of Venezuelan refugees fleeing the communist Maduro regime. Priorities, I assume.

To put it into perspective—only in regards to the expenditures I’ve mentioned in this article—the US government has committed just over \$93 billion in foreign aid while the US economy is still reeling from pandemic lockdowns, a rise in unemployment, and skyrocketing prices.

While we are all doing what we can to provide for our families as [prices](#) across pretty much every industry continue to rise, the Biden Administration has been doing what it can to provide billions of taxpayer dollars, gender programs, and military aid to other nations.

Some may see these “contributions” as a kind of benevolence, but it would be a mistake to confuse government largesse with genuine solicitude.

“It is easy to be conspicuously ‘compassionate’ if others are being forced to pay the cost,” the economist Murray Rothbard once noted.

When he said Build Back Better, who would have thought he intended it for other countries?

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*Connor Vasile is a first-generation American and writer who wishes to raise awareness about classical liberal ideas which empower every individual, no matter their background or experience, to live their best lives and fulfill their goals.*

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