

CROSS- EXAMINATION:

How effective has the foreign aid been in achieving its intended goals in Ukraine so far?

Can you provide evidence that the aid provided to Ukraine has directly contributed to progress in resolving the conflict with Russia?

Do you anticipate support from the 66% of Americans who would rather focus on domestic issues than the war with Ukraine and Russia, in a poll by Ipsos conducted in October 2023?

Are there alternative methods or strategies that could be more effective in supporting Ukraine without financial assistance from the United States?

What would you say to Americans struggling with inflation or the crippled the housing market?

How much is this going to cost the United States since this aid package was approved?

What about the many things in our country like the education system or infrastructure that need redevelopment, attention and money?

Besides ethical reasons, why should the United States send this aid package when they are not legally obligated to help since Ukraine is not a part of NATO?

How do you think providing military aid to Ukraine will impact diplomatic relations with Russia and other key international actors? Are you concerned about potential diplomatic fallout or retaliatory measures from Russia?

Given Russia's military capabilities and its willingness to assert its influence in the region, do you think there's a risk that providing military aid to Ukraine could escalate the conflict into a wider war? How would you mitigate this risk?

Constructive Speech:

As we discuss the crucial issue of whether the United States should continue to funnel billions of dollars in military aid to Ukraine in their conflict with Russia, it's imperative to weigh the ethical, emotional, and logical dimensions of this decision. It's with a sense of responsibility and duty that I stand before you to argue that the United States should discontinue its support in the form of military aid to Ukraine.

As a nation built upon principles of justice and equality, we must question the morality of involving ourselves in a conflict that is not our own. While it's undoubtedly tragic to witness the suffering of the Ukrainian people, we must acknowledge the complexities of geopolitical affairs.

By injecting ourselves into this conflict, we risk exacerbating tensions and escalating the situation into a full-blown international crisis.

Additionally, let's consider the pressing domestic issues facing the United States today. Our nation is grappling with a myriad of challenges, from economic inequality and healthcare disparities to racial injustice and climate change. In the face of such daunting challenges, it is imperative that we prioritize the needs of our own citizens before extending a helping hand abroad.

We cannot ignore the stark reality that billions of dollars spent on military aid to Ukraine could be better allocated to addressing these urgent domestic concerns. Imagine the

impact that such resources could have if redirected towards initiatives aimed at improving education, healthcare, infrastructure, and social services for American citizens.

Think about the improvements that could be made in your own hometowns; how many potholes and roads need repairing? Funding for your elementary, middle and high school? Playgrounds, public libraries or public recreation centers that need funding?

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor, the average U.S. annual salary in Q4 of 2023 was \$59,384 for the 25-34 age group. Additionally, the United States Census Bureau data shows the average U.S. household income was \$74,755 in 2022. However, this fluctuates depending on the racial makeup of the family. Black and African American households earned an average of \$51,374, the lowest of all racial groups.

The issues don't end with household income, based on the latest estimates from No Kid Hungry, 13 million children live in food insecure homes, meaning there is not enough food for every member of the family; imagine the impact the government could have for those kids if some of the aid money was given to them for food assistance.

According to the HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2024, for a family of four the poverty guideline is \$31,200. How can we expect American to support this overseas war and use taxpayer money when most of the nation can barely afford to live comfortably?

Moreover, let us not overlook the fact that our nation is deeply divided along political lines. At a time when unity and solidarity are more crucial than ever, diverting our attention and

resources towards foreign conflicts only serves to deepen these divisions, which is what we are seeing presently with the Pro-Palestinian protests across the country.

We must focus on healing the wounds of division within our own society and fostering a sense of common purpose and shared destiny among all Americans.

It's easy to be swayed by heart-wrenching images of conflict and human suffering.

However, we must resist the temptation to act impulsively based on emotions alone. Yes, the plight of the Ukrainian people is undeniably distressing, but we must consider the broader implications of our actions.

Are we truly helping them by prolonging a conflict that has already claimed countless lives? Or are we merely perpetuating a cycle of violence that serves no one's interests in the long run?

The harsh reality is that pouring billions of dollars into military aid for Ukraine is not a sustainable solution. Not only does it strain our own resources, but it also fails to address the root causes of the conflict.

Despite receiving \$75 billion in humanitarian, financial and military aid from the U.S., according to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, a German research institute, the conflict between Ukraine and Russia has persisted for years without a resolution. The ongoing financial assistance from the U.S. has not led to a notable change in the situation on the ground.

According to BBC News, “Ukrainian forces have withdrawn from the eastern town of Avdiivka, Russia's biggest victory since the fall of Bakhmut in May last year,”. A lag will also develop between the time in which Congress authorizes funds for Ukraine, the time that the military can deliver the equipment associated with those funds to Ukraine’s armed forces and the time that the Ukrainian armed forces can put that equipment to use on the battlefield.

Moreover, in a report from the Association of the United States Army from February 2024, “In the interim period between Congressional approval and the Ukrainian forces putting the equipment to use in the field, the risk of Russian tactical and operational military offensive operations increases, while Ukraine’s risk of successful defensive operations decreases,”.

Although the U.S. Congress has approved a \$95 Billion aid package for Ukraine, Israel and Gaza, \$60 Billion going towards Ukraine, Pentagon officials told VOA News, “We are probably looking at about \$10 billion to replace everything, everything that we’ve given in terms of supplies to Ukraine,”. As a reminder, funding for the United States Military comes from taxpayer money.

In addition to needing \$10 Billion to replenish our weapons, an article from BBC News states, “At the beginning of 2024, meanwhile, the Biden administration said the last of the money available for military assistance was gone. Although there is approximately \$4 billion left under the drawdown cap, Department of Defense officials consider the risk to

U.S. military preparedness too high to keep dipping into U.S. weapons stocks without funding to replenish them,”.

It is also important to note that upcoming elections this year will have a significant impact on Ukraine’s success. According to the Wilson Center, “Elections are ahead in most NATO member countries, whose votes are decisive in shaping international politics and in providing humanitarian assistance. In addition to the United States, presidential elections will be held in the UK, France, and Germany—to date strong supporters of Ukraine—as well as in Russia and Belarus. The continued provisioning and funding of Ukraine in a war it did not seek is likely to be a key issue for politicians, especially those from the radical right and the populist parties.” Even with massive support from NATO members for the last two years, this may discontinue after this year.

An assessment from the Center for Strategic and International Studies in February 2024, Ukraine has not made any significant military advancements against Russia and have not been able to regain much territory back.

While Ukraine has been struggling to push back, Russia has received assistance and weapons from North Korea, China, and Iran, which suggests that they will be able to upkeep a strong push for at least one to two years.

Instead of fueling an arms race, we should be investing in diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions and find a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

History has taught us repeatedly that military interventions only breed more violence and instability. It is imperative that we exercise restraint and prudence in our foreign policy decisions.

While our hearts may compel us to act, we must not lose sight of the ethical, emotional, and logical considerations at play. By refraining from further military aid to Ukraine, we uphold the principles of sovereignty, avoid unnecessary bloodshed, and pave the way for a more peaceful and prosperous future for all nations involved.

Rebuttal:

Military aid can help Ukraine defend itself against external threats, protecting its citizens and preventing further loss of life. This assistance is potentially crucial in safeguarding the well-being of Ukrainians affected by the war.

Although this is a great point to make, it is weakened by the fact that the World Food Program reaches 2.4 million people each month with cash assistance and distributed meals in addition school meals given to over 100,000 children in Ukraine.

Also, the conflict in Ukraine has broader implications for international security beyond Europe because of the alliance China, North Korea and Iran have introduced with Russia. Russian military actions in Ukraine, including targeting civilians and forcibly relocating children in addition to the risk of exploitation for children and women, are condemned as egregious violations of human rights.

At the same time, a quote from the United Nations Refugee Agency states, “UNHCR staff are in neighboring countries carrying out regular protection monitoring at border crossing points and transit centers to assess protection risks”.

U.S. aid to Ukraine is crucial for countering Russian aggression and preserving global security because of the nuclear threats that Russia has made in the past, in addition to the provided substantial military support to Ukraine, including equipment and training.

However, an assessment of the war from the Association of the United States Army says otherwise, "This follows Russia's repositioning of some of its nuclear arsenal to Belarus in the summer of 2023. Nonetheless, short of the commitment of U.S. or NATO land forces, or the potential loss of the Crimean Peninsula, Russia's likelihood to actually use nuclear weapons remains low," (LTC. Amos C. Fox).

Young Americans like Generation Z and Millennials also feel that we should not be interfering with the Middle East issues and Israel as well. It is easy to say that the United

States' position as a global leader means that it is our duty to help other democracies in reference to the Truman Doctrine, however the significant issues that our own citizens are facing also need to be addressed.

Polls conducted in October of 2023 by Ipsos, there is a great deal of uncertainty and less interest among young Americans to participate in aiding overseas wars compared to older Americans. According to the polls, 56% of Americans aged 18-39 say that the problems in Ukraine are none of our business and we should not interfere, and 66% of Americans would rather focus on domestic issues like the economy.

Additionally, Americans like us are experiencing inflation everywhere. As of March 31st, The U.S. Inflation Rate is at 3.48%, compared to 3.15% last month and 4.98% last year. This is higher than the long-term average of 3.28%, according to YCharts. Consumer price inflation rose 19.6% between January 2020 and January 2024, and particularly high housing costs persist, as of April 10th according to Nerd Wallet.

Americans simply do not want to pay for a war that is not ours, and our rising costs for living and expenses are causing a massive toll on many families. Our generation is next for stepping into the real world; starting our careers, graduating college soon and becoming adults.

Soon enough, many of us will be financially independent from our parents if not already, and we will have to face the rising costs, effects of inflation and the economy. It is

imperative as the next generation that we raise our voices and raise concerns to our government that these issues must be rectified.

While the situation in Ukraine is a tragedy, which cannot be denied, we must think clearly about which situation is going to affect us directly and needs our attention first.

POTENTIAL CROSS EXAM QUESTIONS

Financial Responsibility: Do you believe that the financial burden of supporting Ukraine's defense should solely fall on the United States, or do you think other nations should share the responsibility?

- The United States already shoulders a significant financial burden in international affairs and that other wealthy nations should contribute more to global security efforts.

Strategic Interests: How do you perceive the United States' strategic interests being impacted by the conflict between Ukraine and Russia? Do you think it's in America's best interest to intervene or to remain uninvolved?

- direct involvement in conflicts far from American shores could entangle the U.S. in unnecessary conflicts and divert resources away from domestic priorities.

Impact on US Security: Can you discuss the potential repercussions for the United States if Ukraine were to lose this conflict? How might it affect regional stability and, consequently, U.S. national security?

- the conflict in Ukraine, while significant, does not directly threaten U.S. security interests and that military intervention could escalate tensions with Russia, potentially leading to a broader conflict.

Moral Obligations: Do you think the United States has any moral obligations to support Ukraine in its defense against Russian aggression? If so, what are those obligations, and to what extent should they influence foreign policy decisions?

- while the United States sympathizes with Ukraine's plight, it does not have a legal or moral obligation to provide military aid and should prioritize its own national interests.

Alternatives to Military Aid: Are there alternative forms of assistance or diplomatic measures that you believe would be more effective in addressing the conflict between Ukraine and Russia? If so, what are they, and why do you think they would be preferable?

- advocate for diplomatic solutions, economic sanctions, or other non-military means to pressure Russia and support Ukraine without directly involving the U.S. military.

Historical Precedents: Can you draw any parallels between the current situation in Ukraine and past conflicts where the United States either intervened or chose not to intervene? How might these historical examples inform our approach to the current crisis?

- point to past conflicts where U.S. intervention had unintended consequences or failed to achieve its objectives, suggesting that caution is warranted in getting involved in foreign conflicts.

Humanitarian Considerations: How do you weigh the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in Ukraine against the potential risks and costs of providing military aid? Are there any specific humanitarian concerns that you believe should guide our decision-making in this regard?

- acknowledge the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine but argue that military aid carries its own risks and may not necessarily alleviate suffering or resolve the underlying causes of the conflict.

Long-Term Stability: What do you think are the prospects for achieving a lasting peace in Ukraine if the United States does not provide military aid? How might the balance of power in the region be affected by different courses of action?

- skepticism about the prospects for achieving a lasting peace in Ukraine through military means and caution against actions that could further destabilize the region.

Allies and Alliances: How might our decision on whether or not to provide military aid to Ukraine impact our relationships with other NATO allies and international partners? Do you think it's important to consider these broader alliance dynamics in our decision-making process?

- decisions regarding military aid should be based on U.S. national interests rather than concerns about alliances or international reputation.

Public Opinion and Congressional Support: Given the diverse range of opinions on this issue among the American public and policymakers, how do you think decisions regarding military aid to Ukraine should be made? Should public opinion or congressional support play a significant role in shaping foreign policy decisions of this nature?

- while public opinion and congressional support are important considerations, they should not override strategic calculations or diplomatic considerations in foreign policy decision-making.

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AlterNet

The Atlantic



DAILY BEAST

HUFFPOST

The Intercept

JACOBIN

Mother Jones

MSNBC

THE NEW YORKER

The New York Times (opinion)

Nation.

SLATE

Vox

abc NEWS

AP

AXIOS

Bloomberg

CBS NEWS

CNN

The Guardian

INSIDER



The New York Times (news)

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POLITICO

PROPUBLICA

TIME

The Washington Post

USA TODAY

yahoo! news

BBC NEWS

The CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Forbes

MarketWatch

NEWSNATION

Newsweek

REUTERS

RealClear Politics

THE HILL

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (news)

THE DISPATCH

THE EPOCH TIMES

FOX BUSINESS

NATIONAL REVIEW (news)

NEW YORK POST (news)

reason

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (opinion)

Washington Examiner

The Washington Times

The American Conservative

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR

BREITBART

Blaze media

CBN

DAILY CALLER

Daily Mail

DAILY WIRE

The Post Millennial

FOX NEWS

the FEDERALIST

IJR. INDEPENDENT JOURNAL REVIEW

NATIONAL REVIEW (opinion)

NEW YORK POST (opinion)

NEWSMAX

The WASHINGTON FREE BEACON

OAN One America News Network

L LEFT

L LEAN LEFT

C CENTER

R LEAN RIGHT

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