

New York Post.-21.01.2022

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## Jen Psaki defends Biden's jab at reporter's 'stupid' Ukraine question

*Джен Псакі захищає удар Д. Байдена на "дурне" питання про Україну*

*Прессекретарка Білого дому Д. Псакі на брифінгу для преси заявила, що Д. Байден зробив дуже багато, щоб стримати Росію від вторгнення в Україну. Д. Псакі наголосила, що за останній рік США надали Україні більше допомоги у сфері безпеки, ніж будь-коли в історії, виділивши 650 млн дол. на безпеку Україні. Загалом з 2014 р. США виділили Україні 2,7 млрд дол.*

<https://nypost.com/2022/01/21/jen-psaki-defends-joe-biden-jab-at-stupid-ukraine-question/>

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Friday that President Biden called a reporter's question about Ukraine-Russia tensions "stupid" because its premise was incorrect.

Biden griped, "What a stupid question" Thursday when Fox News reporter Jacqui Heinrich asked him, "Why are you waiting on [Russian President Vladimir] Putin to make the first move, sir?" Biden's dismissive remark was slammed as "sexist" by Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), and former Obama White House official Brett Bruen tweeted, "It isn't a stupid question... We continue to allow Putin to set the terms, timeline, & trajectory of this crisis." But Psaki contended at her Friday press briefing that Biden had done plenty to deter Russia from invading Ukraine. "Is the president aware that he was caught on a hot mic yesterday?" Heinrich asked. "Why does he appear to be dismissing the idea of proactive deterrence?" Psaki responded with an extensive recap of recent administration actions and argued "the president is hardly waiting" for Moscow to decide whether to actually launch military action. "The president certainly does not dismiss that idea, considering he has taken a lot of steps — including supporting and approving the several sanctions that were put out by the Treasury Department just a couple of days ago," the press secretary said. "I would note that the United States has delivered more security assistance to Ukraine in the last year than any point in history. In the last year alone, we committed \$650 million in security assistance to Ukraine. In total since 2014, we've committed \$2.7 billion. These deliveries are ongoing including today."

"In addition to traditional security assistance, such as the Ukraine security assistance initiative, the president has authorized the presidential drawdown authority to expedite lethal aid and meet Ukraine's emergency defense needs," she went on. "We've also utilized third-party transfers authorized by the State Department allowing US allies and partners to provide US-origin equipment from their inventories for use by Ukraine — specifically, the State Department has given the go-ahead for three NATO allies to rush anti-armor missiles and other US-made weapons to Ukraine." She added: "And finally, in identifying additional equipment held in DOD inventories that can be delivered under the excess defense articles program, among other mechanisms, we recently notified Congress of our intent to deliver [Mi]-17 helicopters. So I would say the president is hardly waiting. Actions are pretty clear on that front." Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said Thursday that [the US should do even more and directly supply Ukraine](#) with anti-tank weapons and ground-to-air missiles.

Biden horrified Ukrainian leaders when he said Wednesday that a “minor incursion” by Russia might result in less-severe sanctions, and the White House has struggled to clean up the remark. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky tweeted Thursday that [“there are no minor incursions.”](#) while a Ukrainian official [told CNN](#), “This remark potentially gives the green light to Putin to enter Ukraine at his pleasure. Putin senses weakness.” Biden [said Thursday](#) that Putin “has no misunderstanding” about the “severe” economic sanctions that would follow a Russian invasion of Ukraine. The US and European allies say Putin has massed up to 100,000 troops near Ukraine’s borders. Last week, the White House [alleged Russia may stage](#) a “false flag” attack on its own forces to provide a justification for war. When Biden was vice president in 2014, Russia invaded and annexed Crimea from Ukraine following a disputed referendum. Putin’s government also allegedly supports a pair of pro-Russia breakaway states in eastern Ukraine.