

The bipartisan politics of imperialism: Democratic liberals and Republican fascists unite in funding Gaza genocide and Ukraine proxy war

Patrick Martin
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In a series of votes Saturday, the US House of Representatives gave bipartisan support to \$95 billion in supplemental military funding: \$61 billion for the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine; \$26 billion for arming Israel in the midst of its genocide in Gaza and military confrontation with Iran; and \$8 billion for building up Taiwan as a war base against China.

These supplemental appropriations, together with a fourth bill directed at stepped-up war preparations within the US, including banning the social media network TikTok as an alleged instrument of the Chinese government, will be combined into a single piece of legislation to be taken to the Senate, which is set to pass it later this week.

The resulting legislation will give congressional sanction to the Biden administration's policy of global war. The very fact that it will combine into a single whole the US interventions in three widely separated regions—Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East—gives expression to a fundamental change in world politics.

The US ruling elite views its conflicts with Russia, Iran and China as interconnected theaters in the same struggle--the initial stages of a third world war. American imperialism, the strongest military power but a declining economic power, is engaged in a last-ditch effort to maintain its global hegemony against any possible challenge.

And as the anti-TikTok bill indicates, by preparing to shut down an app used by 170 million people, in many cases to obtain information censored by the American

corporate media, imperialist war is incompatible with democracy and freedom at home.

Stepped-up domestic repression is a necessity for the ruling elite, both to silence outright political opposition and to impose on working people the enormous sacrifices, both economic and ultimately in human lives, that such a war will entail. War against Russia, Iran and China means war against the American working class.

The House passage of the war bill brought together the two capitalist parties, uniting them in support of an unlikely “hero,” House Speaker Mike Johnson, a Christian fundamentalist and extreme reactionary. He received the blessing of Trump last week at Mar-a-Lago and the applause of Biden and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries this weekend in Washington.

Johnson consulted Trump before his decision to push through the war funding bill without an anti-immigration component, which Trump previously killed in order to preserve the supposed threat of migrants as the rallying cry for his fascist election campaign. While Biden appealed to Trump to “join me” in the attack on immigrants, this unity has been actualized on the central priority of the US financial aristocracy: global war.

As Johnson said at a Capitol news conference, “I regard myself as a wartime speaker.”

The full meaning of this bipartisan agreement was expressed in separate statements by Biden and Johnson denouncing students demonstrating against the Israeli genocide in Gaza. And House Democrats, from Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries on down, indicated

they would support Johnson against any attempt by a handful of fascist Republicans, led by Marjorie Taylor Greene, to oust him from office.

There were nine roll call votes Saturday in the House on the national security supplementals: four on final passage and five on amendments or procedure. The vast majority of Democrats voted in alignment with Johnson and the Republican leadership on seven out of the nine. In all five votes relating to the Ukraine funding—three hostile amendments, a procedural motion to kill it, and final passage—the Democrats voted unanimously to further the proxy war against Russia.

House Democrats waved miniature Ukrainian flags as the roll call vote on final passage of the Ukraine funding bill was carried out. When it was completed, they began chants of “Ukraine, Ukraine” and had to be admonished from the chair to quiet down. The supposedly “left” Democrats--such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and members the “squad”--joined in the celebration of the Ukraine war.

Saturday’s votes demonstrated the most important reality about contemporary American politics. There is no “lesser evil” in the 2024 electoral contest between Democratic President Biden, the warmonger-in-chief, and Republican ex-president Trump, whose drive to regain control of the White House is accompanied by fascist threats of dictatorial measures against all political opposition.

The claim that Biden is the “lesser evil” to Trump is the main argument of apologists for the Democratic Party, whether in the corporate media, the DSA, or the pseudo-left as a whole. They cannot claim significant reform accomplishments for the Biden administration. It has catered to the interests of big business, using the unions to shut down or limit strikes, and ending all protective measures against COVID-19, forcing millions back to work while the pandemic still rages.

The “lesser evil” argument pretends to acknowledge the vast discontent with the Biden administration among millions of workers and youth, while declaring that Trump would be still worse. But the House actions over the weekend showed one party, not two. Or rather two parties united for war, not only against Russia, but throughout the world.

The bipartisan passage of the war funding bill shows the dangers the working class confronts so long as it

lacks any means to fight for its interests politically. The two-party system is a closed door, with both parties controlled by corporate interests and unalterably committed to the defense of the profit system at home and the global position of American imperialism.

The central issue in the 2024 election is the fight for the political independence of the working class from capitalist politics. As the Socialist Equality Party candidates for president and vice president, Joseph Kishore and Jerry White, said in their campaign launch:

Trump and Biden do not speak for the interests of workers, but for corporations and the billionaires. The Democrats and Republicans agree on far more than they disagree. They agree on war, on austerity, on bailouts for the rich...

The American working class must come forward to oppose the war policies of the twin capitalist parties, which threaten humanity with nuclear annihilation. This requires uniting with workers internationally on a common program based on socialist policies, to put an end to the root cause of war, the capitalist profit system.



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