

## Most Trump Supporters Also Back Ukraine

Our poll found that 69% of Republican voters say Russia is the aggressor and 83% disapprove of Putin.

By Daniel Balson

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Podiums and a table for an intended joint press conference with U.S. President Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Washington, Feb. 28. Photo: Jim LoScalzo-Pool/Zuma Press

High-profile MAGA personalities applauded Friday as President Trump escalated his hostility toward Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Mr. Trump wrote on social media that Mr. Zelensky “disrespected the United States in the cherished Oval Office” and “can come back when he is ready for Peace.” That followed a hostile meeting in which Mr. Trump and JD Vance berated and bullied Mr. Zelensky, with the vice president demanding: “Have you said thank you once?” In the days leading up to the meeting, Mr. Trump described Mr. Zelensky as a “dictator” and suggested that Ukraine started the war with Russia.

Along with the serious implications of all this for America’s security and alliances, it is likely to cause domestic trouble for the president. The White House’s views on Ukraine are out of step not only with the country as a whole but with Republican voters.

Earlier this month, my organization, Razom, commissioned the Republican firm 1892 Polling to conduct a survey of 2024 GOP primary voters on their attitudes toward Ukraine. Majorities said they agreed Russia is the aggressor (69%), would support continued weapons assistance under certain circumstances (60%), and say they’re more likely to support aid for Ukraine when told Russia has kidnapped more than 19,000 Ukrainian children (71%).

Contrary to stereotype, Republican voters have nuanced views about America’s place in the world and Russia’s war. Their opinions on Ukraine are considered, internally coherent and broadly well-informed. Taken in aggregate, this constituency is unlikely to reward American politicians who empower [Vladimir Putin](#).

Mr. Trump remains exceedingly popular among Republicans. Among those polled, 83% have a favorable opinion of him and respondents were much more likely to identify themselves as a “Trump Republican” (53%) than a part of the “traditional” Republican Party (38%). Republican voters revile Mr. Putin as much as they love Trump—83% view the Russian President unfavorably. Republican voters are split on Mr. Zelensky, with 43% viewing him favorably and 45% unfavorably.

The people who elected Mr. Trump and the Republican congressional majority understand the difference between the defenders on the wall and the marauders at the gate. They were asked which proposition they agreed with more: that Mr. Putin launched an unprovoked war to subjugate Ukraine, or that NATO expansion and Ukrainian belligerence sparked the war. By 70% to 15%, they chose the former. When Tucker

Carlson travels to Moscow and hypes Russian supermarkets, his views are boosted by a small number of prominent influencers. But most Republican voters would likely think this fixation is bizarre.

On foreign policy, Republicans want Congress and the White House to tackle two core issues: the porous southern border and the growing influence of China. Everything else is an afterthought. Even those skeptical of continued U.S. aid to Ukraine would still vote for a lawmaker who backs it if he is aligned with the White House's other priorities. The electoral record bears this out. Every Republican House member who voted for Ukraine aid in April 2024 went on to win his primary election. Conservatives are also open to persuasion.

None of this is surprising to those who have spent time speaking to conservatives. In advocating on Ukraine's behalf, Razom meets with people across the country—first responders in Louisiana, veterans in Pennsylvania, small-business owners in rural Michigan. Mr. Trump won most of the states we visit, and most of the people we speak with enthusiastically voted for him. When conservatives tell us what they think about the war, they often start by saying, "We're praying for Ukraine."

Like other Americans, they aren't immersed in the byzantine provisions of military-assistance programs, and they are concerned about how Washington spends their tax dollars. But they clearly see Ukraine having been grievously wronged. Their feelings of solidarity are motivated by patriotism, not politics. They would never allow a foreign power to invade America and hurt their neighbors. They see no reason why Ukraine should either.

As the White House works to end the war, it should begin by heeding the wisdom of the voters who put Mr. Trump in office. If he produces lasting peace, he will be celebrated. If it is fleeting and exploitative, his supporters will see it as weakness and a distraction from the mandate they gave him. And if the war goes on because of Messrs. Trump's and Vance's personal pique against Mr. Zelensky, that will be a tragedy. Republican voters back many of the policies the White House is pursuing, but they didn't vote to surrender Ukraine to Mr. Putin's ravenous ambitions.

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