

Top 20 Most Cringeworthy Zelensky PR Moments

By [Caitlin Johnstone](#)

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The US empire's proxy war in Ukraine has had many jaw-dropping instances of imperialist sociopathy, propagandistic audacity and brazen journalistic malpractice that we've discussed in this space many times, but one of the most cringeworthy and degrading aspects of the globe-spanning narrative control campaign surrounding this war has been the way the nation's president Volodymyr Zelensky has been turned into an ever-present corporate mascot for the most aggressive ad campaign ever devised. The way the most powerful institutions in the western world have been throwing their puppet in everyone's face to sell the empire's proxy warfare puts Ronald McDonald to shame.

Here are 20 of the cringiest moments of establishment PR using Zelensky to market the McProxy War to the western world, in no particular order.

1. A House Republican introducing a bill to place a bust of Zelensky in the US Capitol building

House Republican Introduces Resolution to Place Bust of Zelensky in the Capitol
Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) and other conservative GOP members blasted the idea
by Dave DeCamp [@DecampDave](#) [@RepMTG](#) [@RepThomasMassie](#) [#Zelensky](#) [#Zelenskyy](#) [#Ukraine](#) <https://t.co/E62LAoSdK> pic.twitter.com/7kF0keUkWl

— Antiwar.com (@Antiwarcom) [January 12, 2023](#)

Antiwar's Dave DeCamp [writes](#):

Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) [introduced a bill](#) this week that would place a bust of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in the House wing of the US Capitol building, an idea that was strongly criticized by more conservative GOP members.

2. The fake Hollywood action hero-sounding “I need ammunition, not a ride” quote

The only source for the quote was [a single unnamed US government official](#), yet numerous mainstream media outlets [reported it as fact](#) instead of ignoring it for the baseless nonsense that it plainly was, and now it’s part of the official narrative.

It was clear Ukraine was going to be the phoniest, most PR-intensive proxy war of all time when the entire mainstream press started baselessly ascribing a Hollywood action hero-sounding quote to Zelensky that he never actually said. pic.twitter.com/r6Ubq38SEf

— Caitlin Johnstone (@caitoz) [December 2, 2022](#)

3. The Vogue cover shoot

wartime vogue photo shoots. very serious. let’s keep sending ukraine weekly billion dollar aid packages to protect “democracy.” don’t question it. pic.twitter.com/MXVaW16K0y

— Logan Hall (@loganclarkhall) [July 26, 2022](#)

5. Time Magazine Person of the Year

TIME's 2022 Person of the Year: Volodymyr Zelensky and the spirit of Ukraine [#TIMEPOY](#) <https://t.co/06Y5fuc0fG> pic.twitter.com/i8ZT3d5GDa

— TIME (@TIME) [December 7, 2022](#)

6. Star Wars: Attack of the Drones

The Star Wars actor Mark Hamill has joined President Zelensky to raise money for drones to fight Russia, which the actor compared to the “evil empire” from the films <https://t.co/OZKUHwcf9S>

— The Times and The Sunday Times (@thetimes) [September 30, 2022](#)

7. Zelensky giving a speech at the Golden Globes

I addressed the participants of the 80th [@goldenglobes](#) Awards. This award was born at a special time. WWII was not over yet, but the tide was turned – all knew who would win.

It is now 2023. The war in is not over yet but the tide is turning & it is already clear who will win. pic.twitter.com/u7pHrOu0lq

— Володимир Зеленський (@ZelenskyyUa) [January 11, 2023](#)

8. Zelensky giving a speech for the Grammys

✂ Ukrainian artists, Zelensky address audience at the Grammys.

President Volodymyr Zelensky addressed the audience in a pre-recorded video, wherein he said: “We are fighting Russia, which brings horrible silence with its bombs. The dead silence. Fill the silence with your music.”
pic.twitter.com/DrUzTNqsDO

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [April 4, 2022](#)

9. Zelensky getting an Academy Award from actor Sean Penn

Two-time Academy Award winner [#SeanPenn](#) gifted his Oscar to Ukrainian president [@ZelenskyyUa](#) as a symbol of strength [#Zelenskyy](#) [#Ukraine](#) [#UkraineRussiaWar](#) pic.twitter.com/8UITVC9y7T

— CNBC-TV18 (@CNBCTV18News) [November 9, 2022](#)

10. Zelensky addressing the World Economic Forum

President Volodymyr Zelensky, addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, invited business leaders whose companies are leaving Russia to bring their firms to Ukraine to help rebuild his country. <https://t.co/TV1uaCa2Tw> pic.twitter.com/KyYA3PU22U

— The New York Times (@nytimes) [May 23, 2022](#)

11. Zelensky giving a speech and ringing the bell for the New York Stock Exchange

Ukrainian President Zelenskiy kicked off trading at the New York Stock Exchange by remotely ringing the opening bell pic.twitter.com/2nsQY0A760

— Reuters (@Reuters) [September 6, 2022](#)

12. Zelensky giving a speech at the secretive Bilderberg Group (probably)

We’d never know if Zelensky actually did end up making a video appearance because of Bilderberg’s [notorious secrecy](#), but ahead of the meeting [The Guardian reported](#) he probably would:

“The conference room is rigged up with video screens for shy dignitaries to make a virtual attendance, and it’s highly likely that Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskiy will Zoom in for a T-shirted contribution to the talks. Just a few days beforehand, Zelenskiy met with a Bilderberg and US intelligence representative Alex Karp, who runs Palantir, the infamous CIA-funded surveillance and data analysis company.”

13. Zelensky giving a speech at the Cannes Film Festival

Le président ukrainien Volodymyr Zelensky intervient en direct de Kiev pour la cérémonie d'ouverture du 75e [@Festival_Cannes](#).

DIRECT ► <https://t.co/RrjLcnrtd4#Cannes2022> pic.twitter.com/mn15iilW0W

— France 2 (@France2tv) [May 17, 2022](#)

14. Zelensky giving a speech at the Glastonbury Festival

President Volodymyr Zelensky addressed the Glastonbury Festival on June 24.

"Glastonbury is the greatest concentration of freedom these days," he said, calling on attendees to spread the truth about Russia's war and donate to support Ukrainians.

Video: Glastonbury/Twitter pic.twitter.com/cExzOi41xr

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 24, 2022](#)

15. Weird Hologram Zelensky at the Founders Forum in the UK

✂Zelensky addresses Founders Forum in U.K. as hologram.

President Volodymyr Zelensky appeared as a hologram at the Founders Forum, a gathering of tech entrepreneurs in the U.K., to call on Europe's tech leaders to help rebuild Ukraine and to announce a "digital lend-lease." pic.twitter.com/RurjCpPqxS

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 16, 2022](#)

16. Zelensky meeting with Ben Stiller

17. The Ukrainian flag performance in the US congress

"The phoniest, most PR-intensive war of all time." -[@caitoz](#) pic.twitter.com/OwULhyVvbD

— Lafayette (@LafayetteCahill) [December 22, 2022](#)

18. The bizarre Biden-Zelensky slow motion action-heroes-walking-away-from-an-explosion video clip

In Ukraine's fight against Russia's unprovoked, unjustified war, I'm proud to say they have not stood alone.

And on my watch, they never will. pic.twitter.com/2RV8dyXHxr

— President Biden (@POTUS) [December 21, 2022](#)

19. Guest on David Letterman's show

20. The obligatory Bono psyop

Following a personal invitation from Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelensky, U2's Bono and the Edge visited Kyiv Sunday to perform an acoustic concert in one of the city's subway stations-turned-bomb shelters <https://t.co/ZT7lvH0X6F>

— Rolling Stone (@RollingStone) [May 8, 2022](#)

Honorable mention: Zelensky meeting with BlackRock CEO Larry Fink to help "rebuild" (read: buy up) Ukraine

BlackRock to "rebuild" Ukraine. This is going to make the neoliberalism and privatization the U.S. inflicted on post-Soviet Russia look like child's play <https://t.co/IOm6XckVDo>

— Jordan (@JordanChariton) [December 28, 2022](#)

Honorable mention: DC party at the Ukrainian embassy openly hosted by the US military-industrial complex

A Ukrainian Embassy reception was sponsored by Northrop, Lockheed and Raytheon, reports [@mideastXmidwest](#). (Not The Onion) <https://t.co/U89y7gER8v> pic.twitter.com/fNzika6utb

— Eli Clifton (@EliClifton) [December 16, 2022](#)

Are people not tired of having their intelligence insulted yet?

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