

# The Stossel State of the Union

President Joe Biden just gave his State of the Union Address.

Here's what I wish Biden said:

"Russia's unwarranted invasion of Ukraine reminds us why it's crucial that America's military remains strong, and focused on *defense*, not distractions like gender equity.

"I stand with the people of Ukraine, and I will help them where I can, but America will not enter this war.

"My predecessors involved us in wars all over the world. Today, America posts soldiers in 80 countries: 25,000 in South Korea, 30,000 in Germany, 50,000 in Japan...

"I will bring those troops home. Those countries can pay for their own defense. I promise I will deploy America's soldiers *only* if there is a direct threat to America's interests.

"Avoiding war was one of the things my predecessor got right.

"Former President Donald Trump said he would 'bring our troops back home.' I followed through, and we now are out of Afghanistan. I didn't plan the exit well, but at least we finally left.

"Turning to my governance at home, I have a lot to apologize for. Two years into the pandemic, I finally understand how much I got wrong.

"I said we wouldn't mandate vaccines. My press secretary assured reporters, 'That's not the role of the federal government.'

"But just a few weeks later, I mandated vaccines for most employees.

"I said, 'This is not about freedom or personal choice.' But that's nonsense. It was exactly about freedom and choice. Fortunately, the Supreme Court struck down my mandate.

"My government made endless mistakes.

"For a year, our Centers for Disease Control and Prevention maintained outdoor mask rules. That's absurd. It's almost impossible to contract COVID-19 outdoors. I think bureaucrats do things like that because they like bossing you around.

"I'll stop that.

"Next, during the pandemic, both Trump and I liked sending you money. 'I'm sure people

will be very happy to get a big, fat beautiful check,' said Trump. I said, '85 percent of American households will have gotten a \$1,400 rescue check.'

"But government has no money of its own, so that money wasn't a gift; it's taken from you. Then Washington, D.C., took a cut, and we handed out the rest like we're Santa Claus.

"I'm not Santa. I promise, I'll stop giving away all this money! The national debt is already an unsustainable \$30 trillion. There's no way I can pay that back. In fact, my reckless spending made the problem worse. I once even said, cluelessly, that my big spending would *reduce* inflation. Inflation then hit a 40-year high.

"But I've learned from my mistakes! Starting today, I will cut irresponsible spending.

"I will cut useless cabinet departments, like Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Agriculture. Agriculture employs almost 100,000 people. Why? Independent farmers grow the food. I've been in Washington 50 years, and I still don't know what most of my bureaucrats do.

"I'll get rid of the Department of Education, too. Why does it even exist? Education is a local responsibility. It's none of the federal government's business! It's none of *my* business.

"We don't need a Commerce Department. After all, commerce just happens. I'll get rid of those bureaucrats and sell the buildings.

"I'll get rid of the Drug Enforcement Administration, too. We don't need it because I'll end the destructive War on Drugs. We all have a right to do what we want with our own bodies. Even if we didn't, law enforcement is a local police responsibility.

"If we got rid of harmful laws and departments, we could focus on what the government *should* do: keep us safe and free.

"In closing, I pledge to follow our Constitution. It puts limits on what I can do. Trump once claimed that Article II gave him the power to do whatever he wanted. But that's nonsense.

"We have *limited* powers.

"I can't do whatever I want.

"And from now on, I promise I will do less.

"In fact, if I do my job right, you should barely know I'm here."