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# EasyJet founder blasts bosses who took £600m loan

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EASYJET'S founder has lashed out at the airline's bosses for taking £600million from UK taxpayers while pressing ahead with a £4.5billion order for more than 100 new planes.

Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou last night accused the management team of 'misusing taxpayer's money' and said the decision not to terminate the deal with Airbus 'could be the biggest scandal in British corporate history'. EasyJet will get £600million from the Government's coronavirus fund, and is borrowing an additional £400million from creditors.

Sir Stelios, whose family is EasyJet's largest shareholder, insisted the airline would not need a loan if it cancelled the multi-billion-pound Airbus deal, which he said was 'useless' while planes are grounded during the Covid-19 pandemic. EasyJet has not broken any rules in taking advantage of the bail-out measures and is entitled to use the money to buy new aircraft.

But Sir Stelios is opposed to the Government loan and urged executives to ditch the Airbus contract 'for EasyJet to survive'.

The Greek-Cypriot billionaire called for the removal of chief finance officer Andrew Findlay, and threatened to oust non-executive director Andreas Bierwirth. The row comes days after Sir Stelios faced criticism for receiving a £60million dividend payment, although this related to last year's performance and was approved and made legally binding before the pandemic. He said previously: 'The world looked like a much happier place on the 6 February and the dividend was rightfully paid to all shareholders.'

An EasyJet spokesman said its board 'fully supports' the decision to accept the Government loan in the 'interests of the company'.

