

'I Cannot be Quietly Complicit': Biden Official Resigns Over Gaza Assault

By [Jake Johnson](#)

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"Stable doors slamming, but a - very cautious - feel of shift at all levels, nations?" -**Felicity Arbuthnot**, January 4, 2024

An Education Department official who volunteered for President Joe Biden's 2020 campaign announced his resignation Wednesday over the administration's support for Israel's "indiscriminate violence" against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, the latest sign of growing dissent within the U.S. government.

"It should go without saying that all violence against innocent people is horrific," **Tariq Habash**, a Palestinian American who worked as a policy adviser in the Education Department's Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, wrote in his [resignation letter](#). "I mourn each and every loss, Israeli and Palestinian."

"But I cannot represent an administration that does not value all human life equally. I cannot stay silent as this administration turns a blind eye to the atrocities committed against innocent Palestinian lives, in what leading human rights experts have called a genocidal campaign by the Israeli government," Habash continued. "I cannot be quietly complicit as this administration fails to leverage its influence as Israel's strongest ally to halt the abusive and ongoing collective punishment tactics that have cut off Palestinians in Gaza from food, water, electricity, fuel, and medical supplies, leading to widespread disease and starvation."

Habash is the second administration official—and the [first political appointee](#)—to resign over

the Biden administration's handling of Israel's attack on Gaza, which has killed more than 22,000 people in less than three months. Josh Paul, who worked in the State Department for more than 11 years, [resigned in protest](#) less than two weeks after Israel began its latest bombing campaign in Gaza following a deadly Hamas-led attack.

Internal backlash against the Biden administration's decision to arm and provide diplomatic cover for the Israeli government has grown steadily over the course of the nearly three-month war, with staffers at the [State Department](#), the [United States Agency for International Development](#) (USAID), and even Biden's 2024 reelection campaign voicing opposition to the president's [unpopular approach](#).

On Wednesday, 17 current Biden campaign staffers released an [open letter](#) imploring the president to cut off unconditional aid to the Israeli military, use his leverage to push for an immediate and permanent cease-fire, and "take concrete steps to end the conditions of apartheid, occupation, and ethnic cleansing that are the root causes of this conflict."

"Complicity in the death of over 20,000 Palestinians, 8,200 of whom are [children](#), simply cannot be justified," reads the letter, which was signed anonymously. "Only with an end to violence can we achieve a real and lasting peace that upholds the right to self-determination, safety, and freedom for Palestinians and Israelis alike."

Attorneys have warned that Biden administration officials, including the president himself, [could face legal consequences](#) for supporting genocide in the Gaza Strip. The administration is [currently fighting](#) a lawsuit aiming to enjoin it from providing any additional support for Israel's war on Gaza.

In an [appearance](#) on *MSNBC* following his resignation, Habash said he believes many officials within the Biden administration feel the way he does about the president's support for Israel's assault—and they are becoming increasingly vocal as the humanitarian disaster in Gaza [spirals further out of control](#).

"We've seen hundreds of State Department officials sign onto numerous dissent cables that were leaked," Habash said. "We've seen USAID officials, we've seen White House staff, we've seen interns, we've seen hundreds of officials across the administration from dozens of agencies. This is a pretty commonly held position by a lot of the biggest supporters of the president. And the majority of American voters support a cease-fire, but the president's unwillingness to move on this policy is deafening and it hurts."

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Jake Johnson is a senior editor and staff writer for Common Dreams.

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