

The DNC Fiddles While the World Burns. “An Orwellian disconnect haunts the 2024 Democratic National Convention”

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An Orwellian disconnect haunts the 2024 Democratic National Convention. *In the isolation of the convention hall, shielded from the outside world behind thousands of armed police, few of the delegates seem to realize that their country is on the brink of direct involvement in major wars with Russia and Iran, either of which could escalate into World War III.*

Inside the hall, the mass slaughter in the Middle East and Ukraine are treated only as troublesome “issues,” which “the [greatest military](#) in the history of the world” can surely deal with. Delegates who unfurled a banner that read “Stop Arming Israel” during Biden’s speech on Monday night were quickly accosted by DNC officials, who instructed other delegates to use “We ♥ Joe” signs to hide the banner from view.

In the real world, the most explosive flashpoint right now is the Middle East, where **U.S. weapons and Israeli troops are slaughtering tens of thousands of Palestinians, mostly children and families, at the bidding of Israel’s Benjamin Netanyahu.** And yet, in July, Democrats and Republicans leapt to their feet in 23 standing ovations to applaud Netanyahu’s warmongering [speech](#) to a joint session of Congress.

In the week before the DNC started, the Biden administration announced its approval for the sale of \$20 billion in weapons to Israel, which would lock the US into a relationship with the Israeli military for years to come.

Netanyahu’s determination to keep killing without restraint in Gaza, and Biden and Congress’s willingness to keep supplying him with weapons to do so, always risked exploding into a wider war, but the crisis has reached a new climax. Since Israel has failed to kill or expel the Palestinians from Gaza, it is now trying to draw the United States into a war with Iran, a war to degrade Israel’s enemies and restore the illusion of military superiority that it has squandered in Gaza.

To achieve its goal of triggering a wider war, Israel assassinated **Fuad Shukr**, a Hezbollah commander, in Beirut, and Hamas’s political leader and chief ceasefire negotiator, **Ismail Haniyeh**, in Tehran. Iran has vowed to respond militarily to the assassinations, but Iran’s leaders are in a [difficult position](#). They do not want a war with Israel and the United States, and they have acted with restraint throughout the massacre in Gaza. But failing to respond

strongly to these assassinations would encourage Israel to conduct further attacks on Iran and its allies.

The assassinations in Beirut and Tehran were clearly designed to elicit a response from Iran and Hezbollah that would draw the U.S. into the war. Could Iran find a way to strike Israel that would not provoke a U.S. response? Or, if Iran's leaders believe that is impossible, will they decide that this is the moment to actually fight a seemingly unavoidable war with the U.S. and Israel?

Image: CIA Director William J. Burns official portrait (From the Public Domain)



This is an incredibly dangerous moment, but a ceasefire in Gaza would resolve the crisis. The U.S. has dispatched CIA **Director William Burns**, the only professional diplomat in Biden's cabinet, to the Middle East for renewed ceasefire talks, and Iran is waiting to see the result of the talks before responding to the assassinations.

Burns is working with Qatari and Egyptian officials to come up with a revised ceasefire proposal that Israel and Hamas can both agree to. But Israel has always rejected any proposal for more than a temporary pause in its assault on Gaza, while Hamas will only agree to a real, permanent ceasefire. Could Biden have sent Burns just to stall, so that a new war wouldn't spoil the Dems' party in Chicago?

The United States has always had the option of halting weapons shipments to Israel to force it to agree to a permanent ceasefire. But it has refused to use that leverage, except for the suspension of a single shipment of 2,000 lb bombs in May, after it had [already sent](#) Israel 14,000 of those horrific weapons, which it uses to systematically smash living children and families into unidentifiable pieces of flesh and bone.

Meanwhile the war with Russia has also taken a new and dangerous turn, with Ukraine invading Russia's Kursk region. [Some analysts](#) believe this is only a diversion before an even riskier Ukrainian assault on the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. Ukraine's leaders see the writing on the wall, and are increasingly ready to take any risk to improve their negotiating position before they are forced to sue for peace.

But Ukraine's recent incursion into Russia, while applauded by much of the west, has

actually made negotiations less likely. In fact, talks between Russia and Ukraine on energy issues were supposed to start in the coming weeks. The idea was that each side would agree not to target the other's energy infrastructure, with the hope that this could lead to more comprehensive talks. But after Ukraine's invasion toward Kursk, the Russians pulled out of what would have been the first direct talks since the early weeks of the Russian invasion.

President Zelenskyy remains in power three months after his term of office expired, and he is a great admirer of Israel. Will he take a page from Netanyahu's playbook and do something so provocative that it will draw U.S. and NATO forces into the potentially nuclear war with Russia that Biden has [promised](#) to avoid?

Image [source](#)



A 2023 U.S. Army War College [study](#) found that even a non-nuclear war with Russia could result in as many U.S. casualties every two weeks as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq did in two decades, and it concluded that such a war would require a return to conscription in the United States.

While Gaza and Eastern Ukraine burn in firestorms of American and Russian bombs and missiles, and the war in Sudan rages on unchecked, the whole planet is rocketing toward catastrophic temperature increases, ecosystem breakdown and mass extinctions. But the delegates in Chicago are in la-la land about U.S. responsibility for that crisis too.

Under the slick climate plan Obama sold to the world in Copenhagen and Paris, Americans' per capita CO2 emissions are still [double](#) those of our Chinese, British and European neighbors, while U.S. [oil](#) and [gas](#) production have soared to all-time record highs.

The [combined](#) dangers of nuclear war and climate catastrophe have pushed the hands of the Doomsday Clock all the way to 90 seconds to midnight. But the leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties are in the pockets of the fossil fuel industry and the military-industrial complex. Behind the election-year focus on what the two parties disagree about, the corrupt policies they both agree on are the most dangerous of all.

President Biden recently [claimed](#) that he is "running the world." No oligarchic American politician will confess to "running the world" to the brink of nuclear war and mass extinction, but tens of thousands of Americans marching in the streets of Chicago and millions more Americans who support them understand that that is what Biden, Trump and their cronies are doing.

The people inside the convention hall should shake themselves out of their complacency and start listening to the people in the streets. Therein lies the real hope, maybe the only

hope, for America's future.

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Featured image: DNC delegates unfurl banner during Biden's speech at the DNC. Photo credit: Esam Boraey

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