

Joe Biden's Armageddon, from Gaza to Ukraine

The White House newly prioritizes hegemony over humanity.

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*At a private Manhattan fundraiser one year ago this month, **President Joe Biden** shared an assessment that he had not told the public. From his vantage point, Biden told the room of Democratic Party donors, the world faces "the prospect of Armageddon" for the first time "since Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis."*

At the time, Biden was referring to the conflict in Ukraine, which had just intensified with the bombing of the Nord Stream pipelines and Russia's declared annexations of four Ukrainian regions. Despite noting the dangers of a proxy war against Russia, the world's other top nuclear power, Biden has nonetheless pursued the higher priority of enforcing US hegemony by attempting to "weaken" it. Accordingly, Biden has continued the proxy war with a signature policy of flooding Ukraine with weapons, encouraging a failed counter-offensive, and blocking diplomatic off-ramps.

One year later, Biden is not only doubling down on his apocalyptic approach in Ukraine, but adding a second front in the Middle East. The White House has asked Congress for a new spending package that would provide over \$14 billion for Israel's assault on Gaza and more than \$61 billion for Ukraine – the largest such request since Russia's February 2022 invasion. Concurrently, the US is directly assisting Israeli atrocities and standing virtually alone to block global calls for a ceasefire – all while risking a wider regional confrontation.

In an Oval Office address last week, Biden dusted off George W. Bush's "Axis of Evil" playbook to draw a direct tie between the Ukraine proxy war and Israel's assault on Gaza. " Hamas and Putin represent different threats, but they share this in common: They both want to annihilate a neighboring democracy," he said.

In another nod to neoconservative dogma, Biden appropriated Senate Republican leader [Mitch McConnell's pitch to voters](#) on funding the war in Ukraine. The weapons sent to Ukraine and now Israel, Biden explained, are "made in America" – including, he stressed,

the election swing states of Pennsylvania and Ohio. “You know, just as in World War II, today patriotic American workers are building the arsenal of democracy and serving the cause of freedom.” According to [Biden’s budget office](#), nearly half of his \$106 billion request, \$50 billion, will be spent on “the American defense industrial base.”

Beyond hegemony and war profiteering, Biden’s mention of states vital to his 2024 re-election chances underscores another reason for his record spending request. In bundling the two conflicts together, Biden is hoping to entice pro-Israel Republicans skeptical of more funding for the Ukraine war – thereby giving him \$61 billion to prolong the fight against Russia until after the November 2024 election.

As it has done in Ukraine, the Biden administration is declining to use its significant leverage over Israel to end the carnage. If it wanted to, the White House could call on Israel to accept a ceasefire and pursue a negotiated release of Hamas’ captives, on top of the four that have already been freed. But [according to the Washington Post](#), one US official “said it was clear that Netanyahu was not going to wait until the hostage crisis was resolved to initiate a ground offensive and that there was little Washington could do to change that calculus.”

A major factor, the Post adds, is that Biden “officials are loath to create a public spat as Republicans on Capitol Hill search for any sign of the president being insufficiently pro-Israel.” To avoid looking “insufficiently pro-Israel,” therefore, Biden must be sufficiently pro-mass murder – even at the expense of endangering the hostages that he insists are his [top priority](#).

As for the argument that there is “little” Biden could do to impact Israel’s behavior, even top Israeli officials admit that to be false. At a recent meeting with Israeli lawmakers, Defense Minister Yaov Gallant acknowledged that his government agreed to allow some humanitarian aid into Gaza after US pressure. “The Americans insisted and we are not in a place where we can refuse them,” [Gallant said](#). “We rely on them for planes and military equipment. What are we supposed to do? Tell them no?”

Luckily for Israeli leaders, they will not have to tell Biden “no” on an immediate end to the bombardment of Gaza, and a negotiated return of Hamas’ captives there. After Gaza’s health ministry reported the deadliest night of Israeli airstrikes so far – over 700 Palestinians killed – Secretary of State Antony Blinken allowed himself to declare at the United Nations that “humanitarian pauses must be considered.” In other words, the mass killing of Palestinians with US weaponry may proceed, so long as a pause to the slaughter is “considered.”

Having previously deemed ceasefire proposals “repugnant”, the Biden administration is openly embracing more Palestinian civilian deaths.

“This is war, it is combat, it is bloody, it is ugly, and it’s going to be messy,” spokesperson **John Kirby** said at the White House, just as Blinken appeared at the United Nations. “And innocent civilians are going to be hurt going forward.”

Kirby’s callous indifference to the deaths of more Palestinian civilians contrasts with his response to Hamas’ killings of Israeli civilians on October 7th, which led him to weep [on live television](#).

“These are human beings.” White House spokesperson John Kirby breaks down on live TV while discussing the depravity of Hamas attacks. (Video: CNN) pic.twitter.com/aMfVSEdIj

— Mike Sington (@MikeSington) [October 10, 2023](#)

Israel will thus have free rein to bombard Gaza with no concern for the civilian population or the Hamas captives.

“Hostages and civilian casualties will be secondary to destroying Hamas,” ABC News reports of the prevailing Israeli government view. Economy Minister Nir Barakat explained the strategy further: “We shall do all efforts to bring our hostages, to bring our hostages [back] alive,” but destroying Hamas is the “first and last priority.”

A non-existent priority is the fate of Gaza’s 2.3 million residents, who are facing what Martin Griffiths, the UN’s top humanitarian official, describes as a crisis that “has reached catastrophic levels.”

When it comes to the meager amounts of aid that the US and Israel have allowed into Gaza, even that is subject to constraints. The first delivery of 20 trucks did not include any fuel, which powers hospital, water pumps, and everything else needed for survival - [including the incubators for premature babies](#).

“Without fuel, there will be no water, no functioning hospitals and bakeries,” the UN relief agency for Palestinian refugees warns. “Without fuel, aid will not reach those in desperate need.”

But Israeli needs negate such concerns. “The move to exclude fuel from the first delivery was an apparent concession to Israel, which worries that Hamas and other armed groups could divert it for military purposes,” the [Washington Post notes](#). This follows the previous “concession” to Israel that created the need for these trucks in the first place: the Biden administration’s green light for Israel to shut off Gaza’s water and electricity supplies.

As Dr. Michael Ryan of the UN’s Health Emergencies Programme notes, the small fleet of trucks allowed so far “is a drop in the ocean of need right now in Gaza,” where over 1.4 million people - more than 60% of the population - have been displaced. Before Israel’s current assault, Gaza was already in such need that “several hundred trucks had been arriving in the enclave daily,” [Reuters notes](#).

The Biden administration also acknowledges that its touted aid packages do not meet the bare minimum for Gazans’ survival. In an interview touting the first deliveries, the newly appointed US special envoy for Middle East humanitarian issues, David Satterfield, said that the White House goal is to “build that flow up to the levels necessary to begin to meet Gaza’s needs.” Left unstated is that many Palestinians will die due to a lack of medical equipment and other vital supplies before the US-approved aid deliveries can “begin to meet” their life-saving needs.

The US is also actively involved in Israel’s military operation against Gaza. The White House has sent a Marine three-star general, **Lt. Gen. James Glynn**, and several other military officers to advise the Israeli military, including for its planned ground invasion. According to [the New York Times](#),

US officials “have become increasingly concerned that a ground invasion in Gaza could lead to a huge loss of civilian lives,” but nonetheless insist that they have “not told Israel what to do and still supported the ground invasion.”

Biden’s commitment to protecting Israel’s carnage in Gaza and broader regional hegemony creates dangers far beyond the besieged territory. Since the assault began, Israel and Hezbollah have exchanged fire along the south Lebanon border. In preparation for a potential regional conflict, the US has deployed air defense missiles and two aircraft carriers to deal “with threats to American troops throughout the Middle East,” the Wall Street Journal notes. According to the Pentagon, US forces in Iraq and Syria have come under fire [at least 13 times in the past week](#), leaving [at least 24 soldiers wounded](#). Meanwhile, Israel continues its routine airstrikes on Syrian territory, including the country’s two major airports.

The attacks on US forces from Iranian-backed groups are understood to be a direct result of the Gaza slaughter.

“For more than six months,” the Journal reports, “Iranian-backed militia groups refrained from launching drones or rockets against American troops in Iraq and Syria, as part of what appeared to be an undeclared truce between Tehran and Washington.”

Just as the lives of Palestinian civilians and US-Israeli hostages are subordinate to the imperatives of US-Israeli hegemony, so are US forces’. In Iraq, the US has retained its military contingent despite a 2020 vote from the Iraqi parliament calling for a full withdrawal. In Syria, the US remains all while ignoring government demands for both a withdrawal and compensation for looted oil reserves.

Although the US claims that its “sole purpose” in Syria is fighting ISIS, the US military has in fact barely done any fighting against the militant group. In 2019, [now-senior Biden official Dana Stroul](#) explained that occupying the “resource-rich”, “economic powerhouse” region in Syria’s northeast — which contains the country’s “hydrocarbons” and is its “agricultural powerhouse” — gives the U.S. government “broader leverage” to influence “a political outcome in Syria” in line with US dictates. Jennifer Cafarella of the Institute for the Study of War, a neoconservative Washington think tank, has [likewise explained](#) that the US military occupation gives it “direct influence over the vast majority of Syria’s most productive oil fields,” thereby controlling “Syrian national treasures that, when added up amount to brute geopolitical power for the US.”

As of this writing, more than 5,000 Palestinian civilians have become the latest casualties of the United States and Israel’s brute geopolitical power. This includes more than 2,300 children, a calamity that UNICEF calls a “growing stain on our collective conscience.” Not that of the Biden White House, content to sacrifice countless more civilian lives from Gaza to Ukraine in its dogged embrace of Armageddon.

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