

The War on Gaza: How We Got to the “Monstrosity of Our Century”

Part V

By [Amir Nour](#)

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“I am not willing to see anybody associated with those misled and criminal people.”
—Albert Einstein[1]

From Oslo to Onslaught

A recent Frontline documentary[2] provided a sweeping examination of the most critical moments leading to the ongoing war on Gaza. Starting with the Oslo Accords and continuing through to the current predicament, it draws on years of reporting and takes an incisive look at the long history of failed peace efforts and violent conflict in the region. It also looked at the increasing tensions between Israel and its ally, the U.S., over the war’s catastrophic toll and what comes next.

On 13 September 1993, an historic and hopeful moment in the century-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict took place in Washington D.C. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiator Mahmoud Abbas signed a *“Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”* (The Oslo I Accord) at the White House, under the aegis of US President Bill Clinton.

The agreement was the fruit of secret negotiations that began in January 1993 between representatives of Israel led by **Shimon Peres** and representatives of the PLO led by Mahmoud Abbas in the Norwegian capital, Oslo. Israel accepted the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians, and the PLO renounced armed struggle and recognised Israel’s right to exist in peace. Both sides agreed that a Palestinian Authority (PA) would be established and assume governing responsibilities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over a five-year period. Then, permanent status talks on the issues of borders, refugees, and Jerusalem would be held.

Two years later, **on 28 September 1995, Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, and Yasser Arafat signed the Oslo II Accord**, formally called *“Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip”*, which detailed the expansion of Palestinian self-rule to population centres other than Gaza and Jericho.



Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, U.S. president Bill Clinton, and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat.
(Licensed under the Public Domain)

But in Israel an outcry against the peace process had been building among the ultra-religious right-wing and security-minded conservatives. Leading the charge was **Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of the Likud party**. He famously said that *“The PLO, Islamic State, 15 minutes from Jerusalem or 5 minutes from Tel Aviv is a prescription not for peace but for dangerous and renewed conflict”*. Back then – and still today – he did not believe in the possibility of a deal with the Palestinians whom he has never trusted nor liked.

On 4 November 1995, at the end of a rally of his own Labour party in support of the Oslo peace process, **Yitzhak Rabin was gunned down by Yigal Amir**, a right-wing Israeli Jew. **Rabin’s widow blamed Netanyahu for contributing to her husband’s death and said so on worldwide television**. After Rabin’s death, the peace process he had championed was in jeopardy. His successor, Shimon Peres, would now try to win an election to keep it alive. He had to face Netanyahu who had railed against the Oslo Accords and promised security to the growing number of Israelis scarred by mounting violence.

Just over a month later, as the new Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu was at the White House where he reluctantly pledged to further implement the Oslo peace process. But close observers said he was slow walking, and nobody was happy with him: the left was unhappy for what he was doing to undermine Oslo and the right didn’t like what he was doing to keep Oslo. As a result, in 1999 Netanyahu lost his bid for re-election.

Netanyahu would spend the next several years working his way back into power. He watched with concern as President Clinton brought his left-wing successor Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat together at Camp David for another peace effort that would have created a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank. Eventually, the negotiations failed, stumbling on the highly sensitive and contentious issue of the control of Jerusalem. The failure to make a deal set in motion a new round of frustration and violence on both sides.

By 2005, Netanyahu was back at the centre of the Israeli government. He was finance minister in the administration of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon who had a new plan for dealing with the Palestinians: a unilateral withdrawal of Israeli settlements and troops from the Gaza Strip but no negotiations. Netanyahu grew uneasy about the implications of handing over Gaza to the Palestinians. A week before the pull-out, he resigned in protest, declaring: *"I cannot be a partner to a move that I think compromises the security of Israel"*.

Image: Mahmoud Abbas



In Washington, President George W. Bush had been pushing the Palestinians to quickly take advantage of the moment and hold democratic elections in 2006. The Bush Administration threw its support behind the Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas who'd taken over since the death of Yasser Arafat. Abbas and his Fatah party were unpopular among many Palestinians who saw them as corrupt and ineffective. The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) - which was only established in 1987 during the first Intifada - decided to run against them in what was unanimously considered as open and free elections that were promoted by the US but cautioned against by Israel. And, to the surprise of everyone, Hamas - which had been designated by Israel, the US and many European countries as a terrorist organization a decade earlier because of its armed resistance against Israel - won the election in Gaza. In the wake of this electoral victory, Hamas took complete control of the Strip, Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah party retreated to the West Bank City of Ramallah, and the Israeli government imposed a blockade on the Gaza Strip.

By 2008, Netanyahu was once again running for Prime Minister with a campaign slogan of "strong against Hamas". But during the run-up to his eventual victory, a new President, Barack H. Obama, had entered the White House. Netanyahu was concerned. From his first day in office, President Obama had set a new tone and signalled to the Palestinians and Israelis alike that he wanted to restart the peace process. In May 2009, he invited Netanyahu to the White House, pressing him to stop the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank on land captured in the 1967 War and claimed by the Palestinians. For Netanyahu, his first meeting with the President couldn't have gone worse.

Obama's peace efforts over the next few years wouldn't be able to break the cycle of violence that had been raging between Israel and the Palestinians. He would send his veteran conflict negotiator, George Mitchell, to the region more than 20 times. Eventually, Mitchell gave up. He submitted his letter of resignation in 2011. With his Middle East efforts in trouble, Obama doubled down. Amid the 2011 "Arab Spring", he delivered a speech at the State Department that lasted nearly an hour but would be remembered for just one line: *"We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps"*. That Israel should return land it captured in the 1967 War to form

a Palestinian state was a familiar demand, but one never endorsed so publicly by a US President. For Israel this was a major and perilous development.

The Palestinians who once cheered Obama's election, now watched with disappointment as the peace process not only faltered, but Israel continued to build settlements. Obama's approach has been to send signals, but to never follow up his signals with actual action. Netanyahu understood that and proved to the Israeli public that *"when I defend you, even against the strongest person in the world, the President of the United States, we still get what we need in defence terms, and we still get this huge check from the United States. He managed to prove that Israel didn't pay a price."*[3]

Netanyahu would capitalise on his defiance of Obama. As he ran for re-election in 2015, he publicly lashed out at the President over his deal with Iran to curtail its nuclear program. And it played well to his base on the Israeli right. He took an even harder line on the Palestinian issue declaring:

"I opposed, and I adamantly oppose, the division of Jerusalem. I adamantly oppose going back to the 67 borders. I adamantly oppose the right of return. And that's not all. Look at practical reality. I haven't pulled back a single centimetre. For years, we... I have been facing this whole pressure campaign. I have continued to build in Jerusalem's neighbourhoods. I have never agreed to divide Jerusalem. I have never agreed to pull back to the 67 borders and I never will".

Netanyahu's Likud party won what's been called a stunning re-election victory, one which emboldened Netanyahu's approach to the Palestinians. He would take advantage of the fact they were divided between Hamas in Gaza and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. *"He wanted to divide, and he wanted to make sure that he doesn't have to negotiate any deal where you would connect between the territories and Gaza"*[4], hence preventing the creation of a Palestinian State.

With the Palestinians divided and Netanyahu pursuing a strategy keeping it that way, a new US President, Donald Trump, came to power with a new approach to the region. He boasted he'd be the first US President to broker an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal. *"I speak to you today as a lifelong supporter and true friend of Israel"*, he declared to an AIPAC audience. He also surrounded himself with a team that included his son-in-law, Jared Kushner who was a family friend of Netanyahu and David Friedman who supported Israeli settlements. And so, *"You had these advisers on Israel, all of them Jewish, all of them strong supporters of Israel, none of them with any particular background in negotiation in the region in terms of peace talks, but with very, very developed positions and points of view."*[5]

Just one month into his term, Trump invited Netanyahu to the White House to discuss the possibilities and gave Netanyahu an early nod in his favour, saying he would be open to something other than a two-state solution: *"I'm looking at two states and one state and I like the one that both parties like. I'm very happy with the one that both parties like, I can live with either one"*. That was a sea change in American policy, because going back for multiple Presidents, the idea of an independent Palestinian state as part of an ultimate resolution of this conflict has thus been thrown out the window. Trump would soon follow that up with an even more surprising announcement fulfilling a longtime wish of Netanyahu: *"Today we finally acknowledge the obvious: that Jerusalem is Israel's capital. I am also directing the state Department to begin preparation to move the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem"*, Trump said. Quite understandably, Palestinians took to the streets to

protest.

In effect, in May 2018, Friedman, Kushner, Netanyahu and nearly a thousand guests gathered in Jerusalem for the official ceremony marking the move of the US Embassy. That same day, around 50 miles south, at the border with Gaza, tens of thousands of Palestinians had gathered to protest the embassy move and Israel's blockade. Hamas urged protesters to break through the border fence. Israeli soldiers responded with rifle fire killing more than 60 people. *"What the embassy move symbolised to Palestinians was that they were not going to have a state with its capital in Jerusalem, because now the President of the United States had said that only Israel had a legitimate claim to Jerusalem, and that it would remain eternally Israel's capital."*[6]



Benjamin Netanyahu, Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump attending the opening of the United States Embassy in Jerusalem (Licensed under CC BY 2.0)

Soon afterwards, Netanyahu's government began a rapid expansion of settlements in the West Bank, the very move Obama had personally warned against. The Trump administration backed it, reversing the US's 40-year position that the settlements were illegal. Palestinian ambassador Husam Zomlot had this to say about it: *"Seeing the US performing, behaving, acting this way to the majority of the Palestinian people was definitely a source of hopelessness. And you know, hopelessness is a very dangerous feeling, and when hopelessness accumulates over decades, it's no longer just dangerous, it's catastrophic."*[7]

Adding insult to injury for the Palestinians, Trump and Netanyahu convened at the White House to announce what would be called the "Deal of the Century". On that occasion, Trump declared: *"I was not elected to do small things or shy away from big problems (...)* Under this Vision, Jerusalem will remain Israel's undivided - very important - undivided capital". Husam Zomlot commented: *"That scene was the most vulgar expression of what the Trump Administration and the Netanyahu government were all about. They were about liquidating the two-state solution, liquidating the Palestinian issue and cause".* The deal offered Netanyahu much of what he wanted. It was *"a fantastic blueprint from the perspective of Netanyahu's point of view. No settlements to be removed, a rump Palestinian entity that they might call a state but was not really a state, would have no control of its borders, no control even of its own water, no control of its airspace. It would not be able to*

function as a state. It would be a collection of municipalities.”[8]

To try to lure the Palestinians into the deal, Trump promised international investment worth \$50 billion. Commenting on that announcement, Husam Zomlot said: *“An American President stands next to an Israeli Prime Minister and tell them we will buy you off with some money. That scene has hit the heart of every Palestinian, the heart of Palestinians who have been struggling for 100 years”*. Then Netanyahu took the podium and went even further than the terms of the deal. He announced Israel was about to annex almost a third of the West Bank. *“It’s a unilateral claim on territory, and it really throws a lot of sand in the gears of what’s going on here, because if you start unilaterally claiming sovereignty over sections of the West Bank without having made any concessions, what is the incentive for the Palestinians to come to the table?”[9]*

The Palestinians were now effectively sidelined. Moreover, Trump’s plan unexpectedly set the stage for yet another major shift in the Middle East. Indeed, in the summer of 2020, Yousef Al-Otaiba, a friend of Jared Kushner and the United Arab Emirates’ ambassador to the US, saw an opportunity to propose a different kind of peace deal to Netanyahu. Not between Israel and the Palestinians, but between Israel and some of its Arab neighbours. *“By this time, many of the Arab governments are eager to have relations with Israel, and the Palestinian issue is a nuisance on the way. And for some of them, they felt that they were always putting their interest second to the Palestinian cause. And when Israel speaks of annexing parts of the West Bank, the Emiratis in particular, the United Arab Emirates, see an opportunity to prevent that annexation in exchange for a peace deal.”[10]* Al Otaiba said that the UAE and other Arab nations would consider normalising relations with Israel if Netanyahu stopped his planned annexations. *“The fact that the UAE would even consider signing a normalisation deal with Israel, without consulting the Palestinians, was pretty remarkable. It’s really a sign of just how much the region has changed in the past decade and how much lower the Palestinian issue was now on even the priorities of Arab states.”[11]*

At the White House, Trump’s team jumped on the idea as *“This was Netanyahu’s theory of the case: that the world was moving on from the Palestinians, that in fact Israel could achieve meaningful and lasting stability without having to trade away land for peace to the Palestinians, which had always been the premise of the two-state solution.”* After talks facilitated by Trump’s team, Israel and two Arab countries, the UAE and Bahrain, announced they would normalise relations, and Netanyahu dropped his annexation plans. It was the first peace treaty between Israel and any Arab country in almost 30 years. *“The Abraham Accords were definitely seen as a betrayal by Palestinians. And the Palestinians in general felt that the Arab states had abandoned them”[12]*. The Palestinian Authority called the Accords despicable.

The Abraham Accords would incite Israel’s enemies and seed conflict to come. *“What you see if you’re Hamas is the world is moving beyond you. They no longer care, it seems, about the plight of the Palestinians in Gaza. And this is a deal that is essentially marginalising Hamas, marginalising the Palestinians, marginalising their grievance, and they’re left wondering: well, what becomes of us, you know, what do we do to get some attention to our cause again?[13]”* Ambassador Zomlot responded by saying: *“You cannot ignore the Palestinian people, no matter how much you try by the power of the missiles and the tanks as we have seen throughout the years and now, or by the power of the complete capitulation of a US Administration like Trump, or by the power of getting some Arab countries to normalise without a real solution. All this, all that does not work, and shall*

never, ever work”.

In May 2021, violent protests erupted in Jerusalem over the potential evictions of Palestinians from their homes. The conflict further escalated when Israeli police raided the al-Aqsa mosque, one of Islam’s holiest sites. From Gaza, Hamas retaliated firing rockets toward Jerusalem, and in response, Netanyahu launched multiple air strikes. It was just four months into President Joe Biden’s term and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was suddenly front and centre.

As the violence intensified, Biden pushed Netanyahu for a ceasefire, which *“ended in a sort of a miserable draw. As usual, the Israeli leadership were saying we’ve won this round again, and Hamas is weakened and deterred. But for Hamas, the conflict was a breakthrough. They used it to tout themselves as fighting not just for Palestinians in Gaza, but in Jerusalem as well.”*[14] Khaled Elgindy added: *“Hamas now is not just protecting its fiefdom in the Gaza Strip, but now vying for leadership of the Palestinian struggle as a whole by being the only party that is responding to events in Jerusalem, in contrast to the impotence and ineffectiveness of the Palestinian leadership in Ramallah”.*

In the wake of the conflict, a photo of Yahya Sinwar, Hamas’s leader in Gaza, sent a foreboding message.

“What Sinwar did, which was quite interesting, is take a picture of him sitting on an armchair. The destruction around him was quite clear. This was saying, okay you’re maybe stronger right now, but I haven’t lost anything. I’m willing to go for another round whenever I choose. At the same time, Hamas was also beginning to prepare its plan of attack.”[15]

Netanyahu’s go-to strategy toward Hamas – containment in Gaza – was beginning to crack, but his focus was elsewhere: he was embroiled in scandal, facing charges of bribery and corruption. He and his coalition government were briefly toppled. To regain power, Netanyahu courted Israel’s most extreme parties. *“And so, for Netanyahu, he felt I have no chance but to go to the right, even the very far right. Even parties on the extreme far right that his own Likud party had always shunned. Recently re-elected, and now the head of a new far-right government, controversial plans to overhaul the justice system started pursuing a dramatic overhaul of Israel’s judicial system that would weaken the court’s power over the executive branch. Protests erupted across Israel. He needed to change Israel’s legal system so he could somehow stop the trial.”*[16]

All the while, inside Netanyahu’s government, intelligence officials worried that the political unrest was leaving the country vulnerable to its enemies. *“In many meetings, the chiefs of Israeli intelligence warned Netanyahu that the political crisis and its effect on the military are perceived by Israeli enemy as the time to take more aggressive initiative against Israel.”*[17]

In Washington, President Biden watched the situation with alarm and urged Netanyahu to reverse course. For Biden, the unrest in Israel threatened to disrupt a plan he’d been nurturing to take the Abraham Accords to the next level in the Middle East. He and Netanyahu had been quietly courting Saudi Arabia. *“They did push and try to expand on the Abraham Accords in particular with a vision of Israeli-Saudi normalisation that would offer a dramatically different vision of the Middle East and one that would fit in well to their vision*

of creating alliances, in particular in competition with China and Russia.”[18]

By late September 2023, at the UN General Assembly in New York, a deal was taking shape. Netanyahu met with Biden for the first time since forming his far-right government. Biden used the meeting to discuss how to bring the Palestinians into the deal. *“When he sat down with Prime Minister Netanyahu, the main topic of that meeting which lasted almost two hours was about the Palestinians and how they fit into the Saudi deal. Now, I’ll say Gaza was not a part of that process and that’s because Hamas is in charge of Gaza.”[19]* And less than three weeks before the October 7th attacks, Netanyahu would make a fateful speech: *“I’ve long sought to make peace with the Palestinians, but I also believe that we must not give the Palestinians a veto over new peace treaties with Arab states”*.

The leaders of Hamas and other Palestinian resistance factions understood the Palestinian issue will be completely taken off the world agenda. They decided to react and had their combatants carry out the deadliest single assault in Israel’s history. This was all the more significant as it happened on Benjamin Netanyahu’s watch. *“He saw himself as the greatest protector of the state of Israel, and persuaded himself and his supporters that Israel was safe and that he could handle everything.”[20]* He reacted to what he viewed as a supreme personal humiliation by saying: *“Israel will win this war, and when Israel wins, the entire civilized world wins”*, a thinly veiled appeal to the US in particular and the West in general.

Unsurprisingly, President Biden was visibly shaken by the killing and taking of hostages. *“Let there be no doubt. The United States has Israel’s back. We will make sure the Jewish and democratic state of Israel can defend itself today, tomorrow, as we always have. It’s as simple as that”*. But despite his full-throated public support, as Israel began air strikes in Gaza, behind the scenes Biden was concerned and within days, he arrived in Tel Aviv, in what constituted the first ever visit of a US President during wartime.

The humanitarian crisis from Israel’s military response has brought widespread condemnation. In the US, there has been increasing pressure on President Biden to do more to restrain Israel’s response. In the face of the criticism, the President has been trying to turn attention to the day after. *“What Biden seemed to want is to use this tragic moment for something bigger, for a two-state solution, for negotiation, and this is where he and Netanyahu are like in totally different worlds.”[21]* Indeed, Netanyahu has staked out his own hard line: *“I wish to clarify my position. I won’t allow Israel to repeat the mistake of Oslo”*.

In the strong and meaningful words of Khaled Elgindy, *“There is no going back. Everyone agrees. Israelis, Americans, Palestinians, Gaza, West Bank, anywhere you ask, everyone agrees, there’s no going back to the October 6 status quo. The question is: where do we go from here? Is it a pathway to something less awful? Or is it more destruction and death and something considerably worse than what we’ve had before? Those are still open questions”*.

Unprecedented Carnage and Devastation in Gaza

To be sure, from day one of the war on Gaza, Israel has been waging a war of genocide.

United Nations experts have been sounding the alarm in reaction to the Israeli military campaign, which resulted in crimes against humanity and a risk of genocide against the Palestinian population. They decried an ever-expanding catalogue of blatant violations of international humanitarian and criminal law, including wilful and systematic destruction of

civilian homes and infrastructures, known as “domicide”, cutting off drinking water, essential food, medicine, fuel and electricity, within a complete siege of Gaza, coupled with unfeasible evacuation orders and forcible population transfers.



Dr Suleiman Qaoud surveys the damage at the Rantisi Specialist Hospital, part of the Nasser Medical Complex in Gaza City, following Israeli missile attacks on November 6, 2023 [Abdelhakim Abu Riash/Al Jazeera]

The IDF’s vengeful killing spree continues unabated. It took a turn for the worse with the deliberate destruction of Gaza’s hospitals. As Chris Hedges explained, the IDF *“is not attacking hospitals in Gaza because they are “ Hamas command centres”*. *Israel is systematically and deliberately destroying Gaza’s medical infrastructure as part of a scorched earth campaign to make Gaza uninhabitable and escalate a humanitarian crisis. It intends to force 2.3 million Palestinians over the border into Egypt where they will never return.”*

This observation quite perfectly echoes what many at the heart of Israel’s establishment now want to impose. Major General Ghassan Alian, coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, warned Gazans: *“You wanted hell, you will get hell.”*[22] As recounted by Jonathan Ofir[23], there has been no shortage of genocidal calls from Israeli leaders, as well as clear plans, also at ministerial level, for the complete ethnic cleansing of Gaza. And while the usage of biblical euphemisms like Prime Minister Netanyahu’s *“Amalek”* reference may appear too vague for some, even if the story suggests killing infants, on 19 November 2023, ret. Major General Giora Eiland, former head of the National Security Council and current advisor to the defence minister decided to spell out genocide more explicitly.

In effect, in a Hebrew article on the printed edition of the centrist Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper titled *“Let’s not be intimidated by the world”*, Eiland clarified that the whole Gazan civilian population was a legitimate target: *“Israel is not fighting a terrorist organisation but against the State of Gaza (...) Israel must not provide the other side with*

any capability that prolongs its life (...) Who are the 'poor' women of Gaza? They are all the mothers, sisters or wives of Hamas murderers". The formulation about the Palestinian women is reminiscent of the far-right former Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, who, during the 2014 onslaught, suggested that Israel's enemy was the entire Palestinian people: *"including its elderly and its women, its cities and its villages, its property and its infrastructure."*[24] As for Palestinian women, she believes that: *"Behind every terrorist stand dozens of men and women, without whom he could not engage in terrorism. Now, this also includes the mothers of the martyrs who send them to hell with flowers and kisses. They should follow their sons; nothing would be more just. They should go, as should the physical homes in which they raised the snakes. Otherwise, more little snakes will be raised there".*

Regarding the "humanitarian concern" of the international community, Eiland is of the opinion that it must be resisted: *"The international community warns us of a humanitarian disaster in Gaza and of severe epidemics. We must not shy away from this, as difficult as that may be. After all, severe epidemics in the south of the Gaza Strip will bring victory closer and reduce casualties among IDF soldiers (...) Israel needs to create a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, compelling tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands to seek refuge in Egypt or the Gulf (...) Gaza will become a place where no human being can exist."*[25] It is worth recalling in this respect that back in 2004, in his capacity as head of the National Security Council, he regarded the Gaza Strip as *"a huge concentration camp"* and advocated for the U.S. to force Palestinians into the Sinai desert as part of a "two-state solution. This was reported in the following U.S. diplomatic cable leaked to Wikileaks[26]:

"Repeating a personal view that he had previously expressed to other USG visitors, NSC Director Eiland laid out for Ambassador Djerejian a different end-game solution than that which is commonly envisioned as the two-state solution. Eiland's view, he said, was prefaced on the assumption that demographic and other considerations make the prospect for a two-state solution between the Jordan and the Mediterranean unviable. Currently, he said, there are 11 million people in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip, and that number will increase to 36 million in 50 years. The area between Beer Sheva and the northern tip of Israel (including the West Bank and Gaza) has the highest population density in the world. Gaza alone, he said, is already "a huge concentration camp" with 1.3 million Palestinians. Moreover, the land is surrounded on three sides by deserts. Palestinians need more land and Israel can ill-afford to cede it. The solution, he argued, lies in the Sinai desert.

Specifically, Eiland proposed that Egypt be persuaded to contribute a 600 square kilometer parcel of land that would be annexed to a future Palestinian state as compensation for the 11 percent of the West Bank that Israel would seek to annex in a final status agreement. This Sinai block, 20 kms of which would be along the Mediterranean coast, would be adjacent to the Gaza Strip. A land corridor would be constructed connecting Egypt and this block to Jordan. (Note: Presumably under Egyptian sovereignty. End Note.) In addition, Israel would provide Egypt a 200 square km block of land from further south in the Negev. Eiland laid out the following advantages to his proposed solution:

— For the Palestinians: The additional land would make Gaza viable. It would be big enough to support a new port and airport, and to allow for the construction of a new city, all of which would help make Gaza economically viable. It would provide sufficient space to support the return of Palestinian refugees. In addition, the 20 km along the sea would increase fishing rights and would allow for the exploration of natural gas

reserves. Eiland argued that the benefits offered by this parcel of land are far more favorable to the Palestinians than would be parcels Israel could offer from the land-locked Negev.

— For Egypt: Israel would compensate Egypt with a parcel of land on a 1:3 ratio, which is the ratio of the size of Israel to the Sinai. Egypt would enjoy the land corridor to Jordan, hereby controlling the shortest distance between Jordan and Saudi Arabia to Europe.

— For Jordan: The greater the capacity of the Gaza Strip to absorb Palestinian refugees, the fewer the number of refugees who would “return” to settle in the West Bank, thereby resulting in less pressure on Jordan. Jordan would also benefit economically from the land bridge.

Eiland, having previously debated the merits of this proposal with Ambassador Kurtzer, conceded the point that Egyptian President Mubarak “would never agree” to it, and he also took the point that in negotiating the Israel-Egypt peace treaty Israel had foregone the entire Sinai and accepted the Palestinian issue as an “Israeli” problem. He nonetheless refused to be dissuaded from exploring the idea, noting that he had reason to believe that Prime Minister Sharon would support such a proposal, if it were tabled by a third party.”

Eiland’s call for genocide was endorsed by Israelis in positions of the highest responsibility, including finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, who tweeted the full article and said he “*agreed with every word.*”[27] He and his far-right partner in the government, Ben Gvir, also endorsed the rebuilding of settlements in the Gaza Strip and the encouraging of “*voluntary emigration*” of Palestinians. Speaking during their parties’ respective faction meetings in the Knesset, they presented the migration of Palestinian civilians as a solution to the long-running conflict and as a prerequisite for securing the stability necessary to allow residents of southern Israel to return to their homes. The war presents an “*opportunity to concentrate on encouraging the migration of the residents of Gaza*”, Ben Gvir told reporters and members of his far-right Otzma Yehudit party, calling such a policy “*a correct, just, moral and humane solution.*”[28] Reacting to those remarks, Arab Israeli lawmaker MK Ahmad Tibi condemned Smotrich and Ben Gvir, comparing their statements to Nazi calls for “*Lebensraum*” (living space) and declaring that such rhetoric was “*inciting genocide*”. A day will come, he said, “*and these two senior ministers in the Israeli government will stand before an international tribunal for war crimes*”.

And whereas over one hundred journalists and media professionals have been killed so far in the besieged enclave, a prominent Israeli journalist has said the IDF should have killed 100,000 Palestinians in Gaza.[29] Zvi Yehezkeli, Channel 13’s Arab affairs correspondent, was speaking on the channel when he made the suggestion: “*In my opinion the IDF should have launched a more fatal attack with 100,000 killed in the beginning*”, arguing that “such a fatal attack” would have led to a ceasefire and the release of hostages earlier on.

Moreover, while countless unspeakable atrocities are being committed day and night by the IDF – in large measure because of the appalling international community’s inaction and apathy – the fate of the Palestinians in the West Bank looks grim. Israeli settlers continue rampaging, hell-bent as they are on driving farmers and shepherds off their lands. And neither the far-right government nor the army is doing anything to stop them. As reported by David Shulman[30], President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken have both

warned that this settler violence must be curbed. On 8 November, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made an empty public gesture: *"There is a tiny handful of people" he said, "who take the law into their own hands (...) We are not prepared to tolerate this"*. So far, he seems able to tolerate it quite easily. The same day, he reassured his supporters, including the hundreds of thousands of settlers in the territories: *"I told President Biden that the accusations against the settlement movement are baseless."*

On 29 December, Francesca Albanese, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), described Israel's actions against the Palestinians in Gaza as *"the monstrosity of our century"* in a post on her official X account. Israel, she wrote, *"is bombing areas of Gaza it had designated as "safe". It is wiping out entire families, making countless children orphans and forcing countless men and women to survive their offspring. Each story is excruciating."*[31] Albanese was commenting on a post by another X user which carried a video depicting a Palestinian father placing a pack of biscuits into the hands of his dead son. *"I went to get you these biscuits, son. Keep them! Take them with you!"* the grief-stricken father tells his dead boy in the video. The initial post explained: *"His little son asked him for something sweet. He risked the dangers, leaving his home to cross Gaza to find something sweet for his little boy. He came home to find an Israeli missile had taken his son and wife"*. This is just one among over 9,000 children killed so far by Israeli air strikes and bombardment. The youngest of these children was one day old. He was killed and his death certificate was issued before his birth certificate was![32] In a later post, Albanese repeated: *"Yes: what Israel is doing to the Palestinians, especially in Gaza, is the monstrosity of our century"*, adding: *"Western complacency is turning into complicity"*. Expressing its displeasure of the United Nations, which has criticised Israel's targeting of civilians, Israel has decided to refuse visas to UN staff members. *"We will stop working with those who cooperate with the Hamas terrorist organization's propaganda,"* Eli Cohen, Israel's minister of foreign affairs, posted on X.[33]

Stunned by the speed with which incitement to genocide and other extreme speech had been normalised in Israel, a group of prominent Israelis has accused the country's judicial authorities of ignoring *"extensive and blatant"* incitement to genocide and ethnic cleansing in Gaza by influential public figures. In a letter[34] to the attorney general and state prosecutors, they demand action to stop the normalisation of language that breaks both Israeli and international law: *"For the first time that we can remember, the explicit calls to commit atrocious crimes, as stated, against millions of civilians have turned into a legitimate and regular part of Israeli discourse,"* they write. *"Today, calls of these types are an everyday matter in Israel"*. Signatories of such an unprecedented letter include one of Israel's top scientists, the Royal Society member Prof. David Harel, alongside other academics, former diplomats, former members of the Knesset, journalists and activists. The letter ends with a resounding depiction of an overwhelming sentiment among the Israelis: *"The Israeli society is embroiled in trauma which will take years to heal. This is precisely the substrate on which immoral monsters are liable to grow, and are growing."*

For his part, Haaretz columnist Gideon Levy points out that the evil can no longer be hidden by any propaganda. *"Even the winning Israeli combo of victimhood, Yiddishkeit, chosen people and Holocaust can no longer blur the picture. The horrifying October 7 events have not been forgotten by anyone, but they cannot justify the spectacles in Gaza. The propagandist who could explain killing 162 infants in one day - a figure reported by social media this week - is yet to be born, not to mention killing some 10,000 children in two months"*, he writes in a recent editorial.[35] The suffering in the Gaza Strip, he added, is

enormous in scope and causes despair. *"It has no explanation, nor does it need one. Suffice it for the reports coming out of Gaza and being broadcast all over the world except in one tiny state, whose eyes are shut and whose heart is sealed"*.

Finally, in an outstanding piece[36] that went viral on the Internet, renowned international relations theorist John J. Mearsheimer wrote: *"I do not believe that anything I say about what is happening in Gaza will affect Israeli or American policy in that conflict. But I want to be on record so that when historians look back on this moral calamity, they will see that some Americans were on the right side of history. What Israel is doing in Gaza to the Palestinian civilian population – with the support of the Biden administration – is a crime against humanity that serves no meaningful military purpose"*. He outlined seven main instances showcasing the criminal conduct of Israel both in Gaza and the West Bank before concluding: *"As I watch this catastrophe for the Palestinians unfold, I am left with one simple question for Israel's leaders, their American defenders, and the Biden administration: have you no decency?"*

The United States in the War: Doubling Down on Guilt and Ignominy

In an eye-opening analysis[37], Harvard University professor of international relations Stephen M. Walt delves into the highly contentious question of the root causes of the ongoing war on Gaza. Inevitably, the tendency to look for someone to blame is impossible for many to resist.

For Israelis and their supporters, he says, pinning all the blame on Hamas is like stating the obvious. On the contrary, for those more sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, they see the tragedy as the inevitable result of decades of Israeli occupation and harsh and prolonged treatment of the Palestinians. Yet for others, there is plenty of blame to go around, and thus seeing one side as wholly innocent and the other as solely responsible is a sure recipe for unwise judgment.

Where then to start the quest to find the culprit? While rightly recognising that the point of departure is inherently arbitrary – Theodor Herzl's 1896 book, *The Jewish State*? The 1917 Balfour Declaration? The Arab revolt of 1936? The 1947 U.N. partition plan? The 1948 Arab-Israeli war, or the 1967 Six-Day War? – the professor's inner compass points him in the direction of the year 1991, when the United States emerged as the unchallenged external power in Middle East affairs and began trying to construct a regional order that served its interests. From that moment on, he singles out five key episodes whose adverse consequences brought us to the events of October 7th and their tragic aftermath: the 1991 Gulf War; the September 11, 2001 attacks and the subsequent U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003; the abandonment by President Donald Trump of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran and adoption of a policy of "maximum pressure" toward this important country; the ill-conceived Abraham Accords, and the enduring failure to bring the so-called peace process between Israel and the Palestinians to a successful end. Professor Walt believes that the 30-years-long U.S. management of the region ended in disaster. He concludes his article by saying: *"If the end result of Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken's current ministrations is merely a return to the pre-Oct. 7 status quo, I fear that the rest of the world will look on, shake its head in dismay and disapproval, and conclude that it's time for a different approach"*.

Stephen Walt is far from being alone in drawing such a conclusion. In his recent book[38], former National Security Council member and veteran Middle East expert Steven Simon

attempts to explain how US foreign policy in the Middle East collapsed. Tracing forty years of US's efforts to shape the region from the Iranian revolution in 1979 to Benjamin Netanyahu's return to power in Israel in December 2022, Simon draws stark lessons: Washington's Middle East strategy has been, as his title suggests, "delusional", fabricated in the continual "superimposition of grand ideas" by policymakers convinced of their own virtuous intentions toward a region about which they knew little and cared less. As he writes, *"It is a tale of gross misunderstandings, appalling errors, and death and destruction on an epochal scale."*

As a matter of fact, this failed policy towards the Middle East in general continues, and in the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is as bad as President Trump's was, to say the least. To give just one recent example of this policy, for the second time in December the Biden administration has bypassed Congress to greenlight an emergency weapons sale to Israel, which has only intensified and broadened its attacks on the Gaza Strip despite growing international outrage. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told Congress that he had made a second emergency determination to immediately approve a \$147.5m sale of equipment to Israel, including fuzes, charges, and primers that make 155mm shells functional.[39] According to a State Department spokesperson, *"Given the urgency of Israel's defensive needs, the Secretary notified Congress that he had exercised his delegated authority to determine an emergency existed necessitating the immediate approval of the transfer."* The same source explained that *"The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to US national interests to ensure Israel is able to defend itself against the threats it faces."* Earlier that same month, the administration rushed forward a sale of thousands of munitions to Israel, bypassing the standard 20-day period that congressional committees are typically afforded to review such a sale. The State Department sent an emergency declaration to the oversight committees that more than 13,000 tank shells would be delivered to Israel without any *"further information, details or assurances."* The wall Street Journal reported that the war *"is generating destruction comparable in scale to the most devastating warfare in modern record (...) By mid-December, Israel has dropped 29,000 bombs, munitions and shells on Gaza, destroying or damaging nearly 70 percent of homes."*[40]

So far, neither the exponential rise of Palestinian deaths - now surpassing 22,000 with thousands more still missing or under the rubble - nor the universal outrage have led to any fundamental change in the staunchly pro-Israel position the Biden administration took from the start of the war. The US administration continues to support Israel's goal of defeating Hamas, which is why it has thus far refrained from calling for a ceasefire and even went so far as to use its veto power to block a Security Council resolution. The Biden administration is *"well aware of the massive criticism of its policies - both from Democratic lawmakers and from large parts of the American public who traditionally support the Democratic Party. There also appears to be increasing reservations among some of the civil servants in the State Department and even within the White House. Indeed, there was a report than some 500 members of the administration sent an extremely critical and unusual letter to Biden. The administration is also aware of the harsh criticism levelled against it and against Israel in the US media, especially the New York Times and the Washington Post, which feeds Congressional and public anger."*[41] And still, anyone expecting a major rupture between President Biden and Israeli Prime Minister *"ought to lie down and wait quietly until the feeling passes. If needed, they should keep Biden's Wahington Post op-ed from the weekend handy (...) Indeed, the President's persona, politics and policy choices have virtually pre-empted such an outcome."*[42] In that op-ed, President Biden wrote that the U.S. won't back

down from the challenge of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Hamas: *“Both Putin and Hamas are fighting to wipe a neighboring democracy off the map. And both Putin and Hamas hope to collapse broader regional stability and integration and take advantage of the ensuing disorder. America cannot, and will not, let that happen. For our own national security interests – and for the good of the entire world.”*

Despite increasing domestic and international pressure, there’s no indication that the President might support a ceasefire and has intimated, let alone pressed, Israel to set a timeline for ending its military operation in Gaza. His words in the Washington Post seemed to rule that out for now, even knowing full well that this stand damages America’s standing and image abroad, further isolates it around the world – finding itself in a defensive crouch and at odds even vis-à-vis its closest Western allies – as it becomes a lonely protector of a country engaged in genocide.

Why is it so? The answer lies in unexpected developments of overriding importance that will likely be a game-changer in the non-distant future.

In effect, historically, U.S. President Harry Truman was the first world leader to officially recognise Israel as a legitimate Jewish state on May 14, 1948, only eleven minutes after its creation. His decision came after much discussion and advice from the White House staff who had differing viewpoints. Some advisors felt that creating a Jewish state was the only proper response to the holocaust and would benefit American interests. Others took the opposite view, concerned about that the creation of a Jewish state would cause more conflict in an already tumultuous region.[43]

Nevertheless, it was not until the 1960s, under President John F. Kennedy, that Washington began to provide military hardware to Israel, and the first explicit U.S. pledge to maintain Israel’s qualitative military edge – an assurance of Israel’s military superiority over its rivals – came in a 1982 letter from President Ronald Reagan to Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin.[44] As recalled by Adnan Abu Amer[45], many analysts in Israel remember that in 1948 America did not help the Zionist terror gangs to occupy Palestine, and in 1956 it forced Israel to withdraw from Egyptian territory, which led eventually to the 1967 war. They also believe that although the US intervened in the 1973 War, Israel could have achieved more on its own.

In truth, although the bilateral cooperation has been turbulent at times, *“it has maintained a steady upward trajectory. U.S. security, diplomatic, and economic assistance has bolstered Israel’s position in a volatile region. Having a “big brother” over its shoulder has enabled Israel to punch above its demographic weight and geographic size, projecting strength well beyond its borders. And the United States’ commitment to Israel has endured through both Democratic and Republican Presidents, including the most recent holders of that office”,* says Lipner. Chuck Freilich concurred with this analysis: *“For the most part, as a small actor facing numerous and often severe threats, but with limited influence of its own, reliance on the US has become the panacea for virtually all of Israel’s national-security challenges. Israel can and does appeal to other countries, but this is usually of marginal utility, and what the US cannot achieve, Israel almost certainly cannot, so there has often been limited interest in even trying.”*[46]

Conversely, not long ago, Max Fisher[47] argued that that was the conventional wisdom, and it was true for decades. Israeli leaders and voters alike, he said, treated Washington as essential to their country’s survival, but that dependence may be ending. However, while

Israel still benefits greatly from American assistance, security experts and political analysts say that the country has quietly cultivated, and may have achieved, effective autonomy from the United States. The issue of overreliance by Israelis on the United States for their security and the survival of their “Jewish state”, particularly in the event of their country being embroiled in a major war, suddenly rose to prominence when the Russian-Ukrainian war started. Seeing Ukraine almost left alone to deal with president Vladimir Putin caused alarm bells to ring in Tel Aviv. Therefore, a new “self-reliant” Israel, it was thought, must be pursued since it *“does not need US troops in any capacity to defend it. Ultimately, such self-reliance will grant Israel greater freedom of action and remove a significant lever of pressure used against it in the past.”*[48] Max Fisher went as far as to think that Israel no longer needs American security guarantees to protect it from neighbouring states, with which it has mostly made peace. Nor does it see itself as needing American mediation in the Palestinian conflict, which Israelis largely find bearable and support maintaining as it is. *“Once reliant on American arms transfers, Israel now produces many of its most essential weapons domestically. It has become more self-sufficient diplomatically as well, cultivating allies independent of Washington. Even culturally, Israelis are less sensitive to American approval – and put less pressure on their leaders to maintain good standing in Washington”*, he said. And while American aid to Israel remains high in absolute terms, he added, Israel’s decades-long economic boom has left the country less and less reliant: in 1981, American aid was equivalent to almost 10 percent of Israel’s economy; in 2020, at nearly \$4 billion, it was closer to 1 percent. He concluded his article with a preposterous assertion: *“Now, after nearly 50 years of not quite wielding that leverage to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it may soon be gone for good, if it isn’t already. Israel feels that they can get away with more”* said Ms. Mizrahi-Arnaud, adding, to underscore her point, *“When exactly is the last time that the United States pressured Israel?”*

This hubris and image of invincibility fostered and entertained for half a century were shattered on October 7th. The Israeli trauma will endure as long as the deterrence lost is not reestablished. With the war on Gaza entering its three-month mark and the Palestinian resistance alone – with no aviation, no navy, no tanks, not even a regular army – still holding steadfast and inflicting increasing damage to the IDF, Israel has yet to achieve any of its three stated goals: eliminating Hamas, freeing the kidnapped Israeli citizens, and ensuring that no element in Gaza can threaten Israel again. US defence Secretary Lloyd Austin was not wrong when he said: *“The lesson is that you can only win in urban warfare by protecting civilians. If you drive [Gaza’s civilians] into the arms of the enemy, you replace a tactical victory with a strategic defeat”*.

Today, more than ever before, Israel needs the United States not only to confront its current enemies, but also to guarantee the future survival of its Zionist apartheid state. In the meantime, both Israel and the United States need to defend themselves against criminal charges: the former for committing genocide[49], the latter for failing to prevent it.[50] As UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, the eyes of the world – and the eyes of history – are watching!

*

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Notes

[1] Albert Einstein supported Jewish migration to Palestine but stood strongly against the creation of a Jewish nation-state. In 1948, the American Friends of the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (AFFFI) (which represented the terrorist Stern Gang/LEHI) sought Einstein’s help in raising funds for their Jewish fighters. AFFFI Executive Director Shepard Rifkin explained in the letter below that when Stern Gang commander Benjamin Gepner asked him to reach out to Albert Einstein for the purposes of gaining propaganda and fundraising assistance, he responded: “Are you crazy? He is completely against violence!” Still, Rifkin wrote a letter to Albert Einstein asking for his help raising funds in America for arms. Einstein refused with this letter: <https://www.deiryassin.org/images/EinsteinLetter041048.jpg>

Also, on 4 December 1948, he co-wrote a letter to the New York Times that described one of Israel’s founding political parties (future Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin’s Freedom Party) as “closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist parties.”: <https://archive.org/details/AlbertEinsteinLetterToTheNewYorkTimes.December41948/page/n1/mode/2up>

[2] James Jacoby, “**Netanyahu, America & the Road to War in Gaza**”, FRONTLINE Production, 20 December 2023.

[3] Diana Weiss, Israeli TV journalist.

[4] Diana Weiss.

[5] Peter Baker, Co-author, “**The Divider: Trump in the White House**”, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 19 September 2023.

[6] Khaled Elgindy, Author, “**Blind Spot: America and the Palestinians, from Balfour to Trump**”, Brookings Institution Press, 2 April 2019.

[7] Husam Zomlot, Head of Palestinian Mission to the U.S., 2017-2018.

[8] Natan Sachs, Center for Middle East Policy.

[9] Peter Baker, The New York Times.

[10] Natan Sachs, Center for Middle East Policy.

[11] Khaled Elgindy. Middle East Institute.

[12] Khaled Elgindy. Middle East Institute.

[13] Peter Baker, The New York Times.

[14] Amos Harel, Haaretz newspaper.

[15] Amos Harel.

[16] Natan Sachs, Center for Middle East Policy.

[17] Ronen Bergman, The New York Times.

[18] Natan Sachs, Center for Middle East Policy.

[19] Brett McGurk, Biden's senior Middle East advisor.

[20] Amos Harel, Haaretz newspaper.

[21] Ronen Bergman, The New York Times.

[22] Gianluca Pacchiani, "**COGAT chief addresses Gazans: 'You wanted hell, you will get hell'**", The Times of Israel, 10 October 2023.

[23] Jonathan Ofir, "**Influential Israeli national security leader makes the case for genocide in Gaza**", Mondoweiss, 20 November 2023.

[24] Ali Abunimah, "**Israeli lawmaker's call for genocide of Palestinians gets thousands of Facebook likes**", The Electronic Intifada, 7 July 2014.

[25] Kenan Malik, "**'There is no alternative' is the last resort of those defending morally wrong acts**", The Guardian, 19 November 2023.

[26] Wikileaks, "**Israeli Officials Brief Djerejian on Improved Regional Security Situation; Unilateral Disengagement plans**", Public Library of US Diplomacy, 31 March 2004. To read full document: https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/04TELAVIV1952_a.html

[27] <https://twitter.com/bezalelsm/status/1726198721946480911>

[28] Sam Sokol, "**Far-right ministers call to 'resettle' Gaza's Palestinians, build settlements in Strip**", The Times of Israel, 1 January 2023.

[29] Middle East Eye Staff, "**War on Gaza: Israeli journalist says army should have killed 100,000 Palestinians**", 20 December 2023.

[30] David Shulman, "**A Bitter Season in the West Bank**", The New York Review, 21 December, 2023 issue.

[31] Ahram online, "**South Africa files application at ICJ charging Israel with genocidal acts against Palestinians in Gaza**", 29 December 2023.

[32] As informed by Mustafa Barghouti, Secretary-general and co-founder of Palestinian national initiative in an interview with Sky news, "**Israel-Hamas war: Israel keeps driving you with lies, lies, lies, says Mustafa Barghouti**", 7 November 2023. To watch the interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gvw2kQ6laKw>

[33] Al Jazeera, "**Israel denies visas to UN staff as it hits back against Gaza war criticism**", 25 December 2023.

[34] Emma Graham-Harrison and Quique Kierszenbaum "**Israeli public figures accuse judiciary of ignoring incitement to genocide in Gaza**", The Guardian, 3 January 2024.

[35] Gideon Levy, **“There’s No Way to ‘Explain’ the Degree of Death and Destruction in Gaza”**, ZNetwork, 28 December 2023.

[36] John J. Mearsheimer, **“Death and Destruction in Gaza”**, John’s Substack, 12 December 2023. Mearsheimer has attracted attention for co-authoring, with Stephen M. Walt, and publishing the article **“The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy”**, which was subsequently published as a book by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in September 2008. This work of major importance provoked both howls of outrage and cheers of gratitude for challenging what had been a taboo issue in America, that is the impact of the Israel lobby on U.S. foreign policy. It remains as relevant today as it was when published in the aftermath of the Israel-Lebanon War of 2006.

[37] Stephen M. Walt, **“America Is a Root Cause of Israel and Palestine’s Latest War”**, Foreign Policy magazine, 18 October 2023.

[38] Steven Simon, **“Grand Delusion: The Rise and Fall of American Ambition in the Middle East”**, Penguin Random House, 2023.

[39] Jennifer Hansler and Oren Liebermann, **“Biden admin again bypasses Congress to sell military equipment to Israel”**, CNN, 29 December 2023.

[40] Jared Malsin and Saeed Shah, **“The Ruined Landscape of Gaza After Nearly Three Months of Bombing”**, 30 December 2023.

[41] Eldad Shavit and Chuck Freilich, **“The US, Israel, and the Ongoing War in Gaza”**, The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv, 12 December 2023.

[42] Aaron David Miller, **“Why Biden won’t do more to restrain Netanyahu”**, CNN, 23 November 2023. To read the op-ed, see: **“Joe Biden: The U.S. won’t back down from the challenge of Putin and Hamas”**, The White House, 19 November 2023:
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/11/19/icymi-joe-biden-the-u-s-won-t-back-down-from-the-challenge-of-putin-and-hamas/>

[43] See: Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum.

[44] Shalom Lipner, **“How Israel Could Lose America”**, Foreign Affairs, 29 December 2023.

[45] Adnan Abu Amer, **“Israeli doubts are growing about relying on the United States”**, Middle East Monitor, 31 March 2022.

[46] Chuck Freilich, **“How Long Could Israel Survive Without America?”**, Newsweek Magazine, 14 July 2017.

[47] Max Fisher, **“As Israel’s Dependence on U.S. Shrinks, So Does U.S. Leverage”**, The New York Times, 24 May 2021.

[48] Ramzy Baroud, **“Can Israel exist without America? The facts suggest a changing reality”**, Middle East Monitor, 5 April 2022.

[49] The Government of South Africa filed an 84-page “application” with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 29 December 2023, accusing Israel of committing genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza. To read it: <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231228-app-01-00-en.pdf>

Read also John J. Mearsheimer's comment on that subject: "**Genocide in Gaza**", John's Substack, 4 January 2024.

[50] As Israel rejects growing international calls for a ceasefire in Gaza, the Center for Constitutional Rights in the United States is suing President Biden for failing to prevent genocide. The center is seeking an emergency order to block Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin from providing further military funding, arms and diplomatic support to Israel. Katherine Gallagher, a senior attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights on the case, argues the U.S. is complicit with Israel in the "crime of crimes" by "aiding and abetting genocide" with military aid, advisers and political support despite clear signs of intent to collectively punish the Palestinian population. To read and watch video: "**Failure to Prevent Genocide: Biden Sued as U.S. Provides Arms & Support for Israel's Gaza Assault**", DemocracyNow!, 16 November 2023.

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