

United States: Biden Backs Israel's Racist and Immoral War

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The administration of President Biden has thrown its full support to the current Israeli murderous war against Palestinians in all the territory the racist, Jewish supremacist state rules over in Gaza and the West Bank, and also in what is referred to as Israel proper.

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It is pulverizing Gaza in a one-sided war against all the people living there, not just their Hamas leadership.

Palestinians in the West Bank have mobilized in demonstrations against the war in Gaza and against Israeli forces that control the West Bank. The Israeli army is responding with live ammunition killing many and wounding hundreds. Armed Israeli settlers have joined the attacks on Palestinians.

For the first time Palestinians who are formally citizens within Israel proper, also called "green line" Israel, have risen up to support their brothers and sisters, and have been attacked by Jewish far right groups resulting in lynchings of Palestinians, who are fighting back.

This uprising is a new stage of Palestinian resistance largely fueled by a new generation, young people organizing themselves including by social media, bypassing the increasingly discredited Palestine Authority. The news and videos of the conflict have rapidly spread including into neighboring Arab countries, promoting demonstrations there.

In Jordan demonstrators demanded the monarchy to reject its recognition of and support to Israel. Lebanese demonstrators were at the border with Israel.

On May 18, there was a general strike by Palestinians, the first such strike since 1936, when Britain ruled Palestine.

The destruction of Gaza

Biden, three times since the war on Gaza began, has blocked the United Nations Security Council from calling for a cease fire. He has called the Israeli bombing and artillery attack on Gaza a "proportionate response" to rockets from Gaza.

The real “proportion” is ten Israeli deaths, including two children, vs. over two hundred and climbing deaths in Gaza, including a large percentage of children. Very few Israeli homes have been destroyed compared to massive destruction of not only dwellings but large buildings and other infrastructure in Gaza.

The wounded in Gaza is many hundreds, over 1,000.

The world has seen video of Israeli bombing of high-rise residential buildings, usually, it is true, giving residents time to flee — but not always.

We have seen Palestinians searching through rubble, looking for any survivors or remains of those killed. The weeping parents. Bodies of babies. Wounded on stretchers.

The destruction of the building where many news organizations, including Al Jazeera and the Associated Press, were located, in a successful attempt to make reporting on Israeli horrors by these press organizations more difficult.

While the reporters and other staff were able to flee, all their records were destroyed.

Al Jazeera was a special target, since it is seen throughout the Arab world.

The people of Gaza, mainly descendants of some of the Palestinians driven out of their homes and land by the Zionists in 1948, know what the status of refugees is. Since 1967 they have suffered severe repression by Israel.

Their standard of living has been driven down, especially since Israel imposed a blockade of Gaza, controlling everything including electricity, food and water allowed into it.

Before the current war, medical facilities were poor in Gaza, and it was struggling with COVID (Israel didn't provide vaccines for Palestinians). With hospitals struggling to take care of hundreds of wounded, the fight against COVID has been all but abandoned.

Israel added insult to injury by taking out the doctor heading the COVID fight by bombing his home and murdering him and his family.

During the current war, Israel has cut back on electricity allowed in to five hours. This disrupts life further. Much of the infrastructure is affected, including water and sewage pumping. For much of the day there is no water coming out of pipes and faucets. A plant to remove salt from Mediterranean water, serving some 250,000 people, was bombed.

Biden's cool response is an indication that he knew Israel planned to once again “mow the lawn” in Gaza, to use the phrase of Israeli generals in past wars on the Strip.

In fact it is impossible that Washington didn't know about Israel's planned war against Gaza beforehand and approved it. Israel never undertakes such large actions, and others such as cyber attacks and assassinations in Iran, without approval from its main sponsor and defender.

Israel is central to the U.S. empire's domination of the Middle East. Washington spends billions every year arming Israel, and keeping it the dominant military force in the Arab countries by far. A new bill for another \$735 billion for precision guided weapons for Israel is scheduled to be approved by Congress soon.

Moreover, it was the U.S. that helped Israel to become the Middle East's only nuclear power, with a

vast but unknown number of nuclear missiles aimed throughout the region. After the 1973 Israeli-Arab war, then Prime Minister Golda Meir said that Israel was ready to wipe out the Arab capitals with nuclear bombs if it looked like Israel would lose.

It is obscene for most of the world to accept that two nuclear powers say they will use any means to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

How the War Developed

The current conflict did not start with Hamas and other organizations in Gaza firing rockets into “green line” Israel as the administration claims. It began 27 days earlier, April 13, when Israel chose to send a squad of cops into the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem on the first day of Ramadan, the holy month celebrated by Muslims throughout the world

The timing was deliberate, as was the place. Al Aqsa is the third holiest site for Muslims.

The prayers at Al Aqsa on the first night of Ramadan occurred as the Israeli president, Reuven Rivlin was making a speech at the nearby Jewish holy site of the Western Wall.

The cops invaded the mosque to cut the cables to the loud speakers that broadcast prayers to the faithful in Jerusalem, so the prayers would not drown out Rivlin’s speech, the Israelis claimed.

The police action was a deliberate provocation by the far right Netanyahu government. “This was the turning point,” said Sheikh Ekrima Sabri, the grand mufti of Jerusalem. “Their actions would cause the situation to de-teriorate. It was clear to us that the Israeli police wanted to desecrate the Aqsa Mosque and the holy month of Ramadan.”

Of course Washington knew about this raid, and subsequent events lead-ing up to the current war, and said nothing, giving its tacit approval.

This incident was followed almost immediately by Israeli police closing off a popular plaza outside the Damascus Gate, one of the main entrances to the Old City of Jerusalem. Young people typically gather there at night during Ramadan.

Palestinian youth began to protest being removed from the plaza, that led to clashes with the police and with organized Jewish groups.

“On April 21, just a week after the police raid [on Al Aqsa],” the New York Times reported, “a few hundred members of an extreme-right Jewish group, Lehava, marched through central Jerusalem, chanting ‘Death to Arabs’ and attacking Palestinian passers-by.

“A group of Jews was filmed attacking a Palestinian home, and others assaulted drivers who were perceived to be Palestinian....”

The police relented and opened up the plaza on April 25. “But then came a brace of developments that significantly widened the gyre.

“First was the looming eviction of the six families from Sheikh Jarrah, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem. With a final court decision on their case due in the first half of May [since postponed], regular pro-tests were held throughout April — demonstrations that accelerated after Palestinians drew a connection between the events at Damascus Gate and the plight of the residents.

“ ‘What you see now at Sheikh Jarrah or at Damascus Gate is about pushing us out of Jerusalem,’ said Sala Diab, a community leader in Sheikh Jarrah, whose leg was broken during a recent police raid on his house. ‘My neighborhood is just the beginning.’ “

Video images showing the police violence began to circulate online, and Sheikh Jarrah became a rallying point for Palestinians not just in Gaza, the West Bank and “green line” Israel, but among the diaspora world-wide, including in the United States.

“But then came the most dramatic escalation of all: a police raid on the Aqsa Mosque on Friday, May 7,” the Times reported. “Police officers armed with tear gas, stun grenades and rubber-tipped bullets burst into the mosque compound shortly after 8 p.m. setting off hours of clashes with stone-throwing protestors in which hundreds [of worshippers] were injured....

“The sight of stun grenades and bullets inside the prayer hall of one of the holiest sites in Islam — on the last Friday of Ramadan, one of its holiest nights — was seen as a grievous insult to all Muslims.

“ ‘This is about the Judaization of the city of Jerusalem,’ Sheikh Omar al-Kisswani [one of the leaders of the mosque] said in an interview after the raid. ‘It’s about deterring people from going to Al Aqsa’
....

“Police officers raided the Aqsa Mosque again early on Monday morning [May 10], after Palestinians stockpiled stones in anticipation of clashes with police and far-right Jews. For the second time in three days, stun grenades and rubber bullets were fired across the compound.”

That night Hamas and other organizations began the rocket fire against Israeli targets in solidarity with the Palestinians of Jerusalem, which Israel took as an excuse to unleash its vast U.S.-supplied fire power to crush the Palestinian people in the Strip.

“Gaza will burn!” Netanyahu chortled.

Mass protests, largely by a new generation of Palestinian youth, erupted across the West Bank and Israel proper. This was a development that neither the U.S. nor Israel expected.

A word must be said about terminology to cut through deliberate obfuscation about the reality of Israel. What is called Israel by the U.S. and others is what was controlled by Israel *before* the 1967 war. It was bounded by the “green line” drawn on maps.

This “green line” became the “internationally recognized border of Israel.” But there was one overlooked fact: Israel never recognized the “green line” as its border. Indeed, Israel has never recognized any border, because the areas it won by its various wars it never considered as defining its true border.

This was codified in an addition to its basic law passed in 2018. This law defined Israel as “Eretz Yisrael” which is an undefined area usually interpreted as “Biblical Israel” which could include parts of Egypt, etc.

But it certainly includes all the area Israel conquered in the 1967 war, including Gaza and the West Bank, with the exception of Sinai that was given back to Egypt when it recognized Israel and abandoned the Palestinians.

By this official definition, Israel from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River and Egypt to Lebanon and Syria is the single state of Israel. It has one army, one navy, one government, one border its armed forces defend, and one currency. The 2018 law also made Hebrew its official language, with

Arabic given subordinate status.

It also codified Israel's long-standing effective position, that within Eretz Yisrael only Jews have the right to self-determination. Palestinians, including the majority that reside in the West Bank and Gaza are ruled by Israel but have no rights — the definition of an apartheid state.

As the recent uprising by Palestinians in "green line" Israel demonstrates, they suffer massive oppression and are "citizens" in name only.

It should be noted that Israel doesn't even recognize the borders of this single state as its final borders, as is indicated by its self-identification as "Eretz Yisrael".

The "two state solution" was always a fake and a fraud designed to give cover to Israel's actual expansion that the U.S. in fact supports.

Worldwide Demonstrations on May 15

Every year Palestinians and their supporters mark this day as the anniversary of the "Nakba" meaning "catastrophe" of the 1948 expulsion of some 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and land.

This year Nabka Day took on added significance as thousands of Palestinians and their supporters worldwide took to the streets to denounce Israel's war. Some of the cities were Paris, Brussels, Berlin, London, Madrid, Cape Town, Sydney, Bagdad and many more.

The demonstration in Paris happened in spite of its being banned by the Macron government, as part of its drive against Muslims, and attacks by the police.

Lebanese people again demonstrated on the Israeli border.

In the United States, Palestinian-led actions took place across the country, in an estimated 75 localities. Thousands marched in Washington D.C., New York, Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, Pittsburg and points in-between, including Dearborn, Michigan which has a large Palestinian community as well as an important Ford plant.

President Biden visited the Ford plant to push his economic agenda on May 18, and a big demonstrations against his pro-Israel policy was held.

Significantly, there were contingents of Jewish people in the actions, some brought by Jewish Voice for Peace which publicized the demonstrations.

A point made by many speakers was that the Nabka didn't end in 1948, but continued right up to today with Israel's war.

Divisions in Democratic Party

Biden's staunch defense of Israel reflects the historic position of the Democratic Party.

But this has created the largest rift between the party establishment and its activist base since Biden took office.

An article in the *New York Times* says, “Now, with violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories forcing the issue back to the forefront of American politics, divisions between the leadership of the Democratic Party and the activist wing have burst into public view....

In contrast to the Biden Administration, “the ascendent left views it as a searing racial justice issue that is deeply intertwined with the politics of the United States.

“For those activists, Palestinian rights and the decades-long conflict over land in the Middle East are linked to causes like police brutality and conditions for migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border.

“Party activists who fight for racial justice now post messages against the ‘colonization of Palestine’ with the hashtag #Palestinian Lives Matter....

“On [May 13], a group of progressive members of Congress offered a rare break from party unity, giving fiery speeches on the House floor that accused Mr. Biden of ignoring the plight of Palestinians and ‘taking the side of the occupation’.

“Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York directly challenged the president, who had asserted that Israel had the right to defend itself. ‘Do Palestinian have the right to survive?’ she asked. ‘Do we believe that? And if so, we have a responsibility to do that as well.’

“Less than 24 hours later, nearly 150 prominent liberal advocacy groups issued a joint statement calling for ‘solidarity with the Palestinian re-sistance’ and condemning ‘Israeli state violence’ and ‘supremacy’ in Je-rusalem.”

A particularly moving speech was made on the House floor by Rashid Tlaib, the only Palestinian member of Congress, whose parents emigrat-ed from the West Bank, and whose grandmother still lives there. She challenged her fellow members of Congress to see Palestinians as human beings, before condemning “Israel’s apartheid government.”

The article also said “The debate within the party reflects a long-standing divide among American Jews, a mostly Democratic and secular group, who are enmeshed in their own tussle over how to view the Israeli-Palestinian tensions.

“An older generation sees Israel as a lifeline amid growing global anti-Semitism, while young voters struggle to reconcile the right-wing politics of the Israeli government with their own values.

“A survey released in the past week by the Pew Research Center found that two-thirds of American Jews 65 and older described themselves as emotionally attached to Israel, compared with 48 percent of Jewish adults under 30.”

What should socialist stand for?

The Jewish supremacist apartheid state should be overthrown, and re-placed with a secular, democratic state with equal rights for Jews and Palestinians and everyone else within its confines, as the only democratic solution.

As part of this fight for democracy, we should support Palestinian and Jewish workers in struggles against the mainly Jewish ruling capitalist class. Working class unity can only be won by this combined struggle, a precondition for the future fight for socialism.

Barry Sheppard

