# tdi ’23---israel aff-neg

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#### Advantage one is Iran:

#### Iran-Israel tensions are on the brink now, a return to the nuclear deal won’t solve.

Falk 22 [(Thomas O Falk, UK-based independent journalist and political analyst who is currently working on a PhD with a focus on German foreign policy during the Kohl and Merkel years) “Analysis: Increased Israel-Iran confrontations risk war”, Al Jazeera, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/26/analysis-increased-israel-iran-confrontations-risk-war, 7/26/22] OM – TDI

The tension between Iran and Israel continues to grow, and with the nuclear deal between Tehran and the West looking increasingly unlikely to be restored, further escalation might be a possibility.

Events last month in Turkey highlight the seriousness of the situation.

Five Iranians, who were reportedly tasked with assassinating a former Israeli diplomat and other Israeli citizens in Turkey, were arrested by a Turkish special unit in Istanbul, although Iran denied any involvement.

And last week, Iran arrested what it said was a Mossad cell suspected of attempting to carry out attacks on sensitive sites in the country.

Meanwhile, Iran and the United States continue to trade accusations about who is to blame for the deadlock in nuclear deal negotiations.

In Tehran, the position towards the nuclear deal is largely the same as before, Trita Parsi, executive vice president at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, said.

“The overall position has not changed, but in the Doha round [of negotiations in June], Iran did drop the demand to have the IRGC delisted from the US terror list,” Parsi told Al Jazeera, referring to the elite Iranian military unit. “But this was insufficient to generate a breakthrough as the Iranians still insist on mechanisms to make a second US exit [from the deal] more difficult.”

The US had unilaterally withdrawn from the 2015 nuclear deal, known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), under former President Donald Trump in 2018.

“It’s no secret that Israel always opposed the JCPOA. In Israel’s eyes, representatives of Iran often openly express intentions to annihilate the Jewish state, while the financial support of Israel’s enemies, Hamas or Hezbollah, which regularly attack Israel, furthers the distrust. Above all, the political situation in the US has exacerbated the status quo,” Parsi said.

“We are, in many ways, in a worse situation than in 2015. Even if the JCPOA is revived, the manner in which [US President Joe] Biden has fumbled diplomacy leaves us in a position where neither side believes the deal will last longer than two years.”

That is because the element of the nuclear deal that allows for international oversight over Iran’s nuclear-related imports will end in 2025, meaning that even if the two sides agree to restore the deal now, tensions are likely to ramp up again as 2025 approaches.

“As a result, the risk of a full-scale war between Israel and Iran will be much higher than in 2015, even if Biden returns the US to the agreement,” said Parsi.

Shadow war

Although Israel has never admitted to any attacks, it has been accused of engaging in a shadow war with Iran for years, mainly to slow down Iran’s nuclear programme.

“Recent cyberattacks on Iranian infrastructure and air attacks on Iranian bases in Iraq and Syria have been attributed to Israel,” said Yaniv Voller, a senior lecturer in the politics of the Middle East at the University of Kent. “Behind the scenes, Israel has been striving to form a coalition with other regional powers to counter the Iranian threat.”

In 2020, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, an Iranian nuclear physicist, whom observers call the father of the nuclear programme, was assassinated.

Others, including an engineer, a military officer, and an aeronautical scientist, have also died in recent month, with rumours abound that Israel has been involved.

Digital infrastructure has also broken down repeatedly.

A few weeks ago, the head of Tehran City Council blamed Israel for a cyberattack on the city government. A few days later, the passport control system at Tehran International Airport failed. In April last year, the electricity at the Natanz nuclear enrichment plant went out.

Despite all that, experts have doubts as to whether Israel’s alleged involvement has done anything to stop Iran’s efforts.

“None of these attacks have changed the trajectory of the Iranian programme. It may have delayed certain aspects in the short term, but more often than not, Tehran has responded to these attacks by escalating its nuclear activities. So if the true goal has been to set back the program, the attacks have been utterly unsuccessful,” Parsi noted.

Indeed, Iran has been escalating the situation by shutting down cameras monitoring uranium enrichment at the Isfahan and Natanz nuclear plants.

Increase in attacks?

With the nuclear deal on the verge of failing, Tehran must expect further action.

The Israeli government openly talks about the implementation of the Octopus Doctrine, which stipulates that Israel will no longer only attack its enemy’s allies, such as the Lebanese Hezbollah or the Palestinian group Hamas but also representatives of the Iranian power apparatus itself.

It is hard to predict whether the complicated situation will lead the Iranian leadership to be more cooperative in negotiations for a nuclear deal or to block it. Information about meaningful processes of the JCPOAs status quo is not available.

However, Biden’s recent visit to Israel has likely added a new level of complexity.

Via the Jerusalem Declaration, the US pledged that Iran would never possess nuclear weapons and that both states would use all available means to stop Iran.

In plain language, this means that the shadow war could become even more intense.

“Israeli officials have declared that Israel will not allow Iran to develop nuclear weapon capabilities,” Voller said. “They have not specified the means but have emphasised that Israel can stop the Iranians from achieving nuclear weapons. These officials have stopped short of threatening a preemptive attack on Iranian nuclear facilities but have signalled that all options are on the table if the JCPOA negotiations fail.”

What measures Israel is inclined to take moving forward is anyone’s guess.

However, the effect of such action will likely determine Iran’s response, which, in the worst case, could have dire implications for the whole region, Parsi believes.

“If the Israeli attack causes limited damage, it is plausible that Tehran will play the victim card, escalate its programme further, and potentially withdraw from the non-proliferation treaty rather than retaliate militarily,” Parsi said. “If the attack is more successful, then the risk of a wider war is quite likely with numerous partners of Iran participating in the retaliatory attack against Israel, and potentially other countries in the region if they played a role in the Israeli attack.”

#### Iran isn’t proliferating now but Israel is trying to strike its facilities. The only way it can do that is with further American training and equipment. The threat alone will cause a destabilizing regional war, not stop future prolif, and drag the US into a war.

Klippenstein 5/24 [(Ken Klippenstein, journalist working at The Intercept, was D.C. Correspondent at The Nation and senior investigative reporter for the online news program The Young Turks) “Leaked Report: “CIA Does Not Know” If Israel Plans to Bomb Iran”, The Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2023/05/24/cia-israel-iran-strike-leaked-documents/, 5/24/23] OM – TDI

Whether Israel’s escalating threats of war with Iran over its nuclear program are saber-rattling or something more serious is a mystery even to the CIA, according to a portion of a top-secret intelligence report leaked on the platform Discord earlier this year. The uncertainty about the intentions of one of the U.S.’s closest allies calls into question the basis of the “ironclad” support for Israel publicly espoused by the Biden administration.

The report — which was first covered by the Israeli channel i24 News and subsequently posted by DDoSecrets, a group that publishes leaked documents — reveals an undisclosed military exercise conducted by Israel. “On 20 February, Israel conducted a large-scale air exercise,” the intelligence report, produced by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on February 23, states. The exercise, it says, was “probably to simulate a strike on Iran’s nuclear program and possibly to demonstrate Jerusalem’s resolve to act against Tehran.” There have been several joint U.S.-Israeli military exercises in recent months, including one proudly billed by the Pentagon as the largest “in history.”

“CIA does not know Israel’s near term plans and intentions,” the report adds, speculating that “Netanyahu probably calculates Israel will need to strike Iran to deter its nuclear program and faces a declining military capability to set back Iran’s enrichment program.”

That the U.S.’s premier intelligence service indicated it had no idea how seriously to take Israel’s increasingly bombastic threats to Tehran means that, in all likelihood, neither does the White House. But despite this lack of clarity, Biden has not opposed a unilateral Israeli attack on Iran — and his national security adviser recently hinted at blessing it.

“We have made clear to Iran that it can never be permitted to obtain a nuclear weapon,” Jake Sullivan said in a speech earlier this month, reiterating the administration’s oft-repeated line. The rhetoric reflects what military planners call “strategic ambiguity,” a policy of intentional uncertainty in order to deter an adversary — in this case, around how far the U.S. might go to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. But Sullivan went a step further, adding, “As President Biden has repeatedly reaffirmed, he will take the actions that are necessary to stand by this statement, including by recognizing Israel’s freedom of action.”

Sullivan’s statement represents the strongest signal yet that the administration would not oppose unilateral action by Israel. The rhetoric has also been echoed by other administration officials. In February, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Tom Nides, said that “Israel can and should do whatever they need to deal with [Iran] and we’ve got their back.”

“In the current context this constitutes glibness,” said Paul Pillar, a retired national intelligence officer for the near east, of Sullivan’s statement. Pillar is now a senior fellow at Georgetown’s Center for Security Studies. “I believe the administration is playing with fire with this kind of rhetoric and with the joint military planning.” Last week, Axios reported that the U.S. recently proposed cooperating with Israel on joint military planning around Iran but denied they would plan to strike Iran’s nuclear program.

“Biden has dangerously shifted America’s policy on Israeli military action against Iran,” Trita Parsi, executive vice president of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, told The Intercept. “Previous administrations made it crystal clear to Israel – including publicly – that an Israeli attack on Iran’s nuclear program would be destabilizing, would not prevent a nuclear Iran and would likely drag the US into a war it could do well without.

“Obama’s clear opposition played a crucial role in the internal deliberations of the Israeli cabinet in 2010 and 2011 when Israel was on the verge of starting war,” Parsi pointed out. In 2009, after then-Vice President Biden said “Israel can determine for itself … what they decide to do relative to Iran,” Obama clarified that his administration was “absolutely not” giving Israel a green light to attack Iran.

Israel’s own military officials concede that an attack on Iran would likely metastasize into a broader regional war. Earlier this month, retired Israel Defense Forces Brig. Gen. Amir Avivi reportedly said that “Israel might have to deal with the Iranian nuclear program,” adding that “this will mean an Israeli attack on Iran which will probably result in a regional war.”

In January, just weeks before Israel’s secret exercise referenced in the intelligence report, the U.S. and Israel conducted what the Defense Department touted as their largest joint military exercise in history. Called Juniper Oak, the exercise involved “electronic attack, suppression of enemy air defenses, strike coordination and reconnaissance,” which experts said “are exactly what the U.S. and Israel would need to conduct a successful kinetic attack on Iran’s nuclear program.”

The unprecedented exercise was made possible by a little-noticed order by President Donald Trump just days before Biden’s inauguration. Using his authority as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Trump ordered Israel be moved from European Command’s area of responsibility, where it had been located since 1983 to avoid friction with its Middle East neighbors, to that of Central Command, the Pentagon’s Middle East combatant command.

Under Biden, CENTCOM, whose area of responsibility includes Iran, has continued to coordinate closely with Israel. In March, Biden’s CENTCOM chief, Gen. Michael Kurilla, said in Senate testimony that the decision to move Israel from EUCOM to CENTCOM “immediately and profoundly altered the nature and texture of many of CENTCOM’s partnerships,” adding that “CENTCOM today readily partners with Arab militaries and the Israel Defense Force alike.”

“In fact, the inclusion of Israel presents many collaborative and constructive security opportunities,” Kurilla said. “Our partners of four decades largely see the same threats and have common cause with Israel Defense Forces and the Arab militaries in defending against Iran’s most destabilizing activities.”

Put simply, for the first time, the U.S. and both its Arab and Israeli allies are structurally aligned against a common foe: Iran.

At the same hearing, Sen. Tom Cotton, who had advocated for the relocation of Israel to CENTCOM weeks before Trump gave the order, raised the possibility of training Israeli pilots in the use of mid-air refuel aircraft. The lack of such aircraft, which allow fighter jets to travel long distances, is a key impediment to Israel’s ability to reach Iranian nuclear facilities.

“One of the opportunities I see is having Israeli Air Force personnel training alongside American personnel on KC 46 tankers, which we expect to provide them in future,” Cotton said. Kurilla, for his part, demurred, replying that training might be better “when they get closer to getting their aircraft … so they can retain that training and go right into the execution of operating them.”

Though Biden campaigned on reinstating the Iran nuclear deal — also called JCPOA, which Obama established and Trump pulled out of — the deal is all but dead.

“With Iran, any concerns about a nuclear program have sometimes been overwhelmed by a desire — based on partisanship in the U.S. and heavily influenced by the government of Israel — to isolate Iran and not do any business or negotiations with it at all,” Pillar told The Intercept. “Hence you had Trump’s reneging on the JCPOA agreement in 2018, with a direct result of that reneging being that there is now far more reason to be worried about a possible Iranian nuclear weapon than there was when the JCPOA was still in effect.”

Should Iran acquire a nuclear weapon, it would likely trigger a dangerous regional arms race. Saudi Arabia’s de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has made clear that Riyadh would “follow suit as soon as possible” with its own atomic bomb should Tehran obtain one.

But one key fact is often left out of discussions about Iran and the bomb: There’s no evidence that it’s actually pursuing one.

As the Pentagon’s most recent Nuclear Posture Review plainly states, “Iran does not today possess a nuclear weapon and we currently believe it is not pursuing one.” More recently, CIA Director William Burns reiterated that point in an interview with CBS in February. “To the best of our knowledge,” Burns said, “we don’t believe that the Supreme Leader in Iran has yet made a decision to resume the weaponization program that we judge that they suspended or stopped at the end of 2003.”

Iran’s policy could, of course, change. And tensions are rising in large part because of the U.S.’s recent posturing. For example, following the Juniper Oak exercise, Iran responded with its own military exercises, which Iranian military commander Maj. Gen. Gholam-Ali Rashid said they consider a “half war” and even a “war before war.”

In April, CENTCOM announced the deployment of a submarine armed with guided missiles in the Mediterranean Sea. This was likely a message directed at Iran, which quickly responded by accusing the U.S. of “warmongering.”

Earlier, in October, CENTCOM issued an extraordinary press release featuring Kurilla, the CENTCOM chief, aboard a submarine armed with ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads in the Arabian Sea — another message for Iran.

On May 9, Pentagon spokesperson Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder announced that the military would be increasing its patrols in the Strait of Hormuz, through which many Iranian vessels travel. In his remarks, Ryder made particular mention of the P-8 Poseidon aircraft and the role it would play in bolstering maritime surveillance of the area.

The same aircraft made international news in 2019, when Iran disclosed that it almost downed a P-8 carrying U.S. service members that it claimed had entered its airspace, opting instead to shoot down a nearby drone. The U.S. military scrambled jets to strike Iran in retaliation, only to be called off by Trump 10 minutes before the attack when a general told him that the strikes would probably kill 150 people. The strikes would not, Trump said, have been “proportionate to shooting down an unmanned drone.”

#### **Military aid is the key internal link. The plan is a necessary starting point for reconceptualizing the US-Israel special relationship.**

Badillo ’19 — Anna; Research analyst at Canadians for Justice and Peace. M.Phil from Trinity College in International Peace Studies. April 9, 2019; “The US-Israel ‘special relationship’ subsidizes American military industry and Israeli colonialism”; *DefensePost*; <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2019/04/09/us-israel-arms-sales-opinion/> TDI

But to fully conceptualize the U.S.-Israel special relationship we need to unpack the the preferential arms trade agreements that allows for this relationship to continue at the expense of the indigenous population in the occupied territories.

Max Ajl, a PhD candidate in development sociology at Cornell University, writes: “U.S. ‘military assistance,’ more accurately understood as a circular flow through which U.S. weapons firms profit off the colonization of Palestinian land and Israeli destabilization of the surrounding states, is a long-term structuring element of the U.S.-Israel ‘special relationship.’”

U.S. military loans started arriving in Israel in November 1971, when the Nixon administration signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel to build up its domestic industrial-arms sector through technical and manufacturing assistance. Grants started to replace loans in 1974.

The U.S. government shortly afterwards started to permit Israel to spend 26% of the annual military grant on purchases in Israel – a unique arrangement, since by U.S. law recipient countries must spend all of their foreign military financing in the U.S.

According to Ajl, “the Israeli military industry often relies on U.S. technological inputs, and the U.S. forbids Israel from manufacturing crucial heavy weaponry, such as fighter jets, in order to maintain control over Israel.”

U.S. military grants to Israel were often quid pro quo, as Israel increasingly took on the work for which the U.S. could not publicly take responsibility, given popular unease in the States over aid to fascist dictatorships.

As the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network noted in their report, Israel’s Worldwide Role in Repression, in the 1970s, Israel armed the brutal military regime of the Argentinian junta that imposed seven years of state terrorism on the population. Israel also provided most of the arms that Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio “Tachito” Somoza used in the last year of his dictatorship to oppose the revolution, a conflict that killed tens of thousands of Nicaraguans in the 1970s.

By the 2000s, the Israeli military-industrial complex had produced an industry capable of competing in small-arms and high-end security technology on a worldwide scale. Israel started to export arms that have been refined through high-technology colonial policing of the Palestinian population, especially in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. In recent years, Israel has risen to one of the top 10 arms exporters in the world.

Last May Haaretz reported, “Israel’s defense-related exports in 2017 totalled $9.2 billion, an all-time record and whooping 40% increase over 2016 – when defense-related transactions totaled $6.5 billion.”

The Obama administration adjustments to Israel’s military aid package came amidst a shifting geopolitical environment, both within the U.S. and Israel. There was a shift in original MOU that would slowly phase out the provisions through which Israel could spend up to 26% of its funding package within Israel, to Israel spending more of this funding on the advanced military capabilities that only the United States can provide – as much as $1.2 billion per year, according to Ajl.

In addition, this MOU locked in $500 million annually for missile defense. The MOU mandates Israel update its fighter aircraft fleet, which is a direct investment into the U.S. military-industrial complex, given that fighter-jet factories are exclusively based in the United States.

Not only does U.S. foreign policy and Israeli-settler colonialism shape what happens across historic Palestine, it also shapes what happens across the Middle East region.

The firm establishment of Israel’s military defense industry also provides an excuse to sell ever-more-sophisticated weapons to other regional U.S. allies, especially Saudi Arabia. As long as Israel has the latest U.S. technology, other countries can buy older models, again to the great profit of the U.S. defense industry. Israel thus is the spark plug for an entire region-wide weapons bazaar, while also providing such countries the means to destroy and dismantle even poorer countries like Yemen.

This keeps the entire region aflame, oppressed and desperate, and thus unlikely to upset hierarchical regional and international social structures. Ajl suggests that one of reasons the United States pushed through this MOU before Obama left office is the rising discontent within the U.S. population over ongoing support for Israeli colonization of historic Palestine and the surrounding region.

Frida Berrigan, author of Made in the U.S.A.: American Military Aid to Israel, writes that a major barrier to any shift in American policy towards Palestine-Israel is “financial pressures from a U.S military industrial complex accustomed to billions of dollars in sales to Israel and other Middle Eastern nations locked in a seemingly perpetual arms race with each other by all buying American and using Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to pay the bills.”

The United States is the primary source of Israel’s far superior arsenal. Israel’s dependence on the U.S. for aid and arms means that the Israeli military relies on spare parts and technical assistance from the U.S. to maintain optimum performance in battle.

During the Bush administration, from 2001 to 2005, Israel had actually received more in U.S. military aid than it has in U.S. arms deliveries. Over this time period, Israel received $10.5 billion in FMF – the Pentagon’s biggest military aid program – and $6.3 billion in U.S. arms deliveries. According to Berrigan, the most prominent of those deals was a $4.5 billion sale of 102 Lockheed Martin F-16s to Israel.

Unlike other countries, Israel receives its Economic Support Funds in one lump sum early in the fiscal year rather than in four quarterly installments. While other countries primarily deal with the Department of Defense when arranging to purchase military hardware from U.S. companies, Israel deals directly with U.S. companies for the vast majority of its military purchases in the United States. Other countries have a $100,000 minimum purchase amount per contract, but Israel is allowed to purchase military items for far less, according to Berrigan.

Today, Israel has been the beneficiary of approximately $125 billion in U.S. aid. An unimaginable sum, more than any other country since World War II.

U.S. aid is projected to further increase to $165 billion by the end of the new 10-year package, in 2029, according to Charles D. Freilich, a former Israeli deputy national security adviser. U.S. aid constitutes some 3% of Israel’s total state budget and about 1% of its GDP, a highly significant sum. Moreover, U.S. aid constitutes some 20% of the total defense budget, 40% of the budget of the Israel Defense Forces, and almost the entire procurement budget, according to Freilich.

Israel’s dependence on the U.S. is not limited to financial aid and weapons sales. According to Freilich, the U.S. provides technologies for the development of unique weapons systems that Israel needs, such as the Iron Dome and the Arrow rocket and missile defense systems. It mans the radar deployed in Israel, which is linked to the global American satellite system.

Fredilich writes, “There is simply no alternative to American weapons, and our dependence on the United States is almost complete; the bitter truth is that without the United States, the IDF would be an empty shell.” The United States is Israel’s largest trading partner, at least partially due to their bilateral free trade agreement, the first the United States signed with any country.

#### **Otherwise – Israel strikes now. Causes Iranian proliferation.**

Divsallar 22 [(Abdolrasool Divsallar, political scientist working on the Middle East regional security system with a focus on Iran, visiting Professor of Middle Eastern Studies at the Higher School of Economics and International Relations (AZERI) at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan and a Non-resident Scholar with MEI's Iran Program) “A military strike on Iran is the worst non-proliferation strategy”, Middle East Institute, https://www.mei.edu/publications/military-strike-iran-worst-non-proliferation-strategy, 1/10/22] OM – TDI

The talks over the revival of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), have so far proven difficult. In December 2021, after Iran played hardball in Vienna, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, in a meeting with his Israeli counterpart in Washington, announced that the Biden administration is “prepared to turn to other options” to halt Tehran’s nuclear program if diplomatic talks fail to do so. The White House also confirmed that President Joe Biden has ordered his staff to prepare “additional measures.” Media reports on the U.S.-Israeli discussions revealed that the “other option” is said to be a joint military strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities.

In early January 2022, however, things started to change. Iran’s agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to reinstall monitoring cameras at the Karaj nuclear facility and the U.S. assessment of modest progress in the Vienna talks brought back hope for a diplomatic solution. Also, the Israeli position toward a U.S. deal with Iran dramatically shifted. Foreign Minister Yair Lapid said Israel is not against any agreement and “a good deal is a good thing.” Yet the debate about military options is still ongoing in Tel Aviv despite significant disagreements on the issue between the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Intelligence Chief Maj. Gen. Aharon Haliva and Mossad Director David Barnea.

Several questions are critical in this debate. Will the U.S. secure a longer and stronger non-proliferation objective by carrying out a military strike on Iranian nuclear facilities? Will the strike be able to convince the Islamic Republic’s leadership to abandon sensitive parts of its nuclear program, if not the whole program? Given the limits of military strikes, is the threat of war a meaningful strategy and does it pose a credible threat to Iranian leaders? What would be the consequences for the U.S.’s future ability to respond if Iran decides to speed up a new weapons program after the strike?

Debates on a military solution to Iran’s nuclear program are heavily polarized between those arguing that a threat of war and a preventive non-proliferation military strike can be a solution and those arguing that military action will only accelerate Iran’s nuclear program. This difference of opinion is also at the core of the divergence in U.S. and Israeli intelligence assessments.

The truth is that it is highly unlikely that Tehran would abandon its nuclear program after a military strike. There are serious operational limits to the success of such an operation that at the end would enable Tehran to restart key areas of its nuclear activity, likely shortly after the attack. Besides, the domestic costs of abandoning the nuclear project would be steep; it would be, in effect, political suicide for Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. While no major change in the political-military elites who decide on Iran’s nuclear decisions has taken place, it is unreasonable to believe that Iranian leaders will trust the U.S. enough to abandon a program in which they have already invested heavily. On the contrary, a military strike will be a catalyst to build up an assessment in favor of the security benefits of having a nuclear bomb, ultimately exacerbating non-proliferation dynamics in the Middle East.

While the argument is often made that time is running out to reach an agreement, in reality the parties are constrained by a lack of options and are bound to a diplomatic resolution of the crisis as the only rational choice available.

Tactical ambiguities

A quick review of previous Israeli counter-proliferation strikes may be helpful. The IDF attack on the Syrian nuclear site in Deir ez-Zour in September 2007 benefited from a short decision and operation cycle. Starting in late 2006, the planning and execution of the strike proceeded under tight secrecy, which provided a major element of surprise. The Syrian nuclear site only relied on camouflage and concealment because Bashar al-Assad had calculated that secrecy would provide the most protection for the project. This assessment made the project vulnerable to intelligence disclosure. Not only did the Syrian reactor not have surface to air missile (SAM) protection, but it was also only moderately armored and located above ground.

The Osirak reactor in Iraq, targeted in an Israeli strike in 1981, was a similarly soft and solitary target. In addition to Iraq’s poorly prepared SAM systems, the Israeli strike came in the midst of the Iran-Iraq war, at a time when Iraq’s centralized air-defense systems were constantly saturated due to Iran’s heavy aerial bombardment. This gave Israel the possibility of covering up the attack as well as vital tactical surprise about its direction.

None of these conditions match Iran’s current situation, and a U.S.-Israeli attack would take place in a fundamentally different strategic environment. First, bombing Iran’s nuclear facilities would have no element of surprise. For years, U.S. presidents and international security experts have been analyzing such a scenario. Plans on how Israel might attack Iran were even published by Yoaz Hendel in his 2012 book titled Israel vs. Iran: The Shadow War. Both today and back in 2011-12, when diplomatic negotiations proved bumpy, the threat of a military strike was a fixed part of the U.S. negotiating strategy. Tehran has had more than enough time to prepare and formulate a well-developed counter-strike plan. In fact, Tehran has specifically designed its key nuclear facilities, such as Fordow, to withstand such a strike.

Second, Tehran’s strategy has been to combine active and passive defense measures as part of its readiness plan. Its research, centrifuge production, uranium mining and processing, and possible weapons production facilities are widely dispersed across the country. Moreover, they all benefit from various levels of hardening, air-defense systems, and electronic warfare measures. Natanz is located 20 meters below ground and Fordow is buried under 80 meters of rock in the mountains. These are hard and deeply buried targets (HDBT), which complicates targeting and operational planning and negatively impacts operational success rates.

Third, there is a major intelligence gap about the level of hardening in Fordow and Natanz. Experts have already raised doubts about whether a single U.S. 30,000-pound Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP), or “bunker buster” bomb, which is the main conventional option, can penetrate and inflict sufficient damage on these facilities. Optimistic assumptions rely on a set of incomplete intelligence assessments. Yet there is little data on actual redundancy levels and extra hardening at these sites, and particularly on new upgrades that Iran may have carried out after the MOP became operational — measures that might help to withstand the newly upgraded U.S. MOP. Thus, guaranteeing that a strike would render Fordow dysfunctional for a meaningful period of time from a non-proliferation perspective is extremely difficult.

And fourth, for the above reasons, the operation is deemed to be a large-scale military campaign. According to the Congressional Research Service, the Israeli or U.S. air force would require hundreds of aircraft and thousands of sorties to deliver enough bombs on multiple targets as well as maintain operational sustainability to conduct a post-strike assessment of success. In addition, HDBT targets, especially Fordow, might require more than one strike to ensure effective destruction.

In other words, the U.S. and Israel would also need to design a plan to blind Iran’s national air-defense system across the whole country given the depth of the nuclear sites inside Iran. However, Tehran has heavily invested in air-defense systems too. It has made them geographically dispersed, has created decentralized passive SAMs resilient to jamming, has improved its electronic warfare capability with Russian help, and is using unknown indigenous batteries. It operates a multi-layered architecture of short to long range, homemade to imported versions of SAMs. There is little data about their operational capabilities and some versions, such as the Bavar-373 and new 3-Khordad SAM systems, are mostly unknown, although the 3-Khordad did shoot down a U.S. RQ-4A in 2019. Suppressing these assets is in no away a small-scale operation like the Syrian and Iraqi cases. In a scenario in which Tehran’s strategy relies on forward air suppression by using Syrian and Iraqi territory to hit Israeli jets, the situation will become even more complicated.

This makes any surgical air campaign unrealistic. Tehran has warned about a crushing response and in its latest “Great Prophet” drills has signaled its own version of a plan to strike back against Israeli nuclear sites. This means U.S. and Israeli planners will also need to find a way of neutralizing Iran’s second-strike capability. All of this adds up to a recipe for a full-scale war scenario that is in no way comparable to the low-cost Israeli operations in Iraq and Syria. Recent debates have highlighted the limits of Israel’s military capabilities to carry out such a scenario, while the odds of tactical success remain questionable. Indeed, the high costs and uncertain non-proliferation value of such a strike substantially undermine the credibility of the “threat of war policy” as a negotiating tactic.

Iran may build back better

Unlike the Iraqi case, which received less international public attention, probably because it occurred in the midst of Saddam Hussein’s war with Iran, the Iranian nuclear program is a highly public matter. Syria’s nuclear reactor was also hit in complete silence by a deniable Israeli attack. It raised minimum political costs for Assad. Israeli planners were smart to consider the fact that if the attack avoided embarrassing and humiliating Assad publicly, there was a reasonable chance he would decide to hold back and not respond.

By contrast, Tehran has already invested billions of dollars as well as major political capital in its nuclear projects. In domestic propaganda, Iran’s nuclear capability has been deemed a source of national pride and one of the revolution’s key successes. Above and beyond the humiliation that a strike would cause, an immediate policy shift in its aftermath would have major political costs for the Islamic Republic as well. The leadership’s restraint would not be a face-saving strategy since there would be no plausible deniability for the U.S. or Israel. Thus, the public humiliation caused by attacks on Iranian nuclear sites would inevitably put Supreme Leader Khamenei under huge political pressure to react.

Iran’s response is likely to be two-fold and involve both a military and a nuclear response. But as I have shown in earlier case studies, Iranian behavior follows a core logic of “balancing the threat” and “escalating to deescalate.” As was evident in 2011-12 and the 2019 tensions in the Strait of Hormuz, a growing assessment of existential threats causes Tehran to distance itself from conservative policy pursuits and instead adopt a brinkmanship strategy to reveal the risks of its competitors' policy and convince the aggressor of the mutual costs of insecurity. Tehran’s response to several acts of Israeli nuclear sabotage since 2020 has followed a similar logic.

Iran’s response to the assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh on Nov. 27, 2020 was a mix of political, legislative, technical, and restrictive measures that ultimately resulted in the expansion of its nuclear activities. As the International Crisis Group reports, this included a bill in the Iranian parliament mandating “the initiation of 20 per cent uranium enrichment and annual accumulation of 120kg at that level; 500kg of monthly enriched uranium production; installation of additional IR-2 and IR-6 centrifuges; launch within five months of a uranium metal factory, work on which has commenced; preparation for reverting the Arak heavy-water reactor to its pre-JCPOA configuration; and suspending implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty’s Additional Protocol should other JCPOA signatories provide no sanctions relief within two months of the law’s enactment.”

The response to sabotage at the Natanz facility in April 2021 was a similar decision to go for 60% uranium enrichment and rebuild a new protected workshop in a tunnel under the mountain. Indeed, the attack provided Tehran a unique opportunity to test its technical capabilities for enrichment closer to weapons-grade level and make its facilities resistant to possible future sabotage attempts. Iran’s response following sabotage at the Karaj centrifuge production plant on June 23, 2021 was guided by a similar logic too. The sabotage damaged the facility and halted its production but also blinded IAEA cameras. But after resuming activities at the site almost two months later, the IAEA was barred from installing new cameras. Again, Tehran attempted to impose a cost on the aggressor for the sabotage by benefiting from several months of unmonitored activities.

In this way, the Islamic Republic’s leaders have shown their ability to forge a domestic consensus and a political willingness to ratchet up tensions and use brinkmanship when threats to the regime are high. Tehran’s indigenous nuclear know-how enables it to rebuild the destroyed facilities and build back a stronger program. That said, it can be argued that Tehran’s response might involve more than just a number of tactical measures, restrictions on the IAEA, or even revisiting the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Would a military strike strengthen the rationale for Iran’s nuclear bomb? The answer to this question seems to be positive. A military attack might radically change Iranian elites’ calculus of their security environment. CIA Director Bill Burns made it clear that he does not believe Iran's supreme leader has decided to take steps to weaponize a nuclear device. Yet a strike could dramatically change the regime’s assessment of immediate security threats by proving that it is unable to deter enemy aggression with conventional means amid a growing threat environment. So far, the military escalations since 2019 have gradually spurred public debate about the need for a nuclear bomb among Iranian experts and Persian media outlets.

The Amad project, Iran’s nuclear weapons program in 1990s, was motivated by a similar assessment. Such an assessment would facilitate forging a consensus among political-military elites to opt for a nuclear deterrent and a strategic defense capability. History suggests that Iraqi elites reached a similar conclusion after the Israeli attack on Osirak. It intensified Baghdad's commitment to acquiring nuclear weapons and created independent bureaucratic momentum toward weaponization and vested interest in the development of a nuclear weapons capability.

On the other side, there is no guarantee that the strike would increase the domestic obstacles to Iran’s nuclear program. Ironically, it might actually minimize such obstacles and justify the suppression of those with opposing ideas among the elites. Resolving the existential threats facing the revolution would then be linked to a nuclear device. This could be the moment that Iran’s supreme leader would have enough of a reason to changes his fatwa in favor of a nuclear bomb.

The wider strategic consequences

A military solution to Iran’s nuclear dispute might risk the U.S. shift to focus on great power competition as well. If Tehran decides to build back its nuclear program better and moves toward the bomb, then the U.S. will find itself in a repeated cycle of intelligence and military actions against Iranian nuclear facilities. The complexity of intelligence operations to locate and identify new Iranian sites will increase in a post-strike scenario in which the IAEA’s monitoring ability will probably be limited. At the same time, unification of bureaucratic and scientific bodies at the national level might increase the speed of Iranian activities and add to the complexity of intelligence assessments. Moreover, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps now has a better technical capability and more experience in building deeply buried structures than it did when Fordow was built before 2007. That means Iran’s future nuclear facilities would likely incorporate new and more sophisticated passive defense measures and be better concealed, deeper, and harder to destroy. This new operational and intelligence situation would in turn create further complications for a future U.S. conventional strike capability and force the Pentagon and the Intelligence Community to devote more resources to the issue — resources that would not be devoted to strategic competition with China and Russia.

At the same time, reaching a political deal with Tehran in a post-strike environment would be even harder. Tehran will calculate that even if it agrees to the U.S. demands, the future U.S. response might still include military intervention. In an atmosphere of mistrust between the U.S. and Iran, the value of complying with U.S. demands will continue to remain uncertain in the Iranian view. The U.S. will have a tough job assuring Iran of its non-coercive policy if Tehran stops and rolls back its weapons program. The weaker the perception of U.S. credibility is in the Iranian calculus, the more difficult it will be to reach a future political resolution to the problem — a situation that would force the U.S. to remain ready for continued militarily engagement with Iran in periodic follow-up strikes to neutralize future attempts, while absorbing the costs of Iranian military responses to punish the U.S.

It should not be forgotten that the JCPOA is a part of a larger pathway toward rebuilding a peaceful regional security system in the Persian Gulf and the broader Middle East. This helped push forward the recent Saudi and Emirati talks with the Iranians, which are a further step toward the political resolution of other conflicts in the region. The opposite might also hold true, too. A large-scale operation against Iran’s nuclear facilities could set off a series of military tit-for-tat strikes across the region and exacerbate existing conflict zones, halting the momentum to form a peaceful regional security architecture. It could promote a renewed military approach to regional problems, which would be then adopted by other regional actors, including Iran — all of which would make it difficult for the U.S. to safely scale back its commitment or disengage from the region.

#### Iranian proliferation causes regional war that spirals into a nuclear one.

Afrasiabi 19 [(Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, Iranian-American political scientist and author or co-author of several books on Iranian foreign policy, including Iran Nuclear Negotiations: Accord and Détente Since the Geneva Agreement of 2013; Iran Nuclear Accord and the Remaking of the Middle East (2018); and Trump and Iran: Containment to Confrontation (2020).), “A nuclear war in the Persian Gulf?”, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, https://thebulletin.org/2019/07/a-nuclear-war-in-the-persian-gulf/, 7/2/19] OM – TDI

Tensions between the United States and Iran are spiraling toward a military confrontation that carries a real possibility that the United States will use nuclear weapons. Iran’s assortment of asymmetrical capabilities—all constructed to be effective against the United States—nearly assures such a confrontation. The current US nuclear posture leaves the Trump administration at least open to the use of tactical nuclear weapons in conventional theaters. Some in the current administration may well think it to be in the best interest of the United States to seek a quick and decisive victory in the oil hub of the Persian Gulf—and to do so by using its nuclear arsenal.

We believe there is a heightened possibility of a US-Iran war triggering a US nuclear strike for the following reasons:

The sanction regime set against the Iranian economy is so brutal that it is likely to force Iran to take an action that will require a US military response. Unless the United States backs down from its present self-declared “economic warfare” against Iran, this will likely escalate to an open warfare between the two countries.

In response to a White House request to draw up an Iran war plan, the Pentagon proposed sending 120,000 soldiers to the Persian Gulf. This force would augment the several thousands of troops already stationed in Iran’s vicinity. President Trump has also hinted that if need be, he will be sending “a lot more” troops. Defeating Iran through conventional military means would likely require a half million US forces and US preparedness for many casualties. The US nuclear posture review is worded in such a way that the use of tactical nuclear weapons in conventional theaters is envisaged, foreshadowing the concern that in a showdown with a menacing foe like Iran, the nuclear option is on the table. The United States could once again justify using nuclear force for the sake of a decisive victory and casualty-prevention, the logic used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Trump’s cavalier attitude toward nuclear weapons, trigger-happy penchant, and utter disdain for Iran, show that he would likely have no moral qualm about issuing an order to launch a limited nuclear strike, especially in a US-Iran showdown, one in which the oil transit from the Gulf would be imperiled, impacting the global economy and necessitating a speedy end to such a war.

If the United States were to commit a limited nuclear strike against Iran, it would minimize risks to its forces in the region, defang the Iranian military, divest the latter of preeminence in the Strait of Hormuz, and thus reassert US power in the oil hub of the Persian Gulf. Oil flowing through the Strait of Hormuz is critical to a rising China. US control over this merchant waterway would grant the United States significant leverage in negotiations. A limited US nuclear strike could cause a ‘regime change’ among Iranian leadership, representing a strategic setback for Russia, in light of their recent foray in the Middle East with Iranian backing.

Undoubtedly, there are several significant negative consequences to a US use of nuclear weapons, opening the way for other nuclear-armed states to emulate US behavior, and for many other non-nuclear weapons states to seek their own nuclear deterrent shields. There would also be a huge outcry in the international community causing the US global image to suffer.

Will such anticipated consequences represent sufficient obstacles to prevent a limited U.S. nuclear strike on Iran? With President Trump, who counts on “bomb Iran” billionaire Sheldon Adelson as one of his main campaign contributors, the threshold for using nukes certainly seems to have been lowered.

How the United States and Iran came to the brink. President Donald Trump complicates the situation by stating that the United States is not seeking war with Iran, while repeatedly threatening to annihilate it. In July of 2018, in response to a statement by Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani, Trump tweeted “NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE.” On May 19, 2019, Trump fired another incendiary volley, threatening the “official end” of Iran in a U.S.-Iran war. Then Friday June 21, 2019 the day after Iran shot down a US military drone, the President said “I’m not looking for war and if there is, it’ll be obliteration like you have never seen before. But I am not looking to do that. But, you (Iran) can’t have nuclear weapons.” In an interview with NBC’s Chuck Todd.

Citing Iran’s military threat, the Trump administration continues to enforce relentless economic sanctions under the guise of a “maximum pressure” strategy, designating Iran’s revolutionary guard a terrorist organization. The administration also is ramping up the US military presence in the Persian Gulf, sending several warships, a Patriot missile battery, an expeditionary force of marines, and nuclear-capable B-52 strategic bombers to the region. The United States has also withdrawn all “non-emergency” personnel in Baghdad and Erbil. These actions add fuel to the growing fear of war—a war sure to involve Iraq, home to both US military bases and powerful battle-hardened pro-Iran Shiite militias.

War could break out in a variety of ways: As a result of Iran’s closure of the Strait of Hormuz (a choke point for the daily transfer of some 19 million barrels of oil), a preemptive strike on Iran’s military and nuclear facilities (in light of Iran’s stated intention to resume aspects of its nuclear activities, banned under the 2015 nuclear agreement), an application of the 9/11 legislation on Authorization of Military Force against al-Qaeda (accusing Iran of being in league with al-Qaeda terrorists), or in response to perceived Iranian mischief (such as the recent sabotage on board several Saudi and UAE merchant ships).

The United States and Iran are not the only regional players, and care must be taken to understand the context and implications of events. As pointed out by a number of US experts in the wake of the most recent attacks on oil tankers, regional rivals such as Saudi Arabia have much to gain from a breakout of war between the U.S. and Iran. The U.S. has echoed the Saudi accusations against Iran and extended them to include blaming Iran for the Yemenis Houthi rebels’ drone attack on a Saudi pipeline on May 14th.

Accusations are one thing, but the big question is, will the Trump administration heed Saudi Arabia’s call for a “US surgical strike” on Iran? Both the Saudis and Iranians harbor hegemonic ambitions in the region. The Saudis are pushing for a limited US strike to eliminate some of Iran’s formidable naval and missile capabilities, thus weakening their regional rival. But even a limited US strike would increase the likelihood of Iranian forces inflicting serious damage on US military assets in the region, both directly and indirectly through multiple proxy forces.

Iran’s military commanders have warned that the US military fleet is within range of Iran’s short-range missiles. Iran has reportedly affixed anti-ship missiles on hundreds of its fast boats, as part of an asymmetrical “swarming” tactic. Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran’s Supreme Leader, has also instructed the country’s military forces to commence preparations for war.

It is worth recalling that Iran is ranked 14th for countries with the most military firepower. Iran has also devoted considerable attention to upgrading its asymmetrical capabilities, including shifting its formal strategy to an “offensive-defensive” posture—meaning that if the United States moves offensively against Iran, Iran will counter by moving offensively against a regional target of value for the United States. An example of an offensive-defensive move would be if the United States were to use its airbases to launch nuclear-capable B-52 strikes on Iran, Iran could counterattack the US base in Qatar, irrespective of friendly ties with the country.

Iran is in many respects a “regional superpower” with over a half a million active soldiers and another 350,000 reservists; it possesses thousands of guided missiles, over 1,600 tanks, some 500 aircraft, hundreds of military drones, and several surface warships, submarines, and mine boats, in addition to some 3,000 fast boats. These assets indicate that the now seemly imminent conflict with Iran will not be a cakewalk for the United States. This possibility of a costly conventional conflict in our minds increases the likelihood of US conflict escalation to nuclear war.

The risk of nuclear warfare in the Persian Gulf represents a present and clear danger to world peace, requiring the mobilization of the international community to intervene.

#### The Middle East escalates – global ramifications ensure escalation.

Maloney 20 [(Suzanne Maloney, deputy director of the Foreign Policy program at the Brookings Institution and a senior fellow in the Brookings Center for Middle East Policy, where her research focuses on Iran and Persian Gulf energy), "War with Iran is still less likely than you think," Brookings, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/war-with-iran-is-still-less-likely-than-you-think/, 1-10-2020] BZ –TDI

Israeli officials in Washington on Thursday reportedly urged the United States to launch strikes against Iranian targets, in what would be an unprecedented escalation of hostilities. Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Mossad chief David Barnea pushed the Biden administration to engage in military action in order to get Iran to “soften its position at the negotiating table.”

While the talks in Vienna have yielded little progress, this appeal marks just the latest example of the failed paradigm with which both the United States and Israel have approached Iran: the belief that greater pressure and more aggression will force Tehran to capitulate, when the likelier outcome would be to provoke a similarly militant response.

Israel says it is under an increasingly dire threat, prompting President Herzog to assert, “If the international community does not take a vigorous stance on this issue, Israel will do so. Israel will protect itself.” Yet neither Israel nor the United States would be in this position if Trump had stayed in the deal, or if Biden had swiftly rejoined it upon taking office.

Retired Israeli General Isaac Ben Israel told Bloomberg that “Netanyahu’s efforts to persuade the Trump administration to quit the nuclear agreement have turned out to be the worst strategic mistake in Israel’s history.” With this statement, Ben Israel admitted that not only did Israel undermine its own security by pushing for Trump to renege on the JCPOA, but also that Israel undermined America’s security, as both countries share an interest in preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Such behavior is unacceptable from a partner. Unfortunately, Israel’s current Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is adopting much the same posture on Iran as his political rival and predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu.

If the Biden administration takes Israel’s advice, or, perhaps more likely, if Israel launches attacks that provoke an Iranian response and Washington gets dragged into the conflict, what would happen?

An Israeli strike on Iran will likely start a conflict that pulls in neighboring countries on both sides. Hezbollah will launch thousands of rockets, missiles, and drones at Haifa, Tel Aviv, and other targets. Hamas might also join the conflict. Iran or its Iraqi and Yemeni partners could strike Saudi Arabia as they have in the past; they might also expand attacks to include Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, given their now publicly normalized ties with Israel. Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar, which have tended to maintain relations with both Iran as well as the rest of the GCC and the United States, will be pressed to choose a side, a decision that will subject them to attack from their new adversaries. Jordan would be in a bind, given the enormous popular pressure to break the peace treaty with Israel. Oil prices would skyrocket.

If the war escalated, the United States might feel compelled to invade and try to hold Iranian territory. But as regional expert Kenneth Pollack once quipped, “If you liked the Iraq War, you’ll love the Iran War.” Indeed, Iran’s population is three times larger than Iraq’s was in 2003. Iran’s terrain is more mountainous and therefore challenging for an occupying force to control. Iranian nationalism is grounded in millennia of Persian civilization, so the splintering of national identity observed in Iraq is unlikely. While some might mistakenly imagine Iranians welcoming the fall of their authoritarian government, experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Vietnam, etc. should remind us that foreign invaders are rarely welcomed. Iran lost a half million lives fighting Iraq in the 1980s, in what Iranians believe was an American-inspired war to destroy their revolution, which only rallied citizens behind the regime.

### credibility---1ac

#### Advantage two is credibility:

#### At the end of 2022, Joe Biden set the Federal Budget for the year 2023 including 3.3 billion dollars in security assistance to the State of Israel.

**Magid 22** [(Jacob Magid, Jacob Magid is The Times of Israel's US bureau chief) “Biden signs $1.7 trillion spending bill, including $3.8 billion for Israel, into law,” Times of Israel, https://www.timesofisrael.com/biden-signs-1-7-trillion-spending-bill-including-3-8-billion-for-israel-into-law/, December 30, 2022] sterling TDI

The bill also includes $3.3 billion in security assistance for Israel, the figure former president Barack Obama agreed in 2016 to send to Israel annually over ten years. An additional $500 million was also included in the 2023 budget that will go toward restocking Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system. Congress agreed to grant the supplemental funds after the May 2021 Gaza War. Another $72.5 million was authorized in the latest budget to go toward US-Israel counter-drone and anti-tunneling cooperation in addition to $6 million for a new US-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Grant Program.

#### US support is perceived as enabling human right’s abuses.

Newton 21 [(Creede Newton, journalist) “A history of the US blocking UN resolutions against Israel”, Al Jazeera, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/19/a-history-of-the-us-blocking-un-resolutions-against-israel, May 19, 2021] sterling TDI

The United States has vetoed dozens of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions critical of Israel, including at least 53 since 1972, according to UN data.

With the latest escalation of violence between Israel and the Palestinians now in its tenth day, the US has stuck to that playbook. On Monday, Washington blocked a joint statement calling for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas – the US’s third such veto reportedly within a week.

The US’s unequivocal support of Israel has seen it thwart resolutions condemning violence against protesters, illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank built since 1967 and even calls for an investigation into the 1990 killing of seven Palestinian workers by a former Israeli soldier.

Critics say Washington’s blanket support of Israel encourages a disproportionate use of force against Palestinians, including Israel’s current bombardment of the besieged Gaza Strip, which has killed at least 219 Palestinians, including 63 children.

#### Aid goes hand in hand with human rights abuses *because* it allows Israel to avoid “hard choices” and have more money to spend on the occupation.

**MEM citing Dan Kurtzer and Martin Indyk 23** [(Middle East Monitor, Dan Kurtzer, Martin Indyk, Middle East Monitor is a newspaper reporting on the Middle East, Daniel C Kurtzer was US ambassador to Israel from 2001 to 2005 under President Bush, and Martin Indyk was the ambassador to Israel from 2000 to 2001 and served as executive vice president of the Brookings Institute ) “US should end aid to Israel, say former ambassadors,” Middle East Monitor, https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20230724-us-should-end-aid-to-israel-say-former-ambassadors/, July 24, 2023] sterling TDI

Two former US ambassadors to Israel have called for an end to Washington's aid to the occupation state. Speaking to New York Times columnist Nick Kristof, one of the more influential in liberal circles, former ambassadors Dan Kurtzer and Martin Indyk said that it is time to end the $3.8 billion given every year to Israel because it [no] longer serves US interests.

"Israel's economy is strong enough that it does not need aid; security assistance distorts Israel's economy and creates a false sense of dependency," Kurtzer said in an email to Kristof. "Aid provides the US with no leverage or influence over Israeli decisions to use force; because we sit by quietly while Israel pursues policies we oppose, we are seen as 'enablers' of Israel's occupation."

Kurtzer added that, "US aid provides a multibillion-dollar cushion that allows Israel to avoid hard choices of where to spend its own money and thus allows Israel to spend more money on policies we oppose, such as settlements."

Martin Indyk, who served twice as America's ambassador to Israel, also favoured ending aid. "Israel can afford it, and it would be healthier for the relationship if Israel stood on its own two feet," he told Kristof.

#### The “blank check” policy amounts to knowing recognition of the Administration’s role in those abuses and signals to the world the United States’ condemnation is at best hypocritical.

Amnesty 22 [(Amnesty International, Amnesty International is an international organization that campaigns to protect human rights of individuals and groups across the world) “Middle East: President Biden must condemn systematic human rights violations during visit to region,” Amnesty International, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/07/middle-east-president-biden-must-condemn-systematic-human-rights-violations-during-visit-to-region/, July 2022] sterling TDI

“The Biden administration must stop its brazen support of shocking crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed by its allies, knowingly facilitating rampant abuses with impunity,” said Paul O’Brien, Amnesty International USA Executive Director.

If the US continues on its current course, it will only embolden abusive governments to further silence dissenting voices, oppress minorities and ruthlessly crush the rights of millions of people in the region.

Paul O’Brien, Amnesty International USA Executive Director

“President Biden must seize this opportunity to prioritize the advancement of human rights over short-term interests, and make clear that there can be no double standards when it comes to promoting human rights. If the US continues on its current course, it will only embolden abusive governments to further silence dissenting voices, oppress minorities and ruthlessly crush the rights of millions of people in the region.”

Israel, the OPT, and the Palestinian authorities: US-backed apartheid

The killing of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh while covering an Israeli military raid in the West Bank on 11 May provided a stark reminder of the crimes committed by the Israeli authorities to maintain their system of oppression and domination over Palestinians and of the US’s role in shielding Israel from accountability. Unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, collective punishment and forced displacement occur in the context of a system of apartheid against Palestinians across Israel and the OPT.

The Israeli government has forcibly displaced entire Palestinian communities and demolished hundreds of thousands of Palestinian homes. In Masafer Yatta, in the southern West Bank, and in Ras Jrabah, in the Naqab/Negev area of Israel, residents are at imminent risk of forced displacement. During the latest armed conflict in the Gaza Strip in May 2021, Israeli forces committed apparent war crimes, leaving hundreds dead and thousands injured. Hospitals, homes and other essential infrastructure cannot be rebuilt because of Israel’s blockade on Gaza since 2007.

“The lack of accountability for the government of Israel’s serious violations, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, is perpetuated by US policy. Instead of providing cover for impunity, the US must support independent, thorough, and credible investigations into these crimes, such as that opened by the International Criminal Court,” said Paul O’Brien.

#### Israel has special privileges other US allies don’t get – namely, there are no checks and balances or tracking mechanisms to ensure US aid isn’t misused.

**Reubner, Brooker, and Hassan 21** [(Josh Reubner, Salih Brooker, and Zaha Hssan, Josh Ruebner is Adjunct Lecturer in Justice and Peace Studies at Georgetown University and author of two books on Israeli-Palestinian relations, Salih Booker is the president and CEO of the Center for International Policy. Previously, he served as the vice president of external relations at the United States Institute of Peace., and Zaha Hassan is a human rights lawyer and a fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) “Bringing Assistance to Israel in Line With Rights and U.S. Laws,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/05/12/bringing-assistance-to-israel-in-line-with-rights-and-u.s.-laws-pub-84503, May 12, 2021] sterling TDI

After many years of increasing U.S. military aid to Israel, members of Congress are beginning to debate the wisdom and morality of writing a blank check for weapons—some of which are used against Palestinians living under military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in violation of U.S. laws.

A recent exchange between legislators shows the evolving debate. Congresswoman Betty McCollum introduced a bill on April 15—currently co-sponsored by seventeen representatives—to ensure that U.S. funding is not used for Israel’s ill-treatment of Palestinian children in its military judicial system, forced displacement of Palestinians through home demolitions and evictions, and illegal annexations of Palestinian land. In response, Congressman Ted Deutch produced a letter on April 22, signed by more than 300 representatives, arguing against “reducing funding or adding conditions on security assistance”—which essentially means disregarding Israel’s egregious policies and violations of existing U.S. laws aimed at protecting human rights. The fact that a bill restricting aid to Israel drew seventeen sponsors to date and a letter defending that aid was signed by three-quarters of members—as opposed to all of them—shows that the debate is slowly shifting.

Meanwhile, the emerging policies of President Joe Biden’s administration reflect an uncomfortable paradox. The interim national security strategy calls for the United States to defend and protect human rights in its foreign policy and to lead in restoring multilateralism and rules in the international system. The word “values” appears twenty-five times in the twenty-three-page document. However, the strategy also pledges to maintain an ironclad commitment to Israel’s military aid—despite the apparent contradiction with declared U.S. policy objectives, such as a two-state resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue, and the continuing de facto annexation of the West Bank, home demolitions, evictions, and destruction of entire Palestinian neighborhoods and communities.

Leading progressive Democrats are calling for the Biden administration to center values in its policy toward Israel and Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking. And a growing number of voters support initiatives to restrict U.S. aid to Israel due to its human rights violations. Yet, even if there were enough votes in Congress for these initiatives to become law, another challenge looms: establishing transparent weapons transfer practices to ensure the necessary tracking and end-use monitoring. Until then, the administration should enforce existing laws that prohibit the use of U.S. security assistance for illegitimate purposes and specifically restrict aid from further entrenching Israeli occupation.

THE LARGESS OF U.S. ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL

Through FY2020, the United States has provided Israel with $146 billion in military, economic, and missile defense funding. Adjusted for inflation, this amount is equivalent to $236 billion in 2018 dollars, making Israel the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. assistance since World War II.

Today, almost all U.S. assistance to Israel is in the form of weapons grants. Israel receives $3.3 billion annually in foreign military financing (FMF). It also receives $500 million for joint U.S.-Israeli research, development, and deployment of missile defense systems; however, these anti-missile systems almost wholly benefit Israeli military needs. In FY2021, the administration of former president Donald Trump requested $3.3 billion in FMF for Israel, constituting 59 percent of the requested global FMF budget. Israel receives more FMF than all other countries in the world combined (see figure 1).

Yet Israel is more than capable of purchasing its own weapons. According to the World Bank, it has the twenty-ninth-largest per capita GDP in the world, ahead of the United Kingdom, New Zealand, France, and Japan.

Since 1999, the parameters for U.S. assistance to Israel have been set in memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between the two countries. These ten-year MOUs include promises of presidential budgetary requests for assistance to Israel, but Congress must still appropriate the actual amounts of assistance annually. In practice, Congress adheres to the president’s budgetary requests without changes.

The last MOU was signed in 2016, pledging $33 billion in FMF and $5 billion in missile defense funding for FY2019–2028, the largest totals in the history of these MOUs. However, notably, this MOU phases out an exemption known as offshore procurement (OSP), which allows Israel to use a percentage of FMF on its domestic weapons industry; all other countries receiving FMF are required to spend it solely on U.S. weapons. This is a significant change, as in FY2019, OSP amounted to an $815 million annual subsidization by U.S. taxpayers of Israeli weapons manufacturers. The phaseout reflects that Israel has become one of the world’s leading arms exporters, selling approximately $9 billion in arms in 2017.

Although both countries agreed in the MOU not to seek changes to the specified amounts of FMF and missile defense funds, Congress has made these already unprecedented levels of assistance to Israel a floor rather than a ceiling. In the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress authorized “not less than” $3.3 billion annually in FMF to Israel, giving it the flexibility to appropriate funds beyond those agreed upon in the MOU.

LAWS GOVERNING U.S. ASSISTANCE

Debate about whether U.S. security assistance to foreign countries should be conditioned upon human rights criteria discounts a simple fact. U.S. law is clear: all countries receiving U.S. aid must meet human rights standards, and countries violating these standards are liable to be sanctioned and ineligible for U.S. funding:

The Foreign Assistance Act (P.L. 87–195) regulates all forms of U.S. assistance to foreign countries. It states that no assistance may be provided to a country “which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.”

The Arms Export Control Act (P.L. 90–629) regulates U.S. military assistance and sales to foreign countries. It states that the United States can furnish weapons to foreign countries “solely for internal security, for legitimate self-defense,” and for a few other limited purposes. No credits, guarantees, sales, or deliveries of weapons can be given to a country if it is “in substantial violation” of these purposes.

The Leahy Laws require the Departments of State and Defense to vet individual military units and individuals before they are eligible to receive U.S. equipment or training. The Department of State version of the law states that no form of assistance can be provided “to any unit of the security forces” committing “a gross violation of human rights.” The Department of Defense version states that no training or equipment can be given to a military unit that “has committed a gross violation of human rights.”

Another indisputable fact is that the United States has placed conditions on other countries’ FMF. For example, in the FY2021 budget, $225 million of $1.3 billion in FMF for Egypt is withheld from obligation until the Department of State certifies that Egypt is “taking sustained and effective steps” to strengthen human rights.

However, when it comes to Israel, additional conditions do not apply and general human rights laws are almost never adhered to. Furthermore, weapons flows to Israel are much less transparent than those to other countries, making implementation of these laws more difficult.

TRANSPARENCY AND OVERSIGHT

Most countries receive allocations of FMF in quarterly installments, and the money is kept in U.S.-controlled bank accounts until the country wishes to draw down from its allocation to purchase weapons. This arrangement allows the United States greater oversight over weapons purchases and better control over the purse strings to ensure countries’ compliance with U.S. laws.

Israel, however, enjoys preferential status. Since FY1991, Congress has authorized Israel to receive its FMF allocation in one lump sum and early (within thirty days of the budget’s enactment). Moreover, Israel is allowed to hold these FMF funds in a U.S. interest-bearing bank account so that Israel ends up with more than its annual allocation of $3.3 billion.

Israel is also the only country in the world for which the United States does not have tracking mechanisms to determine which weapons go to which military unit. This opacity makes it nearly impossible for the Departments of State and Defense to properly implement Leahy Law vetting requirements. Vetting only occurs for Israeli military personnel applying to U.S. training programs, and this training is a drop in the bucket of Israel’s FMF package — just 0.02 percent of FMF in 2018, leaving the remaining 99.98 percent of FMF untraceable.

Another unique feature of U.S. assistance to Israel that undermines oversight is the provision for OSP. Although this subsidization of Israel’s military weapons manufacturing will be phased out by FY2028, it will still amount to hundreds of millions of dollars per year until then. Prior to 2016, the United States had no mechanism to track how OSP funds were used — it was essentially giving Israel a blank check. The 2016 MOU requires Israel to provide “detailed programmatic information” on OSP to the executive branch but omits any provision for transmitting it to Congress or making it public.

AFTER THE U.S.-ISRAEL MOU ENDS IN 2028

Some U.S. assistance could be justified as fulfilling Israel’s legitimate self-defense needs and be in line with U.S. law — for example, defense against Iran and its regional proxies and against oftentimes indiscriminate rockets fired by Hamas and other armed Palestinian groups from the Gaza Strip. But the continued provision of billions of dollars in U.S. assistance to Israel — which helps entrench its military occupation of Palestinian land in violation of U.S. law — is becoming more difficult to justify, particularly given U.S. budgetary constraints and given that Israel, with a per capita GDP rivaling Western European countries, could (and already does) purchase weapons, equipment, and fuel from the United States (see figure 2).

Though some might argue that ending grants to Israel will push it to purchase from other countries and undermine the alliance, U.S.-Israel co-development and research of weapons systems and the need to maintain interoperability make this unlikely. In fact, Congress passed a new program to institutionalize U.S.-Israel co-development in cooperation with defense contractors. Both the executive branch and Congress are committed to fully funding the terms of the MOU through 2028. However, ending FMF after this MOU and ensuring that Israel’s future purchases of U.S. weapons are consonant with U.S. law would make taxpayers less directly complicit in Israel’s human rights abuses of Palestinians.

Others might argue for continuing security assistance despite human rights concerns because of the U.S. national security benefits that derive from sharing defense technologies with Israel. But these technologies are generally purpose-specific and based on Israel’s location, size, and strategy; U.S. dollars would be better spent in funding development that meets U.S. specifications and needs. Foreign weapons grants and sales also create domestic economic dependencies around their continuation, which have little to do with the raison d’être for the security assistance.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The United States is not the world’s police, but it does have obligations under both federal and international law to ensure that it is not furthering human rights abuses. Toward meeting those obligations and preventing further deterioration of the situation on the ground between Israelis and Palestinians, the administration should:

Enforce U.S. law. No country should be above the law. Israel should be held to the same standards as other recipients of U.S. assistance or purchased weapons. This means that the State Department must robustly vet not only individual Israeli soldiers receiving U.S. training but also Israeli military units receiving U.S. equipment. The flow of weapons to units that commit gross violations of human rights must be cut off as required by the Leahy Laws. The United States should investigate Israel’s potential violations of the Arms Export Control Act and suspend the sale and delivery of weapons used to commit human rights abuses. Finally, the United States must comprehensively review the entirety of Israel’s human rights records in light of the Foreign Assistance Act, which prohibits providing assistance to a country that engages in a systematic pattern of human rights violations.

#### That spills over globally, greenlighting global human rights violations & democratic backsliding.

Hamid ’18 — Shadi; senior fellow in the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World in the Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings. November 5, 2018; “Deconstructing Trump’s foreign policy”; *Brookings*; https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/11/05/deconstructing-trumps-foreign-policy/

As someone who believes that American ideals matter abroad — particularly that support for human rights and democracy abroad is the only way to advance our interests in the long run — I would not be able, under almost any conceivable scenario, to support Trump’s foreign policy. I have a different worldview with different starting assumptions. From a nationalist perspective, however, the Trump doctrine offers considerable appeal. It emphasizes, even idealizes, American “sovereignty,” based around a narrow conception of U.S. economic and security interests. This results in a more obviously transactional foreign policy, with the president pursuing those interests with little regard for international norms or institutions. Non-citizens are given little consideration, and values and ideals are perceived as luxuries at best and obstacles to the pursuit of the national interest at worst. Stylistically, the Trump doctrine is spare, unsentimental, and confrontational — almost ostentatiously so.

As with most doctrines, the policy doesn’t quite match the rhetoric. But Trump’s stamp on American foreign policy will continue to matter in its clear and ambitious attempt to put forward a set of guidelines for those who wish to carry the “America First” mantle into the future. In other words, Trump has managed to introduce a set of ideas that have their own inherent power, even if his administration does not always reflect these ideas in day-to-day foreign policy. This, along with profound shifts in domestic politics, could ensure that Trump is remembered as one of the more consequential presidents of the modern era.

For example, Trump’s Sept. 25 address to the U.N. General Assembly was aggressively outside Washington’s bipartisan consensus emphasizing the importance of U.S. leadership in preserving the “liberal international order” and, at the very least, paying lip service to the promotion of democracy abroad. Except where Washington can use human rights as a cudgel against its enemies, Trump has displayed practically no interest in other countries’ internal conduct. This is in keeping with what I call “cultural sovereignty,” which the president expounded on in his address:

“Each of us here today is the emissary of a distinct culture, a rich history, and a people bound together by ties of memory, tradition, and the values that make our homelands like nowhere else on Earth … I honor the right of every nation in this room to pursue its own customs, beliefs, and traditions. The United States will not tell you how to live or work or worship.”

The rest of the speech tended toward the dark and confrontational, avoiding even the pretense of foreign policy idealism. It was chilling in its straightforward aversion to the spirit of compromise and cooperation. Of course, some of this is posturing, but some of it is quite real. In the Middle East, Trump’s predecessor Barack Obama hoped for less conflict but showed little interest in investing the resources needed to achieve that outcome. (The one initiative it did expend notable energy on, the Iran deal, was founded on misplaced premises, as I’ve argued elsewhere). Trump couldn’t be more different from Obama in both instincts and intentions. Yet he has taken Obama’s studied disengagement to a different — perhaps logical — level: unapologetic indifference.

Indifference in Action

A telling encapsulation of this is Trump’s early remarks on the repercussions Saudi Arabia could face for the assassination of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. He first thought about the transactional nature of Washington’s relationship with Riyadh: “I don’t like stopping massive amounts of money that are being poured into our country on—I know they’re talking about different kinds of sanctions, but they’re spending $110 billion on military equipment and on things that create jobs, like jobs and others, for this country.” Trump also pointed out that Khashoggi wasn’t a U.S. citizen (he was a resident of Virginia), implying a sharp distinction between citizens and non-citizens that anchors Trump’s stark and hyper-realist worldview. In this reading, if Khashoggi were an American citizen, then it would fall under American sovereignty; that he isn’t a citizen places it outside the domain of “America First.” Trump has since threatened “severe punishment” but has resisted taking any action that might affect arms sales.

The perception, whether fair or unfair, that Trump will generally have very little response to human rights abuses determines the risks allies are willing to take. Emboldened autocrats acting with more impunity than before are a logical and tragic result of “America First.” By any reasonable standard — and in actual measurable outcomes — betting big on Saudi Arabia’s young crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, has been a terrible misstep, but it does not undermine the coherence of a worldview that sees little room for moral outrage directed toward friends as long those friends serve a narrowly defined understanding of U.S. national interests. (I purposely use “friends” rather than “allies,” since Canada, in the Trump worldview, is more ally than a friend).

**Extinction.**

**Buhl ’21** [Marie; July 28; Fellow at Effective Altruism; Rethink Priorities, “Towards a Longtermist Framework for Evaluating Democracy-Related Interventions,” <https://rethinkpriorities.org/publications/towards-a-longtermist-framework-for-evaluating-democracy-related-interventions>]

2.1 Reducing great power conflict

What is this potential intermediate goal?

Reducing the probability of conflict between major powers - e.g., China and the USA.

What are some ways great power conflict might affect the long-term future?

Existential risk reduction and trajectory change: Great power conflict is often seen as an **existential risk** factor. That is, it increases the probability of **existential catastrophes** indirectly rather than directly. This operates through **multiple mechanisms** - for instance, great power conflict might increase the probability of an **AI arms race**, make **nuclear war** more likely, or make **global co-operation on various existential risks** harder[9]. Thus, reducing the likelihood of great power conflict could reduce existential risk. Additionally, conflict between great powers could alter the global hegemony, changing humanity's long-run trajectory. Whether this is positive or negative depends on the particular trajectory change.

What are some ways democracy might affect great power conflict?

**Democracies** have historically **engage**d in war **less often** than non-democracies. This may be mere correlation (e.g., it may be confounded by GDP). But proponents of democratic peace theory argue that the correlation is in fact **causal**. Below, we briefly overview some possible, speculative ways in which various features of liberal democracy might indeed reduce the likelihood of war.

Competitive democracy, responsiveness, participation and accuracy: Leaders in countries high in these features must follow the demands of voters more closely, in order to be re-elected. That increases the influence of public opinion on policy decisions, such as in decisions on conflict. Therefore, if voters are **more averse** to war than leaders are, increasing competitive democracy, responsiveness, participation, and accuracy would, all else equal, make war (including great power conflict) less likely. Conversely, if voters are more inclined towards war than leaders are, increasing these features would, all else being equal, make war more likely. Whilst we tentatively believe that voters are more aversive to war than leaders are, there are likely also other causal mechanisms taking place[10]. Thus, we only weakly suggest that increasing these features is positive for reducing great power conflict.

Liberalism: Democratic peace theory and liberal peace theory are used somewhat interchangeably. Perhaps what really makes democracies less likely to go to war is their **liberal nature**, rather than anything about voting in particular. Specifically, **norms** around resolving differences through deliberation, **pluralism**, and a respect for alternative viewpoints may prevent disagreement **escalating** to violence. Such norms could ultimately **make war and great power conflict less likely**.

Inclusion: Countries low in inclusion will likely focus primarily on their own country's citizens (the decision-making group) before others (the wider affected group). This would increase **nationalistic sentiment**. In contrast, highly inclusive societies are likely to be more conducive to a cosmopolitan mindset. Nationalistic countries would also be more likely to go to war with other countries, compared to cosmopolitan societies. Thus, increasing **inclusion** will probably decrease the chance of great power conflict.

**The absolute best and newest statistics verify the strong link between democracies and peace.**

Dr. Kosuke **Imai 20**, PhD in Political Science at Harvard, Professor in the Department of Government and the Department of Statistics at Harvard University, “Robustness of Empirical Evidence for the Democratic Peace: A Nonparametric Sensitivity Analysis”, https://imai.fas.harvard.edu/research/files/dempeace.pdf

The **democratic peace** — the idea that democracies rarely fight one another — has been called “**the closest thing we have to an empirical law** in the study of **international relations**.” Yet, some contend that this relationship is spurious and suggest alternative explanations. Unfortunately, in the absence of randomized experiments, we can never **rule out** the possible existence of such confounding biases. Rather than commonly used regression-based approaches, we apply a nonparametric sensitivity analysis. We show that **overturning the positive association** between **democracy and peace** would require a confounder that is **47 times more prevalent** in **democratic dyads** than in other dyads. **To put this number in context, the relationship between democracy and peace is at least five times as robust as that between smoking and lung cancer**. To explain away the democratic peace, therefore, scholars must find **far more powerful confounders** than **already** those identified in the literature.

#### Human rights credibility solves conflict.

**Burke-White ’04** [(William Burk-White, Burk-White is a lecturer in Public and International Affairs and was Assistant to the Dean at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs) “Human Rights and National Security: The Strategic Correlation,” Harvard Human Rights Review Journal, https://harvardhrj.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/06/17HHRJ249-Burke-White.pdf, Spring 2004] sterling TDI

This Article presents a strategic--as opposed to ideological or normative--argument that the promotion of human rights should be given a more prominent place in U.S. foreign policy. It does so by suggesting a correlation between the domestic human rights practices of states and their propensity to engage in aggressive international conduct. Among the chief threats to U.S. national security are acts of aggression by other states. Aggressive acts of war may directly endanger the United States, as did the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, or they may require U.S. military action overseas, as in Kuwait fifty years later. Evidence from the post-Cold War period [\*250] indicates that states that systematically abuse their own citizens' human rights are also those most likely to engage in aggression. To the degree that improvements in various states' human rights records decrease the likelihood of aggressive war, a foreign policy informed by human rights can significantly enhance U.S. and global security.

Since 1990, a state's domestic human rights policy appears to be a telling indicator of that state's propensity to engage in international aggression. A central element of U.S. foreign policy has long been the preservation of peace and the prevention of such acts of aggression. n2 If the correlation discussed herein is accurate, it provides U.S. policymakers with a powerful new tool to enhance national security through the promotion of human rights. A strategic linkage between national security and human rights would result in a number of important policy modifications. First, it changes the prioritization of those countries U.S. policymakers have identified as presenting the greatest concern. Second, it alters some of the policy prescriptions for such states. Third, it offers states a means of signaling benign international intent through the improvement of their domestic human rights records. Fourth, it provides a way for a current government to prevent future governments from aggressive international behavior through the institutionalization of human rights protections. Fifth, it addresses the particular threat of human rights abusing states obtaining weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Finally, it offers a mechanism for U.S.-U.N. cooperation on human rights issues.

### solvency---1ac

#### The United States should substantially reduce its military presence in the State of Israel.

#### Presence in Israel emboldens conflict – perpetuates Israeli strikes

Hartung 22 [(William D. Hartung, American political scientist and author. He is a senior research fellow at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, where his work focuses on the arms industry and U.S. military budget), "Promoting Stability or Fueling Conflict? The Impact of U.S. Arms Sales on National and Global Security," Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, https://quincyinst.org/report/promoting-stability-or-fueling-conflict-the-impact-of-u-s-arms-sales-on-national-and-global-security/, 6-11-2022] BZ – TDI

Israel

Arms transfers to Israel will continue at a brisk pace as it works through a 10 year, $37 billion U.S. military aid pledge made in 2016, with an eye towards preserving its “qualitative military edge” over other Middle East states.44 In May 2021 the Biden administration introduced an offer to Israel of JDAMs — guidance kits that convert existing unguided bombs into precision-guided “smart” munitions — just days before a major military operation in Gaza. The administration did not hold back the sale or condition it on an end to the fighting.45

Continuing to provide large quantities of military aid to Israel in the absence of a diplomatic strategy to promote peace between Israel and the Palestinians is a recipe for perpetuating a conflict that will continue to destabilize the region. Given Israel’s continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, its ongoing settlement expansion, and its own growing military capabilities, the question is whether continuing to provide billions in annual, unconditional military assistance aligns with U.S. interests.46 The United States has continued to provide military aid to Israel despite its military’s long history of carrying out attacks on Gaza that have been disproportionate, causing thousands of deaths and immense civilian harm, far exceeding the severity and humanitarian impact of attacks by Hamas and other organizations on targets in Israel.47

#### Biden’s policy entrenches the US into Israel which ensures Iran war – Israel can’t attack on its own. The nuclear deal fails

Hussain 3-21 [Murtaza Hussain, Murtaza Hussain is a reporter at The Intercept who focuses on national security and foreign policy. He has appeared on CNN, BBC, MSNBC, and other news outlets., 3-21-2023, "Hawkish Israel Is Pulling U.S. Into War With Iran," Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2023/03/01/us-israel-iran-war/, accessed 7-24-2023] bo – TDI

ALMOST TWO DECADES after the U.S. launched the disastrous invasion of Iraq, the Biden administration is on the verge of sleepwalking into yet another major armed conflict in the Middle East. Last week, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Thomas Nides appeared to endorse a plan for Israel to attack Iranian nuclear facilities with U.S. support. “Israel can and should do whatever they need to deal with [Iran], and we’ve got their back,” he said at a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Nides’s words come after recent high-level military drills between Israel and the United States intended to showcase the ability to strike Iranian targets, as well as recent acts of sabotage and assassination inside Iran believed to have been carried out by both countries.

It was not clear whether Nides was speaking on his own behalf or outlining an official change in U.S. policy, though the Biden administration has not walked back the remarks. In a press conference, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that the remarks reflected consistent U.S. support of Israeli security. The U.S. has continued to support Israel’s increasingly hawkish Iran policies, including its “octopus doctrine” of strikes inside Iran as well as at Iranian targets throughout the region.

Meanwhile, at first blush, the U.S. has little to lose, diplomatically speaking: The Iran nuclear deal is dead, thanks in large part to the Biden administration’s hesitance to reenter the agreement.

On closer examination, though, the Israeli escalations mean that the U.S. now faces the unsavory prospect of a major crisis flaring up in the Middle East at the exact moment when its bandwidth is already stretched thin because of a major war in Europe and its deteriorating relationship with China.

“It’s now abundantly clear that the decision to leave the JCPOA was a blunder of enormous proportions, because it allowed Iran to restart its nuclear program and raise once again the question of what the U.S., Israel, or anyone else might do about it. This is exactly what many people warned about, and it’s exactly what’s happened,” said Stephen Walt, an international relations professor at the Harvard Kennedy School, referring to the nuclear deal by the initials of its former name, Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. “One of the reasons that you want to try to negotiate settlements to issues in dispute is that there are always new issues that come along. Now, while the administration has its hands full in Europe and elsewhere, it is possible that they will have another major crisis to deal with in the Middle East.”

The nuclear deal was intended to avoid the Middle East confrontation now visible on the horizon. Signed by President Barack Obama in 2015, the deal traded strict limits on Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for its reintegration into the global economy.

When President Donald Trump violated the deal, in an apparent fit of personal pique at Obama, this pragmatic arrangement went out the window — not only removing limits on Iran’s nuclear program, but also politically empowering hard-liners inside Iran who had balked at negotiating in the first place and helping them to victory in Iran’s 2021 presidential elections.

“From the Iranian perspective, Trump’s decision to leave the JCPOA made it look like the moderates inside Iran had simply been fooled — taken to cleaners by the Americans. They did all the things we asked them to do, they were in compliance, then we reneged on the deal,” said Walt. “That allowed the hard-liners to come in and say that we should not talk to Washington anyways because they’re untrustworthy.”

With the Iran deal buried, there is no realistic prospect of dialogue with an increasingly hermetic and repressive government inside Iran.

THE U.S. CONFLICT with Iran is, in many ways, a product of Iran’s conflict with Israel — a resolution to which was never part of the initial talks around the nuclear deal. Today, both Middle Eastern countries find themselves in a state of crisis. Iran is reeling from mass protests, economic turmoil, and domestic repression. Israel is experiencing widespread civil unrest over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s plans to overhaul the Israeli judiciary, alongside moves to formalize apartheid-style annexation and military control over millions of Palestinians living in the West Bank.

It is not uncommon for governments to deflect their citizenry’s ire by directing it at a foreign adversary — something both the Iranian and Israeli governments could benefit from.

However much the U.S. public may not want it, a conflict between Israel and Iran would inevitably draw the U.S. military into the fray, as Nides’s recent comments recognized. Far from keeping Netanyahu in check — as past administrations, including Republican ones, sometimes did — the Biden administration appears to be giving tacit approval for steps likely to lead to war.

“Israel can’t meaningfully strike Iran’s nuclear program themselves — they know they can’t, and we know they can’t. We would have to get involved.”

“What we are seeing now is the Biden administration being very relaxed about threats from Israel that they would have to pay for,” said Gary Sick, an Iran expert at Columbia University’s Middle East Institute. “Israel can’t meaningfully strike Iran’s nuclear program themselves — they know they can’t, and we know they can’t. We would have to get involved.”

With anti-government protests inside Iran ongoing, hawkish analysts in the United States recently began arguing that the Iranian people would jump at the opportunity to overthrow a government that has increasingly lost its legitimacy. A similar notion motivated Saddam Hussein’s Iraq to invade Iran in the 1980s, with international encouragement. At the time, there was a widespread belief that the 1979 revolution had thrown Iran into turmoil and that many Iranians would be glad to take the opportunity to overthrow their new theocratic leaders. Despite these predictions, the regime has remained in power.

”An attack that is supposed to be the coup de grâce against the Iranian government could actually strengthen their position and help them stay in power,” said Sick. “We can have a considerable degree of confidence that that is what would happen. People may not like the supreme leader and his government, but when their friends are being bombed, they can react in a very different way.”

A conflict between Iran and Israel could have other geopolitical costs. The United States is currently expending all the diplomatic energy it can to maintain a coalition to isolate and confront Russia over its war in Ukraine, including by severing Russian access to global oil and gas markets. After a full year of war, this effort is already showing severe strain. If the U.S. finds itself dragged by its client states into a new war in the Middle East, it is unlikely to win many hearts and minds around the world, let alone at home.

“The idea of a new war in the Middle East is not really popular anywhere,” said Sick. “If Israel carries out a raid and the United States gets involved, a lot of Americans are going to be questioning why we are getting ourselves involved in another major war that we can already tell isn’t going to be a good idea.”

“I don’t see this as another Ukraine where everyone rallies to the side of the West,” he added. “It would be seen as another war of choice in the Middle East.”

#### Only substantially reducing presence will keep peace and stop attacks.

Zunes 21 [Stephen Zunes, professor of politics at the University of San Francisco, most recent book is Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution, “125 Democrats Say Military Aid to Israel Shouldn’t Depend on Human Rights Record”, https://truthout.org/articles/125-democrats-say-military-aid-to-israel-shouldnt-depend-on-human-rights-record/, 5/3/21, Accessed 7/19/23] OM – TDI

The message in the letter is clear: human rights and international law should not even be considered in allocating U.S. military aid.

The timing of the letter could also be a signal of support for the embattled Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is under indictment for multiple corruption charges, as he tries to assemble a new government after inconclusive elections.

There is a broad consensus among Middle East scholars that unconditional U.S. military, economic and diplomatic support for Israel has made that government more intransigent regarding the occupation of Palestinian territory, its ongoing human rights abuses and its belligerent policies toward Iran. Despite this, in language that can only be described as Orwellian, the letter insists that “security aid to Israel is a specific investment in the peace and prosperity of the entire Middle East” and makes the bizarre claim that it “makes the region a safer place and bolsters diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving a negotiated two-state solution, resulting in peace and prosperity for both Israelis and Palestinians.”

Since the collapse of the peace initiative led by then-Secretary of State John Kerry in 2014, there have been no significant Israeli-Palestinian talks. Most analysts have noted that it was the Israelis who were primarily responsible for their failure due to Netanyahu’s refusal to end Israeli colonization of the West Bank, withdraw from much of the occupied territory, and allow for the creation of a viable Palestinian state, even with Palestinian offers of strict enforceable security guarantees and virtually every other condition put forward by the Obama administration. Given the insistence of Obama, Trump and now Biden to keep the aid flowing regardless, Netanyahu recognizes that he can get away with his hardline position knowing there would not be any tangible pressure for him to compromise.

Some of the Democrats who signed the letter claim that while they oppose reducing the amount of aid, they do not necessarily oppose some restrictions on its use. Julie Albertson, a spokesperson for Ro Khanna (D-California), defended Khanna’s signing of the letter on the grounds that the congressman supports “robust enforcement of the Leahy Law” and other existing legislation that restricts the use of U.S. weaponry in serious human rights abuses. However, neither the Leahy Law nor any other human rights provisions has ever been applied to Israel, despite repeated calls to do so over the years, and there are no indications it will be in the foreseeable future.

Such rationalizations harken back to the 1980s when pro-Reagan Democrats defended their support for military aid to the Salvadoran government in the face of its large-scale killings of civilians with U.S.-supplied weaponry by saying they supported human rights provisions attached to such aid. However, those human rights provisions — like the Leahy amendment in the case of Israel — were never enforced.

By contrast, ending U.S. military aid for Indonesia’s occupation of East Timor in the 1990s contributed directly to that government finally allowing for a referendum on the fate of the territory and the country’s eventual independence.

Nothing short of a credible threat of substantially reducing the aid is likely to curb Israel’s ongoing violations of humanitarian law or end its occupation and colonization of Arab lands seized in the 1967 war. Without conditioning aid, there will be no peace.

## palestine 1ac

### palestine---1ac

#### In 2013, the US NSA got exposed for secret collusion with the Israeli Significant Intelligence National Unit, in which the US continues to cut Israel blank checks for its colonial campaign against Palestinians. Anything but an innocent bystander, this Gladiator continues to reign terror against thousands daily, deciding who lives and who dies while scrutiny from the US public dies down.

Greenwald ’14 [(Glenn Greenwald, co-founding editors of The Intercept. journalist, constitutional lawyer, and author of four New York Times bestselling books on politics and law. George Polk Award for National Security Reporting; the Gannett Foundation Award for investigative journalism and the Gannett Foundation Watchdog Journalism Award; the Esso Premio for Excellence in Investigative Reporting in Brazil and the Electronic Frontier Foundation’s Pioneer Award. Foreign Policy magazine top 100 Global Thinkers. 2014 Pulitzer Prize for public service.) “CASH, WEAPONS AND SURVEILLANCE: THE U.S. IS A KEY PARTY TO EVERY ISRAELI ATTACK”; https://theintercept.com/2014/08/04/cash-weapons-surveillance/; 08/04/2014] HY - TDI

The U.S. government has long lavished overwhelming aid on Israel, providing cash, weapons and surveillance technology that play a crucial role in Israel’s attacks on its neighbors. But top secret documents provided by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden shed substantial new light on how the U.S. and its partners directly enable Israel’s military assaults – such as the one on Gaza.

Over the last decade, the NSA has significantly increased the surveillance assistance it provides to its Israeli counterpart, the Israeli SIGINT National Unit (ISNU; also known as Unit 8200), including data used to monitor and target Palestinians. In many cases, the NSA and ISNU work cooperatively with the British and Canadian spy agencies, the GCHQ and CSEC.

The relationship has, on at least one occasion, entailed the covert payment of a large amount of cash to Israeli operatives. Beyond their own surveillance programs, the American and British surveillance agencies rely on U.S.-supported Arab regimes, including the Jordanian monarchy and even the Palestinian Authority Security Forces, to provide vital spying services regarding Palestinian targets.

The new documents underscore the indispensable, direct involvement of the U.S. government and its key allies in Israeli aggression against its neighbors. That covert support is squarely at odds with the posture of helpless detachment typically adopted by Obama officials and their supporters.

President Obama, in his press conference on Friday, said “it is heartbreaking to see what’s happening there,” referring to the weeks of civilian deaths in Gaza – “as if he’s just a bystander, watching it all unfold,” observed Brooklyn College Professor Corey Robin. Robin added: “Obama talks about Gaza as if it were a natural disaster, an uncontrollable biological event.”

Each time Israel attacks Gaza and massacres its trapped civilian population – at the end of 2008, in the fall of 2012, and now again this past month – the same process repeats itself in both U.S. media and government circles: the U.S. government feeds Israel the weapons it uses and steadfastly defends its aggression both publicly and at the U.N.; the U.S. Congress unanimously enacts one resolution after the next to support and enable Israel; and then American media figures pretend that the Israeli attack has nothing to do with their country, that it’s just some sort of unfortunately intractable, distant conflict between two equally intransigent foreign parties in response to which all decent Americans helplessly throw up their hands as though they bear no responsibility.

“The United States has been trying to broker peace in the Middle East for the past 20 years,” wrote the liberal commentator Kevin Drum in Mother Jones, last Tuesday. The following day, CNN reported that the Obama administration “agreed to Israel’s request to resupply it with several types of ammunition … Among the items being bought are 120mm mortar rounds and 40mm ammunition for grenade launchers.”

The new Snowden documents illustrate a crucial fact: Israeli aggression would be impossible without the constant, lavish support and protection of the U.S. government, which is anything but a neutral, peace-brokering party in these attacks. And the relationship between the NSA and its partners on the one hand, and the Israeli spying agency on the other, is at the center of that enabling.

Under this expanded cooperation, the Americans and Israelis work together to gain access to “geographic targets [that] include the countries of North Africa, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, South Asia, and the Islamic republics of the former Soviet Union.” It also includes “a dedicated communications line between NSA and ISNU [that] supports the exchange of raw material, as well as daily analytic and technical correspondence.”

The relationship has provided Israel with ample support for both intelligence and surveillance: “The Israeli side enjoys the benefits of expanded geographic access to world-class NSA cryptanalytic and SIGINT engineering expertise, and also gains controlled access to advanced U.S. technology and equipment via accommodation buys and foreign military sales.” Among Israel’s priorities for the cooperation are what the NSA calls “Palestinian terrorism.”

The cooperation between the NSA and ISNU began decades ago. A top secret agreement between the two agencies from July 1999 recounts that the first formal intelligence-sharing agreement was entered into in 1968 between U.S. President Lyndon Johnson and Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, and informally began in the 1950s. But the relationship has grown rapidly in the last decade.

In 2003 and 2004, the Israelis were pressuring the NSA to agree to a massively expanded intelligence-sharing relationship called “Gladiator.” As part of that process, Israel wanted the Americans to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to fund Israeli activities. The specific proposed “Gladiator” agreement appears never to have been consummated, derailed by Israeli demands that the U.S. bear the full cost, but documents in the Snowden archive pertaining to those negotiations contain what appear to be two receipts for one or more payments of $500,000 in cash to Israeli officials for unspecified purposes:

Legal or not, the NSA’s extensive, multi-level cooperation with Israeli military and intelligence agencies is part of a broader American policy that actively supports and enables Israeli aggression and militarism. Every Israeli action in Gaza has U.S. fingerprints all over it. Many Americans may wish that the Israeli attack on Gaza were a matter of no special relevance or concern to them, but it is their own government that centrally enables this violence.

#### This spills over globally, as the US shows that it fully endorses Israel’s actions, placing them on a pedestal for others to follow. This greenlights large-scale colonial violence and actively dispossesses those not deemed deserving of life.

Harb ’23 [(Ali Harb, Writer based in Washington, DC.) “Steady US Support gives Israel ‘cover’ to attack Jenin: Analysts”; https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/7/3/steady-us-support-gives-israel-cover-to-attack-jenin-analysts; 07/03/2023] HY - TDI

The United States’ unwavering support for Israel has enabled and emboldened the right-wing Israeli government’s escalating violence against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, analysts say.

As Israeli forces targeted the densely populated Jenin refugee camp with air attacks and ground involving raids hundreds of troops on Monday, the White House again underscored what it called Israel’s “right to defend” itself.

Experts say that response reflects US President Joe Biden’s unwillingness to rein in his country’s top ally in the Middle East despite a pledge to centre human rights in US foreign policy – and as concerns around the scale of the Israeli attack in Jenin are mounting.

The Biden administration doesn’t want the situation in the West Bank to blow up, but it won’t risk its relationship with Israel, Levy said. “And that’s why in particular things have gotten so bad.”

Israel launched the attack on Jenin – one of many recent assaults on the refugee camp – on Monday, saying it is targeting armed Palestinian groups. At least nine Palestinians have been killed and dozens injured so far.

The attack, which followed the killing of four Israeli settlers by two Palestinian gunmen in the northern West Bank last month, included some of the worst Israeli air attacks in the occupied territory in decades.

In its brief statement, the White House did not mention Palestinian civilians or call for a de-escalation. Later on Monday, a State Department spokesperson said it is “is imperative to take all possible precautions to prevent the loss of civilian lives” while reiterating that Israel has a “right to defend its people”.

“The Biden administration has leaned into its role as a complicit enabler of the Israeli occupation to the point it has all but abandoned even symbolic talking points of ‘supporting a two-state solution’; or calls for calm,” Kenney-Shawa told Al Jazeera in an email.

“The US has shown, implicitly and explicitly, that it fully endorses Israel’s actions no matter the consequences and that it holds Israel on a pedestal that exempts it from the same human rights norms and international standards that Washington holds the rest of the world to.”

Despite being accused of committing the crime of apartheid by leading human rights groups, including Amnesty International, Israel receives at least $3.8bn in US aid annually.

“The Biden administration’s response, while Israel is massacring Palestinian people in Jenin refugee camp in the largest invasion since 2002, shows a cruel disregard for Palestinian life,” Abuznaid told Al Jazeera in an email.

“The Israeli apartheid state is the aggressor, colonizing Palestinian land and murdering Palestinian people, and to characterize its massive colonial violence as anything else is absurd.”

#### That outweighs. Any attempt to downplay the military raids, home demolitions & torture committed upon thousands normalizes and legitimizes ongoing violence.

Ayyash ’23 [(M Muhannad Ayyash Ayyash, author of A Hermeneutics of Violence policy analyst at Al-Shabaka, the Palestinian Policy Network. Professor of Sociology at Mount Royal University.) “Israeli violence is the problem”; https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/4/10/israeli-violence-is-the-problem; 06/10/2023] HY - TDI

In the face of yet another attempt to cover up Israeli crimes, those of us committed to truth, justice, and decolonisation must always keep our sight fixed on the only violence that explains the reality of the situation: Israeli settler-colonial violence.

Israeli violence is first and foremost structural. It involves the dehumanisation of the Palestinian people in Israeli culture, education, and politics; the checkpoints; the apartheid wall; the besiegement of the Gaza Strip; the home demolitions; the permits system; the economic hardships Palestinians suffer; the restrictions on Palestinian access to healthcare and social services; the imprisonment; the denial of the freedom of movement; the limited access to holy places; the stealing of Palestinian lands; the building and expansion of illegal settlements, and so on.

Succinctly put, this structural violence concerns Israeli legal, political, cultural, and economic structures that are designed to strip Palestinians of their sovereignty and freedom, denying them basic human and political rights, exposing them to uninhibited Israeli state military violence.

Israeli violence is also carried out by identifiable agents: the military onslaughts; the raids on Palestinian cities, towns, and places of worship; torture in prisons; settler militia violence; police shootings and beatings, and so on.

These lists are not exhaustive of all of the forms of Israeli violence that fall within these two general types. Israel saturates the world of Palestinians with settler colonial violence. There is no break, no relief, no space to breathe, no time to recover.

Yet, despite the barbarity, cruelty, and destructiveness of the ubiquitous Israeli violence, the mainstream Euro-American public discourse spotlights defensive armed Palestinian resistance as the cause of the latest “escalation”. Israeli structural violence is not identified as violence and is instead normalised and legitimised.

The reality, however, is that against the list of structural acts of violence above, there is no Palestinian equivalent. Israelis are not subjected to nor do they experience any sort of structural violence from the Palestinians. None. And when we compare violence committed by identifiable agents, we find that Israel unleashes much greater violence against the Palestinians.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of casualties since 2008 “that are the result of confrontations between Palestinians and Israelis in the context of the occupation and conflict” are 6,269 Palestinians and 293 Israelis, with 146,613 injured Palestinians compared with 6,147 injured Israelis.

On top of this, we must include the difficult-to-quantify yet massive destructive effects that Palestinians suffer directly as a result of Israeli structural violence – in mental and physical health, in their inability to live free, in economic hardships and destitution, in lives and livelihoods, and so on – compared with zero Israelis in this category because there is no Palestinian structural violence.

If one wants, after this, to equate Palestinian and Israeli violence, to suggest, for example, that 6,269 equals 293 as a new mathematical equation, then they are at best stupid or ignorant, but more often than not, a liar, propagandist, apologist, and violent colonialist and racist.

In a recent interview with the BBC, occupied Jerusalem-based Palestinian activist Mohammed El-Kurd brilliantly responded to other speakers who tried to shift the focus to the rockets from Gaza. El-Kurd reminded the viewers that these speakers’ discourse has no connection to the reality of the situation, and he accurately likened their entitlement to speak about Palestine to that of racist British foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, who paved the way for its colonisation.

Like the Balfour Declaration of 1917, with which the British government promised Zionists a state, theirs is a violent discourse that erases the experiences and perspectives of the Indigenous Palestinian population and thus backs colonial violence.

When Palestinians are disgusted and aggravated by such Euro-American intellectuals, politicians, policy analysts, and journalists, it is because they are looking at this immense Israeli structure of violence on the one hand, yet find these apologists and propagandists for the Israeli state fixated on Palestinian armed resistance on the other. It is truly flabbergasting to hear people centring the rockets in the context of massive Israeli violence deployed on a daily basis.

Palestinians are continuously killed, brutalised, bruised, beaten, and scarred, and yet they are the ones being asked about how their violence is causing an “escalation”.

These talking points are indefensible on intellectual and moral levels. They are not honest questions or arguments. They do not move us closer to understanding fundamental causes. In fact, these are questions and arguments that are designed to move us away from understanding those fundamental causes, precisely because the Israeli settler colonial state, backed and supported by its imperial sponsor the United States, does not want to expose or change them.

Since the early days of the Zionist movement, Zionists have always known that they were undertaking a project of colonial aggression against the Palestinians. Of course, Zionists understood the strategic advantages of painting themselves in the international arena as the victims of the “blind terrorist hatred and the savagery of the Arabs”, but they knew very well that they were the political aggressors, and Palestinians were simply defending themselves.

One does not need to be an academic to understand that when a land is already inhabited by a people, the Palestinians, who settlers must remove to create a new state, Israel, this is, in its foundation, an aggressive, colonial project. Everything has always stemmed from this basic fact.

None of this is new. People in powerful positions, whether in the media or politics or academia, know this reality as well, but they refuse to acknowledge it.

Therefore, this is not a question of people who “don’t know”. This is a question of people who intentionally obfuscate because they think that Palestinians are an acceptable sacrificial lamb and are simply not powerful or important enough to matter.

I wish that they would have the courage to say their real position loudly and honestly. Say it: that you don’t believe that saving Palestinian lives from Israeli violence is a priority because Palestinian freedom does not contribute to the advancement of Euro-American imperial interests. The clothes these emperors are wearing are so transparent, they might as well just take them off already.

#### Extinction of Palestine is extinction. Structural antagonisms intrinsic to settler colonialism transcend biological death---the desire to exterminate Palestine is an ontological status.

Salih & Corry ’21 [(Ruba Salih, social anthropologist and research fellow at the University of Bologna. Olaf Corry, Professor of Global Security Challenges. “Displacing the Anthropocene: Colonisation, extinction, and the unruliness of nature in Palestine”; *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, Volume 5, Issue 1; 01/05/2021] HY - TDI

In Palestine, like in other settler colonial contexts, the elimination of the Indigenous population rested on more than just physical displacement, destruction and ecological alteration. Settler colonialism drew an equivalence between Indigenous Life and Nonlife, with humans and nonhumans together fossilised or desertified by the ongoing settler colonial project which aimed at turning the settlers into the new Indigenous. Like in other settler-colonial contexts, nature was not simply destroyed. It was assigned the ontological status of Nature (capitalised to indicate its supposed pristineness) only when appropriated by the settlers, and then worked upon to subsequently become the blooming ‘settler-Nature’.

That the Anthropocene as a concept is as contested as it is political is clear from the controversies surrounding its semantics and its onset. One initial Earth System science Anthropocene narrative suggested that generic ‘human activity’, particularly since the industrial revolution, had inadvertently brought on a new geological epoch (Crutzen, 2006: 13–14). Others identify the ‘great acceleration’ from around 1950 – the period signaling the globalisation of industrialisation and the nuclear age – as a significant rupture with the previous epoch. In this perspective, the so-called Golden Spike, ‘a global widespread and abrupt signature’, sets the Anthropocene onset at 1964 (Waters et al., 2015: 46). Such accounts have been heavily criticised, not least by those arguing that ‘Anthropocene’ as a concept does much prescriptive work, potentially legitimating planetary engineering interventions, normalising ‘a certain portion of humanity as “the human”, and reinserting man into nature, only to re-elevate “him” above it’ (Baskin, 2015). They consider the name (Age of Humans) deeply misleading, insisting that responsibility rests not with the species but with ‘a tiny minority’ representing ‘an infinitesimal fraction of the population of Homo sapiens in the early 19th century’ (Malm and Hornborg, 2014: 63–64). ‘Capitalocene’ would for some critics be a more apt term since it is not ‘humanity’ but a particular economic–political system that has produced ecological destruction (Moore, 2015, 2017).

Most pertinent here, however, is the scholarship emphasising the role of colonial violence in provoking Earth system changes. The start of the Anthropocene from this perspective is instead 1492 when the Conquistadores first set foot in South America. Their arrival set in motion processes of violence and disease that decimated native populations by around 90% (Miller, 2007: 50). This precipitated widespread collapse of farming and a wholesale reforestation of the continent, trapping sufficient CO2 to lower global average temperatures by the year 1610 (Davis and Todd, 2017; Lewis and Maslin, 2015). In fact, the colonial connection reappears even in the later dating of the Anthropocene. When nuclear weapons states deposited artificial radionuclides worldwide in the Earth’s crust via atmospheric test explosions, such tests invariably took place on colonised lands. The very first was detonated by the USA in the Tularosa Basin, an area held by Apache native Americans until 1850. The USA later chose Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands (claimed by Spain in 1592, later sold to Germany, captured by Japan during the First World War and occupied by the USA during the Second World War) as the site for a total of 23 test explosions between 1946 and 1958. For its tests, the UK chose aboriginal land in Australia, permanently displacing an Indigenous population in the process (Parkinson, 2002). Kathryn Yusoff calls this the ‘nuclear colonization of the Pacific and Marshall Islands’ (2019: 46).

On the other side of the equation, settler colonial literatures have long described what might be considered ‘local Anthropocenes’ resulting from colonial violence, including the expulsion or eradication of native populations (Wolfe, 2006) and the wholesale re-shaping of landscapes and natural habitats (e.g. Brook, 1998; Crosby, 2004; Hubbard, 2014; Weizman, 2007), which ‘curtails the reproduction of Indigenous modes of production’ (Wolfe, 2006: 395; see also Veracini, 2013). Recent work has suggested that settler colonial genocide has often been enacted through ‘ecocide’ (Short, 2016). In Palestine, notions such as ‘spatiocide’ have been used to denote the erasure of living space for the Palestinian Indigenous population (Hanafi, 2009).

Davis and Todd (2017) bring a much-needed decolonial Indigenous lens to the debate by foregrounding the erasure of Indigenous knowledges in Anthropocene representations of an erstwhile binary: a universal humanity on the one hand and Nature on the other. In most Indigenous cosmologies, land and people are an integrated entity. People are born from land and ‘thought on earth is animated through and bound to bodies, stories, time and land’ (Davis and Todd, 2017: 669–670). At stake, and erased by the Anthropocene term, are therefore not only hierarchically ordered humanities and histories of dispossession and destruction, but also unequal narratives of what constitutes nature and which entanglements are allowed to live. In Palestine, as we will show, these antagonisms can be defined in terms of an Indigenous nature that has been constantly erased, ‘fossilised’ or made extinct, with the manufacture of a settler-Nature on its ruins.

Although, as Patrick Wolfe has argued, genocide, extinction and settler colonialism are always connected, in so far as ‘(l)and is life—or, at least, land is necessary for life’ (Wolfe, 2006: 387), extinction here does not equate to genocide, death or physical extermination. Nor does it suggest that the Palestinian refugee community is biologically extinct. Rather, the making of the refugee problem is part of an ongoing process of forcing the extinction of Palestinian indigeneity. ‘Extinction’ points therefore to a settler colonial process that started in 1947 with the settlers’ attempts thereafter to make themselves the Indigenous in Palestine by forcibly erasing Indigenous life-worlds (Veracini, 2013). However, the argument of this article is that this process is unfinished, fractured and made unstable partly by the unruliness and resurgence of Indigenous nature itself and, most crucially, as we will show later, by displaced people attending to this resurgence.

Concerning Palestine, an important and extended body of scholarship documents how settler colonialism operates through ecological, spatial and infrastructural destruction, alteration, appropriation and expropriation (Abu El-Haj, 2001; Alatout, 2009; Falah, 1996, 2005; Meiton, 2015; Pappé, 2006; Selwyn, 1995; Tesdell, 2017; Weizman, 2007; Weizman and Sheikh, 2015; and earlier Abu Jiryis, 1973; Abu-Lughod, 1982). Classic texts like Beshara Doumani’s (1995) or Meron Benvenisti’s (2000) accounted, crucially, for the colonial erasure of the knowledge and practices of the Indigenous agrarian society as well as the upending of the material and natural landscape in Palestine.

More recently, research by legal geographers has cast new light on the ongoing processes of land dispossession, which necessitates constant novel legal expedients by the settler colony. This has become a particularly vicious pattern in the case of Indigenous Bedouins in the Negev (Kedar et al., 2018). Some scholars explored the rare projects of conservation of Palestinian depopulated areas to analyse the ruins and their afterlife (Lekach, 2015; Leshem, 2017) while others have engaged with Palestinians’ spatial and material decolonial rubrics and strategies (Petti et al., 2009). Similarly, a conspicuous literature exists on the conditions that propelled Palestinian displacement and expulsion (Pappé, 2006; Masalha, 2003; Sa’di and Abu-Lughod, 2007) producing the political, embodied, temporal and spatial precarity of Palestinian lives in exile and under Israeli occupation, the latter appropriating not merely space but also their time (Allan, 2014; Peteet, 2005; Salih, 2013, 2017).

Despite this crucial body of scholarship, settler colonialism and displacement in Palestine remain predominantly analysed through the territorial and bio-political lenses of ‘land’ and ‘people’. Only recently a number of Palestinian scholars have begun to interrogate the material, cultural and epistemological elements of natural-social enmeshments. Omar Tesdell (2017) analyses the Indigenous agrarian knowledge that has been erased through the settler colonial project; Mazzawi and Sa’ar (2018) look at the transformation and resurgence of the ḥawākīr of Nazareth, traditional domestic gardens that provided both livelihood and sociality.

#### Thus, the plan: The United States ought to reduce military support for Israel.

#### **Reducing military aid is necessary & sufficient. The plan is a starting point for reconceptualizing the US-Israel special relationship.**

Badillo ’19 — Anna; Research analyst at Canadians for Justice and Peace. M.Phil from Trinity College in International Peace Studies. April 9, 2019; “The US-Israel ‘special relationship’ subsidizes American military industry and Israeli colonialism”; *DefensePost*; <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2019/04/09/us-israel-arms-sales-opinion/> TDI

But to fully conceptualize the U.S.-Israel special relationship we need to unpack the the preferential arms trade agreements that allows for this relationship to continue at the expense of the indigenous population in the occupied territories.

Max Ajl, a PhD candidate in development sociology at Cornell University, writes: “U.S. ‘military assistance,’ more accurately understood as a circular flow through which U.S. weapons firms profit off the colonization of Palestinian land and Israeli destabilization of the surrounding states, is a long-term structuring element of the U.S.-Israel ‘special relationship.’”

U.S. military loans started arriving in Israel in November 1971, when the Nixon administration signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel to build up its domestic industrial-arms sector through technical and manufacturing assistance. Grants started to replace loans in 1974.

The U.S. government shortly afterwards started to permit Israel to spend 26% of the annual military grant on purchases in Israel – a unique arrangement, since by U.S. law recipient countries must spend all of their foreign military financing in the U.S.

According to Ajl, “the Israeli military industry often relies on U.S. technological inputs, and the U.S. forbids Israel from manufacturing crucial heavy weaponry, such as fighter jets, in order to maintain control over Israel.”

U.S. military grants to Israel were often quid pro quo, as Israel increasingly took on the work for which the U.S. could not publicly take responsibility, given popular unease in the States over aid to fascist dictatorships.

As the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network noted in their report, Israel’s Worldwide Role in Repression, in the 1970s, Israel armed the brutal military regime of the Argentinian junta that imposed seven years of state terrorism on the population. Israel also provided most of the arms that Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio “Tachito” Somoza used in the last year of his dictatorship to oppose the revolution, a conflict that killed tens of thousands of Nicaraguans in the 1970s.

By the 2000s, the Israeli military-industrial complex had produced an industry capable of competing in small-arms and high-end security technology on a worldwide scale. Israel started to export arms that have been refined through high-technology colonial policing of the Palestinian population, especially in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. In recent years, Israel has risen to one of the top 10 arms exporters in the world.

Last May Haaretz reported, “Israel’s defense-related exports in 2017 totalled $9.2 billion, an all-time record and whooping 40% increase over 2016 – when defense-related transactions totaled $6.5 billion.”

The Obama administration adjustments to Israel’s military aid package came amidst a shifting geopolitical environment, both within the U.S. and Israel. There was a shift in original MOU that would slowly phase out the provisions through which Israel could spend up to 26% of its funding package within Israel, to Israel spending more of this funding on the advanced military capabilities that only the United States can provide – as much as $1.2 billion per year, according to Ajl.

In addition, this MOU locked in $500 million annually for missile defense. The MOU mandates Israel update its fighter aircraft fleet, which is a direct investment into the U.S. military-industrial complex, given that fighter-jet factories are exclusively based in the United States.

Not only does U.S. foreign policy and Israeli-settler colonialism shape what happens across historic Palestine, it also shapes what happens across the Middle East region.

The firm establishment of Israel’s military defense industry also provides an excuse to sell ever-more-sophisticated weapons to other regional U.S. allies, especially Saudi Arabia. As long as Israel has the latest U.S. technology, other countries can buy older models, again to the great profit of the U.S. defense industry. Israel thus is the spark plug for an entire region-wide weapons bazaar, while also providing such countries the means to destroy and dismantle even poorer countries like Yemen.

This keeps the entire region aflame, oppressed and desperate, and thus unlikely to upset hierarchical regional and international social structures. Ajl suggests that one of reasons the United States pushed through this MOU before Obama left office is the rising discontent within the U.S. population over ongoing support for Israeli colonization of historic Palestine and the surrounding region.

Frida Berrigan, author of Made in the U.S.A.: American Military Aid to Israel, writes that a major barrier to any shift in American policy towards Palestine-Israel is “financial pressures from a U.S military industrial complex accustomed to billions of dollars in sales to Israel and other Middle Eastern nations locked in a seemingly perpetual arms race with each other by all buying American and using Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to pay the bills.”

The United States is the primary source of Israel’s far superior arsenal. Israel’s dependence on the U.S. for aid and arms means that the Israeli military relies on spare parts and technical assistance from the U.S. to maintain optimum performance in battle.

During the Bush administration, from 2001 to 2005, Israel had actually received more in U.S. military aid than it has in U.S. arms deliveries. Over this time period, Israel received $10.5 billion in FMF – the Pentagon’s biggest military aid program – and $6.3 billion in U.S. arms deliveries. According to Berrigan, the most prominent of those deals was a $4.5 billion sale of 102 Lockheed Martin F-16s to Israel.

Unlike other countries, Israel receives its Economic Support Funds in one lump sum early in the fiscal year rather than in four quarterly installments. While other countries primarily deal with the Department of Defense when arranging to purchase military hardware from U.S. companies, Israel deals directly with U.S. companies for the vast majority of its military purchases in the United States. Other countries have a $100,000 minimum purchase amount per contract, but Israel is allowed to purchase military items for far less, according to Berrigan.

Today, Israel has been the beneficiary of approximately $125 billion in U.S. aid. An unimaginable sum, more than any other country since World War II.

U.S. aid is projected to further increase to $165 billion by the end of the new 10-year package, in 2029, according to Charles D. Freilich, a former Israeli deputy national security adviser. U.S. aid constitutes some 3% of Israel’s total state budget and about 1% of its GDP, a highly significant sum. Moreover, U.S. aid constitutes some 20% of the total defense budget, 40% of the budget of the Israel Defense Forces, and almost the entire procurement budget, according to Freilich.

Israel’s dependence on the U.S. is not limited to financial aid and weapons sales. According to Freilich, the U.S. provides technologies for the development of unique weapons systems that Israel needs, such as the Iron Dome and the Arrow rocket and missile defense systems. It mans the radar deployed in Israel, which is linked to the global American satellite system.

Fredilich writes, “There is simply no alternative to American weapons, and our dependence on the United States is almost complete; the bitter truth is that without the United States, the IDF would be an empty shell.” The United States is Israel’s largest trading partner, at least partially due to their bilateral free trade agreement, the first the United States signed with any country.

#### It’s reverse causal. Holding Israel accountable via US legal action ends impunity.

Kane ’18 — Alex; freelance journalist who writes on Israel, Palestine, and civil liberties. April 13, 2018; “American Laws Can Help Stop Israeli Massacres in Gaza”; *The Nation*; <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/american-laws-can-help-stop-israeli-massacres-in-gaza/> TDI

The videos that have streamed out of the Gaza Strip over the last two weeks are disturbing, digital testaments to extreme force and terror.

In one widely circulated video taken on March 30, on the first day of what has been dubbed the “Great Return March,” 19-year-old Abdul Fattah al-Nabi can be seen running with a tire, his back turned to the Israeli snipers who have perched on hills overlooking Gaza. Then a shot rings out and al-Nabi falls to the ground, becoming one of 17 people killed that day by Israeli snipers who gunned down Palestinians as they protested Israel’s blockade of the enclave and demanded their rights as refugees.

In another clip, taken on April 6, Palestinian journalist Yasser Murtaja is seen using a video camera to film Palestinian demonstrators as smoke from burning tires envelops the area he is in. In the next scene, Murtaja, who was wearing a vest marked with the words “PRESS,” is being carried by colleagues while he bleeds from an Israeli gunshot wound. He later died.

As the first of these images began to circulate, the Israeli human-rights group B’Tselem launched a media campaign with a simple message aimed at those tasked with responding to Gaza’s ongoing protest encampment. The organization took out ads in Israeli newspapers with the words “Sorry commander, I cannot shoot”—an attempt to encourage snipers to “refuse to open fire on unarmed demonstrators,” as the group put it in a statement.

Thus far, however, B’Tselem’s campaign hasn’t worked. Israeli snipers have continued to shoot down unarmed Palestinians protesting near the fence that cages in Gaza, a practice human-rights groups say is a crime under international law. And as the Great Return protest heads into the third of its planned six weeks, rights advocates fear more deaths and more bloodshed at the hands of the Israeli military. Already, some 1300 Palestinians have been shot and wounded, and more than 30 killed.

But there’s another strategy for stemming the bloodshed, one that does not rely on the conscience of soldiers—and it starts in the United States. Palestinian-rights groups here have begun urging Congress to demand an investigation into alleged Israeli violations of US laws governing arms exports, and they are calling on the State Department to enforce those laws and cut off the flow of US weapons to Israel. These efforts parallel calls by the Palestinian Boycott National Committee to implement a global arms embargo against Israel, and a call by British opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn for a review of UK arms sales to Israel, but they keep a tight focus on Israel’s most munificent ally.

The United States gives Israel over $3 billion in annual military aid and, under the terms of US-Israeli agreements, 75 percent of that aid must be spent on US-made weapons. At the same time, laws governing the sale of US-made weapons to foreign countries require that these countries do not misuse this weaponry on civilians. Human-rights groups say strict enforcement of these laws would send a statement that the US-Israel alliance is predicated on respect of Palestinian human rights. They also believe that strict enforcement of these laws could deter future Israeli human-rights violations.

“The United States could send a very strong message to the Israelis about the unacceptability of these human-rights abuses by simply making it clear that there’s no blank check when it comes to military support if they engage in behavior like this,” said Yousef Munayyer, executive director of the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights.

The US Campaign is among the chief groups calling for accountability and has been encouraging activists to contact members of Congress and call for “an investigation to hold Israel accountable for violating” laws that prohibit US-manufactured arms from being used to violate human rights. Other groups demanding an investigation include the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee as well as prominent human-rights organizations like Amnesty International USA, whose Middle East and North Africa advocacy director, Raed Jarrar, explained to The Nation: “The fact that live ammunition has been used against unarmed Palestinian protesters might not only be in violation of international law, it might also violate US law: US military aid cannot be used by recipient forces to violate human rights.”

Amnesty and the US Campaign have focused their calls around two laws in particular: the Foreign Assistance Act, which prohibits US assistance to countries that consistently violate human rights, and the Leahy Law, a provision of the Foreign Assistance Act that prohibits the United States from sending arms to individual units of foreign security forces that commit gross human-rights violations. The Leahy Law is narrower, but could ultimately prove more effective, some advocates have suggested, since it may be easier to cut off aid to singular units that misuse US weaponry than to a whole army. It also helps that Leahy himself has said, in a statement issued by his office to another publication, that he wants to know whether his law applies to the Israeli military units who killed protesters in Gaza.

While it is difficult without investigation to determine what role, if any, US aid and weapons played in the recent killings at the Gaza border, experts who monitor US assistance to Israel told me, for a story published previously in The Intercept, that US aid “of one type or another” is assumed to benefit virtually all Israeli military units. At a minimum, images released by the Israel Defense Forces show some of the rifles that soldiers on the Gaza border are equipped with, and at least two seem to have a US provenance. According to Sarit Michaeli, who tracks Israeli weapons as the international advocacy officer for B’Tselem, one photo shows an Israeli soldier surveying Gaza while holding a Remington M24 sniper rifle, a gun made in the United States by the New York–based company Remington Arms. In another photo, a soldier holds what looks like an SR-25 semiautomatic sniper, a gun made by the Florida-based Knight’s Armament Company.

The Nation asked the Israeli army about whether it was using US-manufactured weapons like the Remington or SR-25. An army spokesperson did not respond to those questions, and only said: “The IDF uses means such as warnings, riot dispersal means, and, as a last resort firing live rounds in a precise, measured manner. The IDF is committed to preventing infiltration into Israeli territory and threats against its troops and Israeli citizens.”

In theory, a finding by the State Department that the Israeli army extrajudicially killed Palestinians in violation of international law—as human-rights group allege—could lead the United States to cut off the flow of arms to Israel. The problem is that theory and practice rarely, if ever, meet when it comes to the application of laws governing the sale of US-made weapons. There is too much pressure from the defense industry and other interest groups, and too little political will, to enforce these laws—on Israel or on any other allied country the United States supplies with weaponry, like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, both of whom also use US weapons to fire indiscriminately on civilians.

“Recipients of US weapons understand that they’re very unlikely to be held accountable for [a use of] US equipment [that results] in civilian casualties,” said Brittany Benowitz, an expert on arms-exports laws who worked as a defense adviser to former senator Russ Feingold. “This is creating a perception around the world that the US is indifferent to human suffering.”

There have been occasional exceptions, moments when legislators and even presidents have made moves, however small, to stanch the flow of arms to flagrant perpetrators. President Barack Obama, for instance, temporarily halted the flow of Hellfire missiles to Israel during the country’s deadly assault on Gaza in 2014. (No other US-made weapons were stopped, however.) The Obama administration also criticized Israel over the Israeli army’s killing of civilians during that assault.

But such interventions are rare, and, in the case of Israel, have grown even less likely under President Donald Trump, who has fully aligned US policy with the wishes of Israel’s far-right government and promised not to publicly air disagreements with Israel. Indeed, the Trump administration has said nothing about Israel’s use of deadly force against unarmed civilians. Instead, Jason Greenblatt, the White House envoy in charge of Israel/Palestine, criticized the Palestinian protesters.

As for Congress, only a handful of members have criticized Israel’s actions. The State Department did not respond to requests for comment from The Nation on whether it was concerned about Israel firing on unarmed civilians in Gaza, in possible violation of US law.

“That sends a message to the Israelis that the United States is fully behind the use of lethal force on protesters. That is dangerous,” said Munayyer, the head of the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights. “That the American administration is shielding an Israeli military engaged in those kinds of brutally repressive acts is a new low.”

Still, Munayyer told The Nation it remained important to press the United States to enforce its arms-export laws as they apply to Israel.

“This is an opportunity for people to communicate with their representatives and demand action on this front, because it is a question of whether or not US law has been violated,” he said. “It’s an opportunity for accountability.”

#### The plan generates relational solidarity with global movements against colonial violence. Now is key to combine anti-colonial struggle with legal action, forwarding new understandings against the normalization of pursuit of national security via ethnic cleansing.

Tannous ’21 — Nadya; Al-Shabaka's summer 2021 visiting US policy fellow. MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies from the University of Oxford and a BA in Anthropology and Global Information and Social Enterprise Studies from UC Santa Cruz. September 14, 2021; “Restricting US Military Aid to Israel in the Age of Normalization”; *Al-Shabaka*; <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/restricting-us-military-aid-to-israel-in-the-age-of-normalization/> TDI

The United States’ long-standing commitment to militarily aiding Israel is layered with new considerations in light of recent developments in Palestine, the US, and beyond. The Unity Intifada, which erupted following the Israeli regime’s ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah, its attack on worshipers in the Aqsa mosque complex, and its vicious assault on Gaza in May 2021, garnered Palestinians unprecedented support from activists and policymakers across the world, and even in the halls of Capitol Hill. This dramatic shift in global public and political opinion is critical for the Palestinian struggle, and it presents an opportunity to push for policies that hold Israel accountable for its crimes against the Palestinian people.

This policy brief contextualizes US military aid to Israel historically, delineating how central such aid has become in regional dynamics between Israel and Arab states, and between Arab states and Palestine. It examines the ways in which the recent convergence of global grassroots movements, and their vocal solidarity with Palestine, are challenging the US’ business as usual. From the streets to the halls of power, a concerted push to condition, sanction, and halt US military aid to Israel is gaining traction globally.

The brief offers preliminary recommendations for activists, lobbyists, and policymakers for how to make use of this transformational moment in the history of Palestinian solidarity. Harnessing the movement effectively would contribute to substantively pressuring the US, Israel, and their allies to end their ongoing oppression of Palestinians across historic Palestine.

Normalization in the Context of American Military Imperialism

Since Israel’s establishment in 1948, the US has largely shaped its relationship to the Middle East through maintaining security and leverage for Israel and its supporters. On the one hand, it has done this by maintaining Israel’s regional military dominance through continued funding. On the other, it has brokered “peace” deals between Arab states and Israel, deals that require Arab governments to support Israel politically and economically, or, in the least, to abstain from publicly condemning its actions.

Since 2001, Israel has received over $63 billion in security assistance from the US, with over 90% of it funded by the State Department’s Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program. The FMF, which is commonly known as “the blank check” to Israel, is funded by US tax dollars and comes in the form of weapons grants. In May 2021, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace reported that, in the 2021 fiscal year, the Trump administration requested $3.3 billion in FMF for Israel, constituting 59% of the requested global FMF budget.

In the upcoming 2022 fiscal year, the Biden administration has requested to replicate it. The commitment to this level of funding was specifically instituted through a 10-year Memorandum of Understanding, signed under former president Barack Obama’s administration. The report explained further that, “Israel receives more FMF than all other countries in the world combined.”

Concurrently, the US has directly pressured Arab nations to capitulate to Israeli interests through threats to rescind its military aid packages and financial incentives for cooperation. The first two Arab states to normalize with Israel under US pressure were Egypt (1979), now the second largest recipient of US military aid, and Jordan (1994), a country with one of the strongest and most stable currencies in the world thanks to longstanding arrangements with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Whereas previously normalization of relations between Arab nations and Israel were an exchange of “land for peace,” the 2020 Abraham Accords serve as a declaration of alliances, bolstered by weapons exchange and the promise of military might.

Throughout 2020, former US President Donald Trump ushered in a new era of US-brokered normalization treaties between Israel and Arab states, specifically the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. The agreements came at the same time as Palestinians were witnessing one of the most aggressive advances of the Israeli regime. Indeed, Israel was advancing its plans to annex Area C in the Jordan Valley; it carried out mass arrests and imprisonment of Palestinian university students; and it intensified its ethnic cleansing campaigns in Sheikh Jarrah, Silwan, and other parts of the West Bank. In this way, the agreements directly undercut Palestinian demands for self-determination, and normalize the Israeli regime’s ongoing violence against Palestinians.

Regarding the UAE and Bahrain, the September 2020 Accords were recognized as a first-rate arms deal between two Gulf governments for American weapons. According to a report by the Center for International Policy, the US dominated arms transfers to the Gulf states from 2015 to 2019, and remains the top supplier of over two-thirds of states in the region. As a result of the Accords, the UAE publicly noted that it was expecting 50 F-35 fighter jets and 18 armed Reaper drone systems as part of the $23.37 billion arms deal approved by the Trump administration in exchange for normalization.

While the Sudanese government agreed to normalize with Israel in exchange for the US lifting its sanctions on the country as part of the US terror list, and while Morocco normalized in exchange for US recognition of its sovereignty over the Western Sahara, the UAE and Bahrain normalized in order to bolster their positions vis-à-vis other regional players. In addition to pushing for nuclear deals that will neutralize Iran, the UAE and Bahrain seek to challenge Iran through proxy military confrontation, which requires enhancing their military arsenals.

Bahrain, for one, has clearly articulated that it expects to be consulted by the Biden administration ahead of any nuclear negotiations. This arms deal also permits the UAE to stockpile munitions for its military assault and weapons-racketeering in Libya, and for its participation in the Saudi-led attack on Yemen. At $10 billion, the arms deals ushered in by the Abraham Accords have been the largest in the UAE’s history, and suggest a stockpiling of munitions for future military actions.

Meanwhile, Gulf support for the Palestinians has wavered, as regional donors have moved from neither condemning, nor seeking to obstruct, Israel’s aspirations to now facilitating them. Indeed, the UAE has recently financed the purchase of properties across East Jerusalem, through Palestinian individuals, and then sold them to Israeli settlers. This period of normalization has been politically costly for Palestinians and, with the UAE and Bahrain entering their first year since normalization, their deepening relationship with Israel and their privileged relationship to the US will surely impede Palestinian resistance against Israeli apartheid, settler-colonialism, and military occupation.

US Legislative Responses and Maintaining Israel’s QME

In the US, the Abraham Accords have generated a variety of responses on the legislative level. In November 2020, Representative Brad Schneider (D-IL) proposed H.R. 8494, “Guaranteeing Israel’s Qualitative Military Edge,” co-sponsored by 19 other representatives. The Qualitative Military Edge (QME) agreement ensures Israel’s military advantage in the region in both military technologies and weaponry as the preferred partner of the US, and as a proxy state for US interests. It is a long-standing US practice, enshrined in US legislation since 2008, and enforced at the discretion of Congress. The bill was most significant, however, because it proposed that Israel, not the US Congress, would hold the deciding power over US weapons deals across the Middle East.

Schneider’s bill was brought forward in the clamor of anxieties about the integrity of Israel’s QME in light of US weapons sales to the Gulf states. This concern was largely rooted in the belief that a bolstering of weapons stockpiles among Arab partners could threaten Israel’s security in the region, despite the provisions outlined in the Abraham Accords which stipulate that Arab states would never supersede Israel militarily. These US-brokered normalization agreements ultimately contribute to Israel’s QME by allowing it to fortify the region against a perceived common enemy: Iran. Thus, in the US- and Saudi-led military front against Iran, Bahrain, the UAE, and Israel find themselves on the same side.

Yet, despite the guidelines laid out in the Abraham Accords, in November 2020, members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, led by chairman Robert Menendez (D-NJ), introduced a joint resolution against the weapons sale and invoked Israel’s QME. Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN) also protested the pending weapons deal under the Accords with stronger wording to ban the sale altogether, though she cited the UAE’s human rights violations, and not Israel’s QME, as a reason for the ban.

It is important to contextualize Schneider’s bill both in comparison to Omar and Menendez’s separate resolutions, and against the backdrop of the Leahy Law. The 1977 law, named after Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), prohibits US arms sales and military aid to foreign states’ security forces that commit gross human rights violations. Accordingly, there is legal precedent in the US for conditioning aid based on a state’s human rights violations through the Foreign Assistance Act, while Schneider’s proposed bill enables them.

Salih Booker of the Center for International Policy points out that Israel is the only country in the world for which the US does not track which weapons go to which military unit, making it virtually impossible to enforce the Leahy Law when it comes to Israel. The threat of conditioning US aid to Israel preceding the 1994 Madrid Conference, where former Secretary of State James Baker temporarily withheld loan guarantees to Israel to prevent use of the money for settlement building, is the only historical example of US-conditioned aid to Israel. To be sure, it was the Palestinians who made this possible through the First Intifada.

As of the summer of 2021, Schneider’s bill has not been brought back to the floor, but developments have been made on the heels of Menendez’s November 2020 resolution. In January 2021, Biden announced that he would review all Trump-era weapons sales, but in April, mentioned that the US would, as promised, go forward with “a broader UAE deal worth $23 billion.” There has been continuous debate between Bahrain, the UAE, Israel, and the Biden administration on whether or not the sale of F-35s will actually go through, yet the strategies adopted by Menendez and the Biden administration are not concerned with the UAE’s human rights record; they are concerned with the bedrock of US regional priorities: maintaining Israel’s QME.

Indeed, US aid powers the Israeli Air Force, providing billions of dollars’ worth of fuel under the government-to-government Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. Since 2015, the US has spent over $5.4 billion on aviation fuel, diesel fuel, unleaded gasoline, and aerial refueling aircraft. The US is scheduled to send the $3.3 billion in FMF funds to Israel throughout 2021, which Congress approved on a bipartisan basis.

On top of this, the US is set to send an additional $500 million for joint US-Israeli research, development, and deployment of missile defense systems. In June 2021, Israel was also forecasted to ask US Congress for another $1 billion to restock the Iron Dome and to upgrade the system, putting the FMF at $4.3 billion. Fundamentally, Israel will continue to lie at the center of US interests in the Middle East, and the US will continue to hold Israel’s military actions to different standards than any other country.

US Aid to Israel in the Wake of a Transformative Moment

The Biden administration has not differed from Trump’s with regards to fulfilling the US’ unconditional support for Israel, which is in alignment with the Obama administration’s 10-Year Memorandum of Understanding. The Biden administration has been committed to supporting Israel’s ongoing colonial expansion. This became clear when Washington failed to condemn Israel’s blatant ethnic cleansing in Jerusalem and war crimes against Palestinians in Gaza in May 2021.

On May 5, Congress was notified of the $735 million commercial sale of precision-guided weapons to Israel, initiating a 15-day period when members of Congress may object. Between May 5 and May 20, the Israeli regime bombarded Gaza, killing 243 Palestinians. Israelis also carried out brutal attacks on Palestinians throughout the West Bank and Jerusalem and formed lynch mobs against Palestinians in the 1948 territories, while Israeli forces stood by. Following the assault on Gaza, and at the end of the 15-day period, Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Mark Pocan (D-WI), and Bernie Sanders (D-VT) proposed a senate joint resolution and a house joint resolution to halt the sale.

These efforts have impacted politicians on Capitol Hill, and have brought progressive Democrats to make presentations in Congress in support of Palestine, using language never before spoken in those halls by the people in power. On May 13, Representatives Mark Pocan, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, Cori Bush, Rashida Tlaib, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez publicly expressed support for the Palestinian people in Congress, calling for an end to funding Israeli military aggression. Pressley and Ocasio-Cortez described Israel as an “apartheid state” and even newcomer Representative Marie Newman (D-IL) called on the State Department to condemn the ethnic cleansing of Sheikh Jarrah as a violation of international law.

On April 15, Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN) submitted H.R.2590, titled “Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act,” which is an expanded version of the same bill she previously introduced. It was co-sponsored by 28 representatives. McCollum’s bill aims to ensure that US funding is not used to sustain Israel’s military judicial system, forced displacement of Palestinians through home demolitions and evictions, and illegal annexations of Palestinian land. Days later, Representatives Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass) openly confirmed their willingness to restrict US aid to Israel, or to withhold money from any Israeli institution or military branch responsible for human rights abuses. Notably, Sanders had specifically withdrawn his opposition to the commercial sale by this time. Moreover, on June 8, over 100 prominent national organizations submitted a letter to Biden urging him to block the sale, with 73 centrist democrats calling on him to categorize Israeli settlements as illegal.

Beyond Capitol Hill, grassroots movements of Palestinians and tens of thousands of Palestine supporters have taken to the streets across major US cities, protesting the Israeli regime’s disproportionate use of power, poking holes in the stale “peace” discourses that distract from Israeli colonial violence, and calling for freedom for the Palestinian people. These efforts were inspired by the unprecedented mobilization witnessed across historic Palestine and the world, and which unified Palestinians to push back against ethnic cleansing, settler-colonial violence, apartheid, and siege, effectively defying their geographic and political fragmentation.

Organizers in the US continue to highlight the clear intersections between expanding systems of militarized policing, colonial violence, war, and racism in the US and Israel, bolstering the global struggle to confront all tenets of fascism. Campaigns online and activists on different social media platforms have also critiqued the US’ direct contribution to Israel’s violations of Palestinians’ rights, and have demanded their political representatives take action, including rescinding or conditioning the US’ blank check to Israel.

The tide is clearly shifting in the US. In May 2021, the LA Times cited an April 2021 Gallup study which reported a massive surge in support for Palestine over the past decade: from one in seven US citizens primarily sympathizing with Palestine, to now one in four. Additionally, an August 2021 Chicago Council Survey showed that 50% of Americans favor restricting military aid to Israel in operations that target Palestinians, as opposed to 45% who oppose it. Democrats overwhelmingly support it at 62%. To be sure, many of these US citizens are increasingly realizing that their tax dollars are directly contributing to the onslaught against Palestinians.

What Needs to be Done to Restrict Aid

In order to seize on this historic moment in the defense of Palestinians’ rights:

Activists and lobbyists must pressure policymakers and the international community to restrict US military aid to Israel, including through sanctions. They should support McCollum’s Bill, further legislation conditioning aid to Israel, and should push for legislation that tracks Israel’s military spending. They should promote grassroots groups and NGOs already dedicated to this work, including the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, Adalah Justice Project, American Muslims for Palestine, and the American Friends Service Committee.

#### Foreign policy must start with an understanding of biopolitical control exercised in Palestine. The internal link is linear. Futurity and calculations of ‘risk’ view settler colonialism as ‘necessary collateral damage’---reject ‘extinction outweighs’ when it justifies genocide.

Puar ’15 — Jasbir; Associate Professor of Women's & Gender Studies at Rutgers University. May 2015; “The ‘Right’ to Maim: Disablement and Inhumanist Biopolitics in Palestine”; *Borderlands*, Volume 14, Issue 1

Here, there is a tentative answer to the question, why not just ‘make die’. The act of ‘make die’ is transferred to Hamas as a wish to ‘let die’. The anxiety generated by the term ‘collateral damage’—‘the more dead the better’—is transformed into a favorable rather than damning equation. The statement, I suggest, serves as more than a ludicrous projection; rather, it might actually reveal an investment in ‘will not let die’ that extends as a justification for the right to maim, and for a speculative rehabilitative approach that modulates when to let die, when to maim, and when to ‘will not let die’. Allen Feldman alludes to one reason why ‘make die’ and even ‘let die’ cannot usefully serve the mandate of the post-genocidal Israeli state:

… the alleged manufacture of telegenic death by the Palestinians implies their subjugated knowledge of genocidal truth that both attracts and threatens Netanyahu—for in a Euro-American public sphere acculturated to the Holocaust, Palestinians become more attractive and rhetorically persuasive when dead than when alive, when televisually spiritualized rather than when protesting or resisting or simply enduring intractable prison-house materialities. Netanyahu attacks telegenic death because he fears the population bomb of Palestinian dead and wounded, wherein they become symbolic Jews. (Feldman, 2014)

Given the prohibition and value of ‘dead Palestinians’ that Feldman maps in his analysis, then, it is worth examining the repeated claim that Gaza will be uninhabitable by year 2020. The first question we might want to ask is, by what calculus is Gaza currently inhabitable? And then: With what metrics is this prognosis computed, through which prehensive algorithms, via what naturalized logic does the agent of destruction that creates and sustains Gaza as uninhabitable completely drop from syntactical reference, as if the asphixatory control that Salamanca details reflects (but in actuality, authorizes) the organic order of things? How is this inevitability procured? The prehensive authorizes a set of predictive facts-on-the-ground in terms of the language of risk and probability that extends itself to a predicted ‘apocalypse’; in other words, the representation of Gaza as a ‘natural’ disaster likely to happen. The prehensive, as an addition to reactive and pre-emptive forms of securitization, is about making the present look exactly the way it needs to in order to guarantee a very specific and singular outcome in the future. A remark by Michael Oren, Israel’s former ambassador to the U.S., unwittingly unravels this grammatical elision by positing the inverse: ‘Life in Gaza is miserable now, but if Israel is permitted to prevail [i.e. destroy Hamas], circumstances can improve markedly’ (Oren 2014).

2020 functioned as a perverse apocalyptic timeline that is all-too familiar to us now, largely through the predictive algorithms mapping for us the demise of the planet due to climate change. The prehensive is narratively produced as if this thing is happening to us, when indeed, we made it happen. (And in fact, from Netanyahu’s vantage: We wanted it to happen.) Through prehensive time, it is not only that the terms of futurity are already dictated in the present, but the terms of the present are dictated through the containment of the terms of the future, in an effort to keep the present in line with one version of the future that is desired. In feeding the fixed future into the present, data feeds forward in a retroactive manner that disallows us out of the present. That is to say, we cannot get out of the present because tethered to the desired future. These prehensive futurities are thoroughly resonant now: by such and such year, Caucasians will be the minority in California. X number of species will be extinct by year such and such. What this prehensive control over the present in order to create a certain future might suggest is that the ‘solution’ to the ‘Israeli/Arab conflict’ may well, for Israel, be neither one-state nor two- state, rather the present status quo. In other words, a terrifying implication is that Israel already has its solution: settler colonialism.

There is another twist to these temporalities: the multiplicity of competing prehensive narratives that challenge the hermeneutic seal. 2020 is also predicted to be when Palestinians will outnumber the Jewish Israeli population. Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Territories will outnumber Jews by 7.2 million to 6.9 million (PCBS 2013; Deutsche Presse-Agenteur 2012). Palestinians inside Israel’s 1948 borders are reproducing 33 percent faster than Israeli Jews (Chamie 2014). If indeed Israel needs Gaza’s gas resources by 2017 (Ahmed 2014a, 2014b), if indeed by 2020 Gaza will be uninhabitable (UNRWA 2012), these timeframes reveal as much about the contractions and acceleration of pace demanded within the parameters of slow death as they do about life span.

But is 2020 only a human timeline? If temporality itself is already suffused with the biopolitical, to claim unfettered access to futurity is already predicated upon the genocide or slow death of others. The invocation of 2020 marks the limit of thinking biopolitical time in human terms, gesturing towards temporalities that are wielded in nonreproductive terms, since human reproduction no longer singularly drives the engine of biopolitics. Gaza is not only living human time, and ‘population time’, but also versions of inhuman time. Mel Chen’s (2012) work on toxicity alerts us to the question of the half-life of depleted uranium, which is something like 4.5 million years, and other elements deposited through weaponry and infrastructural warfare. Prehensive time thus also signals a weaponized epigenetics where the outcome is not so much about winning or losing, nor a solution, but about needing body parts (not even whole bodies) for research and experimentation. As Reza Negarestani so magnificently and presciently shows us, the limits of the non-human/in-human frame are already displayed through their precise deployment within capitalism, revealing the necessity of theorizing an inhumanist biopolitics; the non-human, posthuman, and inhuman are thoroughly amenable to the circuits of capitalism that inform biopolitical power (Negarestani 2011). Maiming is thus also necessary for exploiting the project of verticalization which Eyal Weizman details. For Weizman, verticalization happens through the production of expanded Israeli military space through third dimensional renderings of air, ground, and underground entities that provides increasing legitimation for Israeli rule through the colonization of space and time (Weizman 2012). Steven Salaita writes in Israel’s Dead Soul, interiority is accorded to the Jewish Israeli subject through the production of depth—of history, of archeology, of presence (Salaita 2011). Through the practice of maiming, stunting, and debilitation, Palestinians are further literalized and lateralized as surface, as bodies without souls, as sheer biology, thus ironically rendered non-human, part of creating surface economies of control, and captured in non-human temporal calculations.

VI. No Future

Palestinian children in Gaza are on what the Israeli military leadership has called a starvation diet. You have almost 80 percent of Palestinian children living on less than $1 a day. They’re at levels of what we would call poverty and extreme poverty, with extensive food insecurity. That’s just another way of saying that most Palestinian children in Gaza go to bed hungry every day, so their caloric intake has been significantly reduced since the siege began within the last seven years. In addition to the reduced number of calories they take in, the kind of nutrients they’re getting is also decreased, so what we see is this medical phenomenon called stunting, which results in lower birth weights for Palestinian children. Their average birth weight is going down. Their height and weight are below what you would consider basic international norm values for children that age. (Dr. Jess Ghannam quoted in Said & Zahriyeh 2014).

And finally, we turn to the question of generational time. ‘Palestinian children in Gaza are exposed to more violence in their lifetime than any other people, any other children, anywhere in the world’ (Ghannam quoted in Said & Zahriyeh 2014). Given that Israel in particular and Jewish populations in general have thoroughly hijacked the discourse of trauma through exceptionalizing Holocaust victimization, Palestinian trauma is overshadowed, classified into impossibility through ‘an assemblage of laws, policies, narratives, symbols, and practices that re-named trauma and suffering of the dispossessed with colonial terminology’. This terminology demeans Palestinians as ‘present-absentees’, ‘security threats’, and ‘demographic threats’ (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2014b). Numerous studies have documented the on-going effects on children of the state of siege involving arrests, assaults, home invasions, witnessing of deaths, and the loss of familial and community infrastructure.vi The psychological impact on children has been deemed a form of ‘continuous PTSD’ while the Israeli policy of the calorie regulation or the ‘starvation diet’ has led to what medical practitioners call ‘stunting’. Exposure to white phosphorus in Cast Lead and ground contamination from radioactive materials in Israeli bombs have led to increases in birth defects. In a recent article, Nadera ShalhoubKevorkian demonstrates that ‘children are now one of the main targets of the Israeli state’ in large part because they are produced as ‘always already terrorists’ and rendered non-human (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2014a). Efforts from human rights organizations to place the IOF (IDF) on a United Nations list of serious violators of human rights due to killing more than 500 children and injuring at least 3300 last summer have been fraught and apparently stalled due to political pressure from the Israeli state (Sherwood 2015).

Once again, this is not a recent development. Prior research suggests that children became a prime target during the second year of the first Intifada. Reports from UNRWA and the Jerusalem-based Palestine Human Rights Information Center (PHRIC) document that over 41,000 children sixteen years or younger had been treated for gunshot wounds, injuries from beatings and exposure to CS and CN gases between 1987 and 1992 (Graff 1993, p. 47). In 1992 the Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP) reported that ‘89% of a random sample of 1564 children between the ages of eight and fifteen had experienced raids by Israeli soldiers; 45% subjected to beatings’ (Graff 1993, p. 47). During the middle of the first Intifada, UNRWA reported a decline in the number of child fatalities due to Israeli gunfire and a sharp increase in the number of injuries (Graff 1993, p. 50). Studies from the second Intifada start demonstrating the somatization of trauma and other mental health issues amongst the young (Thabet & Vostanis 2005; Thabet & Vostanis 2011; Thabet et al. 2013). In this sense, Samir Qouta and Iyad El Sarraj have observed that ‘… Palestinian children have become laboratories for study of the relationship between trauma and violence, conflict, and children’s well-being during war’ (Qouta and El Sarrai 2004, p. 11).

Targeting youth, not for death but for ‘stunting’, for physical, psychological, and cognitive injuries, is another aspect of this biopolitical tactic that seeks to render impotent any future resistance, future capacity to sustain Palestinian life on its own terms, thereby debilitating generational time. It is especially cognitive and psychological injuries that have long range, traumatic effects that potentially debilitate any resistant capacities of future generations. It is worth stating an obvious but perhaps unremarked upon qualification here: this is a biopolitical fantasy, that resistance can be located, stripped, and emptied. ‘Resistance itself’ becomes a target of computational metrics: How to measure, calculate, and capture resistance? But not only is biopolitical control a fundamentally productive assemblage; the ontological irreducibility of ‘resistance itself’ is elusive at best.

Samera Esmeir, writing of Israel’s ‘experimental wars’ in Gaza, claims that ‘Gaza has become the literal testing ground for Israel’s various experiments … as an occupying power, Israel transformed Gaza into such a laboratory by imposing on it different forms of confinements culminating in the siege imposed and maintained since 2006’ (Esmeir 2014). In the quest for complete air, space and ground control, a thoroughly saturated economy of spatial and temporal control, what are the terms of Gaza-as-laboratory? Is Gaza an experimental lab for the production, maintenance, and profitability of biopolitical debilitation, an experiment in mining the infinite potentialities of the schisms between death, and debility, and the potentiating of nonhuman time? And yet, labs and even many jails have better living conditions than the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Gaza emblematizes the profitability of a speculative rehabilitative economy where debilitated bodies are more valuable than dead ones, because they keep bodies in capital circulation, not as weakened, docile laborers, but as parts that can undergo arbitrary experimentation with forms of life and their variegated temporalities. Maiming is a requirement for this economy, whereby settler colonialism is naturalized through a focus on the status and regulation of occupation.

I offer this analysis in the spirit of what Jord/ana Rosenberg has hailed an ‘anti-Zionist hermeneutic’, vii one that insists on speaking the truth of debilitation as another form of biopolitical governmentality (Rosenberg 2014). It is an anti-Zionist hermeneutic that seeks not to exceptionalize Palestine, nor to render it visible through containment in a comparative frame, but instead to understand intensifications of biopolitical modes of control that are continuous and resonant with historical modes and indeed, across contemporary geopolitical spaces. Palestine in this sense provides an epistemological blueprint, one that opens up the connective tissue between regions, regimes of power, sites of knowledge production, historical excavations, and solidarity struggles for liberation. Such a hermeneutic recognizes the current shifting conditions in the U.S. academy—historically relatively foreclosed, as the writings of Edward Said remind us—for the possibility of genuine debate about what he called The Question of Palestine. The goal of this paper, however, is not to affirm an instrumentalist use of such a blueprint, nor to mobilize Palestine in order to foreground a corrective to Eurocentric theorizations of biopolitics. The ultimate purpose of this analysis is to labor in the service of a Free Palestine.

#### Our conceptualization of sacrificial destruction controls their offense. Saving humanity by destroying part of it is an illusion that drives real existential threats. Reprioritization solves.

Santos ’05 — Boaventura de Sousa; Professor of Sociology at the University of Coimbra. Updated: 2005; Originally Published: March 28, 2003; “Collective Suicide?”; *CES Center for Social Studies*; https://www.ces.uc.pt/ces/opiniao/bss/072en.php

According to Franz Hinkelammert, the West has repeatedly been under the illusion that it should try to save humanity by destroying part of it. This is a salvific and sacrificial destruction, committed in the name of the need to radically materialize all the possibilities opened up by a given social and political reality over which it is supposed to have total power. This is how it was in colonialism, with the genocide of indigenous peoples, and the African slaves. This is how it was in the period of imperialist struggles, which caused millions of deaths in two world wars and many other colonial wars. This is how it was in Stalinism, with the Gulag and in Nazism, with the holocaust. And now today, this is how it is in neoliberalism, with the collective sacrifice of the periphery and even the semiperiphery of the world system. With the war against Iraq, it is fitting to ask whether what is in progress is a new genocidal and sacrificial illusion, and what its scope might be. It is above all appropriate to ask if the new illusion will not herald the radicalization and the ultimate perversion of the western illusion: destroying all of humanity in the illusion of saving it.

Sacrificial genocide arises from a totalitarian illusion that is manifested in the belief that there are no alternatives to the present-day reality and that the problems and difficulties confronting it arise from failing to take its logic of development to its ultimate consequences. If there is unemployment, hunger and death in the Third World, this is not the result of market failures; instead, it is the outcome of the market laws not having been fully applied. If there is terrorism, this is not due to the violence of the conditions that generate it; it is due, rather, to the fact that total violence has not been employed to physically eradicate all terrorists and potential terrorists.

This political logic is based on the supposition of total power and knowledge, and on the radical rejection of alternatives; it is ultra-conservative in that it aims to infinitely reproduce the status quo. Inherent to it is the notion of the end of history. During the last hundred years, the West has experienced three versions of this logic, and, therefore, seen three versions of the end of history: Stalinism, with its logic of insuperable efficiency of the plan; Nazism, with its logic of racial superiority; and neoliberalism, with its logic of insuperable efficiency of the market. The first two periods involved the destruction of democracy. The last one trivializes democracy, disarming it in the face of social actors sufficiently powerful to be able to privatize the State and international institutions in their favour. I have described this situation as a combination of political democracy and social fascism. One current manifestation of this combination resides in the fact that intensely strong public opinion, worldwide, against the war is found to be incapable of halting the war machine set in motion by supposedly democratic rulers.

At all these moments, a death drive, a catastrophic heroism, predominates, the idea of a looming collective suicide, only preventable by the massive destruction of the other. Paradoxically, the broader the definition of the other and the efficacy of its destruction, the more likely collective suicide becomes. In its sacrificial genocide version, neoliberalism is a mixture of market radicalization, neoconservatism and Christian fundamentalism. Its death drive takes a number of forms, from the idea of "discardable populations", referring to citizens of the Third World not capable of being exploited as workers and consumers, to the concept of "collateral damage", to refer to the deaths, as a result of war, of thousands of innocent civilians. The last, catastrophic heroism, is quite clear on two facts: according to reliable calculations by the Non-Governmental Organization MEDACT, in London, between 48 and 260 thousand civilians will die during the war and in the three months after (this is without there being civil war or a nuclear attack); the war will cost 100 billion dollars, enough to pay the health costs of the world's poorest countries for four years.

Is it possible to fight this death drive? We must bear in mind that, historically, sacrificial destruction has always been linked to the economic pillage of natural resources and the labor force, to the imperial design of radically changing the terms of economic, social, political and cultural exchanges in the face of falling efficiency rates postulated by the maximalist logic of the totalitarian illusion in operation. It is as though hegemonic powers, both when they are on the rise and when they are in decline, repeatedly go through times of primitive accumulation, legitimizing the most shameful violence in the name of futures where, by definition, there is no room for what must be destroyed. In today's version, the period of primitive accumulation consists of combining neoliberal economic globalization with the globalization of war. The machine of democracy and liberty turns into a machine of horror and destruction.

In opposition to this, there is the ongoing movement of globalization from below, the global struggle for social justice, led by social movements and NGOs, of which the World Social Forum (WSF) has been an eloquent manifestation. The WSF has been a remarkable affirmation of life, in its widest and most inclusive sense, embracing human beings and nature. What challenges does it face before the increasingly intimate interpenetration of the globalization of the economy and that of war?

I am convinced that this new situation forces the globalization from below to re-think itself, and to reshape its priorities. It is well-known that the WSF, at its second meeting, in 2002, identified the relationship between economic neoliberalism and imperial warmongering, which is why it organized the World Peace Forum, the second edition of which took place in 2003. But this is not enough. I believe that a strategic shift is required. Social movements, no matter what their spheres of struggle, must give priority to the fight for peace, as a necessary condition for the success of all the other struggles. This means that they must be in the frontline of the fight for peace, and not simply leave this space to be occupied solely by peace movements. All the movements against neoliberal globalization are, from now on, peace movements. We are now in the midst of the fourth world war (the third being the Cold War) and the spiral of war will go on and on. The principle of non-violence that is contained in the WSF Charter of Principles must no longer be a demand made on the movements; now it must be a global demand made by the movements. This emphasis is necessary so that, in current circumstances, the celebration of life can be set against this vertiginous collective suicide. The peace to be fought for is not a mere absence of war or of terrorism. It is rather a peace based upon the elimination of the conditions that foster war and terrorism: global injustice, social exclusion, cultural and political discrimination and oppression and imperialist greed.

## iran advantage

### m---iran prolif---1ar

#### **Iranian proliferation isn’t happening now but could easily occur.**

Norman 22 [(Laurence Norman, writer and journalist at The Wall Street Journal), “U.N. Says Iran Has Enough Uranium to Produce Nuclear Weapon”, The Wall Street Journal, https://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-hasnt-provided-credible-explanations-for-nuclear-material-u-n-agency-says-11653923148, 5/30/22] OM – TDI

The United Nations atomic agency said Monday that Iran hasn’t offered credible answers to its probe into nuclear material found in the country and reported that Iran’s stockpile of highly enriched uranium has grown to roughly enough material for a nuclear bomb.

The two reports, circulated to agency member states and seen by The Wall Street Journal, will sharpen concerns about Iran’s nuclear work at the same time negotiations on reviving the 2015 nuclear deal have stalled. That agreement placed tight but temporary restrictions on Iran’s nuclear work in exchange for lifting most international sanctions.

Since the U.S. quit the nuclear deal in 2018, Iran has scaled up its nuclear work, including producing uranium enriched to 60%, which is near weapons-grade material. It has also largely stonewalled a probe into the nuclear material found in Iran, which many experts consider to be related to work on a nuclear weapon Iran carried out many years ago.

The reports set up a fight at the International Atomic Energy Agency’s board of member states next month. Iran wants the agency’s investigation closed next month and Iranian officials have said that failure to end the probe could complicate efforts to revive the nuclear deal, according to Western diplomats involved in nuclear talks.

However, with the agency stating that its concerns about the undeclared nuclear material remain unanswered, it appears unlikely that IAEA member states, which include the U.S. and European countries, will close the investigation.

The agency strongly criticized Iran’s continued failure to answer the questions about the nuclear material. The IAEA wants to know what activities produced the traces of uranium, where the material is now and what Iran did with equipment it believes was contaminated with radioactive traces.

Saying that it had given Iran “numerous opportunities” to explain the presence of the nuclear material, the agency said “Iran has not provided explanations that are technically credible.”

“Nor has Iran informed the Agency of the current location(s) of the nuclear material and/or of the equipment contaminated with nuclear material,” the agency said.

Iran says its nuclear program has always been for peaceful purposes.

The Biden administration has called on Iran to cooperate with the IAEA probe and senior officials have said they won’t pressure the agency to close it if IAEA questions remain unanswered. However, Washington is still seeking a deal with Iran to revive the nuclear agreement.

The IAEA also reported Monday a fresh rise in Iran’s stockpile of nuclear material as well as continued production of advanced centrifuges, which spin uranium feed into enriched material, at Iran’s nuclear sites.

The IAEA reported that Iran’s stockpile of 60% highly enriched uranium had reached 43.3 kilograms, equivalent to 95.5 pounds. That is an increase of almost 10 kilograms from three months ago. A small amount of the material has been turned into metal uranium, making it less useful as nuclear fuel.

A person close to the IAEA said Iran’s stockpile of 60% is now above the so-called significant quantity that defines how much nuclear material could be needed for a nuclear weapon.

Experts say it would take Iran just a couple of weeks to convert the 60% material into 90% weapons-grade fuel.

The production of new advanced centrifuges also poses challenges to reviving the nuclear deal. Under the 2015 agreement, Iran could only use first-generation machines to enrich uranium, part of the conditions set in the agreement intended to ensure it would take Iran at least 12 months to accumulate enough nuclear fuel for a bomb.

The advanced machines produce enriched uranium far more quickly than those machines. That means even if the nuclear deal is restored and Iran’s stockpile of enriched uranium returns to below the deal’s limit of 300 kg of enriched uranium, Tehran would be able to produce enough nuclear material for a bomb in far less than 12 months, U.S. officials say.

Talks on reviving the international nuclear deal have stalled in recent weeks because of a disagreement over whether to lift terror sanctions on Iran’s elite Revolutionary Guards.

### m---middle east---1ar

#### Middle east war goes nuclear.

Silverstein 21 [(Richard Silverstein, writes the Tikun Olam blog, devoted to exposing the excesses of the Israeli national security state), “Iran-Israel tensions: The threat of nuclear disaster looms large”, Middle East Eye, https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/iran-israel-tensions-threat-nuclear-war-looms-large, 4/23/21] OM – TDI

Israel had a near-miss of potentially catastrophic proportions on Thursday. As it has done hundreds of times in the past decade, the Israeli air force attacked Iranian bases inside Syria. In response, Syrian forces fired anti-aircraft missiles of a rather primitive Soviet model, one of which overflew its target and landed some 30 kilometres from Israel’s Dimona nuclear reactor. Israel said recently that it was bolstering its defences around Dimona for just such an eventuality.

Although an Iranian general taunted Israel, implying that Iran had some responsibility for the attack, that doesn’t appear to be the case. But the missile landing inside Israel does show that if Iran wanted to attack Dimona, it has the capacity. And despite Israel’s best efforts, an Iranian missile could hit its target.

With that, one of the worst nuclear disasters in the region’s history could unfold, including a Chernobyl-type radioactive leak that could endanger not only all of Israel, but also many of its neighbours.

A US general has assured a Senate committee that the Syrians weren’t intending to attack Israel. Rather, a misguided missile meant to target an Israeli warplane overshot its target. He blamed it on “incompetence”, as if that was supposed to be somehow reassuring; rather, it only reinforces how easy it is even for a mistake to cause a nuclear disaster.

Certainly, if either Israel or Iran wanted to bomb each other’s nuclear facilities, they could do so successfully. An Israeli attack would probably cause less catastrophic damage, but only because Iran’s nuclear programme is not nearly as developed as Israel’s. An Iranian direct hit on Dimona would cause incalculable damage due to the plutonium reactor at the facility.

Nor does this happen in a vacuum: Israel has maintained a decade-long campaign of terror attacks on Iranian military bases and nuclear scientists. Most recently, it bombed the Natanz nuclear facility, destroying the power generation source and damaging older-generation centrifuges. It also attacked an Iranian Revolutionary Guard spy ship off the Yemeni coast this month.

Iran has responded in its own limited way, restrained by its need to maintain good relations with nuclear-deal signatories.

For Israel, the attacks are a low-risk proposition. It defies US opposition (if there is any) with a wink and a nod, and the attacks look good on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s résumé. To weather his corruption trial and retain public support, he needs external enemies (and internal enemies, but that’s a different story). Iran provides these in spades.

Eliminating Israeli leverage

The US could exert control over this scenario by eliminating Israeli leverage. If it agreed to lift sanctions in exchange for Iran’s return to low levels of uranium enrichment, as designated in the nuclear deal negotiated by the Obama administration, Israel’s rejectionist approach would become moot. The problem is that US President Joe Biden is running scared from Republican opposition to any nuclear deal with Iran. Besides, he has designated the Middle East a low priority for his administration.

There is some faint hope in the US announcement that it is ready to lift a partial set of sanctions. However, the list on offer is quite limited, and will certainly not satisfy the Iranians. Such half-measures present an example of the limitations of the Biden approach. He should instead make a full-throated commitment to end this dithering once and for all.

Israel is mounting a full-court press this coming week as it sends its Mossad and military intelligence chiefs, along with its army chief of staff, to Washington in an attempt to influence nuclear negotiations as they enter what may be a final stage. According to Haaretz, army chief of staff Aviv Kochavi “will also raise other issues, including Iran’s military expansion in Syria and the instability of Lebanon. Israel is concerned about the possibility that Hezbollah will try to … [foment] conflict with Israel.”

The hypocrisy of Israel’s refusal to acknowledge its own massive military interventions in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza and even Iraq, while decrying Iran’s involvement in Syria, is almost breathtaking.

There is next to no chance that any of this will enter into the considerations of negotiators in Vienna. Unlike Israel, they are interested in doing a nuclear deal, not engaging in wishful thinking.

Combustible Middle East mix

Returning to the Biden administration’s global goals, the Middle East doesn’t care about presidential priorities. It contains a combustible mix of corrupt elites and overbearing dictators who do not shirk from causing mayhem in their domains. And one of them, perhaps a desperate Israeli prime minister or an ageing ayatollah eager to preserve his honour and legacy, could inadvertently (or intentionally) set the entire region aflame.

If Biden doesn’t act quickly and decisively, there is a sizeable risk that another missile from one country or the other will hit a target and cause devastation. That would mark a point of no return, like the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, which led to World War One. The difference is that in 1914, armies fought with guns, bayonets and artillery. Today, they will fight with F-35s, ballistic missiles and possibly nuclear weapons.

### m---oil---1ar

#### Oil prices are low now.

Iordache 23 [(Ruxandra Iordache, news editor and journalist at CNBC), “Wall Street predicted a big surge for oil this year. But prices are now lower”, CNBC Oil and Gas, https://www.cnbc.com/2023/04/28/wall-street-predicted-a-big-surge-for-oil-this-year-but-prices-are-now-lower.html, 4/28/23] OM – TDI

A surprise decision by several OPEC+ producers to voluntarily cut output earlier this month had pushed analyst oil price forecasts near $100 per barrel, but stagnating prices now point to a deepening divide between macroeconomic sentiment and supply-demand fundamentals.

Oil prices have once again lulled near the $80 per barrel threshold, nearly revisiting territory walked in early April, before members of the OPEC+ coalition announced a unilateral cut totaling 1.6 million barrels per day until the end of the year.

The production declines prompted some analysts to warn prices could surge to triple digits, with Goldman Sachs adjusting its Brent forecast up by $5 per barrel to $95 per barrel for December 2023.

Analysts now flag that broader financial turmoil has so far obstructed this bullish outlook, as supply-demand factors are outweighed by recessionary concerns.

“Oil markets have completely faded the boost from the surprise OPEC+ cut earlier this month, and we think this primarily reflects deep pessimism about the macro outlook, with little evidence of incremental weakness in demand so far,” Barclays analysts said in a Wednesday note.

“Weaker refining margins and freight demand have been in focus recently, but we believe markets might be reading too much into the implications of these trends for the demand outlook. We also think that markets might be underestimating OPEC+’s resolve to keep the inventory situation in check.”

“People really bet on a China reopening,” Helima Croft, managing director and global head of commodity strategy at RBC Capital Markets, told CNBC’s “Squawk Box” on Wednesday.

Beijing, the world’s largest importer of crude oil, reined in its purchases last year amid drastic “zero-Covid” restrictions that depressed transport fuel requirements. China has been progressively lifting its pandemic measures since the end of last year, and local crude oil demand is returning — but at a more “muted” pace, Croft noted.

“And the issue of the Fed is real. I think that is something that a lot of us got wrong in terms of the impact of, you know, the rate hikes, recession concerns,” she added.

“We have these OPEC cuts in place, we do have, you know, again, strong demand in India, China is reopening — this should be set up for a bullish story. People are still optimistic about the back half of the year, but the question is, can you get through the big macro wall of worry?”

Viktor Katona, lead crude analyst at Kpler, told CNBC by e-mail that oil prices have suffered from a “constant barrage of gloomy macroeconomic news that creates a negative sentiment background,” as well as market distrust in the implementation of the OPEC+ production cuts. Market participants often wait for a visible reflection — such as lower export rates — to factor in production cuts, which can create a disconnect when vessel loadings arise from stock inventories.

But Katona projected price-supportive tightness in the physical markets over the summer season:

“We still see July and August as being the tightest months of 2023, with demand surpassing supply by some 2 million b/d (barrels per day), so the overall direction is still the same,” he said, noting that, globally, consumers will be exiting their annual refinery maintenance periods that curb their intake by that time.

“Net length in crude futures contracts has fully recovered from the banking panic seen in March and net length in WTI is the highest since November 2022, so the belief that prices are to increase is definitely widely shared by the market.”

But China’s long-anticipated reopening may prove too little, too late. One trade source — who could only comment on condition of anonymity because of contractual obligations — said the market is waiting for concrete signs of physical inventory draws. Another pointed to generally poor refining margins in Asia and a “poor demand cycle.” Another said that China’s reopening has been fully factored into the current pricing, and Beijing’s needs are simply being met by Russian oil. Moscow has rerouted 20% of the oil it supplied to Europe to other markets such as Asia, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said Wednesday, in comments reported by Reuters.

Kpler data indicates that China’s imports of Russian crude oil averaged 1.59 million barrels per day in March, up 68% from the same period in 2022. Croft says that Chinese buyers have been “beneficiaries of sanctions policies,” as Moscow’s slashed prices also pushed other sanctioned sellers, such as Venezuela and Iran, to discount their crude.

#### Middle East war would trigger a spike in oil prices – that’s Maloney.

Maloney 20 [(Suzanne Maloney, deputy director of the Foreign Policy program at the Brookings Institution and a senior fellow in the Brookings Center for Middle East Policy, where her research focuses on Iran and Persian Gulf energy), "War with Iran is still less likely than you think," Brookings, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/war-with-iran-is-still-less-likely-than-you-think/, 1-10-2020] BZ –TDI

Israeli officials in Washington on Thursday reportedly urged the United States to launch strikes against Iranian targets, in what would be an unprecedented escalation of hostilities. Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Mossad chief David Barnea pushed the Biden administration to engage in military action in order to get Iran to “soften its position at the negotiating table.”

While the talks in Vienna have yielded little progress, this appeal marks just the latest example of the failed paradigm with which both the United States and Israel have approached Iran: the belief that greater pressure and more aggression will force Tehran to capitulate, when the likelier outcome would be to provoke a similarly militant response.

Israel says it is under an increasingly dire threat, prompting President Herzog to assert, “If the international community does not take a vigorous stance on this issue, Israel will do so. Israel will protect itself.” Yet neither Israel nor the United States would be in this position if Trump had stayed in the deal, or if Biden had swiftly rejoined it upon taking office.

Retired Israeli General Isaac Ben Israel told Bloomberg that “Netanyahu’s efforts to persuade the Trump administration to quit the nuclear agreement have turned out to be the worst strategic mistake in Israel’s history.” With this statement, Ben Israel admitted that not only did Israel undermine its own security by pushing for Trump to renege on the JCPOA, but also that Israel undermined America’s security, as both countries share an interest in preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Such behavior is unacceptable from a partner. Unfortunately, Israel’s current Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is adopting much the same posture on Iran as his political rival and predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu.

If the Biden administration takes Israel’s advice, or, perhaps more likely, if Israel launches attacks that provoke an Iranian response and Washington gets dragged into the conflict, what would happen?

An Israeli strike on Iran will likely start a conflict that pulls in neighboring countries on both sides. Hezbollah will launch thousands of rockets, missiles, and drones at Haifa, Tel Aviv, and other targets. Hamas might also join the conflict. Iran or its Iraqi and Yemeni partners could strike Saudi Arabia as they have in the past; they might also expand attacks to include Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, given their now publicly normalized ties with Israel. Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar, which have tended to maintain relations with both Iran as well as the rest of the GCC and the United States, will be pressed to choose a side, a decision that will subject them to attack from their new adversaries. Jordan would be in a bind, given the enormous popular pressure to break the peace treaty with Israel. Oil prices would skyrocket.

If the war escalated, the United States might feel compelled to invade and try to hold Iranian territory. But as regional expert Kenneth Pollack once quipped, “If you liked the Iraq War, you’ll love the Iran War.” Indeed, Iran’s population is three times larger than Iraq’s was in 2003. Iran’s terrain is more mountainous and therefore challenging for an occupying force to control. Iranian nationalism is grounded in millennia of Persian civilization, so the splintering of national identity observed in Iraq is unlikely. While some might mistakenly imagine Iranians welcoming the fall of their authoritarian government, experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Vietnam, etc. should remind us that foreign invaders are rarely welcomed. Iran lost a half million lives fighting Iraq in the 1980s, in what Iranians believe was an American-inspired war to destroy their revolution, which only rallied citizens behind the regime.

#### High oil prices cause recession.

Menton 22 [(Jessica Menton, personal finance and markets reporter at USA Today. She previously covered the financial markets at The Wall Street Journal), “History Suggests Oil Shock Raises Probability of U.S. Recession”, Bloomberg Markets, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-04/history-suggests-oil-shock-raises-probability-of-u-s-recession, 3/4/22] OM – TDI

Historically, a surge in crude-oil prices of this magnitude have ended U.S. economic expansions and tipped the U.S. economy into recession, according to Pictet Asset Management.

In the past 50 years, every time oil prices, adjusted for inflation, rose 50% above trend, a recession followed, data from Luca Paolini, chief strategist at Pictet, show. Brent, the international gauge for prices, climbed well above $110 a barrel this week, crossing that threshold on worries about disruption to Russia’s exports after the country invaded Ukraine.

Brent has rallied around 50% this year to top $118, trading around decade highs. Futures in New York rose by more than $24 this week alone, the highest weekly dollar increase on record.

Read more: Short Sellers Are Betting Oil Won’t Go Much Higher From Here

Fear is already playing out in the stock market as the war rekindled inflation concerns and clouded the outlook for corporate profits. The S&P 500 Energy Sector has been one of the few bright spots, continuing its rein as the top performing group in the index, up 35% in 2022. Oil-and-gas companies like Exxon Mobil Corp., Chevron Corp. and ConocoPhillips have posted double-digit gains this year, benefitting from a rise in oil prices.

But investors question how long the strength in energy stocks will last, as the group is now the third-most shorted industry on the S&P 500, with short sellers betting that the oil boom will soon be over.

“I don’t expect an economic disaster, but what we’re seeing in oil prices will have a significant impact on growth,” Paolini said.

To be sure, oil-price shocks have ended economic expansions like those in the mid-1970s, early 1980s and early 1990s. But other downturns weren’t directly caused by a sharp rise in oil prices, like the 2001 recession and the global financial crisis.

Few economists say the U.S. is in danger of recession since the economy is underpinned by a strong labor market, solid consumer spending and better-than-expected corporate profits. But many expect growth to slow further if inflation continues to rise. The war in Ukraine has injected further volatility into markets just as the Federal Reserve enters a rate-hike cycle.

“The best thing for markets is for the Fed to lift rates gently and adjust policy in case the war in Ukraine evolves in the wrong way,” Paolini said. “Waiting to raise rates would be the wrong thing to do because the economy could suffer significantly if inflation rises even further.”

#### Economic crisis triggers global nuclear war AND populism.

Roubini 22 – [Nouriel, Professor of Economics at New York University Stern School of Business, “Dark Destiny” in “MegaThreats: Ten Dangerous Trends That Imperil Our Future, And How to Survive Them”, Little, Brown and Company, October 18, 2022] TDI

Manifestations of economic malaise—stagnant growth, stagnant employment numbers and job losses—will have disturbing political consequences. They can lead to political extremism, usually under the guise of right-wing populism, but the left-wing version shares ,some commonalities. When populism reaches a fever pitch, it tends to vilify pluralistic values associated with liberal democracy and rule of law. Populists of both extremes are united in their callousness or antipathy toward foreigners and against domestic elites. That creates an opening for authoritarian demagogues who denounce their political opponents as elitists, and embrace prejudice against disadvantaged minorities, while praising redistribution of wealth from rich to poor not based on the rule of law, as in China and Russia.

In emerging markets—leaving aside outright dictatorships in some of the poorest countries—authoritarians now run governments in Russia, Belarus, Turkey, Hungary, the Philippines, Brazil, Venezuela, Kazakhstan and China, among others. Cascading megathreats will only make that list grow longer.

Latin American nations flirted for decades with populism on the left and right. For a time, after the end of the Cold War, it looked like representative democracy would prevail in many parts of that region. Yet hard times have handed populists a hefty axe to grind. Their recent resurgence has changed the region’s face. Promising democracies have succumbed. Mexico took a populist turn in 2018 with the election of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, its sixty-fifth president. Left-wing populists won presidential elections in 2021 in Chile and Peru, and in 2022 in Colombia. Experts expect elections in 2022 in Brazil to go the same way.

Brazil turned to the semi-authoritarian president Jair Bolsonaro who, in January 2022, thumbed his nose at liberal democracies by planning a trip to meet Vladimir Putin as Russia amassed troops on the border with Ukraine.- And Latin America is not unique. Years of mediocre growth make South Africa—and other parts of Africa—candidates for populism and authoritarian regimes. India, in a perennial struggle to make life bearable for an impoverished population, is still a democracy and a modernizing economy but has some political forces who openly disdain Muslims, independent democratic institutions and the rule of law. This trend is not our friend, and it’s just getting started.

“At the extremes,” Anne Applebaum warned in the November 2021 issue of the Atlantic, “this kind of contempt can devolve into what the international democracy activist Srdja Popovic calls the ‘Maduro model’ of governance, which may be what Lukashenko is preparing for in Belarus. Autocrats who adopt it are ‘willing to pay the price of becoming a totally failed country, to see their country enter the category of failed states,’ accepting economic collapse, isolation, and mass poverty if that’s what it takes to stay in power.

Advanced democracies are vulnerable as well. Populist arguments yanked Britain out of the European Union, as voters went for Brexit. In the United States, populists elected Donald Trump and his allies. We see growing support in advanced countries for right-wing parties that oppose the European Union, immigration, and rescue packages for indebted countries. France, the historical bastion of liberty, equality, and brotherhood, has grown increasingly receptive to the anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant appeal of the recent presidential candidate Marine LePen; she lost the presidential election in 2022 but her nativist message is still popular as economic malaise worsens for those left behind.

For years, political division and polarization, lack of bipartisanship, partisan radicalization, the rise of extreme right-wing groups, and conspiracy theories have been growing and severely dividing the United States. These trends reached one peak after the 2020 election spawned the fiction that the election was stolen from Donald Trump. Lack of evidence notwithstanding, most of his base went along with him. The January 6, 2021, attempted coup revealed a vast base of radicalized white supremacists and other extreme right-wing militia willing to use force to prevent the electoral vote count in Congress and the rightful installation of Joe Biden as president.

Unfolding megathreats and the rising tide of populism will partly decide the 2022 midterm elections in the United States. Debt, inflation, globalization, immigration, climate change, and the rise of China alarm swing voters. Observers predict angry contests and even violence that may threaten to overturn outcomes in the 2024 presidential election.- Conspiracy theories, massive misinformation campaigns, large-scale violence, coup, insurrection, civil war, secession, and insurgency are now terms used in a large number of op-eds, essays, and books. Collectively, we are thinking the once unthinkable.

The 2024 presidential campaign is drawing close. The New York Tinies calls “the prospect of American political conflagration—including insurrection, secession, insurgency and civil war”—a serious threat.- Numerous authors have raised the possibility of a “slow-moving coup,” the pundit Bill Maher told his HBO audience. Writing in The Nation, a left-of-center publication, Robert Crawford predicts a “worst case scenario” for the United States. Chauncey DeVega, in Salon, and British journalist Sir Max Hastings, have voiced concern about secession or large-scale political violence instigated by the loser’s cadres. Titles like How Civil Wars Start, by political scientist Barbara F. Walter, and The Next Civil War, by journalist Stephen Marche, mince no words. In January 2021, after the assault on the Capitol, a poll showed that 46 percent of Americans had the view that their country was headed toward another civil war.- A CIA task force reached the conclusion that “the United States during the Trump presidency regressed, for the first time since 1800, into “anocracy.” That’s how scholars label a system of government that hovers uneasily between democracy and autocracy.—

Like nuclear meltdowns, megathreats turn all matter in their path into fuel. The economic malaise and rising inequality that leads to populism will spur a backlash against free trade and globalization. The fundamental aspect of populist economic policy is economic nationalism and autarkic tendencies. The rise of political and economic populism exacerbates the risk of deglobalization, protectionism, fragmentation of the global economy, balkanization of global supply chains, restrictions to migration, controls of movement of capital, technology, and data, and severe friction between the United States and China.

Dystopian upheaval will turn science inside out. Technology’s dark side threatens Western values. Social media produces echo chambers as news and postings keep a specious rumor mill in high gear, often to advance interests of foreign adversaries. Conspiracy theories—even demonstrably lunatic ones—travel with alarming speed. Initially seen as a tool to launch and organize dissent against autocratic regimes that traffic in lies and hypocrisy (do you remember the Arab Spring, and the Facebook-generated protests against the Egyptian government?), social media today increasingly foments assaults on democratic institutions and orchestrates ethnic violence. Look no further than the January 6 Capitol mob in the United States or the Rohingya massacre in Myanmar. These trends will accelerate as artificial intelligence and machine learning refine ways—via “transformers” technologies—to manipulate minds.

Technology will become autocracy’s handmaiden. Social media and big tech help current autocrats and dictators hold power. The idea that technology would expose authoritarians to justice and defend democracy now sounds naive.— China uses a Great Firewall and other social media tools to control its population in Orwellian ways. A “social credit rating system” restricts access to financial services and punishes socially and politically “deviant” behavior. Now China is exporting these technologies to client regimes, reinforcing autocracy elsewhere.

Unfettered computerization will make jobs vanish, and not just routine, repetitive jobs. Artificial intelligence advancing at warp speed will make cognitive workers obsolete, from Uber drivers, paralegals, and auditors, to eventually brain surgeons. Robots will also populate creative jobs once we reach a point where machines outthink people. Even computer developers will find their seats occupied by robots. Permanent blue- and white-collar technological displacement will extend unemployment lines, adding pressure to a fraying social safety net. Adding irony to injury, robots are already running most HR decisions and will run unemployment offices.

Who controls AI will command enormous economic, financial, and geopolitical power. That is why the United States and China are vying to dominate the industries of the future. And if the United States and China ever enter into open warfare, their respective AI technologies could make the difference between victory and defeat.

To assert control in a world unsettled by megathreats, major powers will reinforce or reshuffle alliances. China's informal geopolitical partnerships with revisionist powers such as Russia, Iran, and North Korea are challenging the United States and the West. The United States is reinforcing and building new alliances in Asia: the Quad, the AUKUS (a security agreement between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the Indo Pacific Economic Framework, and now NATO flexing its military muscle in Asia. Revisionist powers challenging the United States and the West cannot yet match Western military strength. The United States alone spends more on military resources than its four revisionist adversaries combined. Those adversaries will increasingly counter American strength with asymmetric warfare that deploys cyber espionage, cyberattacks, and misinformation campaigns to weaken and polarize the United States and the West. But traditional hard power conflict on controlling land masses will not disappear, as the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the looming conflict over Taiwan show.

Indeed, their logistical disadvantage won’t prevent America’s adversaries from aiming conventional weapons at the United States and the West. Putin’s Russia seeks to partially restore the former Soviet empire by projecting a sphere of influence over former Soviet and Iron Curtain nations; the bloody invasion of Ukraine is a starting salvo of Russia’s attempt to re-create the Soviet Union or its sphere of influence on its “near abroad.” Similar tensions will mount in the Baltics, Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and parts of Central Asia, such as Kazakhstan.

Then there’s North Korea, where sanctions only embolden a mercurial dear leader who demands adoration from a starving people while he embraces long-range missiles and cyberwarfare. In the Middle East, Iran may soon aim nuclear warheads at Israel and Arab states that challenge its dominance; but Israel may try to strike Iran’s nuclear facilities before the country reaches the nuclear point of no return. War in the Gulf would trigger a stagflationary shock from rising oil prices more calamitous than twin spikes produced in the seventies. So many flash points and rivals jockeying for leadership amid geopolitical instability make skirmishes inevitable. They make conventional wars likely, and the horrifying specter of nuclear war possible. In 2022, the war in Ukraine led to risk of its escalation to the Baltics and Central Europe and even a military and nuclear confrontation between Russia and NATO. The specter of nuclear wars—that seemed faded once the Soviet Union collapsed—returned as the war in Ukraine escalated.

### at: accords turn---1ar

#### Non-unique and alt causes – five alt causes to failure.

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Introduction

Since taking office in January 2021, President Joe Biden has vigorously pursued an expansion of the Abraham Accords, the Arab-Israel normalization[1] project facilitated by his predecessor Donald Trump.[2] While no new agreements have been forthcoming yet during Biden’s tenure, significant wherewithal has been mobilized across the U.S. government to support the process.

The failure of the Abraham Accords to expand in nearly three years is not due to a lack of effort but rather because the normalization project itself is significantly flawed, with at least five major weaknesses that undermine its effectiveness and appeal. Taken together, they have blunted the campaign of the U.S. government and Israel and paved the way for parties to the Abraham Accords, like the United Arab Emirates, and targets like Saudi Arabia, to pursue an alternative diplomatic strategy that diverges starkly from the U.S.-sponsored normalization process — namely coming to terms directly with Iran.

This issue brief outlines the five weaknesses of the Abraham Accords and concludes by showing that the parallel normalization process now underway with Iran is already producing more significant results — presenting a major challenge to U.S. ambitions in the region.

Biden’s Approach

The failure of the Abraham Accords to expand poses a major problem for the Biden administration as it looks set to double down on the effort it has already made ahead of the next election cycle. So far, the administration has transferred U.S. military coordination with Israel from the purview of European Command to Central Command (CENTCOM), which oversees operations in the Middle East — implementing a decision made by Trump during his last week in office.[3] In November 2021, the first joint military exercises between the parties were conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Navy in the Red Sea.[4] Proposals for creating a regional military architecture based around the accords, such as the Middle East Air Defense alliance (MEAD), have been floated at the highest levels of government.[5] Multiple high-ranking diplomatic officials have been dispatched to the region to make the case for joining the Abraham Accords, with Biden himself advocating on behalf of normalization during his trip to Israel and Saudi Arabia in July 2022.[6] Most recently, Biden named former U.S. Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro to the newly-created role of Senior Advisor for Regional Integration, a post dedicated to advancing the Abraham Accords.[7]

Congressional Pressure to Expand the Accords

Pressure to expand the accords is also emanating from Congress. In January 2022, the bipartisan Abraham Accords Caucus was formed,[8] and within months its members had introduced legislation requiring the Department of Defense to present plans for integrating Israeli and Arab air defenses,[9] and the Department of State to develop a strategy to strengthen and expand the accords through leveraging the full weight of U.S. diplomacy.[10] Congressional hearings have been held to discuss how to advance normalization, and delegations have traveled to the Middle East to pitch their ideas to the region’s leaders. Multiple private enterprises headed by former U.S. officials have been established, such as the Abraham Accords Peace Institute and the Atlantic Council’s N7 Initiative, dedicated to formulating policy ideas in support of the normalization project.

Primary Target is Saudi Arabia

The primary target of this multi-faceted effort is Saudi Arabia. While this Gulf power has taken some small steps, such as allowing Israel use of Saudi airspace, it has also reaffirmed that it will not normalize until the Palestinian issue is settled. Recent reporting suggests that the Biden administration plans to make a concerted push for an agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israel by the end of 2023.[11]

To date, the current administration has not appeared willing to be as transactional with American foreign policy as its predecessor, which offered major foreign policy concessions to incentivize countries like Morocco and Sudan to normalize with Israel. Biden’s reluctance in this regard could stem from Saudi Arabia’s lack of popularity among Democratic Party voters, a sentiment that encouraged Biden to lambast the kingdom’s leadership and vow to make the country a “pariah” during his 2020 presidential run.[12] As the 2024 election approaches, however, this strategy could change as Biden seeks to score a major foreign policy achievement to eclipse Trump’s own record with the Abraham Accords, while hoping that his Democratic base does not object to what it might cost in terms of concessions to Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, if the Gulf region continues to shift away from normalization, moving closer to Iran and China, it could pose a significant political liability for Biden, especially when measured against Trump’s facilitation of normalization agreements.

Despite all this, the U.S.-sponsored normalization project is unlikely to make meaningful progress for five key reasons. The project 1) lacks intrinsic value, 2) is over-reliant on the U.S., 3) produces too much risk for Gulf states, 4) is tremendously unpopular in the Middle East, and 5) is facing the headwinds of a changing regional context.

Five Weaknesses of Israel-Arab Normalization

1. Lack of Intrinsic Value

First and foremost, the Abraham Accords lack a substantive, core achievement. Although they mark a breakthrough in relations between Israel and some Arab states, this is neither novel nor a sharp turn in direction. Two other Arab states, Egypt and Jordan, have had formal relations with Israel for 43 years and 29 years, respectively. Further, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel have had a treaty for 30 years, with the Palestinian Authority working in daily coordination with Israel for nearly that entire period. While those peace treaties are limited to the top levels of government and military, they long ago broke the taboo on recognizing and cooperating with Israel.

Moreover, the Arab parties to the Abraham Accords already had years, if not decades, of existing informal relations with Israel and had never been at war with the state.[13] This means the accords are not peace treaties, as heralded, but merely agreements to bring into the open and formalize relations. This has allowed them to deepen and diversify away from a largely security and intelligence focus that occurred behind the scenes. Certainly, there is far more symbolism involved because of the historical enmity between the Arab states and Israel, but these particular states have never been direct parties to violent conflict with Israel.

For the UAE, which spearheaded the normalization process from the Arab side, formalizing relations with Israel serves two central purposes:

It offers an added basis for strong relations with the U.S. — being Israel’s closest Arab ally carries weight in Washington — at a time of great concern over the future of America’s presence and security architecture in the region.

It helps to develop a regional coalition of states to contain and confront adversaries such as Iran.[14]

Hence the motivation is to secure against threats from others — not from the parties to the agreement.

There are Other Options for Coalition-Building. Essentially this means the Abraham Accords are an exercise in coalition-building rather than peace-building — what former Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid referred to as “a new regional architecture to deter common enemies.”[15] Viewed from Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, the weakness, as such, is that this strategy must compete with alternatives for achieving the same goals. If a different approach is seen as more capable of effectively addressing those threats, then it would likely become the preferred option. Indeed, this is largely what has happened: The UAE and Saudi Arabia have sought to de-escalate tensions with Iran by reestablishing diplomatic relations and negotiating directly with Tehran. But even if this new approach fails, the Gulf states could just as easily reason that a formal relationship with Israel no longer meaningfully improves their stock in Washington, or that America’s commitment to their security can be renewed on its own terms, in a way that’s mutually beneficial to the U.S. and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Any option that achieves results without Israel in the equation alters the cost-benefit calculus of normalization.

By contrast, for example, the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David Accords were based on the cessation of military conflict between chronically warring parties and the return of territory taken by force — core achievements between direct parties to a conflict. While there were certainly other motivations at play for both parties that were crucial for securing an agreement — such as Anwar Sadat’s desire to bring Egypt into the U.S. orbit and Israel’s interest in separating the largest Arab country from the Arab bloc that opposed it — these were ultimately ancillary.

2. Over-Reliance on the U.S.

A second, related weakness is that the Abraham Accords are over-reliant on the U.S. as a linchpin. The U.S. both brokered the agreements and is the provider of the material concessions that helped facilitate them, from cutting-edge military equipment for the UAE (which was, notably, never delivered)[16] to diplomatic recognition of Morocco’s claims to Western Sahara.[17]

The U.S. offered to remove Sudan’s supporter-of-terrorism designation in exchange for forging relations with Israel.[18] While Sudan has not actually followed through on the deal, it was the U.S. that was providing the incentives for the agreement: Israel was almost a passive participant.

Israel Has Little to Offer. Realistically, Israel has little to offer the Arab states beyond what they were already getting in an informal capacity: Clandestine military and intelligence coordination was taking place, and the Arab side had access to Israeli surveillance technology for purchase.[19] That said, the economic-commercial component is an added benefit and has advanced rapidly since the agreements. Yet few would argue that the oil exporting states of the GCC need Israel for their economic well-being. Even military coordination could have advanced without the Abraham Accords if the U.S. had decided to bring Israel under CENTCOM without normalization.

U.S. Political Volatility and Foreign Policy Variance Makes It an Unreliable Ally. The structural dependence of the accords on the U.S. is especially problematic because the American public does not necessarily perceive any direct gains from the concessions it is making on Israel’s behalf. That is particularly true when the most important offering is America’s security commitment, already considered by many to be increasingly tenuous given the public’s growing aversion to military engagement in the Middle East — especially if the military is being used to protect third-party interests rather than America’s own. Along with the pivot to Asia and changing energy security dynamics, that aversion has been reflected in the policies of the past three presidents, who have all sought some level of retrenchment away from the region. While this is precisely what the Gulf states have been trying to guard against by seeking new rationales for America’s security commitment,[20] it still subjects their security to the vicissitudes of U.S. domestic politics.

In fact, with the polarization and dysfunction in American domestic politics increasingly seeping into its foreign policy, it is more difficult than ever for any U.S. partner or ally to trust the continuity of America’s posture abroad from one administration to the next. This was particularly evident when President Trump assumed office and disengaged the U.S. from the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA),[21] the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP),[22] and nearly from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[23] The decision to exit the nuclear agreement with Iran, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was especially egregious to America’s image as a reliable partner.[24] Although the Gulf states opposed the nuclear deal, primarily on the grounds that it did not include guarantees restricting Iran’s intervention in Arab states, pulling out of the agreement demonstrated an unnerving level of fickleness in America’s commitments.

The realities of political volatility in the U.S. and the variances in foreign policy make the U.S. a less-than-reliable partner for the states of the Middle East, especially in a high stakes confrontation with Iran. In spite of the hope that the Abraham Accords would bind the U.S. more firmly to the Gulf’s security, this article of faith has not turned into a matter of fact.

3. Great Risk for Gulf States

American reliability is crucial when considering the third major weakness, the extreme risk involved in a heavily confrontational posture with Iran. From the standpoint of the Gulf states, escalating tensions with Iran through the formation of a coalition with Israel only makes sense if the U.S. security umbrella is foolproof. Otherwise, the aggressiveness of the united effort to contain Iran puts Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which share an extensive littoral border with Iran, directly in the crosshairs of retaliatory violence. This dangerous position was put to the test between 2019 and 2022 when Saudi Arabia and the UAE had their civilian infrastructure and commercial shipping lanes repeatedly attacked by Iran and its proxies, demonstrating not only their vulnerability, but also the shortcomings of the U.S. response.

When two Saudi oil facilities were hit by cruise missiles and drones in September 2019, shutting down half the oil production of the world’s largest exporter, Trump only deployed a few thousand troops to bolster regional defenses and spoke casually of the strike occurring against Saudi Arabia and not the U.S.[25] (Although the 2019 attack preceded the Abraham Accords, to which Riyadh is not even a party, Saudi Arabia had overtly joined the UAE and Israel in supporting Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign against Iran and encouraged his decision to exit the JCPOA.) America’s Gulf partners were alarmed by this lackluster response and those that followed other attacks after the Abraham Accords were signed, providing a wake-up call to the implications of the strategy of confrontation and security dependence.[26] Even aggressive behavior on the part of the U.S. — such as the killing of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani with a drone strike in Iraq in January 2020[27] — likely only served to ratchet up tensions rather than cool them, without doing much to assuage the Gulf states’ fear of reprisal.

Furthermore, given Israel’s engagement in a “shadow war" with Iran,[28] the implications of a formal military alliance, in which the Gulf states have little say over Israel’s use of force, is particularly risky. Therefore, it is not surprising that the UAE has distanced itself from initiatives such as MEAD, at least insofar as they constitute an alignment against Iran. In July 2022, UAE Foreign Minister Anwar Gargash expressed this discomfort to the press during Biden’s visit to the region, saying, “We are open to cooperation, but not cooperation targeting any other country in the region, and I specifically mention Iran.” He added, “The UAE is not going to be a party to any group of countries that sees confrontation as a direction.”[29] In May 2023, the UAE announced it had even gone as far as exiting a U.S.-led naval coalition that promotes security in the Gulf waters,[30] citing its “continuous evaluation of effective security cooperation with all partners.” While some analysts pointed to tensions between Abu Dhabi and Washington as the cause — although the UAE dismissed this view as unfounded — “all partners” could be a reference to Iran and an emergent interest of not participating in a maritime coalition partly designed to counter Iranian naval activities.[31] More recently, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan spoke during a visit to Iran about “the importance of cooperation between the two countries on regional security, especially the security of maritime navigation.”[32]

4. Very Unpopular in the Region

A fourth weakness of the accords is that normalization with Israel is tremendously unpopular in the region. According to March 2022 polling from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 71% of Emiratis and 76% of Bahrainis oppose the normalization agreements their governments signed with Israel — numbers that could be on the low end given the difficulty of collecting polling data critical of government policy in these countries. Moreover, these sentiments have become less supportive over time, as the Washington Institute’s polling from November 2020 showed closer to 50% in support. Saudi citizens oppose the Abraham Accords at roughly the same level — 75% — according to the 2022 survey. That number rises even higher in countries with longstanding peace treaties with Israel, namely Egypt and Jordan, whose citizens oppose at a rate of 84%.[33] According to the Arab Center’s annual Arab Opinion Index, which polls 14 countries in the region, an average of 84% oppose diplomatic relations with Israel, with only 8% in support.[34]

Strong Support for the Palestinian Cause. Underlying this sentiment is strong support for the Palestinian cause — this is tightly woven into the cultural and political fabric of Arab societies and is unlikely to change any time soon. Likewise, antipathy toward and distrust of Israel is deeply rooted despite efforts to alter perceptions of Israel and Zionism in places like the UAE, and nothing in Israel’s current behavior has changed those perceptions; in fact, Israel’s ongoing repression of Palestinians and colonization of their lands are worse than ever.[35]

Part of the calculus of the normalizing states in formalizing ties with Israel is based on the notion that the Palestinian cause no longer resonates as intensely in the region, particularly among younger generations.[36] While there likely is some drop-off in support after 75 years, the notion that the Palestinian cause has been abandoned is overstated and is continually being challenged. The most recent demonstration of overt public support was at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, which brought together people from across the region and where displays of the Palestinian flag and shows of solidarity with the Palestinian people were ubiquitous.[37] More concretely, the Arab Opinion Index shows that an average of 76% of people across the region believe that “the Palestinian cause concerns all Arabs and not the Palestinian people alone.”[38]

All this means that maintaining a warm and open relationship with Israel is a constant drain on a normalizing country’s reputation and image, both at home and regionally. While the opposite may be true in the West, where forging an alliance with Israel is intended to produce public relations benefits for the normalizing countries, that matters little closer to home, where rivals like Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood are able to monopolize the far more popular position of supporting Palestinians and opposing Israel. This directly undermines a core purpose of the accords — to increase power and influence over those rivals.

5. Changing Regional Context

The fifth and final weakness is the importance of the prevailing — but quickly changing — regional context in facilitating normalization. This multi-layered context includes longstanding U.S. hegemony, post-Arab Spring competition, and the persistence of the Oslo Accords era.

However, the period of American supremacy in the Middle East appears to be ending. Although the U.S. is still the most powerful external actor in the region, its position is unraveling and increasingly being challenged by Washington’s main rivals, especially China, in a new era of multipolarity. While the Gulf states will still likely look to the U.S. as a partner, they could be less deferential than in the past as they assert more autonomy in their decision-making. This has already been seen in numerous ways, including ignoring the U.S. position on the war in Ukraine, collaborating with Russia in manipulating energy markets through OPEC+,[39] drawing closer to China as a strategic ally,[40] and normalizing ties with Syria’s Bashar al-Assad in opposition to U.S. demands,[41] among other things.[42] This trend does not augur well for the U.S.-sponsored normalization project.

Moves Toward Regional Comity. Further, the fierce competition that ensued between regional powers after the Arab uprisings in 2011, as they vied to influence outcomes, appears to have concluded and been replaced by a period of regional comity. In January 2021, the Saudi-UAE bloc lifted its blockade of rival Qatar, followed quickly by a rapprochement with Turkey. In July 2022, the UAE restored diplomatic ties with Iran, and Saudi Arabia followed suit in March 2023 after years of mediation by local actors, Iraq and Oman. Finally, in May 2023, Syria was welcomed back into the Arab League after being suspended in 2011. If this moment of rapprochement holds, it weakens the impetus for normalizing with Israel, which was partly driven by this competition. The period of turmoil and civil war also had the effects of overshadowing and marginalizing the Palestinian issue, which could now return to the fore as evidenced by its reemergence as a focus at the most recent Arab League Summit in Jeddah.

Lastly, the relationships between Gulf states and Israel largely began after the Oslo Accords were signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in the early 1990s. The Oslo Accords blurred the redlines on engaging with Israel that had stood for nearly half a century. Although the Oslo process failed and Israel’s military occupation deepened, the basic structure it created — namely the Palestinian Authority (PA) — continued to function along with the “peace process.” This kept the lines blurred and allowed the Gulf states to develop years of backchannel ties with Israel that finally pushed through to normalization in 2020.[43]

Israel’s Unpopular Policies Militate Against Normalization. Nonetheless, the Oslo era has persisted longer than anyone’s imaginings and today is nearer to its end than ever before. The PA is teetering on the edge of collapse and holds little legitimacy among its own people, a majority of whom now reject a negotiated two-state solution.[44] At the same time, no Israeli government in more than a decade has even feigned interest in a negotiated solution with Palestinians. Instead, the Israeli right — with its unshakeable hold on political power — has unrelentingly pursued de facto annexation, intending to hold the West Bank indefinitely. This has led an increasing number of observers, including a virtual consensus of international human rights professionals, to conclude that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid.[45]

Although these conditions have been apparent for a long time, the current far right government in Israel has made it unmistakable. This has had a chilling effect on the prospects of normalization. The UAE has expressed its discomfort in numerous ways, such as refusing a state visit from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu since his return to power in December 2022[46] and public rebukes of Israeli policies from UAE officials at the United Nations Security Council.[47] While that is unlikely to result in a break in relations for those who have already normalized, it may well deter others from making the same leap in the future.[48]

#### The Abraham Accords can’t bring peace.

Kaye 21 [(Dalia Dassa Kaye, Senior Fellow in the Burkle Center the University of California at Los Angeles, Ph.D. and M.A. in Political Science from the University of California at Berkeley), “Why the Abraham Accords Won’t Bring Israeli-Palestinian Peace”, Foreign Policy, https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/10/29/why-the-abraham-accords-wont-bring-israeli-palestinian-peace/, 10/29/21] OM – TDI

Fresh off his triumph in Iraq in 1991, then-U.S. President George H.W. Bush sought to translate U.S. global predominance into a peace dividend, declaring “the time has come to put an end to Arab-Israeli conflict.” By Oct. 30 of that year, the United States and Soviet Union would convene dozens of global and regional parties in Madrid for the most ambitious regional peace conference in the history of Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

Thirty years later, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is as far from resolution as ever. Unfortunately, a key lesson still resonates: Regional diplomatic and economic engagement with Israel has not boosted Israeli-Palestinian peace. Regional cooperation—including Israel’s recent normalization agreements with Arab countries—has its own benefits, but it did not facilitate peace then, and there is little sign it will do so now.

The Madrid Conference embodied the idea that Israel’s regional acceptance would give it the confidence to make concessions for peace with its immediate neighbors, including the Palestinians. To coax participation from then-Israel’s hard-line prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, then-U.S. Secretary of State James Baker invited Arab states from across the region.

In keeping with that approach, Madrid launched a multilateral peace process, establishing working groups on common regional concerns like water scarcity, the environment, economic development, regional security, and refugees. Several Arab states were reluctant to move too far ahead on the multilateral track in the absence of Israeli-Palestinian progress, but regional talks nonetheless broke taboos throughout the 1990s as Israeli delegations regularly met with their Arab counterparts in countries like Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and Morocco.

Rabin’s assassination in 1995 and rampant terrorism in the late 1990s pushed Israel into the arms of former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had little interest in the two-state formula. To the contrary, in Netanyahu’s vision, Israel would be accepted by the region despite the Palestinian conflict. Netanyahu’s framing was largely validated nearly 20 years later when Israel signed the Abraham Accords and subsequent normalization agreements with four Arab states—the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan—without coming to terms with the Palestinians.

Regional transformations, particularly after 2011, helped Netanyahu flip the script. The Palestinian issue was not the rallying cry it once was as the region descended into civil wars and citizens in many Arab countries turned their attention inward to the corruption and mismanagement of their own rulers. To be sure, solidarity with the Palestinians remains popular in many Arab countries. But the pull of that solidarity has weakened while Iran’s regional influence has provided further impetus for regional accommodations with Israel.

The United States’ focus also changed. The Trump administration strongly backed Netanyahu’s worldview, trumpeting the Abraham Accords as its own bilateral peace plan predictably fell apart. The Emiratis—at the forefront of the normalization drive—billed the accords as key to stopping Israel’s annexation of the West Bank. But the Palestinians never bought it. They viewed the agreements as a betrayal, a concession for which Israel gave nothing in return.

Indeed, the drivers of these regional agreements have nothing to do with the Palestinians. They are about business, trade, and tourism—and the sharing of intelligence and advanced technologies. The continuation of Israeli settlement activity deep in the West Bank, even after Netanyahu was replaced by a broad coalition government, removes any lingering pretense that normalization was about furthering peace with the Palestinians.

The Madrid Conference exemplified a genuine desire to use a regional forum to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a bet that never paid off. This resolve to solve the bilateral conflict has largely dissipated in Washington and in the region. Biden administration officials argue a regional track may yet promote progress on the Palestinian front, and experts have presented a number of suggestions for how to leverage the accords to further Israeli-Palestinian peace.

But the history of the past 30 years teaches us that attempts to link regional and bilateral peacemaking are not likely to work. They ask very little of Israel on the core issues at the heart of the conflict. There is scant evidence of Arab states using their ties with Israel as leverage to successfully obtain concessions on key issues like Palestinian claims in East Jerusalem or halting Israeli settlements—let alone territorial compromise. The current Israeli government is even signaling it will oppose the Biden administration’s desire to reopen the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem to restore Palestinian relations, which was disrupted during former U.S. President Donald Trump’s years in office.

Perhaps the Saudis would demand more concessions from Israel in a peace deal given their long-standing positions on the Palestinian issue, and Israel would be eager to formalize ties with one of the most important Arab and Islamic countries in the region. Yet the converse is more likely; the Saudis may be satisfied with symbolic gestures like rhetorical reaffirmation supporting a two-state solution or improving daily Palestinian economic conditions if they saw normalization as a way to remove the modest chill with Washington following the Saudi government’s 2018 murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Nobody should expect the traditional Saudi position of a full resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to hold in an Israeli-Saudi peace deal. Arab engagement with Israel has become much more about being in good favor with the United States than about resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Unlike the Madrid Conference, which was premised on resolving the hardest final-status issues and achieving sustainable peace, today’s regional proposals involve limited steps to improve living conditions for Palestinians.

Economic prosperity for Palestinians is a good thing, to be sure. And normalization between Israel and Arab states can bring positive windfalls, especially if focused on finding solutions to common environmental and economic challenges that can benefit people in the region rather than on tools that can further repress them. But policymakers should not deceive themselves that normalization among states, most of whom were never at war, or “shrinking” the Palestinian conflict through economic development can replace solving the conflict between the two key antagonists: the Israelis and the Palestinians.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was never about economics. Until the core issues are resolved about how two peoples can live on the same land with dignity, security, and equality, diplomats are not dealing with the dispute’s essence. It is time to give up on the idea that regional deals can advance an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal. As the world learned from the years after the Madrid Conference, only Israelis and Palestinians can do that.

### at: china---1ar

#### China doesn’t sell arms to Israel or provide training, that’s the root cause. Chart for reference

SRD 23 [(Statistica Research Department, our mission is to enable our clients and customers to make the best decisions. To ensure this, over 200 experienced and well-versed Statista research experts and analysts track the latest developments and current trends in over 170 markets and industries every day), “Share of arms imported in Israel between 2000 and 2019, by supplier country”, Statistica, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1210645/israel-share-of-arms-imports-by-supplier-country/, 1/3/23] OM – TDI



The largest share of arms imported to Israel between 2000 and 2019 was from the United States at about 82 percent. It was followed by Germany as the second largest exporter to the country at a share of about 15.3 percent. The total value of arms imports to the country in that period exceeded 9.6 billion U.S. dollars.

### at: other actors---1ar

#### No link – the plan isn’t about arms sales. Israeli is a net exporter, which thumps

Trees 22 [Luke Tress, 3-28-2022, "Israel ranked world’s 10th-largest weapons exporter in past five years," No Publication, https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-ranked-worlds-10th-largest-weapons-exporter-in-past-five-years/, accessed 7-24-2023] bo

Israel was ranked the 10th-largest international weapons exporter in the past five years by an independent global security think tank.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s latest report, measuring weapons trade from 2017 to 2021, said arms trade to Europe surged, the Gulf states were leading importers and Israel remains a major player.

## palestine advantage

### m---ethics---1ar

#### US is ethically obligated to reduce military presence in the Middle East

Hoffman 21 [(Jon Hoffman, Jon Hoffman is a policy analyst in defense and foreign policy at the Cato Institute. His research interests include U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, Middle East geopolitics, and political Islam. Hoffman’s work has been featured in a number of academic and policy‐​oriented platforms, including Foreign Policy, The Washington Post, The National Interest, Middle East Policy, and more. Hoffman was included in the inaugural cohort of the “40 under 40” award provided by the Middle East Policy Council for furthering U.S. understanding of the Middle East. Hoffman holds a Ph.D. in political science, an M.A. in Middle East and Islamic Studies, and a B.A. in Global Affairs, all from George Mason University.) “Why the US should end its unconditional military aid to Israel” <https://dawnmena.org/why-the-u-s-should-end-its-unconditional-military-aid-to-israel/> 06/21/2021] HY

The stark realities of U.S. military aid to Israel were on full display in the recent war on Gaza, which once again devastated the besieged strip. According to the Israeli military, 160 of Israel's U.S.-built F-16 fighter jets dropped 450 missiles on more than 150 targets in Gaza in a single raid alone. These strikes disproportionately targeted Palestinian civilian sites and, Amnesty International warned, "may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity."

It's an all-too familiar story of the implications of America's unconditional military aid to Israel, which totals roughly $3.8 billion per year—more than any other country—and is often complemented with other arms deals and security benefits. But this story may finally be changing. The 11-day war between Israel and Hamas in May, which resulted in the deaths of more than 240 Palestinians in Gaza and 12 Israelis, has led to renewed calls for the cessation of that aid. The traditional bipartisan consensus in Washington on the need for it has started to unravel, with several prominent progressive Democrats scrutinizing arms transfers to Israel more than ever.

Yet despite these shifts in his own party, and his own pledge to "revitalize" America's "national commitment to advancing human rights and democracy around the world," President Joe Biden continues to stick to the typical playbook of past American presidents. He offered unwavering and unconditional support for Israel, even in the face of documented Israeli abuses last month—including bombing the Gaza bureau of an American news agency, the Associated Press. The Biden administration blocked three resolutions at the United Nations Security Council calling for an immediate cease-fire as the fighting escalated, with Israel bombing more residential buildings in densely packed Gaza City.

The White House claimed it was pursuing "quiet" diplomacy behind the scenes—all while immediately expressing the usual public support for Israel's "right to defend itself." Any mention of Palestinian civilian casualties came with heavy qualifications and after noticeable delay. The Biden administration also publicly ignored the Israeli provocations in Jerusalem—the looming expulsions of Palestinians from the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah, and the storming of the al-Aqsa mosque compound by Israeli security forces, targeting Palestinian protesters there—that had precipitated the conflict in Gaza. The Biden administration even secretly approved a $735 million weapons sale of precision-guided arms to Israel before a cease-fire was reached, effectively circumventing a debate and vote on it in Congress.

Nevertheless, more progressive voices are steadily challenging the dominant narrative that has for so long served as the foundation for Washington's bipartisan consensus on writing these blank checks to Israel. It's time for the United States to fundamentally reassess this relationship, and recent events show why—morally, legally and strategically. Besides violating existing U.S. laws that are supposed to bar Washington from providing security assistance to countries that commit human rights abuses, military aid to Israel serves little to no strategic purpose for the United States.

What this unconditional aid really does, instead, is allow Israel to act with impunity, directly implicating the U.S. in Israeli conduct, making it a complicit party. The cease-fire in Gaza may be holding for now, but it merely entailed a return to the status quo: Gaza is still under Israeli blockade, and Palestinians are still facing expulsion from their homes in occupied East Jerusalem. Nearly 7 million Palestinians—in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel proper—are all still under a system of Israeli authority and control that more and more observers are calling apartheid. Human Rights Watch released a comprehensive report in late April accusing Israel of committing "the crimes of apartheid and persecution," as defined under international law, in an effort to "maintain the domination of Jewish Israelis over Palestinians across Israel and the [Occupied Palestinian Territories]." It echoed an earlier conclusion from B'Tselem, Israel's largest and leading human rights organization, that labeled the Israeli government "an apartheid regime." Yet Israel still maintains its unwavering and unconditional support from Washington.

U.S. law, however, is clear: The American government cannot provide security assistance to actors engaged in gross human rights abuses. Two laws are of particular importance here: Section 502b of the Foreign Assistance Act, and the Leahy Laws. The Foreign Assistance Act states that "no security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." Moreover, it emphasizes America's duty to "promote and encourage increased respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." That is echoed by the Leahy Laws, two statutory provisions which, in the State Department's own description, prohibit "the U.S. Government from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violation of human rights."

One does not have to look far to find evidence of Israel's noncompliance with these American laws. Israel has violated five major internationally recognized human rights and humanitarian laws during its more than 50-year occupation of Palestinian territory: unlawful killings, forced displacement and the building of illegal settlements, abusive detention, unjustified restriction of movement, and various institutionalized forms of racial and religious discrimination. There were more abuses in the latest escalation in Jerusalem and Gaza.

However, despite these legal obligations, Washington continually skirts around them or ignores them outright. American complicity in these human rights abuses will only end when it ceases its security assistance to Israel—as required by U.S. law.

For those who overlook—or prefer to ignore—the legal and moral obligations of ending such aid, the argument typically proffered in defense of this assistance is that it serves to advance U.S. interests. But even on strategic grounds, it is hard to justify such a high level of unconditional military support for Israel.

The U.S. has been adrift in the Middle East for too long, without a clearly defined regional strategy or objective. Longstanding military aid to Israel—and other countries in the region, like Egypt, which is the second-largest recipient of American assistance after Israel—is always predicated on the ambiguous notion that vital but vaguely defined "U.S. interests" are somehow being advanced. That conventional wisdom neglects the incoherence of America's Middle East policy, which has mainly served to subsidize dictatorial repression and a conglomerate of arms manufacturers in the U.S., in large part driven by the influence of various lobbying and special interests groups in Washington. If U.S. interests can at least be broadly interpreted as American security and prosperity, how does unconditional military aid to Israel that implicates the U.S. in human rights abuses advance either one?

The U.S. receives almost nothing from the copious amounts of annual aid delivered to Israel. As Paul Pillar has warned, "What the 'allies' in the Middle East want from the United States is greater than what the United States wants, needs, or gets from them. U.S. policymakers should keep this asymmetry in mind." This uneven relationship got even worse under the Trump administration, with its blatant overtures to Benjamin Netanyahu and his Likud party—moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights—that brought nothing in return for Washington.

American support certainly does not provide the U.S. with leverage over Israel and its actions, as the recent war on Gaza showed yet again. When Biden, on May 19, finally called for a "significant de-escalation today," Netanyahu essentially ignored him—and a cease-fire didn't come into effect until May 21. So much for U.S. pressure.

But this was really nothing new. Attempts by the Obama administration to rein in Israeli settlements failed, humiliating Biden in particular, as plans for new settlements in East Jerusalem were defiantly announced by the Israeli government just as he was visiting Israel as vice president in 2010. Efforts by other administrations to have Israel legitimately engage with the Palestinians and make certain concessions have also come up empty (although, in many cases, that was by default, since American officials were hardly always the honest brokers).

In fact, Israel has arguably become a strategic liability. As Rashid Khalidi noted in 2014, after an earlier war on Gaza, "continued U.S. encouragement of Israeli violations of international humanitarian law will further embolden the brazen currents of far-right ethnocentric racism permeating Israeli society, and encourage more brutal military actions like those just inflicted on Gaza. This is turn can only inflame extreme and reprehensible reactions, whether in the form of international jihadi militancy, crude anti-Semitism, or blind terrorism against civilians." In recent months, efforts by the Biden administration to revive the international agreement curbing Iran's nuclear program, known as the JCPOA, have been met with fierce and open Israeli resistance. In April, widely suspected Israeli sabotage crippled Iran's Natanz nuclear facility. And last December, a top Iranian nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, was assassinated outside Tehran, reportedly by Israel. Such behavior has not only undermined U.S. diplomatic efforts, but has also resulted in Iran ramping up its enrichment capacity in response.

While it is touted as a close security partner—"the eyes and ears of America" against "radical Islam," as Sen. Lindsey Graham claimed on a recent visit—Israel in fact has often provided the U.S. with overstated and alarmist intelligence, like it did regarding Iraq and Saddam Hussein's weapons program leading up to America's 2003 invasion. It is also increasingly manipulating the return of great-power competition in the Middle East, in order to pressure the U.S. into remaining deeply engaged in the region and granting ever more concessions to Israel along the way.

What has this frozen policy, all billed to American taxpayers, actually accomplished? And what will billions more of American military aid—all unconditionally granted, no matter Israel's human rights record—accomplish in the years to come? It will only lead to more violations of America's own human rights obligations as codified under existing U.S. law, while continually undermining America's interests and position in the Middle East.

### solvency---pressure—1ar

#### The U.S. must pressure Israel to stop settler violence against Palestinians

Merryman Lotze 6/26 [(Michael Merryman-Lotze, Mike Merryman-Lotze works as AFSC's Middle East Program Director. Based in Philadelphia, Mike is a member of the Middle East Regional Office. He coordinates AFSC’s advocacy and policy work related to Israel and Palestine and the broader Middle East. In this role, he works closely with AFSC’s offices in Israel, the occupied Palestinian territory, Jordan and throughout the U.S. Mike received his BS in International Politics from Earlham College and his MA in International Relations with a focus on Conflict Management from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins.) “The U.S. must pressure Israel to stop settler violence against Palestinians” <https://afsc.org/news/us-must-pressure-israel-stop-settler-violence-against-palestinians> 06/26/2023.] HY

On June 21, hundreds of Israeli settlers attacked the Palestinian village of Turmus Ayya, which is located north of Ramallah in the West Bank. Over 80% of the village’s Palestinian residents are U.S. citizens. During the attack, one Palestinian, Omar Qattin, was killed and at least 12 were injured, including four by gunfire. Homes, shops, cars, and agricultural fields were burned and destroyed.

The violence against Turmus Ayya was one of at least 21 attacks carried out by Israeli settlers over three-day period. In Urif, settlers set fire to the local mosque and school.

Much of the news reporting in the U.S. has characterized the settlers’ actions as reprisal for an attack by Palestinian gunman who killed four Israelis near an illegal West Bank settlement the same day. While that Palestinian attack did serve as a spark for this round of settler violence, we must remember that settler and Israeli state violence in the West Bank is a constant reality. The recent Palestinian attack came on the heels of an Israeli raid in Jenin that killed six Palestinians, including two children.

So far this year, Israel has killed at least 145 Palestinians. And between the start of the year and June 12, Israeli settlers carried out at least 441 attacks on Palestinians, 112 of which resulted in the injury of Palestinians, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). At least 10 of those attacks targeted Turmus Ayya.

Settler violence has been a problem for decades. In 2022, UN OCHA recorded at least 849 attacks on Palestinians by settlers. Settlers seize land, destroy homes, burn agricultural fields, kill herds of animals, and cut down olive trees, they attack Palestinians with impunity and often with military backing. The Israel government almost never takes action to stop settler violence.

The roots of this violence are found in Israel’s historic and ongoing dispossession of the Palestinian people—and the system of apartheid that denies Palestinians their basic human rights. That is the context in which the ongoing settler attacks and all violence needs to be viewed.

Some within the Israeli government back the settlers and encourage more violence. In the wake of the attack, Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir called for the building of more settlements and massive military operations against Palestinians, saying,

“The Land of Israel must be settled and at the same time as the settlement of the Land a military operation must be launched. [We must] demolish buildings, eliminate terrorists, not one or two, but tens and hundreds, and if necessary even thousands, because at the end of the day, this is the only way we will hold on here, strengthen control and restore security to the residents, and above all we will fulfill our great mission. The Land of Israel is for the people of Israel, we are backing you, run to the hills, settle down. We love you."

Rhetoric that dehumanizes Palestinians and supports ethnic cleansing has become an accepted part of Israeli political discourse. This rhetoric is dangerous, fueling settler violence, increasing military repression of Palestinians, and leading to more deaths.

Stopping settler and military violence against Palestinians requires ending Israeli apartheid. Israel must be held accountable for its actions. One immediate step that the U.S. can take toward accountability is ending all military funding to Israel. As settlements expand, lives are lost, and apartheid deepens, the U.S. cannot continue to fund Israeli abuses.

As Oifat Abdel Aziz, a U.S. citizen whose family home is in Turmus Ayya, told the Israeli online magazine +972, “Our taxes in the U.S. are used to kill us here, the American government must stop it.”

Today, we need to hear Oifat and many others who are calling for change and an end to U.S. complicity in Israeli apartheid.

**bmd pic**

**pdcp---1ar**

**“Substantial” means “considerable” and depends on context.**

**Prost ’04** — Sharon; Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. June 18, 2004; “Committee For Fairly Traded Venezuelan Cement v. United States”; *Case Law*

The URAA and the SAA neither amend nor refine the language of § 1677(4)I. In fact, they merely suggest, without disqualifying other alternatives, a “clearly higher/substantial proportion” approach. Indeed, the SAA specifically mentions that no “precise mathematical formula” or “‘benchmark’ proportion” is to be used for a dumping concentration analysis. SAA at 860 (citations omitted); see also Venez. Cement, 279 F. Supp. 2d at 1329-30. Furthermore, as the Court of International Trade noted, the SAA emphasizes that the Commission retains the discretion to determine concentration of imports on a “**case-by-case basis**.” SAA at 860. Finally, the definition of the word “substantial” undercuts the CFTVC’s argument. The word “substantial” generally means “**considerable** in **amount**, **value** or **worth**.” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary 2280 (1993). It does not imply a specific number or cut-off. What may be **substantial** in **one situation** may not be in **another situation**. The very breadth of the term “substantial” undercuts the CFTVC’s argument that Congress spoke clearly in establishing a standard for the Commission’s regional antidumping and countervailing duty analyses. It therefore supports the conclusion that the Commission is owed deference in its interpretation of “substantial proportion.” The Commission clearly embarked on its analysis having been given considerable leeway to interpret a particularly broad term.

**“Reduce” means to diminish, not eliminate.**

**Words & Phrases ’02** — Words and Phrases. 2002; “Reduce”; *Words & Phrases*; Volume 36; pg. 80

Mass. 1905. Rev.Laws, c.203, § 9, provides that, if two or more cases are tried together in the superior court, the presiding judge may “reduce” the witness fees and other costs, but “not less than the ordinary witness fees, and other costs recoverable in one of the cases” which are so tried together shall be allowed. Held that, in reducing the costs, the amount in all the cases together is to be considered and reduced, providing that there must be left in the aggregate an amount not less than the largest sum recoverable in any of the cases.

The word “reduce,” in its **ordinary signification**, does not mean to **cancel**, **destroy**, or **bring to naught**, but to diminish, lower, or bring to an inferior state.—Green v. Sklar, 74 N.E. 595, 188 Mass. 363.

**“Reduce” means to shorten the extent.**

**Roget’s Thesaurus ’13** — Roget’s Thesaurus. 2013; “Reduce”; *Roget’s Thesaurus*; <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/reduce>

Reduce verb

1. To grow or cause to **grow gradually less**:

abate, decrease, diminish, drain, dwindle, ebb, lessen, let up, peter (out), rebate, tail away (or off), taper (off).

2. To make short or **shorter** the **duration** or **extent of**:

abbreviate, abridge, condense, curtail, shorten.

3. To lower in rank or grade:

break, bump, degrade, demote, downgrade.

Slang: bust.

4. To become or **make less** in price or value:

cheapen, depreciate, depress, devaluate, devalue, downgrade, lower, mark down, write down.

**sd---iran---1ar**

**Iron Dome fails and emboldens Israel to first strike Iran.**

**Patrikarakos ’12** — David; an U.K.-based writer and author of the book “Nuclear Iran: The Birth of an Atomic State. November 24, 2012; “One Size Does Not Fit All: The Limits of Iron Dome”; *The Diplomat*; <https://thediplomat.com/2012/11/iron-dome-and-an-israeli-strike-on-iran/> TDI

If Israel eventually makes good on its **years of threats** and strikes **Iran’s nuclear facilities** the Iranians have promised to “respond with everything they have.” One means of retaliation available to Iran is launching **missile attacks** against Israel both directly and through **proxy groups** like Hamas and Hezbollah.

How Israel is likely to cope with this depends in large part on its new missile defense system, which includes “**Iron Dome**,” the latest jewel in Israel’s **opulent military crown**. Iron Dome is seen as a panacea for a country perpetually targeted by missiles: it is a $210 million, mobile all-weather air defense system developed by Israeli firm Rafael Advanced Defense Systems (with additional funding from the U.S.), working jointly with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Designed to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and artillery shells fired from distances of up to 70 km away, it is, so Israel’s leaders say, the future of the country’s defense.

Iron Dome has its roots in the 2006 Second Lebanon War. During the hostilities, the Lebanese militia group Hezbollah fired around 4,000 mostly short-range Katyusha rockets at northern Israel, including at its third largest city, Haifa. Scores of Israelis were killed and thousands were forced to cower in bomb shelters. Meanwhile, in the south of the country things had been bad for years. Between 2000 and the Second Lebanon War, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military arm of Hamas, fired thousands Gazan-made Qassam and Iranian-made Fajr-5 rockets into the south of Israel, where almost 1 million Israelis live within rocket range.

The seemingly endless **missile attacks** from **Gaza** and **Lebanon** were enough to prompt the Israeli government into action. Shortly after the Lebanon War, in February 2007, Israeli Defense Minister, Amir Peretz, announced that Rafael Advanced Defense Systems would develop a new missile defense shield – Iron Dome – that was to be **Israel’s defensive solution** to the country’s **short-range rocket threat**.

The system has a simple goal: to intercept rockets, aircraft and artillery and destroy them in mid-air before they reach populated areas. It works in three stages. The first is to detect the incoming missile(s), which it does through the use of radar installation that forms part of the system. Once detected, stage two, the battle management and weapons control (BMC), the brains of the system, kicks in. The BMC calculates the trajectory of the incoming missile: if it is headed toward an unpopulated area, like a field, the system will not deploy. This is necessary to keep the cost down as thousands of missiles are launched at Israel from Lebanon and Gaza, most of which fall harmlessly on unpopulated areas.

But if a rocket is on a path to a city or built-up area, stage three kicks in and Iron Dome launches a Tamir missile to intercept and destroy it. Critically, the system calculates the best place to intercept the incoming target, to try and avoid debris falling on populated areas. The Tamir is initially guided by the BMC system before the Tamir’s onboard radar kicks in to take it as close to the incoming missile(s) as possible. Once there it detonates the warhead it is carrying, destroying both itself and the target missile. Each Tamir costs around $60,000, so accuracy is of paramount importance.

The system is mobile (it can be carried on a truck) and can be used in all weather, day or night. Each Iron Dome battery costs about $50m to install, and the government believes it is cheap at the cost. As soon as it was first declared operational, on March 27, 2011, it was deployed near the city of Beersheba, in the Negev Desert in the south of the country. Just a few weeks later, the system successfully intercepted a rocket launched from Gaza for the first time. By April 2012 it had intercepted 93 rockets.

But it is with Israel’s recent **Operation Pillar** of **Cloud** in **Gaza** that Iron Dome really proved its worth. In the first days of the conflict, the IDF said Iron Dome had intercepted 90 of an estimated 250 rockets fired by militant groups in the Palestinian territory over the previous day, an impressive ratio of 85 percent (when bearing in mind the system detects when missiles are heading toward unpopulated land and leaves those missiles alone). More recently Israeli leaders put the system’s **success rate** at **90 percent** throughout the conflict.

By Tuesday evening the IDF tweeted that the shield had intercepted 389 rockets from Gaza. And it was at work across the country right up until the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas on Wednesday. Four Iron Dome batteries were initially in operation (eight more are planned for the future) with a fifth battery – a late addition – being deployed in Tel Aviv, Israel’s largest city and financial hub. Critically, Tel Aviv was previously thought to be out of range of rockets from Gaza, but Hamas and other militant groups upgraded their missiles capabilities, and the city was repeatedly targeted during the conflict. Indeed, the Tel Aviv battery was almost immediately called into action shortly after it was installed, knocking out a rocket as it shot through the sky toward the city.

But its range (it’s able to intercept missiles fired from around 70km away) was put to the limit by the Tel Aviv attack, which is **worrying for Israel** because it means that it cannot intercept the **longer range missiles** that would be fired from Iran. What is even more worrying is that the Iranians know that it cannot. According to Iranian Brigadier General Massoud Jazayeri, Iron Dome is **no match** for **Iranian missiles**, and that “what is said about this [Iron Dome] is mostly psychological warfare and propaganda.” “There is,” he continued, “**no iron dome in the world that we cannot pierce though**.”

**sd---credibility---1ar**

**It perpetuates militarization and human rights abuses that are the root cause of conflict.**

**Merryman-Lotze ’21** — Michael; works as AFSC’s Middle East Program Director. Based in Philadelphia, Mike is a member of the Middle East Regional Office. He coordinates AFSC’s advocacy and policy work related to Israel and Palestine and the broader Middle East. In this role, he works closely with AFSC’s offices in Israel, the occupied Palestinian territory, Jordan and throughout the U.S. From 2000 through 2003, Mike worked as a researcher with the Palestinian human rights organization Al-Haq in the West Bank, and from 2007 through 2010 he worked in Save the Children UK’s Jerusalem office managing child rights and child protection programming. He has also managed community and local government development programs in Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, and throughout the Middle East and North Africa. He has appeared in many news outlets, including Al Jazeera, Mondoweiss, Centre for Research on Globalization, +972, and Middle East Eye. He is also a regular contributor to AFSC’s Acting in Faith blog. Mike received his BS in International Politics from Earlham College and his MA in International Relations with a focus on Conflict Management from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins. September 29, 2021; “5 things to know about U.S. funding for Israel’s “Iron Dome””; *American Friends Service Committee*; <https://afsc.org/news/5-things-know-about-us-funding-israels-iron-dome> TDI

2. There is no urgent need for these funds, which could have been invested in peaceful alternatives instead of further militarization.

When funding from the recent vote is finalized, it will go into a slush fund that Israel can use at any point between now and the end of 2024. This is because the companies that developed and maintain Iron Dome simply can’t use this funding immediately. There was no immediate or urgent need for new funds.

These funds also come at the expense of other priorities. As Dylan Williams of J Street noted on Twitter: “To put this $1 billion in context, it’s more than the US spends on Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism & Demining Assistance globally ($890m in 2021) & more than twice what the US spends on direct contributions to NATO ($420m in 2019) & the entire Peace Corps ($410.5m in 2020).”

Given all of this—and the strength of the Israeli economy—all U.S. lawmakers should have questioned why there was an urgent need to provide this money to Israel with no time for debate or discussion.

3. Iron Dome is part of a **larger military system** used to **enforce apartheid**.

Over the last year the Israeli human rights organizations B’Tselem and Yesh Din as well as **H**uman **R**ights **W**atch all issued reports documenting how the situation in Israel and Palestine qualifies as **apartheid**. Palestinians living under Israeli control face **systematic violations** of their **human rights**. Palestinians in Gaza live under a **brutal blockade** that the **U**.**N**. and the **Red Cross** have declared an **illegal form** of **collective punishment**. That blockade has destroyed the Gaza economy, blocks people’s access to basic services including medical care, restricts peoples’ travel, and results in the **loss of life**.

Representatives who opposed new funding for Iron Dome have been accused of not supporting “purely defensive” weapons that are used to save Israeli lives. While Iron Dome does stop some rockets, it does nothing to stop the **larger drivers** of **conflict** and is part of a larger military system that **enforces apartheid**. Instead of investing in more militarized spending, the **U**.**S**. must prioritize ending Israeli apartheid and the **root causes** of **violence** and **injustice**.

**Iron Dome technology is not neutral but expands and justifies Western dominance and human rights abuses at the expense of global peace and prosperity.**

**Cook ’21** — Jonathan; author of three books on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and a winner of the Martha Gellhorn Special Prize for Journalism. October 6, 2021; “Iron Dome funding: Don't be deceived - US aid to Israel is not about saving lives”; *Middle East Eye*; <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/us-israel-iron-dome-not-about-saving-lives> TDI

Expiring in silence

In Israel, and in Jewish communities beyond, the conversation about US support for Iron Dome is even more detached from reality. The nine US representatives who voted against were roundly castigated for willing the deaths of Israelis by voting to deny them protection from rockets fired from Gaza. In predictable fashion, Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations, Gilad Erdan, called those who voted against “either ignorant or antisemitic”.

But some liberals took the argument in a different, even more fanciful direction. They called the Squad “hypocrites” for voting against the $1bn funding, arguing that Iron Dome missiles not only save Israelis, but Palestinians too. One Haaretz commentator went so far as to claim that Palestinians were actually the main beneficiaries of the Iron Dome system, arguing: “The fact Israel has a defensive shield against rocket attacks makes a wide-scale military operation with thousands of - mainly Palestinian - casualties less likely.”

Of course, there is the small question of whether Israel indeed been “forced” into its attacks on Gaza. It is precisely its **military superiority** – paid for by the US – that has freed it to carry out those **massive attacks**, in which large numbers of Palestinians, including **hundreds** of **children**, are **killed**, rather than negotiate an end to its decades-long occupation.

Just as in life, bullies resort to intimidation and violence because they feel no need to compromise. But even more to the point, Iron Dome is central to Israel’s efforts to keep **Palestinians imprisoned** in Gaza, entirely **subjugated** and **stripped** of any **power to resist**.

With Israel patrolling tiny Gaza’s land borders and coast, sealing off the enclave from the rest of the world, Palestinians have few options to protest their **slow starvation** – or to gain attention for their plight. Israeli snipers have fired on Palestinians staging unarmed, mass protests at the fence caging them in, killing and wounding thousands. The Israeli navy fires on or sinks Palestinian boats, including fishing boats, in Gaza’s waters if they stray more than a few kilometres from the shore.

Iron Dome, far from being defensive, is another **weapon** in **Israel’s armoury** to keep Palestinians **subdued**, **impoverished**, **corralled** and **silent**. For those claiming to want peace in Israel-Palestine, the extra funding for Iron Dome just made that prospect even less likely. As long as Palestinians can be made to slowly expire in silence – their plight ignored by the rest of the world – Israel is free to **seize** and **colonise** yet more of what was supposed to become a future **Palestinian state**.

Systems of domination

But there is another reason why Ocasio-Cortez should have voted against the Iron Dome resupply, rather than tearfully abstaining – and that is for all our sakes, not just the sake of Palestinians.

The US foots the bill for Iron Dome, just as it does for most of Israel’s other weapons development, for self-interested reasons: because it helps its own **war industries**, as Washington seeks to maintain its **military dominance** globally.

With western populations less willing to sacrifice their sons and daughters for the sake of modern wars, which seem less obviously related to defence and more transparently about the control of key resources, the Pentagon has worked overtime to reframe the public debate.

It is hard to disguise its global **domination industries** as anything but offensive in nature. This is where Israel has played a critical role. Not only has Israel helped to develop weapons systems like **Iron Dome**, but - despite being a **nuclear-armed**, **belligerent**, **occupying state** - it has leveraged its image as a vulnerable refuge for the long-persecuted Jewish people. It has been able to make more plausible the case that these domination systems really are defensive.

In recent decades, Israel has developed and tested drone technology to **surveil** and **assassinate Palestinians**, which has proved **invaluable** in the **US** and UK’s long-term occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. Israel’s latest “swarm” technology - making drones even more lethal - may prove particularly attractive to the Pentagon.

Israel has also been the ideal partner for the Pentagon in testing and refining the battlefield use of the new generation of F-35 fighter planes, the most expensive military product in US history. Uniquely, Israel has been allowed to customise the jet, adapting its capabilities in new, unforeseen ways.

Bowing to US hegemony

The F-35’s ultimate role is to make sure major rival airforces, such as Russia’s and China’s, are elbowed out of the skies. And Israel has been at the forefront of **developing** and **testing** a variety of **missile interception systems**, such as **Iron Dome**, David’s Sling, and Arrow, which are intended to destroy incoming projectiles, from short-range rockets to long-range missiles.

Last December, Israel announced it had successfully launched Iron Dome interception missiles for the first time from the sea. Reports noted that the US arms maker Raytheon and the US defence department were involved in the tests. That is because, behind the scenes, the US is not only paying for the development and testing of these systems; it is also guiding the uses to which they will be put. The Pentagon has bought two Iron Dome batteries, which, according to Israeli media, have been stationed in US military bases in the Gulf.

The US has its own interception systems under development, and it is unclear which it will come to rely on most heavily. But what is evident is that Washington, Israel and their Gulf allies have Iran in their **immediate sights**. Any country that **refuses to bow** to **US global hegemony** could also be **targeted**.

US interest in these missiles is not defensive. They are fundamental to its ability to **neutralise** the responses of rivals to either a US military attack, or more general moves by the US to **dominate territory** and control **resources**.

Just as Palestinians have been besieged by Israel for 15 years, the US and Gulf states may hope one day to deal a knockout blow to Iran’s oil exports. Washington would be able to ignore current concerns that Tehran could retaliate by firing on shipping through the Strait of Hormuz or on hostile Middle Eastern capitals. If Iran’s missiles can be intercepted, it will be incapable of defending itself against increasing economic or military aggression from the US or its neighbours.

Less safe world

Following the US withdrawal from Afghanistan this summer, there has been plenty of naive talk that the US is seeking a diminished role in the world. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Ultimately, the US is seeking global dominance at arm’s length - through a combination of **long-range military power**, **cyber warfare**, **robotics** and **a**rtificial **i**ntelligence - that it hopes will lift the restraints imposed by American casualties and domestic opposition.

Israel’s playbook with regards to Palestinians is one that elites in Washington trust can be exported to other corners of the **globe**, and even outer **space**. Interception missiles lie at the **heart** of that strategic vision, as a way to neutralise and silence all **resistance**. This is why no one who cares about a less **violent**, **exploitative** and **dangerous world** should be indifferent to, or neutral on, congressional funding for Iron Dome.

Missile interception systems are the face not of a more defensive, safer world, but of a far more nakedly hostile, aggressive one.

**turn---iron dome bad---1ar**

**Iron Dome provides short-term security, not long-term solutions.**

**Levy ’21** — Yagil; Professor of public policy and political sociology at the Open University of Israel. He is the co-editor (with David Kuehn) of “Mobilizing Force: Linking Security Threats, Militarization, and Civilian Control”. May 14, 2021; “Israel’s Iron Dome defense system protects Israeli lives. It also perpetuates the Israel-Gaza conflict”; *The Washington Post*; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/05/14/israels-iron-dome-defense-system-protects-israeli-lives-it-also-perpetuates-israel-gaza-conflict/> TDI

But the defense system **perpetuates** the **conflict**

Here’s the **ironic outcome**: Even as Iron Dome enables **devastating Israeli bombardment** from the air, it protects Gazan civilians from potentially devastating outcomes of an Israeli ground offensive, which would be the likely alternative. The increasing **legal scrutiny** of Israel’s wars, from the U.N. investigations that followed the earlier operations and the current attention from the International Criminal Court, gives Israel an interest in diminishing **global pressure** for **military restraint** and a **political resolution**.

Apparently, the escalating body count from Cast Lead (2008) to Protective Edge (2014) suggests that Israel is not so restrained. However, Israel was dragged into a ground operation in 2014 not because of the rockets fired from Gaza but because of the urgency to remove the threat of Hamas tunnels. Shifting risk from the ground forces to Gazan civilians, the land operation accounted for most of the civilian deaths. While Israel’s leaders understood the limitations set forth in international law, it was the field command who liberally shaped the fire policy, as my research explains.

Iron Dome up to this point has saved Israeli lives from Gaza rocket attacks, while enabling air campaigns against **Palestinian citizens**. But the reduced pressure to resolve the conflict with Gaza also means Iron Dome gives Israelis a false sense of security, based on **technological success** — which isn’t **guaranteed forever** — rather than **political solutions**.

#### Iron Dome only temporary

Hambling 21 [(David is a South London-based technology journalist, consultant and author.)“Under The Iron Dome: The Problem With Israel’s Rocket Shield,” Forbes, https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidhambling/2021/05/12/under-the-iron-dome-the-problem-with-israels-rocket-shield/?sh=2a77dadd59b8, 5/12/2021] ES - TDI

**Iron Dome** **has been largely successful in preventing Hamas rockets from causing serious casualties** to date**.** **But is has its weaknesses: the system has a**high but unknown ‘saturation point’**the maximum number of rockets it can deal with at one time. If this number is exceeded, the excess rockets will get through. The recent attacks look like an**[attempt to overwhelm the system with more rockets than ever](https://twitter.com/nktpnd/status/1392182229552533508). The IDF claims [that some 850 rockets](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/diplomacy-defense/1620800706-liveblog-more-than-850-rockets-fired-from-gaza-toward-israel-since-start-of-latest-escalation)**have been fired** since the start of the latest escalation.

Also, **the supply of** Tamir missiles is finite**, and they are expensive, whereas Hamas has reportedly**[stockpiled thousands of Qassams](https://www.jpost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/what-do-hamas-and-pij-have-in-their-rocket-arsenals-analysis-667856)**and other weapons**. Sometimes Iron Dome launches two missiles against one rocket to ensure an intercept. **If the defenders run out of interceptors,** casualties could escalate rapidly**.** This may motivate military action to counter the rocket launchers.

**Iron Dome’s effectiveness may even be a** strategic weakness, according [a 2016 study by RAND](https://www.rand.org/blog/2017/11/is-iron-dome-a-poisoned-chalice-strategic-risks-from.html). Because the Hamas rocket offensives cause so little damage by comparison, **any Israeli military response is seen as disproportionate and heavy-handed. The death toll in Gaza is from the latest Israeli airstrikes is already**[reported to be 35, with more than 200 wounded](https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/israeli-pm-netanyahu-hamas-will-pay-heavy-price-as-violence-continues/ar-BB1gDmmV?fullscreen=true#image=3)**, several times higher than the casualties in Israel.**

Defensive measures alone will not be enough to stop the attacks, and **the reliance on Iron Dome means that if it fails – and the government is seen not to have defended its people – there will be serious consequences.** On the other hand, a ground offensive to take on the source of the rockets could also result in a massive number of deaths and global political ramifications. The problem with a defense this good is that you can rely on it too much.

**Short Berman.**

**Berman ’21** — Lazar; The Times of Israel’s diplomatic reporter. May 13, 2021; “Iron Dome has saved many lives, but has it made Israel safer?”; *The Times of Israel*; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iron-dome-has-saved-many-lives-but-has-it-made-israel-safer/> TDI

Technology as strategy

It may seem bizarre to call into question a system that has saved hundreds of Israeli lives, all the more so on a day when it is actually saving lives, but the picture is **not** that **straightforward**. Millions of more Israelis have come **under threat** since Iron Dome first made its appearance, not to mention the **Gazan civilians** whose lives Hamas deliberately put at risk by **firing** at **Israel** without fearing a decisive response.

Imagine for a moment that the Iron Dome was never developed. Israel would face two possible principal approaches to the Gaza question. It could seek a **political solution** with Hamas through the **mediation** of Egypt and other third parties, or it could embark on a decisive ground campaign in an attempt to rid Israelis of the **rocket threat** from **Gaza** once and for all. For much of Israel’s history, its concept against sophisticated terrorist networks rested on ground raids and larger operations, and it often succeeded, including against the PLO in southern Lebanon in 1982 and Palestinian groups in the West Bank in 2002. Such an operation in Gaza would undoubtedly be costly in blood and treasure in the short term, and would necessitate some sort of longer-term Israeli presence or arrangement to introduce PA security forces, but could potentially bring a solution to the Hamas threat.

Instead, with the illusion that the technological wizardry of the Iron Dome grants it a hermetically sealed bunker to shelter in for as long as it needs to, Israel has thus far chosen to let the **Gaza problem fester**. Even if the lion’s share of the blame can be placed at the feet of the cruel and corrupt Hamas government, millions of Gazans still live in **dire economic circumstances** on Israel’s border. Even if one argues that it’s not Israel’s fault, or even Israel’s responsibility, it is hard to see the downside in a **new reality** that would allow Gazans to **prosper** and **travel** while not posing a **danger** to **Israelis**.

#### Iron Dome is not defensive

Saba 5/25 (Dylan is a civil rights attorney and writer based in New York City, and a contributing editor at Jewish Currents.) “Iron Dome Is Not a Defensive System,” https://jewishcurrents.org/iron-dome-is-not-a-defensive-system#:~:text=%E2%80%9CIron%20Dome%20facilitates%20greater%

20Israeli,in%20deadly%20operations%20that%20take, 5/25/2023] ES - TDI

JOURNALISTS AND COMMENTATORS often describe Israel’s regular assaults on the Gaza Strip—the small coastal enclave that it controls by land, sea, and air—as “[exchanges of hostilities](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/05/03/israel-palestinian-rockets-adnan-khader/).” This term and so many others like it—“[escalation of violence](https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/12/world/gaza-israel-violence-heavy-strikes-intl/index.html),” “[rising tensions](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/2/israel-bombs-gaza-as-tensions-rise-over-death-of-khader-adnan)”—belie the immense power difference between the Israeli military and the nearly two million Palestinians it holds hostage in Gaza. Indeed, even a cursory look at the casualties documented since Israel imposed a blockade of the Strip in 2007 reveals tremendous loss of life on the Palestinian side of the border and only the occasional Israeli civilian death. **According to**[United Nations data](https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties)**, 2,774 Palestinian civilians in Gaza have been killed since the beginning of 2008, while only 30 Israeli civilians have been killed in the same period by Palestinian militants.**

**This gross asymmetry results in part from the Iron Dome air defense system,** a military project [co-produced](https://www.raytheonmissilesanddefense.com/what-we-do/missile-defense/air-and-missile-defense-systems/irondome)by the Israeli defense company Rafael and the US weapons manufacturer Raytheon. The system, which has the capacity to intercept the vast majority of the largely short-range projectiles fired from militants in the Strip, enjoys bipartisan political support in the United States; Congress has [funded](https://www.bbc.com/news/57170576) it since its development. Following the strikes on Gaza last summer, President Joe Biden [praised the Iron Dome](https://www.timesofisrael.com/biden-welcomes-gaza-ceasefire-says-us-proud-to-back-life-saving-iron-dome/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter), which he said has “intercepted hundreds of rockets and saved countless lives.” The year prior, when Republican Senator Rand Paul initially [blocked](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/575281-rand-paul-blocks-quick-vote-on-house-passed-1b-iron-dome-funding/) an emergency round of Iron Dome funding, Democratic Senator Bob Menendez [blasted the move](https://www.foreign.senate.gov/press/dem/release/senate-republicans-block-iron-dome-funding) from the Senate floor. “Iron Dome is a purely defensive system that protects civilians. It saves lives, regardless of religion or ethnicity,” Menendez declared. “Furthermore, by saving those lives, Iron Dome also preserves diplomatic space for de-escalation, communication, and further negotiations about Israeli and Palestinian long term security and the future of a negotiated two-state solution.”

But this narrow view reflects **the total devaluation of Palestinian life endemic to US foreign policy.** By almost entirely negating the ability of militant groups in Gaza to respond to Israel’s incursions, **the purportedly defensive Iron Dome allows Israel to strike without fear of repercussion.** And because the cost is so low when measured in Israeli casualties, Israel can wage perpetual war without suffering domestic political consequences, and is under negligible pressure to pursue diplomacy with the Palestinians. “**In theory, a weapon like Iron Dome could be used only defensively. But in practice it doesn’t work that way**,” analyst Nathan Thrall told Jewish Currents. “**Iron Dome facilitates greater Israeli offensive measures, because it lowers the perceived cost to Israel of escalating or extending or initiating attacks**.” In other words, while the Iron Dome may prevent the deaths of Israeli non-combatants, **it has made it easier for Israel to engage in deadly operations that take Palestinian lives.** Indeed, Menendez’s formulation is backwards: **Rather than preserving space for diplomacy, Iron Dome enables Israel’s commitment to the status quo of permanent occupation. Its ultimate function is to entrench an already asymmetrical conflict into a state of ongoing bloodshed, dispossession, and devastation for the Palestinians of Gaza.**

A GAZAN born in 2005—**the median age in the Strip is 18**—has survived two Israeli ground invasions: At age four, they lived through Operation Cast Lead, when an invasion combined with aerial assaults left 1,400 Palestinians dead. At age nine, they witnessed **Operation Protective Edge, when another invasion and round of bombings killed 2,200 Palestinians**. Such a person has also lived through a series of air-only assaults: **Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012** (when they were seven), **Operation Guardian of Walls in 2021** (when they were 16), and smaller but still **deadly engagements last year and again this month**. A harrowing life, entirely spent enclosed in an area less than half the size of New York City and with the third-highest population density in the world.

**The Iron Dome has become a critical component of the Israeli strategy that creates these conditions.** Wary of the military resources that might be required either to reoccupy the Strip or to deal with the forces that could seize power in a political vacuum, Israel aims instead to maintain Hamas’s position as Gaza’s governing authority while limiting its ability to deal substantive damage. In a 2014 [report](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9975.html) following Operation Protective Edge, the RAND Corporation—a US policy and strategy nonprofit—summarized the approach: “[Israel] needs to exert enough force to deter Hamas from attacking but not so much that it topples the regime. As one **Israeli defense analyst put it, ‘We want to break their bones without putting them in the hospital.’”**

In the years since the blockade began, as Joshua Leifer [wrote](https://jewishcurrents.org/the-intentional-cruelty-of-conflict-management-in-gaza) last week in Jewish Currents, Israel has settled into what is euphemistically dubbed a policy of “crisis management,” by which it avoids both full-scale war and negotiated settlement, preferring instead to maintain its economic and political chokehold on the Strip. Here, missile defense is key, both to hold Hamas and other militant groups at bay, and to manage the way the operations are viewed by the Israeli public. The RAND report highlights the role of what it calls “the perception of success” in sustaining political support for military engagements, explaining that it is not only the system’s prevention of Israeli casualties but the narrative of its impenetrability that so effectively bolsters Israeli confidence. In 2014, this confidence bought Israel time to wage a more protracted war. **In other words, by both reducing the threat of casualties from Palestinian rockets and instilling a sense of security in the Israeli people, the Iron Dome provides political cover for a war without end.**

**Supporters of the Iron Dome system often claim that it saves Palestinian lives by lowering the likelihood of Israeli ground invasions, which result in huge numbers of civilian casualties. It’s not clear that this is the case—there has been one ground invasion of Gaza before the installation of the system and one since, the latter of which was** longer and more deadly**.** The RAND report makes this point directly: **By lessening the perceived threat of rocket fire, the Iron Dome “relieved political pressure on senior Israeli leaders to bring the [2014] conflict to a speedy conclusion and allowed for a more deliberate, if slower, operation**.” Even if the system has prevented other ground invasions, **it’s unclear that this represents a material benefit to the Palestinians.** The Iron Dome, director of the Middle East Institute’s program on Palestine and Israeli–Palestinian affairs Khaled Elgindy [writes](https://www.mei.edu/publications/no-iron-dome-doesnt-save-palestinian-lives), “is more likely to have cost Palestinian lives by deepening an already vastly asymmetrical conflict and extending Israel’s ability to defer a political settlement indefinitely.” Because it effectively neutralizes the deterrence capability of Palestinian militants, the system has ensured that none of the political factions in Gaza have any real power to prevent assaults on its trapped population; thus, it has helped to sustain a lifetime of violence for the Gazan people.

This extended tragedy continued this month when Israeli air strikes [killed 33 Palestinians](https://apnews.com/article/palestinians-gaza-israel-west-bank-a8ab10afdc202040feee0a9a08c2bab9) in just five days and injured 90 more. As usual, the human cost of military engagement was starkly uneven: Islamic Jihad, the second-largest armed faction in Gaza, launched [hundreds of rockets](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-65544214) and other projectiles into Israel in the same period, killing one Israeli and wounding nine others after a purported Iron Dome [malfunction](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-742846?draft=1) allowed a missile to hit an apartment building in the Tel Aviv suburb of Rehovot. A Palestinian laborer working inside Israel was also killed by rocket fire. As Leifer [notes](https://jewishcurrents.org/the-intentional-cruelty-of-conflict-management-in-gaza), limited Israeli casualties are an accepted part of the conflict management paradigm (though it’s possible that even that single Israeli death helped hasten the Egypt-brokered ceasefire; negotiations that had reportedly been [stalled](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/10/israeli-palestinian-fighting-ongoing-as-egypt-ceasefire-falters) began making headway the next day).

The latest attack also demonstrates the kind of political calculations that Israel’s leaders make in the absence of any real threat of retaliation. Analysts have [speculated](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-05-09/ty-article/.premium/with-gaza-assault-netanyhau-caves-in-to-ben-gvir-and-the-gang/00000188-0115-de69-a3ac-bf7f63290000) that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s decision to launch an operation was driven, at least in part, by a desire to pacify the right wing of his coalition and draw attention away from domestic political turmoil. Indeed, the assault galvanized the support of the Israeli public, providing a much-needed political [boost](https://allisrael.com/netanyahu-receives-bump-in-polls-folliwing-gaza-offensive) to Netanyahu and his fragile coalition. The opposition’s weekly anti-government protest—part of a series of civil actions contesting the Netanyahu government’s proposed judicial overhaul—was [canceled](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-05-12/ty-article/.premium/despite-gaza-flare-up-israelis-set-to-protest-judicial-overhaul-for-19th-week-in-a-row/00000188-0e99-db03-adbd-2ebd198c0000) for the first time since it began in early January. Though the purported rationale was safety concerns, the opposition parties and protest organizers largely [supported the assault](https://www.972mag.com/gaza-war-israeli-opposition/). These events illustrate the way that the Iron Dome has allowed other political exigencies to dominate Israel’s decision-making about when and how to wage war. “Like any state, Israel makes cost-benefit calculations when deciding whether or not to initiate an attack,” said Thrall. “What Iron Dome does is lessen the price Israeli pays for its attacks—in Israeli life, especially, but also in property damage—and therefore makes it more likely that Israeli attacks will occur . . . This is a case of the strong doing what they can and the weak suffering what they must.”

**Despite its role in cementing a deadly status quo for Palestinians, support for the Iron Dome goes** nearly unquestioned **in the US**. There have been signs of slippage since 2021, however, when Israel’s last major assault on Gaza was met with [unprecedented](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/tv/story/2021-05-17/israel-palestinians-gaza-john-oliver-last-week-tonight) [criticism](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/05/26/world/middleeast/gaza-israel-children.html) from the political mainstream. When $1 billion in supplementary military assistance to Israel for the Iron Dome came up for congressional approval in the fall of that year, eight Democrats—led by Rep. Rashida Tlaib, the only Palestinian American member of Congress—[cast the body’s first-ever votes](https://jewishcurrents.org/a-guide-to-the-fight-over-iron-dome-funding) against funding the system, largely on the grounds that any and **all military aid to Israel should be conditioned on respect for Palestinian human rights**. Controversially, neither Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez nor Rep. Jamaal Bowman, both of whom were endorsed at the time by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), voted against the funding (AOC voted present, while Bowman, who subsequently lost his DSA endorsement, voted in support). Likewise, Rep. Betty McCollum, often heralded as one of Palestine’s staunchest advocates in Congress, voted for the funding on the grounds that Iron Dome protects the innocent: “I voted to support today’s bill because it is intended to save lives,” she [said](https://mccollum.house.gov/media/press-releases/mccollum-statement-hr-5323-iron-dome-supplemental-appropriations-act) in a statement. In the end, the latter argument proved insurmountable, and the funding [sailed through](https://jewishcurrents.org/a-guide-to-the-fight-over-iron-dome-funding) with a vote of 420–9.

Though the 2021 dispute failed to galvanize significant progressive opposition to the Iron Dome, it opened up a debate within the US left about the system’s role in Israel’s broader apparatus of repression. **Even within circles where statements of solidarity with Palestinians are ubiquitous, opposition to this purportedly defensive, life-saving technology is often derided as a matter of “purity politics”**—a phrase that writer and activist Hadas Thier used in a [Jacobin piece](https://jacobin.com/2021/11/democratic-socialists-j-street-bds-israel-palestine-iron-dome-aoc) arguing that sanctioning Bowman for his “yes” vote would “confine [the left] to . . . continued marginality.” Opposition to Iron Dome is not a symbolic issue, however, but rather a direly materialist one. **Simply put, Israel’s missile defense system costs Palestinian lives and perpetuates the economic and military chokehold of Gaza.**

**Viewed in light of its role in cementing a deadly status quo, the Iron Dome cannot meaningfully be considered “life-saving” in any value system that recognizes Palestinian life alongside Israeli life**. Palestine advocates ought to oppose its funding not just because they oppose military aid for Israel in general, but on the specific grounds that by depriving Palestinians of even the most limited means of military deterrence, the US has given Israel a blank check to massacre Gazans whenever it is politically convenient. Especially in the absence of political will from the Israelis to end the devastating siege and blockade, Palestinians, desperate for life, have shown that they will continue to fight back. By funding a system that guarantees their acts of resistance are of almost no consequence to their oppressors, we are consigning them to death.

## conditions counterplan

### pdcp---1ar

#### c/i---“Reduce” includes conditions

**USCA 01** – United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit, per curiam opinion, 1/17/01, Carrington Gardens Associates, I v. Cisneros, 1 F. App'x 239 (2001), https://cite.case.law/f-appx/1/239/136950/

The housing contract, which specifically incorporates HUD’s regulations in section 3, establishes other remedies that HUD may exercise if an owner is in default on its obligations. Section 26 of the housing contract states that if an owner is in default, then HUD may:

(a) Pay housing assistance directly to the mortgagee in the event of default under mortgage.

\*242(b) **Reduce or suspend** housing assistance payments until the default under this Contract has been cured to the satisfaction of HUD.

(c) Withhold housing assistance payments until the default under this Contract has been cured to the satisfaction of HUD.

Therefore, if HUD finds that an owner has violated its obligations under the housing contract to maintain decent, safe, and sanitary housing, HUD may abate payments pursuant to 24 C.F.R. § 886.123 or exercise a remedy listed in section 26 of the housing contract. In this connection, we note that the meaning of abate is “a: to bring entirely down; demolish: put an end to: do away with.” Webster’s Third New Int’l Dictionary 2 (1971).

Under the regulation, 24 C.F.R. § 886.123, the payments to Carrington could have been stopped for good, the contract terms aside. For construction of the contract terms, we adopt the wording of the opinion of the district court for the next three paragraphs of this opinion which follow:

The plain meaning of the word “withhold” is “[tjo retain in one’s possession that which belongs to or is claimed or sought by another.... To refrain from paying that which is due.” Black’s Law Dictionary 1602 (6th ed.1990). Using this common meaning of “withhold,” HUD clearly has the authority to retain housing assistance payments. But, the HAP Contract’s withhold remedy also limits how long the funds may be retained. The housing assistance payments may be retained only “until the default under this Contract has been cured.” Tr.Ex. 8, § 26. Once the default is cured, HUD may no longer keep the retained funds. This remedy, therefore, creates a trust type relationship where HUD has the authority to keep the withheld funds on the owner’s account only while the owner is in default and thereafter must pay out the withheld funds when the default is cured. In contrast, the reduce-or-suspend remedy suggests a more permanent forfeiture of funds. The word “suspend” means “[t]o interrupt; to cause to cease for a time; to postpone; to stay, delay, or hinder; to discontinue temporarily, but with an expectation or purpose of resumption.” Black’s Law Dictionary 1446 (6th ed.1990). “Reduce” means “to diminish in size, amount, extent, or number.” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary 1905 (1981).3 Based on these definitions, “**reduce” is** **merely** **a less radical form of “suspend**.”

Under the common meanings of “reduce” and “suspend,” HUD has the authority to discontinue housing assistance payments entirely or diminish the size of the payments while Carrington Gardens is in default. Like the withhold remedy, this remedy limits how long payments may be discontinued or diminished— **only “until** **the** **default** under this Contract **has been cured**.” Tr.Ex. 8, § 26. After the default has been cured, therefore, HUD must resume full housing assistance payments. Unlike the withhold remedy, however, under the plain language of the reduce-or-suspend remedy, HUD is under no obligation to pay out any discontinued or diminished funds. The words “suspend” or “reduce” furnish no inference or suggestion that HUD is obligated to retain suspended or reduced funds on the owner’s account until a default is cured. This language in the HAP Contract speaks \*243only to HUD’s obligation to begin full payments after the default is cured. JA 546-548.

Thus, under the applicable regulations and the contract between the parties, the Secretary could have imposed any remedy from abatement of the payments to suspension of them for a time, with or without making up the suspended payments.

#### Conditions are a reduction

Fjestsul 19 - (\*Joshua C. Fjelstul & \*\*Dan Reiter,\*PhD in political science at Emory University \*\*Professor of Political Science at Emory University; 8-1-2019, Taylor & Francis, "Explaining incompleteness and conditionality in alliance agreements," 12-31-2020) url:

Mattes (2012b) also presumes that **conditions reduce** uncertainty about an alliance’s compliance requirements. Kim (2011) similarly seems to suggest that conditions make an agreement more specific and less ambiguous.5

Broadly, **making agreements more** **conditional means adding words to an agreement**. An unconditional alliance might read, “Signatories must intervene if a signatory is at war,” whereas a conditional alliance might read, “Signatories must intervene if a signatory is at war except under condition X.” The specificity of the language of conditions varies across alliances (Snyder 1997, 14). If the words of condition X are not carefully defined or if they lend themselves to diverging interpretations, then those words can make the agreement more incomplete, inviting disagreement about the alliance’s compliance obligations. Kann (1976) writes:

### sd---conditions---1ar

#### US won’t impost conditions

**Toosi 23** [(Nahal Toosi is POLITICO's senior correspondent for foreign affairs and national security. Her work has taken her from the halls of the U.S. State Department to refugee camps in Asia. In 2019, Toosi was a finalist for the National Magazine Award in reporting for her story on the plight of Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh and Myanmar.), “Biden finds his limit on Israel”, Politico, <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/03/27/israel-biden-netanyahu-00089013>] JH – TDI

How are Biden and his aides reacting to all this?

Very, very cautiously.

For the most part, Biden administration officials have tried to keep their conversations with the Israelis private, and, even then, they tend to say things in carefully worded ways.

The administration has — often in a coded manner — warned Netanyahu that he needs to protect Israeli democracy. The administration also has stressed its support for LGBTQ rights and Palestinian rights in ways designed to signal to Netanyahu that he should rein in his extremist allies.

Administration **officials have said they will hold Netanyahu responsible for his coalition,** pointing out that he’s insisted he’s the one in charge. And top administration officials have refused to meet with far-right figures surrounding the Israeli prime minister.

But the **Biden administration also insists that its commitment to Israel’s security is ironclad**. The **president has long said he will not impose conditions on the billions of dollars in security aid the U.S. provides to Israel, and there’s no sign he’s changed his mind about that.**

While the **administration insists that it does have some leverage over Israel** — such as assisting it against attacks at the United Nations or helping it pursue deeper cooperation with some Arab states — the reality is that it has largely stuck to rhetoric as its main weapon.

Is it working?

Not really.

Just days ago, Biden spoke to Netanyahu, and the White House readout of the call emphasized that Biden wanted Israel to find a compromise on the judicial reform issue because it’s critical to safeguarding Israeli democracy.

“Democratic societies are strengthened by genuine checks and balances, and that fundamental changes should be pursued with the broadest possible base of popular support,” the readout said.

It was an unusually frank call, the readout suggested, especially given the usual niceties involved in the relationship. But in the days after, there was no sign that Netanyahu had taken Biden’s warnings to heart.

The Israeli leader proceeded ahead with the judicial reform plans. It wasn’t until Netanyahu’s coalition started to crack amid popular pressure that he began to rethink his stance this past weekend.

#### Empirics prove that conditions are negotiated in favor of Israeli goals – and they weren’t even an official ally then

Wienpahl-Jensen ’14 — Master’s Thesis in History (Beate Wienpahl-Jensen, “Untying the Gordian knot: US policy towards Israel regarding Palestinian property rights from 1947 to 1953,” University of Oslo, Fall 2014

During the early 1950ies, the US State Department tried to find a solution for the problem of compensation to the Palestinian refugees. Stabilization in the Middle East was important to the Americans. In May 1950, the United States, France and Great Britain made a nonaggression agreement related to the arms trade to the Middle Eastern nations. They signed the Tripartite Declaration on May 25. This agreement intended to stabilize the relationship between Israel and its Arab neighbors by “condition arms sales to Middle Eastern states on their willingness to pledge non-aggression.”316 By that, the nations would only be allowed to maintain, “a certain level of armed forces for the purposes of assuring their internal security and their legitimate self[-]defense.”317

The agreement undermined the PCC and its efforts to establish a permanent peace settlement. In addition, it was a de facto recognition of the post-war armistice borders that favored Israel. Despite this, the US did not try to make a more lasting peace between the belligerents, and Israel was in no hurry as long as she benefited from the agreement.318

At the same time as the Tripartite Declaration was signed, President Truman entered into another war. In June 1950, the Korean War broke out, and the US had to shift its foreign policy priority. The Korean conflict reflected the geopolitics of the Cold War, and the United States stood against communism, with the USSR and China as its enemies. The United States’ foreign policy was challenged by the crisis that overshadowed the conflict in the Middle East. For the United States, the Cold War made it important to keep its allies and preferably gain new ones. Israel had always had a Western attitude, but knowing that a great number of Eastern European Jews had immigrated to Israel, Truman had asked Ben-Gurion whether Israel was about to become a “red state”.319

### sd---palestine---1ar

#### US military aid being conditional with Palestine allows for Israeli colonialism to spread.

**Alhamdan 21** Alhamdan, Nooran. Nooran Alhamdan is an MA candidate in Arab studies at Georgetown University. She is currently a graduate research fellow at the Middle East Institute’s Program on Palestine and Palestinian-Israeli Affairs*.*
 “The United States Is Complicit in the Ethnic Cleansing of Sheikh Jarrah.” *Progressive Policy Review*, 7 July 2021, ppr.hkspublications.org/2021/05/10/sheikh-jarrah/.

Over the past few days, the world has watched in horror, over Instagram livestreams, the forced expulsion of Palestinian families from the Jerusalem neighborhood Sheikh Jarrah. Israeli settlers took over the Al-Ghawi family’s home and promised to do the same to the rest of the neighborhood. These armed and ideologically fanatic settlers were under the protection of the Israeli police and had legitimized their theft through lawsuits in Israeli courts, which ruled in the favor of the settlers this past December. For now, Israeli courts have delayed the much-anticipated hearing on the evictions of the Sheikh Jarrah families, giving the families a chance to recoup after weeks of violent settler colonialism. However, the fight to save Sheikh Jarrah will continue until the families of the neighborhood regain their homes and can live without fear of daily settler terror.

Sheikh Jarrah has been coveted by settler organizations since the 1970s in an attempt to increase the amount of private Jewish residency in strategically located areas of occupied East Jerusalem ([**Adalah**](https://www.adalah.org/uploads/oldfiles/newsletter/eng/feb10/docs/Sheikh_Jarrah_Report-Final.pdf)). Nahalat Shimon International, an organization based in the United States, is one of two settler organizations implicated in the ethnic cleansing of Sheikh Jarrah; it intends to demolish the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and replace it with a 200 unit Israeli settlement, according to legal advocacy organization [**Ir Amim**](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/globalministries/legacy_url/12409/Microsoft-Word-Evictions-and-Settlement-Plans-in-Sheikh-Jarrah.pdf?1419975211). The other settler organization, Ateret Cohanim, has a branch registered as an American charity in the United States. A 2015 [***Haaretz* report**](https://www.haaretz.com/does-your-jewish-charity-donate-to-settlements-1.5430962) found that there are over 50 organizations registered as 501(c)(3) tax exempt charities in the United States that have funneled over $200 million dollars to the Israeli settlement enterprise.

In the past few years, Nahalat Shimon has filed several lawsuits against the families of Sheikh Jarrah who have lived there since 1956, all of which have been upheld by Israeli courts. The current deputy mayor of Jerusalem, [**Arieh King**](https://twitter.com/OrenZiv1985/status/1390572090554736640?s=20), is the founder of the Israel Land Fund, which has the expressed goal of settling East Jerusalem with a Jewish population. The Israel Land Fund lists Sheikh Jarrah as an “investing opportunity” on its website under the name “Nachalat Shimon Residential Plots,” which it explicitly claims is “being squatted on by Arabs who have built on them illegally or are renting.”

The Israel Land Fund website states that one of its chief goals is to realize “the desire of Diaspora Jews to take a more active role in redeeming the land of Israel, especially in Jerusalem.” That much can be seen from a [**viral encounter**](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/4/if-i-dont-steal-your-home-someone-else-will-jewish-settler-says) between Sheikh Jarrah native Muna El Kurd and the settler known as Yacob, who speaks to her in a perfect American accent and tells her that if he doesn’t steal her home, someone else will.

How is it acceptable that settler organizations are able to operate freely in the United States while Palestinian charities have been accused of providing [**material support for terrorism?**](https://theintercept.com/2018/08/05/holy-land-foundation-trial-palestine-israel/) How are settlers, many of whom are American citizens, allowed to travel to Jerusalem and other parts of occupied Palestine to partake in violations against international law which include settling occupied land?

The settlement enterprise has been allowed to continue unchecked thanks to the Oslo paradigm. The Oslo Accords are an agreement signed in 1993, in which Israel recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the representative of the Palestinian people and the PLO agreed to recognize Israel. In terms of utility, Oslo was meant to be a first step to later negotiations and a peace treaty, though it was clearly unsuccessful. The United States was successful in manipulating Palestinians to continue pursuing a peace process that Israel itself was not complying with in the slightest; American aid to Palestinians became dependent on fulfilling the parameters of Oslo, which for the Palestinian Authority meant ensuring Israel’s safety and security if they ever wanted to qualify for a state. The United States lambasted Palestinians if they weren’t sufficiently meeting their Oslo requirements, yet throughout the five-year interim period of Oslo, Israel hardly stopped building settlements, one of its stipulated Oslo requirements; in fact, settlement construction increased in the West Bank and East Jerusalem during this time period according to Israeli human rights organization [**B’tselem**](https://www.btselem.org/publications/summaries/199905_oslo_before_and_after).

As it stands now, there are an estimated 620,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The infrastructure required to maintain the apartheid system that keeps these settlers comfortable, from settlement-only-highways to military checkpoints all over the West Bank, has eaten away so aggressively at the land—that the United States insists will one day constitute a Palestinian state—that there is less than 22 percent of the occupied territories that is fully in Palestinian sovereignty. The archipelago of remaining Palestinian land is surrounded by settlements at every corner and its inhabitants are still subject to Israeli military rule.

American administrations may have highlighted that settlements were at the very least problematic, varying in their levels of harshness when scolding Israel, but no American administration has ever been serious about ending the settler enterprise. Trump went the farthest in normalizing the settlements by legitimizing products made on settlements and sending former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to the West Bank to meet with settlers.

There is also, of course, the bipartisan support for unconditional aid packages to Israel; the Obama administration passed the largest military aid package to Israel, promising $38 billion USD over a ten-year period. This funding is used to arm the Israeli military and security forces—which not only commit their own fair share of war crimes and human rights violations, but actively protect and defend illegal settlers making life hell for Palestinians in Hebron, Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied territories. Our tax dollars are explicitly at work when it comes to the settlement enterprise; we’re paying for the security standing guard at the Al-Ghawi house while settlers jeer at the Sheikh Jarrah families from inside.

### sd---say no---1ar

#### Israel says no and exacerbates internal tensions.

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Finally, there is the problem that Israelis under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will almost certainly never agree to the sort of deal that would be necessary to make Palestinian or Arab acceptance even remotely feasible. In the past few years, Netanyahu has stopped even talking about support for the two-state solution, which he first accepted in a highly caveated way in a 2009 speech at Bar Ilan University. A majority of members of the current Israeli cabinet do not even support the creation of a Palestinian state, much less the concessions Israel would need to make to achieve it. And with Netanyahu and his wife the subject of several serious corruption inquiries, the prime minister likely sees his only hope as to keeping that hardline cabinet together to stave off or delay potential indictments. It is far from clear that the Israeli people themselves are prepared to make the major compromises required for peace, including the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of settlers from the West Bank. But it is quite clear that the current Israeli government is not ready to do so. In his interview, Kushner questions whether Abbas has the ability or the willingness to “lean into finishing a deal.” But neither does Netanyahu, and the fact that Kushner only calls out one side is telling. It is itself part of the problem. After 18 months of conversations, assisted by the able Jason Greenblatt, who has consulted a wide variety of experts and officials from all countries, Kushner must know all this. So is he naive or something else? Why would he move forward with a plan with such poor prospects of success? It could be he is operating on the notion that it’s always better to try and fail than not to try at all. But this is also misguided. The only thing worse than not advancing the peace process is raising hopes and expectations only to deflate them soon thereafter. We’ve seen this dynamic play out too many times in the past, from the Camp David summit of 2000 to the Olmert-Abbas talks of 2008 to the Kerry process in 2013-2014, with each failure soon followed by violence. Luckily for Kushner, in this case expectations could not be much lower. But introducing yet another peace plan only to have it pronounced dead on arrival just emboldens opponents of compromise, and even supporters of violence, on both sides. Another reason to proceed would be to blame the Palestinians, rather than the difficult context and Trump’s mistakes, for failure to make “the ultimate deal.” If past is prologue, we can expect the Israeli side to say “yes, but” (while meaning “no way”) and that the Palestinians will fall into the trap of rejecting a U.S. plan or not engaging at all. This would please parts of Trump’s base and may get the administration off the hook for trying, but it would only further divide the Israelis and Palestinians, while exacerbating partisan divides on Israel in the United States as well. Kushner might think Palestinian rejection will slow support for efforts to censure Israel internationally. But this is also wrong. Trump’s total lack of credibility on this issue, after the decisions on Jerusalem and UNRWA in particular, mean that most in Europe and elsewhere will conclude that the Palestinians rejected the plan because it was unfair and not because they are opposed to peace. The lopsided UN vote against Trump’s decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem shows that it is the United States, and not the Palestinians, who are isolated. In fact, the cancellation of a recent soccer match between Israel and Argentina in part because Netanyahu’s government insisted on the political symbolism of holding it in Jerusalem may signal an acceleration in the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel. After all, supporters of BDS may say, if the U.S. supports only one side in the conflict, what else is there left to do? Solidifying this view by introducing a dead-on-arrival peace plan will not do Israel or anyone else any favors. We have devoted many years to working on this issue and worry about the consequences of the status quo, both for Israel’s future as a secure, democratic, and Jewish state and for the future of some 6 million Palestinians. We have seen, and participated in, our share of ill-fated and even ill-advised peace efforts. But the reality is that under present circumstances, with the current Israeli and Palestinian governments, at this point the two-state solution is itself a fantasy. Neither the Palestinian nor Israeli people, nor their leaders, are currently prepared for the compromises required for a deal, and accentuating this reality will only make things worse. In diplomacy, as in medicine, the Hippocratic Oath to “do no harm” can be a worthy principle. Jared Kushner would do well to consider it now.

### turn---lashout---1ar

#### Conditioning aid causes Israeli preemptive first strike.

**Bender 20** [Lt Gen William J. Bender, Usaf (Ret.), 12-30-2020, Lt. General (Ret) William J. Bender currently serves as Senior Vice President – Strategic Account Executives & Government Relations, within the Business Development & Strategy Group at Leidos. "Conditioning U.S. Aid to Israel Would Make Everyone Less Safe," JINSA, <https://jinsa.org/conditioning-u-s-aid-to-israel-would-make-everyone-less-safe/>] jason

Calls for conditioning aid to Israel have gained momentum since Israel proposed—but postponed—extending sovereignty to parts of the West Bank this summer. However, placing additional restrictions on those funds would strain America’s most critical security relationship in the Middle East and be harmful to Palestinians and Israelis alike. The security assistance that the United States provides to Israel directly benefits America’s strategic interest for regional stability and deterring major war. As the United States retrenches from the Middle East, its aid to a capable partner like Israel will only become more important to regional security. In this way, the assistance goes beyond supporting Israel and is also a means for promoting regional security and stability without deploying more American troops. Since the Clinton administration, the United States has planned its foreign military financing (FMF) and missile defense cooperation with Israel through ten-year Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). The Clinton, Bush, and Obama White Houses all maintained a firewall between their policy disagreements with the Israelis and security assistance. Indeed, the Obama administration negotiated both a nuclear agreement with Iran that created tensions with the Israeli government as well as the current U.S.-Israel MoU. This MoU, which covers fiscal years 2019-2028, bolstered the vital bilateral relationship by outlining an unprecedented $33 billion of FMF and $5 billion in missile defense. While MoUs are nonbinding, strong bipartisan majorities in Congress have generally appropriated funds per their terms. This precedent has held regardless of which political party controlled the White House or Congress. However, conditioning aid is a growing idea among those who see U.S-Israel relations primarily through the lens of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their theory is that Washington could leverage its support to change how Israel spends the funds or push Israel’s leadership to make concessions to the Palestinians. Yet, existing U.S. laws already specify that Israel must use U.S. military supplies for self-defense and sets rules for American weapons transferred to foreign countries. In the few instances where U.S. officials have investigated Israel’s operational use of American-made weaponry, they have done so with Israel’s full cooperation. American defense assistance enables Israel to develop and purchase crucial missile defenses and tunnel detection technology. These technologies afford it the strategic patience to interrupt most attacks without initiating ground operations against their source in Gaza or Lebanon. In fact, rather than being used against Palestinians, Israeli equipment purchased through American aid is more likely to help defend them. Missile defense funding has helped Israel develop and acquire Iron Dome, David’s Sling and Arrow batteries and interceptors that effectively protect the skies over the West Bank and Israel proper. Since 2016, the American and Israeli governments have cooperated on tunnel detection technology that the IDF has deployed on the border with Gaza and Lebanon. As a result of this innovation, Israel has destroyed roughly twenty tunnels, including one extending into Israel in October 2020. If withholding these funds means that Israel has less access to valuable technologies and munitions, Jerusalem may launch preemptive but necessary actions to stop attacks on Israeli civilians. Without the defensive systems the MoU allows Israel to purchase, the IDF could have to divert weaponry to Gaza and away from the much-bigger threat from Hezbollah and Iran to its north. In fact, U.S. security guarantees have encouraged Israel to take risks for peace. As President Bill Clinton aptly explained during a 1993 press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, he “has told me that he is prepared to take risks for peace. He has told his own people the same thing. I have told him that our role is to help to minimize those risks. We will do that by further reinforcing our commitment to maintaining Israel’s qualitative military edge.” FMF has also enabled Israel to purchase the F-35 fighter aircraft, which it has used in Syria to stop Iran from proliferating advanced weaponry. More than any other ally, Israeli operations against Iran have rolled back Iranian military expansion and prevented it from building up weapons to Israel’s north that could provoke a regional war that harms both Israeli and U.S. interests.

## assurance da

### uniqueness---1ar

#### Non unique – the US Israel relationship is declining now

Rothkopf 7/24 [(David Rothkopf, produces custom podcasts for clients including the United Arab Emirates. He is also the author of many books including Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power, Superclass, Power, Inc., National Insecurity, Great Questions of Tomorrow, and Traitor: A History of Betraying America from Benedict Arnold to Donald Trump), “This Is the End of the U.S.-Israel ‘Special Relationship’”, The Daily Beast, https://www.thedailybeast.com/this-is-the-end-of-the-us-israel-special-relationship, 7/24/23] OM – TDI

America’s special relationship with Israel has, for the foreseeable future, come to an end.

Many will deny this. Many will hope it is not so. But the damage that has been done cannot be easily undone. A relationship built on shared values cannot be easily restored once it is clear those values are no longer shared.

For years, Israel made the case that it was America’s essential ally in the Middle East because it was the only state in the region that was a democracy—not a theocracy or an autocracy like all its neighbors.

That is no longer the case.

While most of the blame for this turn of events must go to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his extreme right-wing coalition of Jewish nationalists, some falls on America’s leaders who, to varying degrees, for years refused to acknowledge Israel’s drift toward authoritarianism or, for that matter, its serial abuses of millions of the people who lived within the borders it controlled.

As recently as a week ago, only nine people in the U.S. Congress dared stand up to the lie that Israel was not a racist state. This despite decades of denying fundamental human rights to Palestinians in territories over which it asserted power simply because they were Palestinian.

The chorus of American leaders who regularly promised Israel’s leaders we would be with them (no matter what they did) invited Netanyahu and the thugocracy he assembled around him to do their worst. The Israeli leaders knew there was no price to pay. They knew that American aid would keep on coming. They knew American leaders would apologize for or cover up their crimes, block the U.N. from taking action against them, and maintain the myth that they were democratic when becoming less and less so.

It is, of course, galling and revealing that it took the most baldfaced assault on the democratic rights of Jewish Israelis ever to get awareness of the decay within the Israeli polity to the level it is today.

Part of that is due to the natural and warranted support that has long existed for Israel due to its origins as a refuge for Jews escaping the horrors of the Holocaust, and seeking a homeland from which they could control their own destiny. Part of this is due to the fact that Israel was created to be a democracy, built around ideals much like those on which the U.S. was founded. Part of this is due to the fact that Israel was a valued ally during the Cold War, a potent counterforce to Soviet friends in a vital region of the world.

We must also acknowledge that part of the support for Israel was due to the political influence of its supporters among the American electorate, from Zionist Jews to evangelical Christians. Some among these supporters have been particularly effective in making any wavering of support by political leaders seem toxic. This was accomplished via multiple means, but among these were the establishment of bright red lines, such as the argument that failing to support the government of Israel’s ethno-nationalist policies was tantamount to antisemitism.

Politicians in both U.S. parties therefore failed to offer sufficient criticism to Netanyahu as he bulldozed Palestinian settlements or changed Israel’s laws to shift the country in a more theocratic direction.

Even when Netanyahu, frustrated that his support from Democrats was not enthusiastic enough, became overtly partisan—embracing the GOP and, in particular, the MAGA GOP—this continued. Those who criticized Israel were ostracized and condemned. Trump offered Bibi a blank check and in exchange was offered a train station and a settlement named after him.

In recent months, as Netanyahu sought to change Israel’s laws to eviscerate the power and independence of its Supreme Court, while the Biden administration offered stronger and stronger words to warn the Israeli government away from such action, no major changes were made in U.S. plans to continue to provide billions of dollars of military and other forms of aid to Israel. Promises from Netanyahu that (to Israeli observers) were clearly lies were accepted.

More recently, this tolerance of outrageous behavior was seen to fray further when—in the wake of outright lies by Netanyahu about the nature of Biden’s support for him—the U.S. president took the extraordinary step of reaching out to New York Times columnist Tom Friedman to help him communicate the truth of what he had said to the Israeli prime minister, so that Bibi could no longer continue to twist Biden’s words as he had been doing.

But with the passage of the first part of Netanyahu’s plan to strip away the powers of the Israeli Supreme Court, it must be clear that the lies were lies, that the intent is undeniably anti-democratic, that we no longer share the values we once celebrated with Israel, and that the relationship must be reassessed.

Strikingly, some stalwart supporters of the traditional U.S.-Israel relationship, like former U.S. ambassadors to Israel Martin Indyk and Daniel Kurtzer, have said what was previously unthinkable: That the U.S. must consider stopping the provision of military aid to Israel.

They are right. We must consider it. We must, as Tom Friedman has argued in The Times, must use our special history with Israel in support of democracy in that country.

But we need to recognize that Israeli politics have changed, and that while hundreds of thousands of Israelis have taken to the streets to protest the actions of the Netanyahu coalition, the damage that has already been done is likely to be compounded. More aggressive actions to settle the occupied territories using force are likely to follow. More blows against Israeli democracy are likely to follow. Even if the protests gain further momentum, divisions within Israeli politics are likely to remain for a long time to come.

America’s leaders must recognize that the policy of biting their tongues when Israel’s government brutalizes Palestinians‚ or when it has telegraphed its coming attacks on its own democracy—has been a failure.

Stronger steps were called for earlier. Stronger steps are called for now.

Aid to Israel cannot be a blank check. It must be driven by U.S. interests. And currently, the Netanyahu government (which also sat on the fence when the U.S. called for support in Ukraine) is not acting in those interests.

Shockingly, one senior U.S. government official said to me recently that as the U.S. pursued normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia, it was the Israeli government rather than that of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (also known as MBS—a leader with whom they have had bad blood), that was proving the more difficult with which to deal.

U.S. political leaders must finally tune out the specious argument that opposing the actions of a racist Israeli government contemptuous of international law and fundamental human rights is somehow antisemitic. No one is doing more damage to the legitimacy of the state of Israel than the current Israeli government. No one is a greater threat to the state of Israel than Netanyahu and his coalition.

The only way to revive the “special relationship” is to establish that the U.S. and Israel are actually bound together by genuinely shared values. We must be clear about what that means and about the concrete costs of failing to re-establish those values as guiding principles of the Israeli government.

We must also recognize that it means protecting the rights not only of Israeli Jews but of Palestinians, as well, of making democracy and the transparent rule of law available to all who live within the borders—not just of the state of Israel but of the territories over which it exerts its authority. Because giving the Israeli government license to abuse the rights of Palestinians is part of what sent the message that we would tolerate the other abuses they have subsequently committed.

We must also recognize that Netanyahu hopes (and perhaps believes) that he can restore the special relationship by waiting for Donald Trump to be reelected. He knows that a Trump administration would not only be as contemptuous of democracy as he is, but it would be seeking to implement similar policies, in part because Trump (like Netanyahu) shares the desire to use power as a way of avoiding jail time for past crimes.

Of course, the consequence of a restoration of ties based on the further debasement of the principles on which both governments were once founded would mean something much worse than the end of an international relationship. It would mean a devastating blow to democracy and the rule of law worldwide. It would be a catastrophe for both nations and the planet.

We have come to this dangerous moment by failing to acknowledge and actively work to stop the enemies of our values, our standing, and our security. Given the stakes and the precariousness of the current situation in both countries, we must use every legal lever available at our disposal to undo the damage that has already been done and to stop further erosion at the foundations of our societies.

### link & turn---1ar

#### Israel isn’t key to US grand strategy and there’s no risk to reduction in aid---their authors are stuck in the Cold War---but it’s key to strengthening the global alliance network.

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Yet, this generous aid does little to address the main challenges American foreign policy faces today. It is an anachronism during an intense security competition with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and Russia, which are centered in the Indo-Pacific and European regions respectively. The PRC is the United States’ most formidable competitor. It possesses the latent resources and military capabilities to potentially establish hegemony over the Indo-Pacific region and eventually project power beyond. Russia is far weaker but maintains the most formidable military in Europe, an enormous nuclear arsenal, and is actively working on expanding its territory and influence.

The United States must thus focus its resources on the Indo-Pacific and Europe, the only two regions of the globe where great power competitors exist. East Asia and Europe are two areas concentrating tremendous wealth and advanced industries. If a single state were to dominate them, it could assemble enough latent power to potentially outcompete the United States and project power toward the Western Hemisphere. The dormant power of other regions of the globe — Africa, the Middle East, and South America — is more limited, and none of these regions face a local great power plausibly capable of establishing hegemonic control. The Indo-Pacific represents an exceptionally demanding challenge due to the PRC’s growing military superiority over U.S. allies and forward-deployed American forces. Israel plays almost no role in the European and Indo-Pacific theaters and hence matters little in defending core American interests.

Going one step further, the aid to Israel weakens U.S. efforts at containing great power rivals. The United States has been slow to refocus its defense posture toward the Indo-Pacific region while the PRC built up its military power unabated. Furthermore, Russia’s ongoing invasion of Ukraine encouraged the Biden Administration to ramp up its presence in Europe and give large amounts of equipment and money to Kyiv, hence further undermining the American posture in the Indo-Pacific.

Under that context, the United States should redirect the nearly four billion dollars donated annually to Israel to initiatives such as bolstering Taiwan’s defenses or expanding the Philippines’ feeble navy. Alternatively, this money could help reinvigorate the United States’ lackluster effort to grow its navy. The United States should focus its finite resources and bandwidth on the PRC challenge first and, if there are spares, on the Russian one. All other endeavors are peripheral at best.

Many U.S. foreign policy pundits would disagree with that stance. Some argue that U.S. aid is essential to guarantee the survival of Israel. Others may warn that discontinuing the Israel aid would open the door for Iranian aggression. Many more worry about the implications of drawing down assistance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

During the Cold War, Israel was an isolated state in a precarious situation: it faced powerful Arab states like Egypt and Syria with enough offensive capabilities to attempt a blitzkrieg on the country. Today, none of Israel’s neighbors possesses the military wherewithal to destroy it. The threat posed by Egypt disappeared during the 1970s, in no small part thanks to astute American diplomacy. Syria’s once impressive military is only the shadow of its pre-civil war former self. Iran’s conventional forces mostly rely on antiquated weaponry and are poorly prepared for high-intensity offensive warfare. Also, Iran’s territory is far from Israel’s borders; it is ill-placed to attempt an offensive against Israel. Terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah represent a significant risk but lack the firepower to defeat the Israeli military. Even if a major military threat was to materialize near Israel’s borders, Jerusalem could still count on its nuclear arsenal to deter or, in last resort, defeat it. Thus, the current threat level does not justify U.S. aid, and other U.S. partners in Asia or Eastern Europe, like Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, and the Baltic states, are in far more dire situations.

While it enjoys a safer position than many other U.S. partners bordering the PRC and Russia, Israel is also wealthy enough to defend itself without bankrupting the American taxpayer. Its nominal GDP is among the thirty largest economies in the world, ranking above Egypt and Iran. Israel’s per capita wealth places Jerusalem among the most developed countries globally. It is wealthy enough to sustain its current military effort without U.S. aid. Terrorist groups regularly murder innocent Israelis but do not threaten the survival of the Israeli state in the same way a massive foreign army stationed at the border could.

Furthermore, numerous destitute African and Asian countries face large-scale terrorism and yet do not receive massive military aid. Financing the Israeli military made more sense during the Cold War when it faced the existential threat of a significant Arab onslaught encouraged by the Soviet Union. Such a rationale does not exist anymore.

Similarly, the Iran threat argument does not hold up against scrutiny. Israel is not physically exposed to Iranian conventional military power, contrary to other U.S. allies in the region, such as Iraq and the Gulf states. If Iran launched a bid for regional hegemony, Israel would be peripherical to the fight, likely focusing on closer neighbors like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Israel more directly confronts Iran’s influence through pro-Iran paramilitary groups operating in Lebanon and Syria. Although these groups pose some security risks, they do not pose existential threats since they lack the wherewithal to defeat the Israeli military, which can deal with them without U.S. aid. If the United States is seriously concerned about Iranian aggression, pushing for a regional alliance to counterbalance Iran would likely be a more efficient, less tax-dollar-consuming endeavor. A determined local coalition could contain Iran without direct U.S. involvement.

In fact, the unwavering commitment to Israel’s foreign policy preferences pushes the United States toward conflict with Iran, which is not in the U.S. national security interest. Whether Iran becomes an aspiring local hegemon, or a nuclear state is almost irrelevant to the United States. The core of U.S. foreign policy since at least World War I has been to prevent the appearance of a hegemon in Asia or Europe. In that sense, the PRC and, secondarily, Russia are far more significant challenges than Iran. If anything, Washington should build friendly relations with Iran, so it does not align with the PRC and Russia and disrupt American efforts to contain Chinese and Russian power. An affable Iran could even help keep the Chinese and Russians away from the Gulf and maintain regional security as it did before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Finally, drawing down aid to Israel will unlikely worsen the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel is far stronger than the Palestinian Authority, which does not even muster a regular military. Violent armed bands roam the West Bank, but Israel employs law enforcement and counterinsurgency capabilities to deal with them, not the high-end conventional warfare platforms bought by U.S. assistance. Ending the U.S. aid thus will not weaken the Israeli position.

The other way around, stopping the aid should sweeten relations between the United States, the Palestinians, and the Muslim world in general. The Palestinians overwhelmingly view U.S. policy as supportive of Israel and its creeping annexation of the West Bank. Military aid to Israel has long poisoned the U.S. relationship with the Muslim world and gives ammunition to extremist groups. If the United States ended its massive aid to Israel, it would reduce regional defiance against U.S. interests. It is also in the U.S. interest to play the mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian and other regional conflicts.

Ending Israel’s windfall of tax dollars does not entail abandoning good relations with Jerusalem. The United States should maintain close ties with Israel and engage in beneficial cooperation. Selling weapons to Jerusalem is profitable for American companies and ensures that Jerusalem remains capable enough to maintain the balance of power in the Middle East. At a time of intense great power competition, keeping a leader in advanced technologies like Israel out of Chinese or Russian influence is also important. Israel excels in several critical technological sectors, and the United States should prevent Russia and especially the PRC from profiting from Israeli industrial and military prowess.

The massive campaign of U.S. aid to Israel has outlived its original purpose and is now impeding Washington’s effort to outcompete great power rivals. Although the United States should strive to maintain excellent relations with Israel, offering billions of dollars yearly provides no apparent benefit. At the same time, it reduces U.S. resources available for defending the Indo-Pacific and Europe. Policymakers and experts should urgently debate whether the current aid to Israel serves the national interest and discontinue it if it does not.

### link turn---ukraine---1ar

#### Plan key to free Israel ammo for Ukraine

Schmitt et al. 1/17 [(Eric is a senior correspondent covering national security for The New York Times. Since 2007, he has reported on national security and terrorism issues with assignments to West Africa, the Middle East, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Southeast Asia.) “Pentagon Sends U.S. Arms Stored in Israel to Ukraine,” New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/17/us/politics/ukraine-israel-weapons.html, 1/17/23] ES - TDI

WASHINGTON — **The Pentagon is tapping into a vast but little-known stockpile of American ammunition in Israel to help meet Ukraine’s dire need for artillery shells in the war with Russia**, American and Israeli officials say.

The stockpile provides arms and ammunition for the Pentagon to use in Middle East conflicts. The United States has also allowed Israel to access the supplies in emergencies.

The Ukraine conflict has become an artillery-driven war of attrition, with each side lobbing thousands of shells [every day](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/world/europe/ukraine-bakhmut-strategy.html). **Ukraine has**[run low on munitions for its Soviet-era weaponry](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/10/world/europe/ukraine-ammo-shortage-artillery.html)**and has largely shifted to firing artillery and rounds** donated by the United States **and other Western allies.**

**Artillery constitutes the backbone of ground combat firepower for both Ukraine and Russia, and the war’s outcome may hinge on which side runs out of ammunition first, military analysts say.** With stockpiles in the United States strained and [American arms makers](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/18/us/politics/defense-contractors-ukraine-russia.html) not yet able to keep up with the pace of Ukraine’s battlefield operations, the Pentagon has turned to two alternative supplies of shells to bridge the gap: one in South Korea and the one in Israel, whose use in the Ukraine war has not been previously reported.

The shipment of hundreds of thousands of artillery shells from the two stockpiles to help sustain Ukraine’s war effort is a story about the limits of America’s industrial base and the diplomatic sensitivities of two vital U.S. allies that have publicly committed not to send lethal military aid to Ukraine.

**Israel**[has consistently refused to supply weapons](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/middleeast/israel-ukraine-russia.html)**to Ukraine out of fear of damaging relations with Moscow and initially expressed concerns about appearing complicit in arming Ukraine if the Pentagon drew its munitions from the stockpile.** About half of the 300,000 rounds destined for Ukraine have already been shipped to Europe and will eventually be delivered through Poland, Israeli and American officials said.

As senior defense and military officials from dozens of nations, including NATO states, prepare to meet at Ramstein Air Base in Germany on Friday to discuss sending Ukraine more tanks and other arms, **U.S. officials have been scrambling behind the scenes to cobble together enough shells to keep Kyiv sufficiently supplied this year**, including through an anticipated spring offensive.

“With the front line now mostly stationary, artillery has become the most important combat arm,” Mark F. Cancian, a former White House weapons strategist, said in [a new study](https://www.csis.org/analysis/rebuilding-us-inventories-six-critical-systems?utm_source=Daily%20on%20Defense%20(01132023)_01/13/2023&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=WEX_Daily%20on%20Defense&rid=72597&env=7456a7961a7470504d863d941734a04ee54603df0bf3cb637eeb4cd5e75db6d7) for the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, where he is a senior adviser.

Another [analysis](https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/12/how-the-battle-for-the-donbas-shaped-ukraines-success/) published last month by the Foreign Policy Research Institute said that **if Ukraine continued to receive a steady supply of ammunition, particularly for artillery, as well as spare parts, it would stand a good chance of wresting back more territory that Russia had seized.**

“The question is whether these advantages will prove sufficient for Ukrainian forces to retake territory from entrenched Russian troops,” wrote Rob Lee and Michael Kofman, leading military analysts.

The State of the War

Drone Attacks in Moscow: The Russian authorities said they [destroyed two attack drones targeting central Moscow](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/24/world/europe/explosions-moscow-drones.html?action=click&pgtype=Article&state=default&module=styln-russia-ukraine&variant=show&region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&block=storyline_top_links_recirc) in what they called a strike by Ukrainian forces. Two buildings were hit but there were no reports of casualties.

A Barrage on Odesa: The civilian toll is rising in the Ukrainian port city that has been [under relentless attack](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/23/world/europe/odesa-cathedral-missile.html?action=click&pgtype=Article&state=default&module=styln-russia-ukraine&variant=show&region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&block=storyline_top_links_recirc) by Russian forces after the Kremlin [pulled out of an agreement](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/17/world/europe/ukraine-grain-deal-russia-war.html?action=click&pgtype=Article&state=default&module=styln-russia-ukraine&variant=show&region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&block=storyline_top_links_recirc) that allowed for the export of Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea.

Wagner Mutiny Aftermath: Russian investigators [detained a leading nationalist critic of Russia’s conduct of the war in Ukraine](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/21/world/europe/igor-girkin-strelkov-detained-russia-war.html?action=click&pgtype=Article&state=default&module=styln-russia-ukraine&variant=show&region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&block=storyline_top_links_recirc), in a sign that the brief rebellion by Wagner mercenaries in June has further reduced tolerance of any dissent, even among those who support Moscow’s invasion.

**Arming the Ukrainian military with enough artillery ammunition is part of a larger American-led effort to increase its overall combat power** by also providing more precision long-range weapons, Western tanks and [armored fighting vehicles](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2023/01/05/world/russia-ukraine-news/what-is-the-bradley-fighting-vehicle), and combined arms training.

The United States has so far sent or pledged to send Ukraine just over one million 155-millimeter shells. A sizable portion of that — though less than half — has come from the stockpiles in Israel and South Korea, a senior U.S. official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss operational matters.

Other Western countries, including Germany, Canada, Estonia and Italy, have sent 155-millimeter shells to Ukraine.

The Ukrainian army uses [about 90,000 artillery rounds a month](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/25/us/ukraine-artillery-breakdown.html), about twice the rate they are being manufactured by the United States and European countries combined, U.S. and Western officials say. The rest must come from other sources, including existing stockpiles or commercial sales.

Mr. Kofman said in an interview that without adjustments to how the Ukrainian military fights, future Ukrainian offensives might require significantly more artillery ammunition to make progress against entrenched Russian defenses.

“The U.S. is making up the difference from its stockpiles, but that’s doubtfully a sustainable solution,” said Mr. Kofman, who is the director of Russian studies at CNA, a research institute in Arlington, Va. “It means the U.S. is taking on risk elsewhere.”

Pentagon officials say they must ensure that even as they arm Ukraine, American stockpiles do not dip to dangerously low levels. According to two senior Israeli officials, the United States has promised Israel that it will replenish what it takes from the warehouses in its territory and would immediately ship ammunition in a severe emergency.

“We are confident that we will continue to be able to support Ukraine for as long as it takes,” Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder, the Pentagon spokesman, [told reporters last week](https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3267095/pentagon-press-secretary-air-force-brig-gen-pat-ryder-holds-an-on-camera-press/). “And we’re confident that we’ll be able to continue to maintain the readiness levels that are vital to defending our nation.”

General Ryder told The New York Times in a statement on Tuesday that the Pentagon “will not discuss the location or units providing the equipment or materiel,” citing operational security reasons.

**And those war reserve stockpiles are playing a pivotal role.**

**When last year the Pentagon first raised the idea of withdrawing munitions from the stockpile, Israeli officials expressed concern about Moscow’s reaction.**

**Israel has imposed**[a near-total embargo on selling weapons to Ukraine](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/us/politics/pegasus-israel-ukraine-russia.html)**, fearing that Russia might retaliate by using its forces** in Syria to limit Israeli airstrikes aimed at Iranian and Hezbollah forces there.

**Israel’s relationship with Russia**[has come under close scrutiny](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/middleeast/israel-ukraine-russia.html)**since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine last February, and Ukrainian officials have called out Israel’s government for offering their country only limited support and** bowing to Russian pressure**.**

As the war dragged on, the Pentagon and the Israelis reached an agreement to move about 300,000 155-millimeter shells, Israeli and American officials said.

The American desire to move the munitions was officially submitted in an encrypted phone conversation between the U.S. secretary of defense, Lloyd J. Austin III, and Benny Gantz, the Israeli minister of defense at the time, according to an Israeli official who was briefed on the details of the conversation.

Mr. Gantz brought the issue to the Israeli cabinet. The officials asked to hear the opinion of the defense establishment, whose representatives recommended accepting the plan to avoid tension with the United States, in part because the ammunition was American property. Yair Lapid, then the prime minister, approved the request at the end of the discussion.

The **Israeli officials said that** Israel had not changed its policy of not providing Ukraine **with lethal weapons and rather was acceding to an American decision to use its own ammunition as it saw fit.**

“Based on a U.S. request, certain equipment was transferred to the U.S. D.O.D. from its stockpiles” in Israel, a spokesman for the Israeli Defense Forces said in a statement, referring to the Department of Defense.

The stockpile of American military hardware and munitions in Israel has its origins in the [1973 Arab-Israeli War](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/11/world/middleeast/11israel.html), which saw the United States airlifting weapons to resupply Israeli forces.

After the war, the United States established warehouses in Israel so that it could rely on them if it were again caught in a crisis. A strategic memorandum signed by the two countries in the 1980s paved the way for the “pre-positioning” of Pentagon assets in Israel, according to two former U.S. officials and a former senior Israeli military officer with direct knowledge of the agreement.

#### That outweighs---the whole world is looking to Ukraine.

Einhorn ’22 — Robert; Senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, previously served as assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation in the Clinton administration and the secretary of state’s special adviser for nonproliferation and arms control in the Obama administration. October 2022; "Will Russia’s War on Ukraine Spur Nuclear Proliferation?"; *Arms Control Association*; https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2022-10/features/russias-war-ukraine-spur-nuclear-proliferation

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine upended many of the norms and expectations essential to the success of the global nuclear nonproliferation regime.

In his August 1 address to the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken referred to the potentially damaging impact of the invasion: “So what message does this send to any country around the world that may think that it needs to have nuclear weapons to protect, to defend, to deter aggression against its sovereignty and independence? The worst possible message.”1 According to foreign affairs columnist David Ignatius the Russian war “might prove the greatest stimulus to nuclear proliferation in history.”2 Similar concerns are shared by many other experts.3

Such proliferation pessimism in the midst of Russia’s brutal effort to erase Ukraine as an independent state is understandable. Some non-nuclear-weapon states under threat from hostile nuclear powers may reconsider whether they need their own nuclear deterrent to guarantee their security. Moreover, the perception that Russian President Vladimir Putin’s nuclear saber-rattling succeeded in deterring NATO’s direct intervention in the conflict may reinforce the determination of nuclear-armed states such as North Korea to hold on to their nuclear weapons. It also may increase the fears of non-nuclear-weapon states that are potential victims of nuclear power aggression that they could be left without a nuclear protector and forced to fend for themselves.

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#### Still time for diplomacy, plenty of options and it works better than military action, specifically related to israel!

Davenport 3-10 [(Kelsey Davenport, Kelsey Davenport (@KelseyDav) is the Director for Nonproliferation Policy at the Arms Control Association, where she focuses on the nuclear and missile programs in Iran, North Korea, India, and Pakistan and on international efforts to prevent proliferation and nuclear terrorism. She also reports on developments in these areas for Arms Control Today and runs the Arms Control Association’s project assessing the effectiveness of multilateral voluntary initiatives that contribute to nonproliferation efforts) “Still Time for Diplomacy: Nuclear Negotiations with Iran Are Imperative”, Just Security, <https://www.justsecurity.org/85410/still-time-for-diplomacy-nuclear-negotiations-with-iran-are-imperative/>, 3/10/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)’s recent detection of uranium enriched to near weapons-grade levels in Iran should send a strong message to the United States and Europe that it is necessary to ratchet up diplomatic efforts to reduce the risk of a nuclear-armed Iran. While the spike in enrichment did lead the agency to begin negotiations on additional transparency measures with Iran, these steps alone are insufficient to mitigate the growing proliferation threat and stabilize the current crisis. It is imperative that the United States look to build on the positive momentum generated by the IAEA’s efforts to pursue additional steps to deescalate tensions. From a technical perspective, Iran can now build a bomb more quickly than at any point in its history, if it made the decision to do so and undertook the necessary weaponization activity. This risk is amplified by domestic and geopolitical factors that might lead Tehran to conclude that the perceived security benefits of nuclear weapons outweigh the cost it will pay for developing them. Since protests broke out in September, Iran has accused the West of supporting regime change objectives. Tehran may come to view nuclear weapons as necessary to deter foreign interference in its domestic politics and to preserve the current regime. Further acts of sabotage and the growing threat of military action against Iran’s nuclear program could also lead Tehran to determine that nuclear weapons are necessary to prevent future attacks. While the combination of technical factors and political drivers increases the threat of proliferation, there is still time for diplomacy. Nothing in the IAEA’s Feb. 28 report suggests that Iran is accumulating uranium enriched to 84 percent, a level that can be used for nuclear weapons but is just shy of the 90 percent considered weapons grade–or that it is about to make a dash for the bomb. Central Intelligence Agency Director William Burns also said on Feb. 26 that there is no evidence that Iran has made a decision to pursue nuclear weapons. At the same time, Iran’s attempt to explain the presence of the 84 percent enriched particles as an “unintended” fluctuation in its 60 percent enrichment at Fordow strains credulity. But whether accidental or intentional, the enrichment to 84 percent highlights the challenge in discerning whether Tehran’s actions are intended to build leverage in future negotiations or to inch closer toward a nuclear-weapons threshold capability. Either way, Iran’s actions increase the risk of miscalculation and conflict. While restoring the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, would roll back Iran’s most proliferation sensitive activities, it is not a viable option at this time. The political space in the United States and the E3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) for restoring the JCPOA has narrowed significantly since talks stalled in August over Iran’s extraneous demands. The United States and Europe are understandably focused on condemning Iran’s brutal crackdown on domestic protesters and countering Tehran’s support for Moscow’s war in Ukraine. But these policy goals and preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons are not mutually exclusive. If Iran develops nuclear weapons, or is about to cross that threshold, it will be more difficult to counter Tehran’s destabilizing activities and domestic repression. The Status Quo is Unsustainable Since negotiations to restore the JCPOA stalled in August, the proliferation risk posed by Iran’s advancing nuclear program has grown significantly. Further escalation appears inevitable. The Raisi government has made clear it will continue to respond to perceived provocations by ratcheting up its nuclear activities. With several likely flashpoints in the coming months, the nuclear crisis will deepen and the risk of conflict increase. The IAEA’s Board of Governors is under growing pressure to take further action against Iran for stonewalling agency inquiries into the country’s pre-2003 nuclear activities that should have been declared to the IAEA. The IAEA Board censured Iran twice in 2022 for failing to cooperate and each time Tehran retaliated, first by reducing monitoring of its nuclear activities and then by announcing it would ratchet up enrichment at the fortified Fordow site. IAEA Director General Rafeal Mariano Grossi did announce that Iran and the IAEA discussed concrete measures to advance the investigation during his March 4 trip to Tehran. However, the spokesperson for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran swiftly refuted Grossi’s characterization of the discussion, suggesting that, yet again, there is no agreed upon path to close the investigation and that it will remain an area of tension. The Biden administration suggested in November that the Board will need to refer Iran to the Security Council, a logical next step, if Tehran fails to provide the IAEA with credible responses. While the IAEA Board is not required to take this step, failure to escalate after years of Iran stalling would undermine the agency and set a poor precedent for future cases of proliferation, even if Russia is likely to veto any new resolution targeting Iran. Another flash point will likely come in October, when United Nations (U.N.) Security Council sanctions targeting Iran’s missile program are set to expire. Under Resolution 2231, Iran is prohibited from selling missiles and drones capable of delivering a nuclear weapon and certain technologies pertinent to building those systems without prior approval. The United States, the E3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom), and Ukraine have accused Iran of violating Resolution 2231 by selling drones to Russia, which Moscow is using against civilian targets in Ukraine. If Tehran continues to provide military support for Moscow and transfers additional drones, or possibly even ballistic missiles, it will be politically challenging for the United States and the E3 to allow the U.N. sanctions to expire, even though the measures have proven ineffective in halting Iran’s illicit weapons sales. As permanent Security Council members and parties to the JCPOA, the United Kingdom or France could initiate “snapback” of U.N. sanctions without the full support of the permanent five members under an innovative mechanism in Resolution 2231 that ensures reimposition of sanctions cannot be vetoed. In response to such a move, Tehran may follow through on threats to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which legally prohibits the country from developing nuclear weapons. It is imperative to deescalate the current crisis before Tehran acts on this threat and further accelerates its nuclear activities. Even if Iran chooses not to escalate the crisis, the status quo is unsustainable. At present, the time it would take for Tehran to produce sufficient weapons-grade uranium for one nuclear bomb – the “breakout” time – is less than one week (it was 12 months when the JCPOA was fully implemented). While this short breakout time is concerning, one nuclear weapon does not provide Iran with a nuclear deterrent. If Iran’s program continues at its current pace, however, there is a risk that Tehran could stockpile sufficient amounts of highly-enriched uranium to build multiple nuclear weapons quickly. In a Feb. 28 IAEA report, the agency noted that Iran has 87 kilograms of uranium enriched to 60 percent and 435 kilograms enriched to 20 percent. That is likely enough for Iran to produce four nuclear weapons in less than a month. As that timeframe decreases, risk will increase. Breakout time is also important because disrupting the acquisition of nuclear material is the best option for preventing a country from developing nuclear weapons. Enrichment occurs at known, declared facilities. It is more difficult to detect and disrupt the weaponization process, which could take as little as six months or more likely a year, because Tehran would divert the material to covert sites. To date, the United States and Israel have been willing to tolerate the risk posed by Iran’s short breakout timeline. But if Iran begins enriching to weapons-grade levels or can rapidly produce enough material for multiple weapons, threat perceptions will shift. Israeli officials are already suggesting that military strikes may be “necessary” within the next year or two if Iran continues on its current nuclear trajectory (of course, the use of force absent an armed attack or imminent threat thereof would itself be unlawful, and would likely precipitate further conflict). Toward A New Diplomatic Approach Given the uncertain political commitment to the JCPOA in Washington and Tehran and urgency of the proliferation risk, the United States and its European partners need a new diplomatic strategy. The most feasible option given political constraints in Washington would likely be a gesture-for-gesture approach that focuses on stabilizing the current crisis through unilateral measures that freeze or roll back the status quo. While similar measures could be negotiated in an interim deal, like the arrangement that stabilized Iran’s nuclear escalation in 2013 and created space for negotiations on the JCPOA, an interim deal may be more time consuming to negotiate and politically challenging in the current environment. To be sure, calibrating a gesture-for-gesture approach will not be easy and it is not a long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis. It is designed to deescalate the current crisis and create the time and space for further negotiations. Those talks could be focused on restoring the JCPOA, but more likely a new paradigm will be necessary. So what types of gestures should each side pursue at the outset? Restoration of the Additional Protocol The Biden administration and remaining JCPOA participants should first encourage Iran to permit increased monitoring of its nuclear program. Additional verification measures would provide further assurance that Iran is not deviating from its declared nuclear activities—an objective made all the more necessary after Tehran was caught in January reconfiguring centrifuges at Fordow without notifying the IAEA—and deter diversion. Currently, Iran is implementing its comprehensive safeguards agreement, as legally required by the NPT. Under that agreement, inspectors have access to facilities in Iran where nuclear materials are present. This agreement provides assurance that the IAEA will detect weapons-grade enrichment—eventually—but it is insufficient to ensure that Iran’s nuclear program is entirely peaceful and that there is no diversion. Under a December 2020 law, Iran suspended implementation of its more intrusive safeguards agreement, known as the additional protocol, and a number of other JCPOA-specific measures, such as continuous surveillance at certain nuclear sites. As a result, IAEA inspectors have not been able to access certain locations that support Iran’s nuclear program but do not contain nuclear materials–such as centrifuge production facilities–since February 2021. The IAEA has raised concerns about the implications of this gap. It escalated its warning about the implications of this step in its Feb. 28 report, which said for the first time that the agency will be unable to reconstruct an accurate history of Iran’s nuclear activities. The report went on to warn that there will be a high degree of uncertainty in reestablishing baselines for certain materials such as centrifuge components and uranium ore concentrate. This has implications for diplomacy. It will be more challenging, for instance, for the IAEA to quickly and confidently verify Iran’s compliance with limits under either a restored JCPOA or a new deal. Restoring the additional protocol would be the most straightforward option to give inspectors access to the sites and information necessary to provide assurance that Iran’s nuclear program is peaceful. The E3 urged Iran to take that step as a confidence building measure last year. However, the December 2020 law required Tehran to suspend that additional protocol and other JCPOA specific measures if the parties to the JCPOA failed to take steps on sanctions, including the normalization of bank relations and the sale of Iranian oil products. This suggests that the Raisi government may be unwilling or unable to resume any monitoring required by the JCPOA without the level of relief enumerated in the law. But the Biden administration is unlikely to remove the oil and banking sanctions, which are significant sources of U.S. leverage, following solely restoration of the additional protocol. Other Monitoring and Verification Options A more feasible option in a gesture-for-gesture approach would be to look at monitoring and verification options that exist outside of the JCPOA or were not included in the December 2020 law. JCPOA participants could also look to build on the recent transparency measures that Grossi announced after his March 3-4 trip to Tehran. The March 4 statement from the IAEA and the AEOI said that Iran agreed to “further appropriate verification and monitoring activities.” Specifically, Grossi said Iran and the IAEA agreed to increasing the frequency of inspections at Fordow and reinstalling surveillance equipment that Iran disconnected, such as cameras and monitors that track enrichment in real-time (OLEMs). While Grossi said the details are still being negotiated, any increase in monitoring at this stage is useful. Reinstalling cameras at sites that the IAEA has not had access to since February 2021, for instance, would assist IAEA efforts to reconstruct a history of Iran’s nuclear program during the monitoring gap and to potentially deter diversion. A new U.S. diplomatic strategy could seek first to build on this success to ensure optimal benefits. It is not clear, for instance, whether the IAEA will have regular access to the data collected by the surveillance cameras. Iran allowed cameras to operate from Feb. 2021 to June 2022, but the IAEA was not able to access that data and Iran said it would only hand it over if the JCPOA were restored. It is also unclear whether an online enrichment monitor will be installed at Fordow, as there was not a machine there in the past. Reconnecting the OLEMs would help ensure timely detection of any enrichment beyond the declared levels. The challenges the IAEA is facing in obtaining an explanation for the 84 percent enriched particles underscores the benefits of the OLEMs. If the negotiated modalities do not include regular access to surveillance data, access to the previous recordings, and an OLEM at Fordow, these proposals could be pursued in an initial round of gestures. Additionally, a less politically sensitive alternative for increasing inspections would be for Iran and the IAEA to negotiate technical visits. Technical visits are voluntary arrangements whereby the state allows the IAEA access beyond what is permitted in a safeguard’s agreement. Technical visits to facilities that fall outside of the sites covered by the comprehensive safeguards could help provide assurance that Tehran is not diverting materials for a covert program and assist the agency in reestablishing a baseline in the future. Increased transparency also benefits Tehran. Given the advanced state of Iran’s nuclear program and how quickly the country could breakout, the risk of Tehran miscalculating its space to maneuver and crossing a redline is increasing. Greater clarity about Iran’s actions and greater assurance that breakout will be detected rapidly reduces the risk that the United States, or more likely Israel, will resort to kinetic action to halt the country’s nuclear advances. Capping Stockpiles in Gas Form Beyond additional monitoring, which should be the primary priority, the United States should pursue additional gestures that maintain a longer breakout timeline for several nuclear weapons and freeze enrichment capacity at Fordow. Given that Iran views its stockpiles of HEU as one of its most significant sources of leverage, it is unlikely to give the materials up in a “gesture-for-gesture” or interim deal. The Biden administration could propose limits on the size of the stockpiles kept in gas form (the form necessary for further enrichment) that reduces immediate proliferation risk by preventing Tehran from breaking out quickly to several nuclear weapons, while allowing Iran to retain its leverage. Tehran could blend down or convert to powder material produced at more than those levels. Increased transparency would also provide greater assurance that any attempt to divert the material stored in gas form or enrich it further would be quickly detected, reducing the risk posed by limited gas stocks in the country. Limits at Fordow Limits on Iran’s deployment of IR-6 centrifuges at Fordow should also be considered. In November, Iran announced its intentions to install 14 cascades of IR-6 centrifuges and enrich uranium to 60 percent at that location. Currently, there are two cascades of IR-6 centrifuges and six cascades of the much less efficient IR-1 centrifuges installed at the facility. While the IAEA confirmed that Iran is enriching to 60 percent at Fordow, it is not clear how quickly it will install the 14 cascades of IR-6 centrifuges. As of the Feb. 28 IAEA report, Tehran has not installed any additional IR-6s at the site. Regardless of the pace of IR-6 installation, increasing the enrichment level and capacity at Fordow is significant because of the location of the facility. Fordow was built into the mountains near Qom, likely for the purpose of producing nuclear materials for weapons. It is a hardened facility that would be challenging to target with a military strike, particularly for Israel. For those reasons, Iran was prohibited from enriching uranium at the site for 15 years under the JCPOA. Limiting capacity at Fordow decreases the likelihood of Iran using it to breakout in a manner that would be more challenging to disrupt. Limited Sanctions Relief For their own part, the United States and its European allies should be willing to undertake limited sanctions relief commensurate with the technical steps Iran is willing to take. This could include limited oil sales and the unfreezing of Iranian assets held abroad. Allowing certain regional trade may be another route for providing Iran with limited relief. Where possible, Washington and its partners should support the provision of humanitarian aid, as well as economic policies that benefit and empower Iran’s middle- and working classes that have long borne the brunt of sanctions. An Unpalatable Necessity While the Biden administration continues to profess its support for a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis, it will face severe criticism for engaging with the Raisi government, or for implementing any unilateral gestures that provide Iran with monetary benefits. Critics of diplomacy that are pushing for the United States to refrain from negotiations with Iran, or gestures that could stabilize the current crisis, argue that such actions legitimize the current regime. But as unpalatable as these steps may be, the alternatives – possible military action or the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran – are worse. The status quo, whereby Iran advances its nuclear program and the United States increases sanctions, is unsustainable. The risk will likely rise to the point where the United States, or more likely Israel, decides to take military action to reduce the threat. Israeli officials have publicly suggested that a strike will be necessary within the next two years. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Feb. 21 that the only thing that has stopped “rogue nations from developing nuclear weapons is a credible military threat or a credible military action.” The Biden administration has made clear it will use military force to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran if necessary, but proponents of this strategy should also be clear about the likely consequences of that route. Military strikes or sabotage could reduce proliferation risks in the short- to medium-term, but Iran previously has responded to sabotage attempts by further ratcheting up its nuclear activities. A military strike against key facilities may also lead Tehran to assess that nuclear weapons are necessary to preserve its own sovereignty and territorial integrity. Strikes could also escalate into a broader conflict, with a devastating impact on the Iranian people, regional countries, and the many U.S. troops in striking range. Given the gravity of these consequences, the United States and its European partners must pursue every diplomatic avenue to deescalate the nuclear crisis. The IAEA’s recent success in negotiating additional transparency measures provides an important window of opportunity to capitalize on the current momentum and pursue further steps that reduce risks. It is past time the urgency of diplomacy matched the urgency of the proliferation risk – and the risk of disastrous military conflict if that risk is ignored.

#### The “Middle Eastern Exception” causes erosion of regional and global democracy, Russian and Chinese fill-in, and loss of American credibility

**El Kurd 23** [(Dana El Kurd, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Richmond) “There should be no more Middle East exception in US policy,” Al Jazeera, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/1/18/there-should-be-no-more-middle-east-exception-in-us-policy, January 18, 2023] sterling TDI

Much has been written about the changing role of the United States as a global power. President Joe Biden and his administration have made repeated statements about reclaiming the US position as leader of the “free world” and promoter of democracy. This has come amid growing authoritarian trends across the globe, in part due to the increased influence of countries like Russia and China.

But one facet of American foreign policy and grand strategy seems to remain unaffected by this renewed effort to promote democracy: the US approach towards the Arab world.

The Biden administration seems to be just as lukewarm about democracy in the region as its predecessors. Although it has emphasised the importance of democracy to its foreign policy, it has essentially refused to hold human rights violators in the Middle East accountable – even when this affects American citizens.

Moreover, on the question of Palestine, another issue of importance to Arab nations which is directly related to democracy, the Biden administration has not changed track either. It continues to back the Israeli government, its occupation and apartheid, and its regional policies which undermine local democratic movements. Worse still, despite being critical of the Trump administration, Biden appears to be an enthusiastic supporter of its disastrous concessions to Israel.

The US embassy in Jerusalem remains and will continue to expand on [stolen Palestinian land](https://theintercept.com/2022/12/15/us-embassy-israel-biden-jerusalem/). The statements of “deep concern” over each new display of Israeli fascism at this point do nothing more than evoke expected derision. Most importantly, the US continues to push for an expansion of the Abraham Accords, despite the fact that it is perfectly clear they are nothing more than an authoritarian alliance.

The Middle Eastern exception to the American democracy-promotion strategy remains, and there seems to be little appetite among American decision-makers to apply the same ideas of sustainable global order to this troubled region.

This does not go unnoticed in the Arab world itself. Rulers now fully understand the limitations of heavily relying on their partnership with the US. In Washington, there was much consternation and rending of garments when Saudi Arabia demonstrated alignment with China on a variety of policy issues. Israeli politicians have also expressed their interest in [better relations with Moscow](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/12/israel-and-russia-may-forge-closer-ties-under-netanyahu), in spite of American kowtowing on the issue of Palestine.

Citizens of the region are also aware of the failed American strategy and blatant hypocrisy. They do not believe that the US is a bulwark against authoritarian forces. That much is apparent from the results of the eighth Arab Opinion Index conducted by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in Qatar in 14 Arab countries.

According to the survey report, released earlier this month, the percentage of Arabs who think democracy is the best system of governance for their countries has grown from 67 percent in 2011 to 72 percent in 2022. But that does not mean that they see a role for the US in helping the region achieve democratic development.

Some 78 percent consider the US the biggest source of threat and instability in the region. By contrast, 57 percent think of Iran in these terms and 57 percent of Russia. This is despite the Iranian-backed crackdown on the Tishreen Revolution in Iraq in 2019-20 and its destabilising role across the region and the Russian bombardment of civilians in Syria over the past seven years.

Bottom of Form

American policymakers should consider what these numbers imply. The US’s reputation is so bad and so synonymous with hypocrisy that Arab respondents view actors like Iran and Russia as less threatening. But what is worse, perhaps, is how these views have become cemented across generations of Arab citizens.

Those who witnessed or participated in the Arab Spring have internalised disappointment with the American position, which was pro-democracy in rhetoric only and in reality, was supportive of authoritarianism.

Now a new generation of Arabs, who have demonstrated their own capacity for political mobilisation, is adopting the same views. The US has maintained policies that are hostile to pro-democracy forces in the region, whether in supporting regimes that facilitate repression transnationally or backing Israeli oppression of the Palestinians.

The Arab world continues to be rife with conflict, Arab regimes are largely failing to provide basic services and guarantee rights, and Arab citizens understandably see no benefit to American leadership on the world stage. Such widespread attitudes may not only undermine American interests in the region, but also pose a risk to the broader international system.

As American legitimacy deteriorates, this leaves a vacuum for other powers – such as Russia and China – to advance their interests and their anti-democracy ideologies, both in the Arab world and across the globe. Moreover, the prospect of democracy becomes less attractive to nations when the primary advocate for such an idea worldwide, the US, is seen as hypocritical. And as democracy recedes, this bodes poorly for the level of violence, conflict, and instability we will see in the future.

### at: iran prolif---1ar

#### Even if Iran gets Nukes they won’t use them and it results in regional deterrence

Daoud 20 [(David Daoud, United Against Nuclear Iran’s (UANI’s) Lebanon and Hezbollah Research Analyst) “Iran Could Pursue a Nuclear Weapon to Restore Deterrence Lost in Suleimani Strike”, The National Interest, https://nationalinterest.org/blog/middle-east-watch/iran-could-pursue-nuclear-weapon-restore-deterrence-lost-suleimani-strike, 1/21/20] // lynbk MD

Iran lacks any conventional means to restore its battered deterrence. It also lacks the funds to upgrade its outdated military arsenal, particularly with U.S. sanctions in place. Instead, the simplest route for Tehran to restore regional parity is by pursuing a nuclear weapon—the pathways to which the JCPOA left virtually intact, by recognizing Iran’s right to enrich uranium and including sunset provisions on the most concerning aspects of its nuclear program. However, Iran likely won’t use it. Such a weapon’s hypothetical primary targets would be the regime’s regional foes, such as Israel and Saudi Arabia. But both countries have Islamic holy sites and large Arab and Muslim populations. Thus, harm to either would further erode Iran and its proxies battered regional image. Moreover, nuclear fallout from a strike would impact neighboring states, which might then also actively join the ranks of Tehran’s regional adversaries. Report Advertisement Instead, Iran will likely use its mere possession of a nuclear weapon to buttress what remains its most powerful asset—its regional proxies. How would this work? Iran excels at psychological warfare, largely to compensate for its conventional weaknesses. In the past, Tehran and its proxies have successfully used propaganda to prevent their foes from deploying their maximum strength against the conventionally much weaker “Resistance Axis.” They’ve repeatedly used this method to avoid defeat. As part of that psychological warfare, Iran has built a reputation of adventurism and reckless martyrdom-seeking, belying the regime’s highly pragmatic and long-term thinking. In other words, Iran has created the idea that there’s a risk—however minimal—it could use a nuclear weapon. But it’s just enough of a risk to restrain its adversaries. The Saudis lack nuclear parity with Iran, and Israel’s small, concentrated population denies it a second-strike capability, despite its vast, albeit undeclared, nuclear arsenal. Report Advertisement Meanwhile, Iran has surrounded these foes with increasingly well-equipped proxies, which it could activate to wage low-intensity wars against them and other regional enemies. If any of those enemies were to respond in a manner that crossed Iran’s redlines—which could unilaterally occur simply by Iran being in possession of a nuclear weapon—it would simply have to rattle the nuclear saber to stop them in their tracks. It could then force its enemies to accept realities—like Hezbollah or armed factions in Gaza firing daily rockets into northern and southern Israel, respectively—that would erode their morale, and bleed them through slow attrition. Tehran can thus checkmate its opponents and use nuclear deterrence to prevent outside forces—like the United States or Europe—from coming to their aid without ever having to use its nuclear arsenal.

#### Nuclear-armed Iran inevitable and that’s a good thing.

Latham 22 [(Andrew Latham, Andrew Latham is a professor of international relations at Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minnesot,a and a non-resident fellow at Defense Priorities in Washington, D.C.) “The upside of a nuclear-armed Iran”, The Hill, <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/589620-the-upside-of-a-nuclear-armed-iran/>, 1/13/22] // lynbk MD

Sometime in the next decade or so, Iran will join the exclusive club of nuclear weapons states. And the harsh reality is that – blustering, bargaining and even bombing notwithstanding – there is simply nothing that the United States or any other power can do to prevent it. That Iran is an inevitable nuclear power is beyond doubt. The regime has always been highly motivated to acquire nuclear weapons — and has been willing both to invest scarce resources and weather costly international sanctions to realize that goal. It has also made substantial progress toward acquiring such weapons. Indeed, despite all the diplomatic and military efforts to end or reverse the country’s nuclear weapons program, it is reported that Iran’s breakout time – commonly defined as the time required to produce enough fissile material for one nuclear weapon – is now as short as a few months. If deeds speak louder than words, Iran’s deeds have signaled its commitment to acquiring nuclear weapons very loudly indeed. Similarly, there can be little doubt that there is no way to prevent this outcome. Given the regime’s motivation, there is little hope that it can be talked out of acquiring nuclear weapons. At best, the much-lamented Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) slowed Iran’s inexorable march toward becoming a nuclear weapons state. It certainly didn’t make it any less inexorable. And, if the reports we’ve been hearing about the state of the ongoing negotiations to revive that arrangement are even remotely accurate, there is little prospect that JCPOA 2.0 will be anything other than a similar retardant. It certainly won’t extinguish Tehran’s nuclear ambitions or the program these ambitions feed. And given the way they have hardened and protected their nuclear infrastructure, there is little possibility that they can bombed out of acquiring them. The best that could be hoped for from an American bombing campaign is to set Tehran’s nuclear program back by some number of months or maybe even a year or two. But then what? Rinse and repeat indefinitely? And even if a bombing campaign were to be “successful,” the geopolitical blowback would be counterproductive to say the very least. Not only would Iran retaliate militarily – via some combination of regional proxies, its own irregular forces, its now-formidable medium-range ballistic missile forces or naval operations in the Persian Gulf – but such an operation would present opportunities for mischief to Beijing and Moscow. Would either of these consequences be worth whatever temporary setback could be inflicted on Iran? What then is to be done? Ultimately, there really is only one solution to the problem of an inevitably nuclear-armed Iran: accept reality and begin adapting to the regional “balance of terror” that will naturally result. The United States has learned to live with nuclear-armed adversaries in the past, most notably with the Soviet Union during the Cold War and more recently with North Korea. And there is no reason to believe that it couldn’t accommodate itself to a nuclear-armed Iran. Such an accommodation would be uncomfortable, to be sure. No one in Washington would choose this scenario if there were any alternative. But that was true in the past as well. The harsh reality is that the enemy always gets a vote. In the late 1940s, Moscow voted to go nuclear; in the mid-2000s Pyongyang voted for the same; and in the not-too-distant future, Tehran will cast a similar ballot. Washington adapted in the past and will have to adapt again in the near-term future. That is not merely the best option, it is the only option. While it is the best, indeed only option, however, we should be under no illusion that it is good option. There is no reason to assume that such a nuclear balance of terror would usher in an era of peace and harmony in the region. Iran is a revisionist power that has long sought regional hegemony at the expense of its neighbors and will continue to do so under the umbrella of mutually assured destruction. And there are dangers inherent in any balance of terror arrangement – otherwise it wouldn’t be called a balance of terror – the most obvious of which is the danger that a regional crisis will erupt and subsequently spiral out of control. But such is the inevitable tragedy of great power politics. Sometimes there are no good options — only bad, really bad and utterly catastrophic ones. Accepting the inevitability of a nuclear-armed Iran may well be a bad option. But at least it is realistic (and neither really bad nor utterly catastrophic). Finally, it is worth considering the if there are dangers inherent in accepting the reality that Iran is an inevitable nuclear power, consider the upside of such an accommodation. From an American perspective, a nuclear balance of terror in the region – perhaps involving a future nuclear-armed Saudi Arabia as well as Israel and Iran – would likely stabilize the geopolitical order in the region, enabling the U.S. to disentangle itself even further from the region and refocus its strategic attention elsewhere. It would allow the Washington to downgrade its ties with Riyadh — ties which have grown increasingly problematic in recent years. In turn, further U.S. disengagement would reduce the perceived need for Russia and China to assert themselves in the region to undermine or counterbalance U.S. influence. And further disengagement from the Persian Gulf region would allow the United States to rebalance the deployment of its strategic resources and energies worldwide, focusing on more pressing regional threats and challenges. The bottom line? Iran is an inevitable nuclear weapons state, and the sooner everyone comes to grips with that reality the sooner we can get on with the task of managing the emergent nuclear balance of terror in the region. We may wish we had better options, but we don’t. In fact, the alternative options we do have – blustering, bargaining and bombing – are all ill-fated in one way or another. The rational thing to do is to choose the least bad option, especially as it’s the only realistic one. The only question is, will we?

## elections da

### link---partisanship---1ar

#### The plan doesn’t affect elections---not a reason to prefer one party over the other.

Amiri 7-18 [(Farnoush, Farnoush Amiri covers the Ohio statehouse for The Associated Press, where she concentrates on issues related to abortion, gun control and opioids), “House passes resolution to show support for Israel after Democrat's comments about 'racist' state,” ABC News, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/house-republicans-tee-vote-support-israel-after-democrats-101422301>, 7/18/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

WASHINGTON -- The House on Tuesday passed a Republican-led resolution reaffirming its support for Israel with strong bipartisan approval — an implicit rebuke of a leading Democrat who, over the weekend, called the country a “racist state” but later apologized. The resolution, introduced by Rep. August Pfluger, R-Texas, passed with over 400 lawmakers backing the measure. It did not mention Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., by name, but was clearly a response to her recent remarks about the Jewish state. The measure was drafted soon after she criticized Israel and its treatment of Palestinians at a conference on Saturday. Jayapal, the chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, walked back the comments the next day, insisting her comments were aimed at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and not the state of Israel. “I do not believe the idea of Israel as a nation is racist,” Jayapal said in a statement. “I do, however, believe that Netanyahu’s extreme right-wing government has engaged in discriminatory and outright racist policies and that there are extreme racists driving that policy within the leadership of the current government.” The GOP-led effort highlighted the divide among House Democrats over Israel, with younger progressives adopting a more critical stance toward the longtime U.S. ally than party leaders. “If there’s anybody in the Democrat party that does not think that antisemitism is bad, then I think this puts them on the record,” Pfluger said Monday. Some progressive Democrats boycotted Herzog's address. The same handful voted against the resolution Tuesday. Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich. — the only Palestinian-American in Congress — who did not attend the address, criticized the resolution as normalizing violence against those living in the occupied West Bank. “We’re here again reaffirming Congress support for apartheid,” Tlaib said during floor debate on the resolution. “Policing the words of women of color who dare to speak up about truths, about oppression.” Over at the White House, Herzog on Tuesday sought to assure President Joe Biden that Israel remains committed to democracy amid deepening U.S. concerns over Netanyahu’s controversial plans to overhaul his country’s judicial system and ongoing settlement construction in the occupied West Bank. Top Democratic leaders in the House also reaffirmed their support for Israel ahead of the vote, responding Sunday to Jayapal’s comments with a blistering joint statement. The statement — from House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., and members of his leadership team — declared that “Israel is not a racist state.” It also said America's long-held commitment to "a safe and secure Israel as an invaluable partner, ally and beacon of democracy in the Middle East is ironclad.” Hours later, more than 40 House Democrats, including a large group of Jewish members, issued a separate letter also condemning Jayapal's comments. “Any efforts to rewrite history and question the Jewish State’s right to exist, or our historic bipartisan relationship, will never succeed in Congress,” the group, led by Rep. Josh Gottheimer, D-N.J., said Monday night. Most Democrats supported the GOP resolution Tuesday, even as they accused Republicans of playing politics. “These are straightforward things that we should be supporting,” Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., who is Jewish, told reporters. “But I certainly questioned the intentions of the Republicans by putting it on the floor. I wish their intentions were genuine” Schultz also called out House Republicans’ efforts to condemn Jayapal's comments with a vote but their refusal to disinvite Democratic presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy Jr. from a hearing Thursday despite comments he made about the COVID-19 virus being engineered to spare Ashkenazi Jews and Chinese people. “That type of vile messaging and statements should never be given those world’s largest platforms to fan the flames of conspiracy theories and racial and ethnic and religious hate,” she said. More than 100 Democrats have signed a letter as of late Tuesday calling for Republican leadership to remove him from the panel. Speaker Kevin McCarthy and committee chair Jim Jordan, who is holding the hearing, have so far refused to disinvite Kennedy. Both said while they disagree with his comments, taking him off a panel about censorship would be contrary to the point Republicans are trying to make.

### link---plan popular---1ar

#### Most Americans, democrats and republicans support reducing aid to israel – means more support for Biden if Israel is important for voters.

Saltzberg N.D. [(Emma Saltzberg, Emma Saltzberg is a graduate student, a Data for Progress senior fellow, and a co-founder of IfNotNow who lives) “Reduce Aid to Israel Based On Human Rights Violations”, Data For Progress, <https://www.filesforprogress.org/memos/israel_palestine_2020_candidates/israel_palestine_polling_memo.pdf>, No Date] //lynbk MD – TDI

Reducing military aid to Israel based on human rights violations is supported by more voters than oppose it: 45 percent of voters support the policy, while 34 percent oppose it, for a net support of 10 percent. Reducing aid to human rights abusers is even more popular: 61 percent of voters support it, while 12 percent oppose it, for a net support of 49 percent. Democratic voters support reducing aid to Israel. based on human rights violations at the same rate (64 percent, net support 53 percent) at which they support reducing aid to human rights abusers in general. Republican voters support reducing aid to human rights abusers at a slightly lower rate (55 percent) than Democrats do, but they oppose reducing aid to Israel based on human rights abuses at about the same rate that Democrats support it (64 percent oppose, for a net 45 percent opposition). Born-again or evangelical Christians, on net, oppose reducing aid to Israel for human rights violations by 33 percent. Among born-again/evangelical voters, 21 percent support the policy, while 54 percent oppose it. Net support for reducing aid to human rights abusers among born-again/evangelical voters is 46 percent—close to the net support for this policy among voters as a whole (49 percent). During this election cycle, we’ve seen a round of commentary heralding the collapse of the bipartisan consensus on Israel: the combination of rhetorical support for a negotiated two-state solution and material support for the Israeli military that has characterized US policy on Israel since the signing of the Oslo Accords in the 1990s. So far, most of the change to this arrangement has come from within the Republican Party and the Israeli government. Whether it’s moving the US embassy to Jerusalem or appointing an ambassador who has personally funded West Bank settlements, President Trump has unabashedly taken the side of the racist, pro-annexation Israeli right. Much of the Democratic Party still supports the once-bipartisan consensus position: endorsing a two-state solution in policy and rhetoric while avoiding holding Israel accountable for its ongoing violations of human rights. But the Trump administration’s unabashed embrace of Israel’s rightwing, pro-annexation politics—combined with brazenly defunding nearly all of the aid the US had been giving to Palestinians—has opened up new space for progressives to criticize Israeli policies more sharply, calling special attention to the human rights crisis facing Palestinians.

#### Most americans oppose unrestricted aid to Israel – leads to increased support for Biden

Harb 21 [(Ali Harb) “Most Americans oppose unrestricted aid to Israel: Poll”, Middle East Eye, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-majority-americans-oppose-unrestricted-aid-aai-poll>, 5/27/2021] //lynbk MD – TDI

Most Americans and a significant majority of Democrats oppose unrestricted military aid to Israel if it continues to expand settlements in the occupied West Bank, a new poll shows. The study, released by the Arab American Institute (AAI) on Thursday, underscored a clear partisan divide over Israel-Palestine, with Republicans showing more support for Israeli policies across multiple questions. Fifty-one percent of overall respondents agreed with the statement: "The United States should not provide unrestricted financial and military assistance to the Israeli government if it continues to violate US policy on settlement expansion in the West Bank." That support rises to 62 percent amongst Democrats and 75 percent from respondents who identify ideologically as liberal. The opposite statement: "The United States should always provide unrestricted financial and military assistance to the Israeli government," polled at 28 percent overall and only had the support of a plurality, not a majority, of Republicans, with 42 percent. The data is based on the answers of 1,011 people with a 3.1 percent margin of error. The poll, conducted on 20 May on the day a ceasefire was announced in Gaza, comes at a time when many progressive Democrats in Congress are questioning Washington's unconditional support to Israel. Last month, Congresswoman Betty McCollum introduced a bill that would ensure that US military assistance to Israel is not used to fund abuses against Palestinians, including the imprisonment of children and home demolitions. Washington provides $3.8bn in annual aid to Israel with no strings attached.

### link---at: significance---1ar

#### **Americans care less and less about Israel**

Pinkas 6-16 [Alon Pinkas, 6-16-2023, "Is the ‘special’ U.S.-Israel relationship no longer special?," Haaretz, https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-06-16/ty-article/.premium/is-the-special-u-s-israel-relationship-no-longer-special/00000188-c3a2-dfde-adfd-dfeb414b0000, accessed 7-22-2023] bo

* Makes israeli management politically unpopular to the american electorate

Ever since the 1980s, Israel and its many friends in the United States have described the evolving relationship between the two countries as a “strategic alliance,” “an unbreakable bond” and “a special relationship” amid “shared values,” with Israel being nothing less than a “strategic asset” and America’s “staunchest, most reliable ally in the Middle East.”

With the caveat that such slogans and bumper stickers are by definition meant to glorify and exaggerate, they were basically right. From Israel’s independence in 1948 until after the 1967 Six-Day War and particularly until after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, relations were cool, distant and politely cordial at best.

In the context of the Cold War and the containment of the Soviet Union, relations developed into an (informal) alliance and thus began an impressive reverse engineering of the narrative about “the United States' historic commitment to Israel” and “shared biblical values” – two democracies born in defiance of injustice and an old, hostile world. After the 1973 war, President Richard Nixon institutionalized an annual military aid grant to Israel.

This sum began at $1.8 billion and today is $3.8 billion annually in a 10-year agreement. Israel’s dependence on the United States in terms of access to advanced weapons systems and technology increased, but with it the sense that this was indeed a durable, force-multiplying alliance, the central beam of Israel’s national security.

The entire Israeli interpretation of the relationship was based on these premises. The two countries broadly share a strategic outlook, they're both dedicated to counterterrorism, and they exchange intelligence and advanced technology.

That hasn’t changed dramatically. What has changed is the American interpretation of the quality of the ties. A raft of factors have changed the relationship: the end of the Cold War, America’s independence from Arab oil, demographic changes in the United States, and Israeli policies both domestic and foreign that have been at odds with American policy.

None of this was easily discernible if all you followed were official statements or the endless bipartisan love professed by visiting members of Congress. Relations remain strong, but at both the core and the seams, changes are taking place.

U.S. policy toward Israel indeed developed into a special relationship starting in the '80s, and any changes in the ties can't be detached from recalibrations in overall U.S. policy in the Middle East.

In the last 30 years, geopolitical developments in and out of the region gradually converged to generate a U.S. reassessment. The list is long: the dissolution of the Soviet Union, American energy independence, disillusionment with the prospects of democratization in the Arab world, badly bungled military adventures throughout the region – Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iraq (both 1991 and 2003) – and most significantly the rise of China and U.S. perceptions of Beijing as a strategic challenge that turned into a rivalry and can quickly transform into enmity.

The cumulative strategic outcome of these separate developments was a U.S. shift away from the Middle East to a clear focus and resource allocation to the Indo-Pacific.

The Middle East became a growing burden with diminishing vital interests for the United States. But when a superpower recalibrates, so do regional powers – a development that somewhat slowed the pace of the U.S. disengagement. Washington foreign-policy circles in and out of the administration now identify two major issues in the region that still require American attention and some form of commitment and projection of power, even if all this is done reluctantly.

First, disillusionment with the failed Arab Spring, a brief democratization effort, emphatically weakened traditional power centers such as Egypt and Syria. The prolonged war in Iraq didn't add to any sense of stability.

In fact, the first tangible signs of U.S. disengagement from the region can be traced to the standoffish American response to both the coup against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Syria's savage civil war. The center of power in the Arab world shifted to the rich and politically stable Gulf, mainly to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, supposedly two U.S. allies. But the confluence of American fatigue and frustration with the region, an abject failure to install durable changes and the rise of the China rivalry inevitably eroded American influence.

Second, and arguably the more important issue, is Iran and specifically its status as a “nuclear threshold state.” Five years after America’s reckless withdrawal from the Iranian nuclear agreement, Iran is now potentially on the verge of a military nuclear capability, capable of enriching weapons-grade uranium within weeks, and possibly 12 to 18 months away from a deliverable nuclear weapon. Five U.S. presidents – Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump and Joe Biden – over 31 years (1992 to 2023) have vowed to “never allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon.”

After the 2015 nuclear agreement and America's unilateral withdrawal from it in 2018, Iran remains the most potentially destabilizing force in the region, a potentially devastating one. Iran's expanded military ties to Russia, China's increased involvement in the region – and with Iran – and Iran's rapprochement with Saudi Arabia only add to the problem.

What's relevant here is that despite similarly phrased pledges and implicit threats against Iran’s nuclear ambitions, the United States and Israel disagree on policy. America can tolerate a “nuclear threshold” Iran, Israel ostensibly can't. This adds to the political tensions.

As Aaron David Miller astutely observes in a new tour d’horizon essay on current and future U.S. Mideast policy, “The New-Old Middle East”: “As much as the United States would like to extricate itself from the Middle East, that simply is not a realistic option. While the region has experienced a rapid geopolitical change in response to U.S. disengagement, it remains maddeningly complex and fraught with potentially systemic risks that America cannot afford to ignore.”

The United States, he argues, “has learned in recent decades – sometimes at a frightful cost – that it can neither transform the region nor extricate itself from it.” What’s left, he concludes, is risk management.

With priorities shifting to the Indo-Pacific, and with an increasingly aggressive and unpredictable Russia, the Biden administration would define “risk management” as preferably minimal risk and minimal management. That applies to Israel too.

In the coming years, Israel will remain a major U.S. ally, but it's becoming a high-maintenance ally, and American support is incrementally becoming politically uncomfortable. The insoluble impasse on the Palestinian issue has become a permanent feature diametrically opposed to U.S. policy, and it can deteriorate; for example, the implosion or dissolution of the Palestinian Authority. Israel's democratic backsliding further alienates it from swaths of the American electorate.

These structural cracks could have been ameliorated with different Israeli approaches and policies, or with a prime minister in the last 14 years aware of America's demographic and political changes and the reprioritization of U.S. foreign policy. While support for Israel in the United States remains relatively high, the importance that Americans attach to the relationship is dwindling, according to surveys and studies. Relations surely aren’t transitioning from “alliance” to hostility or even indifference, they're simply being normalized, and with that they lose the qualitative edge they had for around four decades.

The central force driving this change is internal, but Israeli actions are accelerating rather than slowing it down, mainly by turning Israel into a partisan wedge issue in Washington.

Instead of identifying the seismic cracks and devising policies to mitigate their effects, Israel remains cocooned in '80s and '90s concepts. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not being invited to the White House is certainly a deliberate insult, and he most certainly earned it. But it's just a symptom.

## lashout da

### link turn---1ar

#### Now decreasing Iranian nuke programs means Israel looks to deterrence instead of unnecessary attack

Lubell 23’- [(Maayan, Correspondent at Thomson Reuters, “Israel no closer to attack on Iran nuclear sites, official says,” Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-no-closer-attack-iran-nuclear-sites-official-says-2023-06-30/>, June 30, 2023)]- TDI

JERUSALEM, June 30 (Reuters) - Israel is not nearing an attack on Iran's nuclear sites, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's national security adviser said on Friday, as talks between Tehran and Washington have sought to cool tensions. Tzachi Hanegbi said it was still unclear what will come of talks Israel's main ally the United States has held with Iran in recent weeks in an effort to outline steps that could limit Teheran's nuclear program and de-escalate tensions. Nonetheless, no agreement would obligate Israel, which views a nuclear-armed Iran as an existential threat, Hanegbi told Channel 13 television. Asked whether an Israeli decision on a preemptive strike against Iran was any closer, Hanegbi said: "We are not getting closer because the Iranians have stopped, for a while now, they are not enriching uranium to the level that in our view is the red line." Hanegbi added: "But it can happen. So we are preparing for the moment, if it comes, in which we will have to defend the people of Israel against a fanatic regime that is set on annihilating us and is armed with weapons of mass destruction." Netanyahu has set a "red line" on Iran's uranium enrichment at bomb-grade 90% fissile purity. Iran has ramped up enrichment to 60% purity in recent years. Having failed to revive a 2015 nuclear deal that had capped Tehran's enrichment at 3.67%, Iranian and Western officials have met to sketch out steps that could curb its fast advancing nuclear work. The 2015 agreement limited Iran's uranium enrichment to make it harder for Tehran to develop the means to produce nuclear arms. Iran denies it has such ambitions. Then-U.S. President Donald Trump ditched the pact in 2018 and reimposed sanctions that have crippled the Iranian economy. Tehran responded by gradually moving well beyond the deal's enrichment restrictions.

### m---at: collapse---1ar

#### Israel has the capability of self-sufficiency and practically already has it. Aid is 1% of its economy.

**Fisher 21** [(Max Fisher, Max Fisher is an international reporter and columnist for The New York Times. He has reported from five continents on conflict, diplomacy, social change and other topics) “As Israel’s Dependence on U.S. Shrinks, So Does U.S. Leverage”, New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/24/world/middleeast/Israel-American-support.html, May 24, 2021] sterling TDI

That’s the conventional wisdom, anyway. For decades, it was true: Israeli leaders and voters alike treated Washington as essential to their country’s survival.

But that dependence may be ending. 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.

“We’re seeing much more Israeli independence,” said Vipin Narang, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology political scientist who has studied Israeli strategy.

Israel no longer needs American security guarantees to protect it from neighboring 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.

And while American aid to Israel remains high in absolute terms, 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](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33222.pdf), it was closer to 1 percent.

Washington underscored its own declining relevance to the conflict last week, calling for a cease-fire only after an Egyptian-brokered agreement was [nearing completion](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/20/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-ceasefire.html), and which Israeli leaders said they agreed to because they had completed their military objectives in a 10-day conflict with Gaza. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken will visit the region this week, though he said he did not intend to restart formal Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

The change comes just as a faction of [Democrats and left-wing activists](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/15/us/politics/democrats-israel-palestinians.html), outraged over Israel’s treatment of Palestinians and [bombing of Gaza](https://www.nytimes.com/article/israel-gaza-what-we-know.html), are [challenging](https://jewishcurrents.org/aoc-to-introduce-resolution-blocking-bomb-sale-to-israel/) Washington’s long-held consensus on Israel.

Yet significant, if [shrinking](https://pomeps.org/changing-american-public-attitudes-on-israel-palestine-does-it-matter-for-politics), numbers of Americans express [support](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/24/a-new-perspective-on-americans-views-of-israelis-and-palestinians/) for Israel, and Democratic politicians have resisted their voters’ [growing](https://news.gallup.com/poll/293114/majority-again-support-palestinian-statehood.aspx) support for the Palestinians.

The United States still has leverage, as it does with every country where it provides arms and diplomatic support. Indeed, former President Donald J. Trump’s unalloyed embrace of the Israeli government demonstrated that Israel still benefits from the relationship. But American leverage may be declining past the point at which Israel is able and willing to do as it wishes, bipartisan consensus or not.

Steps Toward Self-Sufficiency

When Americans think of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, many still picture the period known as the Second Intifada, when Israeli tanks crashed through Palestinian towns and Palestinian bombs detonated in Israeli cafes and buses.

But that was 15 years ago. Since then, Israel has re-engineered the conflict in ways that Israeli voters and leaders largely find bearable.

Violence against Israelis in the occupied West Bank is rarer and lower-level, rarer still in Israel proper. Though fighting has erupted several times between Israel and Gaza-based groups, Israeli forces have succeeded in pushing the burden overwhelmingly on Gazans. Conflict deaths, once three-to-one Palestinian-to-Israeli, are now closer to 20-to-one.

At the same time, Israeli disaffection with the peace process has left many feeling that periodic fighting is the least bad option. The occupation, though a crushing and ever-present force for Palestinians, is, on most days and for most Jewish Israelis, ignorable.

“Israelis have become increasingly comfortable with this approach,” said Yaël Mizrahi-Arnaud, a research fellow at the Forum for Regional Thinking, an Israeli think tank. “That’s a cost that they are willing to accept.”

It’s a status quo that Israel can maintain with little outside help. In past years, its most important military tools were American-made warplanes and other high-end gear, which required signoff from Congress and the White House.

Now, it relies on [missile defense technology](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/world/middleeast/ido-avigal-israel-palestine-gaza.html) that is made and maintained largely at home — a feat that hints at the tenacity of Israel’s drive for self-sufficiency.

“If you had told me five years ago,” said Mr. Narang, the M.I.T. scholar, “that the Israelis would have a layered missile defense system against short-range rockets and short-range ballistic missiles, and it was going to be 90 percent effective, I would have said, ‘I would love what you’re smoking.’”

Streaks of smoke from Israel’s Iron Dome anti-missile system intercepting rockets launched from the Gaza Strip toward Israel, as seen from Ashkelon, Israel, on May 15.Credit...Amir Cohen/Reuters

Though heavy American funding under President Barack Obama helped stand up the system, it now operates at a relatively affordable $50,000 per interceptor.

Israel began working toward military autonomy in the 1990s. Cool relations with the George H.W. Bush administration and perceived American failure to stop Iraqi missiles from striking Israel convinced its leaders that they could not count on American backing forever.

This belief deepened under subsequent presidents, whose pressure to strike peace with the Palestinians has run increasingly counter to Israeli preferences for maintaining control of the West Bank and tightly blockading Gaza.

“The political calculus led to seeking independent capabilities that are no longer vulnerable to U.S. leverage and pressure,” Mr. Narang said, adding that Israel has also sought independent intelligence gathering. “It certainly appears they’ve been able to get to that point.”

The ‘Other Friends Policy’

There is another existential threat from which Israel no longer relies so heavily on American protection: international isolation.

Israel once sought acceptance from Western democracies, which demanded that it meet democratic standards, but bestowed legitimacy on a country that otherwise had few friends.

Today, Israel faces a much warmer international climate. “Anti-imperialist” powers that once challenged Israel have moved on. While international attitudes toward it are [mixed](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13537121.2019.1670442?journalCode=fisa20), and tend starkly negative in Muslim-majority societies, Israel has cultivated ties in parts of [Africa](https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/asia-and-australia/chad-s-30-year-president-idriss-deby-dead-after-visit-to-frontline-1.9729101), [Asia](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/israeli-pm-netanyahu-greets-great-friend-narenedra-modi-on-72nd-republic-day/articleshow/80466449.cms) and [Latin America](https://www.timesofisrael.com/brazil-applauds-netanyahu-bolsonaro-bromance-new-ties-with-jewish-state/).

Even nearby Arab states, such as Jordan and Egypt, once among its greatest enemies, now seek peace, while others have [eased hostilities](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/23/world/middleeast/netanyahu-mohammed-bin-salman.html). Last year, the so-called Abraham Accords, brokered under President Trump, saw Israel normalize ties with Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. Israel subsequently normalized ties with Morocco and reached a diplomatic agreement with Sudan.

## politics da

### link---plan popular---1ar

#### More recent polls prove the plan has broad support.

CVA 21 [(Concerned Veterans for America, veterans from every branch of uniformed services and every conflict from World War II to the Global War on Terror. We are the family members of those who have proudly worn the uniform. We are freedom-loving citizens who value America’s heroes and are concerned about the fate of our country. We come from all walks of life and live in every community across America), “New poll: Americans want to stay out of Ukraine and the Middle East”, CVA Polling, https://cv4a.org/the-overwatch/new-poll-stay-out-of-ukraine-and-middle-east/, 7/20/22] OM – TDI

Americans know what they want to see from President Joe Biden and his administration – a focus on domestic issues and avoiding unnecessary foreign conflicts.

A new poll commissioned by CVA found Americans oppose sending more troops to the Middle East and getting directly involved in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Further, many Americans don’t approve of President Biden’s handling of Russia’s war on Ukraine and want the president to focus on problems at home.

Here’s what Americans think about specific foreign conflicts and entanglements:

46 percent oppose the U.S. military getting directly involved in combat in Russia’s war on Ukraine. Only half that many (23 percent) support getting directly involved.

44 percent have an unfavorable opinion the president’s handling of the war in Ukraine.

52 percent would oppose the president sending more troops to the Middle East while only 17 percent would support the move.

Further, 47 percent would oppose the president making promises of aid in the event of an attack to Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Only 16 percent support these security guarantees.

When asked broader questions about American foreign policy and the president’s priorities, here’s what Americans had to say:

40 percent believe the U.S. should be less militarily engaged in conflicts around the world. Only 12 percent believe the U.S. should be more engaged.

When asked which issues President Biden should make a top priority, the majority of those surveyed (38 percent) said lowering or eliminating inflation, followed by lowering cost and improving access to health care (15 percent), and solving the energy crisis (12 percent). Only 8 percent believe ensuring Russia’s defeat in Ukraine should be the President’s top priority.

Americans want the president to focus on the problems we have here at home before getting involved in conflicts overseas. We hope President Biden and leaders in Washington will pay attention to what the American people are telling them.

## terror da

### uniqueness---1ar

#### Non-unique – Hezbollah is increasing attacks now. Also plan solves – the only risk of nuclear terror is if Iran arms them with nukes.

Teller 20 [(Neville Teller, born in London and educated at Oxford University, Neville combined a career in the Civil Service with writing for BBC radio as dramatist and abridger. In addition, he has been commenting on the Middle East political scene for some 35 years, with five books published on the subject), “Hezbollah is as big a threat to Israel as Iran's nuclear program – opinion”, The Jerusalem Post, https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-725964, 12/28/22] OM – TDI

On the morning of Tuesday, December 20, fighter jets fired missiles at and around Damascus airport, destroying several weapons storage facilities and other infrastructure belonging to Iran’s local proxies. According to Al Arabiya TV, an anti-aircraft battery positioned near the airport was also struck, shortly after an Iranian plane had landed. The Syrian authorities hold the Israel Defense Forces responsible for the attack.

Later that same day, a Hezbollah drone attempted to enter Israeli airspace from Lebanon. The IDF shot it down. It was intercepted near the moshav of Zarit (population around 250), which is located close to the Lebanese border in Upper Galilee. The drone was identified as a quadcopter, a small device with four rotors.

This tit-for-tat exchange was the latest in a recent spate of military encounters in what has been termed for more than a decade as the war between wars. On November 9, for example, The Wall Street Journal reported that a convoy believed to have been smuggling Iranian weapons into Syria had been hit by Israel. According to the report, the strike was near the Syrian border town of Abu Kamal and destroyed several vehicles. There were at least 10 casualties.

Israeli sources usually refrain from acknowledging the counter-measures it takes but on December 14, Lt. Gen. Aviv Kohavi, the IDF chief of staff, appeared to confirm this particular operation. Speaking at Reichman University in Herzliya, Kohavi referred to Israeli intelligence and its strike capabilities. He said, “We could not have known, a number of weeks ago, about the Syrian convoy moving from Iraq to Syria. We could not have known what was in there. We could not have known that among 25 trucks, this is the truck – truck number eight – that was the truck with the weapons.”

And even knowing, he continued, “We must send the pilots. They must know how to evade surface-to-air missiles. Make no mistake: There are operations in which 30, 40 – at peak times, 70 – surface-to-air missiles are fired at them during sorties. They must strike, hit and come back, and they must, in some of the attacks, avoid killing those who should not be killed. Those are very advanced capabilities.”

Recently, Hezbollah operatives have been increasingly active on the Lebanon-Israel border. They have set up dozens of lookout posts, increased their patrols, and openly monitor and document Israeli troop movements. Also, Hezbollah’s use of Iran-supplied drones has increased over the last few months. In the summer, drones were dispatched to film Israel’s offshore gas rig prior to the Israel-Lebanese maritime agreement. They were destroyed by the IDF.

IN ADDITION, Hezbollah is continuing efforts to strengthen its presence in Syria. Earlier in December, it was reported that the IDF attacked a radar site at Tal Qalib belonging to the Syrian military. The next day, the Israel Air Force dropped leaflets in the Quneitra area of southwestern Syria, warning Syrian soldiers against working with Hezbollah. “The continued presence of Hezbollah in the Syrian site of Tal Qalib,” they read, “and cooperating with them will go badly for you. The presence of Hezbollah in the region has brought you humiliation and you are paying the price for that.”

The effort to contain or diminish Iran’s anti-Israel efforts has spilled over to social media. The Al-Monitor website recently reported that posts on Twitter from various sources claimed that Israel has the names of 63 pilots employed at the Iranian Mahan airline who are involved in flying weapons from Tehran to Beirut. The tweets promised to post the pilots’ names and photos soon. There was no indication of what action, if any, might follow.

Iran is engaged in a determined effort to smuggle advanced weapons by air through various Syrian airports6 and also by land through Iraq and Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel has been waging an equally determined campaign over the past decade to frustrate Iran’s intentions, which are clearly aimed at arming Hezbollah in preparation for an eventual conflict with Israel.

This campaign took a new turn on December 10 when rumors emerged that Iran was planning to launch an aerial smuggling route from Tehran to Beirut using civilian flights. Meraj Airlines, operated by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), started direct flights from Tehran to Beirut in mid-November. This corridor would reportedly complement or replace the arms smuggling to Hezbollah carried out in recent years through Syria, shipments that Israel is believed to have targeted repeatedly.

Hezbollah must be viewed as a major strategic threat

Israel must view Hezbollah’s growing precision missile arsenal as a major strategic threat on a par with Iran’s nuclear program. Indeed, if Iran eventually developed a nuclear capability, there would be nothing to prevent it from arming its proxies similarly. The London-based Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported earlier in December that Israel had formally warned Lebanon’s government that it would consider bombing Beirut airport if it serves as a destination for weapons smuggling from Iran.

The implications of such an attack, were it ever carried out, are incalculable. The mere threat may be sufficient to deter any attempt by Lebanon’s Hezbollah-dominated administration from using civilian flights as a new route for smuggling Iranian arms.

As long as Iran is intent on pursuing its obsessional anti-Israel policies, Israel’s response must continue to be deterrence by every means, including the destruction of weaponry clearly intended to turn Syria into an Iranian armory or to boost Hezbollah’s military capacity. For deterrence to remain effective, Israel must enhance its world-class intelligence capabilities even further. It also needs to take to heart the well-known motto of the Scouting movement: Be prepared. This is the only way to thwart the enemy’s malign intentions without resorting to an all-out conflict.

### link turn---1ar

#### US intervention in the ME hardens the resolve of terrorists instead of deterring them

Glas and Spierings 20 [(Saskia Glas, Assistant Professor Sociology. Her research mainly focuses on the cultural integration of non-European migrants in Western European countries, and Niels Spierings, studies issues of inclusion and exclusion, particularly with respect to politics, civil society and the labour market. Geographically his focus is on the Netherlands, Western Europe and the Middle East and North Africa), “Why Do They Hate America(ns)?”, London School of Economics and Political Science, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mec/2020/09/22/why-do-they-hate-americans/, 9/22/20] JH – TDI

Our analyses also show that unfavourable attitudes towards America and Americans have similar causes. American interventions – be they troop deployment, military aid, or economic investments – help to explain why publics are not only more politically but also more societally anti-American. This paints a two-sided picture. Anti-Americanism is partly caused by the actions undertaken by the US government. However, it is not just ‘the United States’ that is held responsible for the interventions; ordinary Americans are blamed for these actions as well. This suggests that there is an understanding of the democratic responsibility the American populace holds for their government’s actions.

Of course, not all Arab citizens hold the same views or react similarly to American interventions. This brings us to an especially bitter conclusion from the results – American interventionism most strongly squelches pockets of good will. When the US intervenes, it spawns anti-Americanism particularly among those groups poised to be more favourable to America(ns). For instance, we found that non-Muslims are on average rather favourable towards America(ns) compared to Muslim citizens. But, as illustrated in Figure 2 below, the more the US intervenes in a country the smaller this ‘Muslim gap’ in anti-Americanism becomes.

In other words, ‘they’ do not hate us. This example once more stresses that citizens across the Arab region are neither all the same, nor united in their hatred of America(ns). Pockets of good will can be found across the region. However, when the US intervenes, it not only strengthens the resolve of its enemies; it actually drives potential allies away.

#### Turn – US aid increases terrorism

Benson 23 [(Pesach Benson, Senior editor at Tazpit Press Service), “Increased American Aid Brings More Palestinian Terror, Study Finds”, Israel Today, <https://www.israeltoday.co.il/read/increased-american-aid-brings-more-palestinian-terror-study-finds/>, 3/16/23] OM – TDI

A comparison of the amount of US aid provided to the Palestinian Authority with the number of people killed in Palestinian terror attacks found that American financial support “fuels terror, not peace,” an Israeli research institute found.

According to the Israel-based Palestinian Media Watch, in findings published on Monday, as US aid to Ramallah declined during the presidential administrations of Barack Obama and Donald Trump in 2011-2019, so did the number of people killed in Palestinian terror attacks.

However, “Since 2020, under the Biden administration, US aid to the Palestinians was restored and has spiked,” PMW wrote.

Under the Obama administration of 2009-2017, the US provided the Palestinians with almost $6.47 billion in aid. During that same period, 140 Israelis and foreigners were killed in Palestinian terror attacks, an average of 17.5 fatalities each year.

The Trump administration cut back on the support during its four-year term 2017-2021, sending nearly $670 million to the Palestinian Authority. During Trump’s term in office, 42 Israelis and foreigners were killed in Palestinian terror attacks, an average of 10.5 people each year.

Since the inauguration of current US President Joe Biden in 2021, the US has provided Ramallah with nearly $1.1 billion, while 46 Israelis and foreigners were killed in Palestinian terror attacks. That is an average of 23 fatalities annually. During a wave of terror attacks in which 14 Israelis were killed during the spring of 2022, the US aid continued.

Maurice Hirsch, PMW’s Director of Legal Strategies and author of the study, told the Tazpit Press Service that the Palestinians see aid as a “general reflection of political support” from Washington.

“If the Palestinians feel that the money is flowing and they have general support for their cause, including killing Jews, that bolsters terror,” Hirsch said.

He explained to TPS that terror stipends, which Israelis call “pay for slay” payments are a key part of the Palestinian Authority budget.

“Within the PA’s pay for slay policy, there are two aspects. One focuses on salaries paid to prisoners and released prisoners. That’s paid via the Ministry of Prisoner Affairs. They claim that last year, they paid out just over 600 million shekels [$165.6 million] in payments to living terrorists,” Hirsch said.

“The other aspect is the Martyrs Fund. That makes payments to injured terrorists and to the families of terrorists who have been killed.”

Hirsch explained that the Palestinian Authority hasn’t published an open budget since 2018. That year, the Martyrs Fund had a budget of 687 million shekels ($189.6 million).

In retaliation, Israel deducts from monthly tax transfers to the Palestinian Authority the amount of money it estimates was disbursed to terrorists and their families.

Hirsch also dismissed Palestinian arguments that the stipends are legitimate welfare payments.

“First and foremost, the Palestinian law codifying the stipends specifically uses the word ‘salaries.’ Second, the payments are made irrespective of any needs-based criteria. If you come from a rich family, you get the same payment as if you came from a poor family,” he told TPS. “According to the Israeli Prison Service, 70 percent of the living terrorists are single and have no family to support. There’s no basis to say they are breadwinners and that their families are destitute in need of social welfare.”

He added that even for a married terrorist, the monthly payments ought to decrease as children grow up and leave their homes. Instead, said Hirsch, “The payments go up based on time spent in prison.”

In addition, Hirsch pointed out that welfare payments to the needy of Palestinian society have separate criteria in Ramallah’s budget. “The real poor are already being supported by European Union payments,” he told TPS.

“While the US support to the Palestinians, as represented inter alia by the US aid, should be, and is ostensibly, devoted to promoting peace, in practice the Palestinians see the unconditional US support as an opportunity to promote terror,” the PMW report concluded.

“While US aid to the Palestinians flows freely, Palestinian terrorists feel emboldened and murder Israelis. Only when the US demonstrates moral clarity and stops aid because the PA promotes terror, do the Palestinians understand that terror does not pay,” it said.

Hirsch noted that PMW is now examining European Union financial support for similar parallels.

### at: counterterror---1ar

#### US presence in Israel doesn’t solve

Vinson 15 [(Mark Vinson, Research Staff Member, Institute for Defense Analyses), “An Israeli Approach to Deterring Terrorism”, Center for Complex Operations, https://cco.ndu.edu/portals/96/documents/prism/prism\_5-3/an\_israeli\_approach\_to\_deterring\_terrorism.pdf, 1/1/15] JH – TDI

On July 8, 2014, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched Operation Protective Edge against Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and other violent extremist organizations (VEOs) attacking Israel from the Gaza Strip. This was Israel’s fourth major operation in Gaza since 2006, each immediately following a period of escalating, violent exchanges. The persistent, long-term interactions of this conflict, the increasingly dangerous nature of the VEO threat, and Israel’s adaptive approach to manage conflicts with such VEOs, provide a conceptual basis for “deterrence operations” as a component of a military support concept to a whole-of-government strategy for preventing and managing conflict with VEOs. The United States and Israel have well-developed, but distinct, concepts of deterrence. Although both concepts emerged in the 1950s as centerpieces of each nation’s national strategy, they were designed to address dissimilar existential threats, and they have evolved along largely separate paths in response to unique national security challenges. Although each concept shares a fundamental cost-benefit, rational-actor basis, their current approaches remain different. While the U.S. security environment has the inherent physical advantage of strategic depth, enabled by friendly neighbors and two oceans, the terror attacks of 9/11 shattered any notions that the U.S. homeland is secure from attack. Moreover, U.S. security interests, responsibilities, and threats are global and wide-ranging, and physical distance no longer ensures security from terrorism and modern threats, such as cyber, space, and missile attacks. Israel, on the other hand, is a small country with no strategic depth, surrounded by a hostile, regional mix of state and non-state adversaries, and has remained in an almost perpetual state of conflict since gaining statehood in 1948. To survive, Israel developed a powerful, high-technology military that repeatedly defeated its larger Arab neighbors in a series of major wars from 1948 to 1973. The cumulative deterrent effect of these decisive victories eventually led to peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan; while Syria remains hostile it is deterred from directly challenging Israel militarily.

#### US Counterterrorism fails

Brands and Hanlon 21 [(Hal Brands, American international relations scholar of U.S. foreign policy. He is the Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies and a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and Michael O’Hanlon, director of research and senior fellow of the foreign policy program at The Brookings Institution. He began his career as a budget analyst in the defense field), “America Failed Its Way to Counterterrorism Success”, Foreign Affairs, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/america-failed-its-way-counterterrorism-success#author-info, 8/12/21] JH – TDI

“War,” the late French prime minister Georges Clemenceau famously remarked, “is a series of catastrophes that results in a victory.” That is a good way to think about the United States’ odyssey in the “war on terror.” For 20 years, Washington has struggled and mostly failed to reduce the overall level of global terrorism and to create a healthier political climate in the Muslim world. It has also endured slow, grinding quagmires and sharp, humiliating setbacks. Yet on the most fundamental level, the United States has achieved its strategic objective: it has prevented catastrophic attacks against the U.S. homeland, mainly by becoming extremely proficient at destroying terrorists’ sanctuaries and pulverizing their networks.

The United States has paid too high a price for this success. Yet that price has fallen dramatically over time as Washington has developed what is, on balance, a better counterterrorism approach. After conducting unsustainably expensive military commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States underreached by pulling back from the broader Middle East too fast and allowing old threats to reemerge. But since around 2014, Washington has settled on a medium-footprint model based on modest investments, particularly in special operations forces and airpower, to support local forces that do most of the fighting and dying. When combined with nonmilitary tools such as intelligence cooperation, law enforcement efforts, and economic aid, this approach provides reasonably good protection at a reasonable price.

A medium-footprint strategy is no silver bullet. It offers only incremental and incomplete solutions to the political problems underlying extremist violence. It also necessitates tradeoffs with other priorities, such as competing with China, and is politically vulnerable because of its association with long, frustrating wars. Yet the experience of the past two decades suggests that the medium-footprint strategy is still the best of bad options available to the United States.

The war on terror certainly hasn’t gone as U.S. policymakers would have liked. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, few would have predicted that the United States would spend two decades fighting in Afghanistan, only to leave with the Taliban on the march; that it would invade Iraq in 2003, withdraw in 2011, and a few years later send troops back to destroy a self-proclaimed caliphate that Washington’s earlier missteps had helped to produce; and that it would spend trillions of dollars and sacrifice thousands of lives in an endless global battle against terror.

On some dimensions, this effort can be simply described as a failure. Overall levels of global terrorism are higher now than they were in 2001. Depending on how one measures, the number of terrorist attacks and people killed by terrorists around the world each year is three to five times as high as it was in 2011, although few of the victims are Americans.

This failure reflects another: the United States has had relatively little success transforming the underlying political conditions in the greater Middle East and in parts of Africa. Across this expansive region, rapidly growing populations, lack of economic opportunity, and legacies of corruption and misrule have bred instability and repression. Mishandled U.S. interventions, especially in Iraq and Libya, have sometimes made the situation worse.

### at: hezbollah---1ar

#### Hezbollah can’t do much of anything – too many barriers at home.

**Young ND** [(Michael Young, Michael Young is a Lebanon affairs columnist for The National. He is the senior editor at the Malcolm H Kerr Carnegie Middle East Centre in Beirut, where he also edits Diwan, the blog of the Carnegie Middle East Programme. A former journalist, he is the author of 'The Ghosts of Martyrs Square: An Eyewitness Account of Lebanon’s Life Struggle' (Simon and Schuster, 2010), selected by The Wall Street Journal as one of its 10 notable books for 2010.) “Hezbollah is much weaker than it seems,” The National News, https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/hezbollah-is-much-weaker-than-it-seems-1.1028271, No Date] sterling TDI

Some would say that, given the crisis Lebanon is facing today, Hezbollah’s project for the country is dead. Such statements, however, go too far.

With thousands of men under arms, a missile arsenal, Iranian backing and much of the Shiite religious community behind the party, Hezbollah remains a potent force in Lebanese society. Yet it is also true that today its ability to act as Iran’s deterrent has been severely compromised by Lebanon’s domestic situation, and this may not end any time soon.

What is Hezbollah’s plan? Principally, it is to turn the country into a so-called “resistance state” that acts as an outpost for Iranian influence, and another counterweight to Israel and the United States. The common assumption is that the militant party has succeeded in that effort.

But has it?

Hezbollah has power over the Lebanese state, but its sway has also helped to bankrupt and undermine Lebanon, negatively affecting the party’s capacities.

There are several reasons for this. In protecting a corrupt political class and allowing it to pursue its looting of the state, Hezbollah was partly responsible for the collapse last October of Lebanon’s financial order. At the time, the party’s secretary general, Hassan Nasrallah, had understood the risks of popular protests against the ruling class and tried to neutralise public anger. He failed.

For weeks Hezbollah sought to retain some control over a system that had lost all legitimacy, and in January it thought it had succeeded when a government formed by the party and its allies came to power.

**But** something was definitely broken. Lebanon was insolvent, hundreds of thousands of people were out of work and all of the political parties were forced to recalculate.

This lost Hezbollah two of the essential prerequisites needed to conduct a war against Israel, were Iran to demand it. The first is Lebanon’s ability to absorb Israeli retaliation and rebuild, as happened in 2006. The second is a minimum level of consensus nationally behind Hezbollah’s “resistance” agenda.

A picture taken on May 22, 2020 shows a poster of soldiers carrying a coffin draped in an Israeli flag at the Hezbollah memorial landmark in the hilltop bastion of Mleeta, built in 2010 to commemorate Israel's withdrawal from the country, near the Lebanese southern village of Jarjouaa. Twenty years after the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, Hezbollah still enjoys wide support among youth regaled with tales of the Shiite group ending 22 years of Israeli occupation.

The group continues to leverage the memory of this "victory" to mould a new generation of loyalists gearing up to join its regional operations.

Iran leaves countries so debilitated that its proxies end up controlling volatile and vulnerable sandcastles

Lebanon’s bankruptcy means that if there were a war against Israel, the country would be unable to bounce back from the destruction the Israelis would cause. Worse, because of Hezbollah, Lebanon has isolated itself from most of the Arab countries that might once have been willing to finance its reconstruction, so this time the damage would be enduring.

Nor could Beirut call upon Iran, Hezbollah’s economically strangled sponsor, to help, as it simply lacks the means to do so.

The rifts in the political class as a result of the popular protest movement mean that there is no discernible consensus to back Hezbollah in going to war.

Today, the party’s harshest critics come from its erstwhile allies in the Aounist movement, a predominantly Christian faction led by former foreign minister Gebran Bassil. Their criticisms may be linked to domestic disagreements, but when Ziad Aswad, a prominent Aounist, declares that Lebanon “cannot continue to hold a rifle when its people are hungry,” he expresses a widespread view.

Without domestic backing, Hezbollah’s ability to wage war would be greatly hampered. The party would be blamed for sacrificing Lebanon for Iran. Hundreds of thousands of displaced Shiites would have to find refuge in areas hostile to the party, further stoking divisions and potentially leading to strife. This is a nightmare scenario for Hezbollah, as it could plunge the party into a civil conflict that it could not hope to win, nullifying its usefulness to Iran.

Yet that usefulness is questionable even today. Hezbollah has hubristically assumed that Lebanon is solidly in the Iranian camp. Its command of the state may be assured to an extent to an extent, but its command over society is not. And even then, key outposts of the state, such as the army, merely play along with Hezbollah but remain autonomous and would manoeuvre away from the party if the power balance shifted.

Another factor fundamental in determining Hezbollah’s latitude to engage in war with Israel is the situation in Syria. Until the start of Syria’s civil war in 2011, Damascus provided Hezbollah with potential strategic depth in any war. Weapons and men could be moved through Syrian territory to reinforce the party in Lebanon. But today, much of Syria’s airspace is controlled by Russia and Israel, both of whom would oppose, by action or omission, Syria’s transformation into an Iranian forward base.

Iran’s regional strategy involves feeding off the weaknesses of institutions in many Arab countries to advance its own interests. Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen and Syria have all paid a price. In each, Tehran built up autonomous armed groups that counterbalanced state structures, eroding the state. Indeed, Iran gains influence by destroying its host.

Today, Hezbollah’s ability to carry the Lebanese state and society in the direction of its own regional preferences, strong-arm Lebanon’s sects into approving its actions and secure legitimacy from the country’s leaders has been crippled. The party remains powerful, but the foundations on which it built its order in Lebanon have collapsed. Perhaps that’s the problem in Iran’s approach: it leaves countries so debilitated that its proxies end up controlling volatile and vulnerable sandcastles.

As Iran looks at Lebanon, what does it see? It sees its local ally presiding over a state in ruin whose population is angry and refuses to suffer for Tehran. Nor can Hezbollah go to war against Israel without potentially destroying its own domestic standing. All of that won’t make the Iranians alter their strategy, but it does raise real questions about the value of that strategy today.

### at: bioterror---1ar

#### No bioterror attacks or impact.

Lentzos et al. ’14 — Filippa Lentzos is PhD from London School of Economics and Social Science, Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Social Science, Health and Medicine at King’s College London. Catherine Jefferson is researcher in the Department of Social Science, Health, and Medicine at King’s College London, DPhil from the University of Sussex, former senior policy advisor for international security at the Royal Society. Claire Marris is Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Social Science, Health and Medicine at King's College London. September 18, 2014; “The myths (and realities) of synthetic bioweapons”; *The Bulletin*; http://thebulletin.org/myths-and-realities-synthetic-bioweapons7626

The bioterror WMD myth. Those who have overemphasized the bioterrorism threat typically portray it as an imminent concern, with emphasis placed on high-consequence, mass-casualty attacks, performed with weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This is a myth with two dimensions.

 The first involves the identities of terrorists and what their intentions are. The assumption is that terrorists would seek to produce mass-casualty weapons and pursue capabilities on the scale of 20th century, state-level bioweapons programs. Most leading biological disarmament and non-proliferation experts believe that the risk of a small-scale bioterrorism attack is very real and present. But they consider the risk of sophisticated large-scale bioterrorism attacks to be quite small. This judgment is backed up by historical evidence. The three confirmed attempts to use biological agents against humans in terrorist attacks in the past were small-scale, low-casualty events aimed at causing panic and disruption rather than excessive death tolls.

The second dimension involves capabilities and the level of skills and resources available to terrorists. The implicit assumption is that producing a pathogenic organism equates to producing a weapon of mass destruction. It does not. Considerable knowledge and resources are necessary for the processes of scaling up, storage, and dissemination. These processes present significant technical and logistical barriers.

Even if a biological weapon were disseminated successfully, the outcome of an attack would be affected by factors like the health of the people who are exposed and the speed and manner with which public health authorities and medical professionals detect and respond to the resulting outbreak. A prompt response with effective medical countermeasures, such as antibodies and vaccination, can significantly blunt the impact of an attack.

## liberal militarism k

### link turn---1ar

#### Militarism and human rights advocacy are incompatible. An increase in human rights is a decrease in miltarism.

Felice 23 [(William F. Felice, professor of political science at Eckerd College. He was named the 2006 Florida Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching), “Militarism and human rights”, International Affairs, <https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/2980272.pdf>, 1998] OM – TDI

The enduring tension between militarism and human rights

Militarism describes one type of society and world vision; international human rights describe a very different world. The two visions are incompatible. To implement a human rights agenda means sacrificing the fixation with military growth and military spending.

Human rights claims evolve over time. There is a strong link between the growth of new human rights and social development. As modern global society has matured, accompanied by deep ecological interdependence, new threats to the individual and the group have surfaced. To combat these threats, govern-ments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have raised issues of envi-ronmental balance, economic growth, social equality, refugee relocation, drug interdiction and disease eradication. Global cooperation between state and non- state actors is seen as critical to addressing this perplexing new agenda of world politics. Accordingly, the list of human rights claims keeps growing. Complex social relations give rise to these demands as new claims are made to alleviate suffering. What appears fundamental in one historical era may not be in anoth-er. Human rights claims today have no relation to a primitive state of nature where people’s lives were dominated by a few essential needs. As Norberto Bobbio points out, there are no current charters of rights which do not recog-nize the right to education, which broadens as society develops to include sec-ondary and university as well as primary education. Yet none of the better-known descriptions of the state of nature mentions such a right. International human rights today are a product of this particular historical period.

The International Bill of Human Rights incorporates civil, political, eco-nomic, social and cultural rights. It acknowledges human needs of survival, well-being, identity and freedom. In the late twenetieth century, collective human rights of gender, class, sexuality and ethnicity/race have been added to this framework. The goal is to create political, civil and socio-economic rights which enable all individuals through group membership to develop a valuable, independent life in civil society. We now have the ability to create a world of humane governance informed by these normative priorities. Perhaps in other times such an ambitious agenda was not possible, but there is no question that today with new economic developments, technological breakthroughs and innovations in communications, we have the ability to protect basic human dignity.

It is now commonly accepted that it is not possible to achieve significant progress on human rights without subsistence needs (food, sanitation, educa-tion, etc.) being met. It is also impossible to achieve human rights progress and development in societies controlled by repressive and corrupt regimes. The government can be the main obstacle to achieving either economic or politi-cal rights. Most United Nations scholars and human rights activists promote an interdependence between the two sets of rights (civil/political and economic/ social/cultural), and criticize those who make too sharp a distinction between them. Economic and social rights are complementary to libertarian principles found within civil and political rights. They are both symbiotic and mutually dependent. Civil and political rights can be enacted only if everyone has a min-imum of economic security.

This human rights agenda can also only be implemented within a framework of peace. Militarism has neither created a world of peace and stability, nor protected the human right to physical security. Overemphasis on military supe-riority undermines the ability to build regimes of trust and harmony. The arsenals of the war system are symptoms of deep conflict. Arms control and disarmament and the demobilization of armed forces are prerequisites to providing the institutional framework within which nations may pursue imple-mentation of the corpus of international human rights law. International security and stability are dependent on domestic security and stability. The roots of conflict within domestic societies are often the result of economic, social and environmental pressures which cause poverty and unem-ployment and pit one community, class, sex or ethnic group against another. Human rights as the core of domestic and foreign public policy can provide a route for the achievement of peace and stability. Preoccupations with ‘balance of power’ and military prowess can only continue to produce a world of inse-curity and war. Policies based on outmoded notions of realpolitik exacerbate insecurities. The irony is that human rights policies provide the clearest road to achieve the ‘realist’ objectives of security and stability. Long-term interests in international stability should compel governments to explore human security and positive peace.

### impact turn---1ar

#### Their K of liberal violence justifies atrocity---means less commitment to action in the wake of genocide. The risk of “humanitarianism” being abused as cover is comparatively less.

Petty ’13 — Keith; The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School; LL.M. with distinction 2008, Georgetown University Law Center; J.D., 2002, Case Western Reserve University, School of Law; B.A., 1999, Indiana University. The author was previously assigned as a legal advisor to battlefield commanders in Iraq, focusing on targeting, detention, and rule of law issues, The Michigan Journal of International Law

The only way to overcome these impediments to action - willful blindness, definitional quagmires, and subjective facts - is for states to demonstrate leadership. There is some evidence in past episodes that the international community responds when the United States takes an active leadership role in genocide prevention. n428 While U.S. support to global initiatives can spark backlash if the concept is perceived as expanding "Western influence," the United States is nonetheless uniquely positioned to influence states to adopt developing norms. n429 But the United States alone is incapable of influencing events in areas where "neighboring states, regional powers, and patron states will outweigh [the influence] of the United States." n430 In such situations, norm development will require building partnerships to assist in anti-atrocity efforts. n431 [\*810] C. Mass Atrocity Response Is a National & Global Security Interest It is common for states to look away as atrocities occur because they are not considered to implicate national interests. n432 When Ambassador Morgenthau reported the Armenian genocide to a disinterested Wilson administration, he had to remind himself that "unless it directly affected American lives and American interests, it was outside the concern of the American Government." n433 Consider, for example, that the United States embraced a foreign policy principle of nonintervention from its founding days. n434 Even though the noninterventionist impulse is ingrained in the national character, as U.S. global influence grew so too did the need to take proactive security measures. President Franklin Roosevelt, for example, warned of an isolationist United States. With regard to the formation of the United Nations, he stated, "There can be no middle ground here. We shall have to take the responsibility for world collaboration, or we shall have to bear the responsibility for another world conflict." n435 This statement about conflict echoes efforts to prevent atrocity crimes. An isolationist position will only foster impunity for the killing of civilians, as will an ineffective United Nations. Today it is widely recognized that genocide and crimes against humanity are crimes that affect all of humanity, not simply the target population or the territory where the atrocity occurs. n436 Still, the Genocide Prevention Task Force reported that "[a] core challenge for American leaders is to persuade others - in the U.S. government, across the United States, and around the world - that preventing genocide is more than just a humanitarian aspiration; it is a national and global imperative." n437 [\*811] National policy and recent studies indicate that the United States is moving toward this perspective. Since at least 2006, the United States has concluded that mass killings are a threat to U.S. national security. n438 Today, the President and Congress are in agreement about the threat posed to U.S. interests by atrocity crimes. n439 The Genocide Task Force reported that atrocity crimes are a direct threat to core U.S. national interests, n440 in addition to an assault on the universal right to life. These crimes fuel instability in weak states, which are often the source of other national security threats, such as "terrorist recruitment and training, human trafficking, and civil strife." n441 The spillover effects of these crimes also have long-term consequences in both the region where they occur and in the United States. When millions of refugees flow across porous borders, states provide humanitarian assistance ranging from assisting displaced people to bearing high economic costs for aid. In Bosnia, for example, because state action was ineffective at the early stages, "the United States has paid nearly $ 15 billion to support peacekeeping forces." n442 This is significant in a time of economic austerity in the United States and abroad. n443 Public opinion also appears to favor measures to prevent and respond to atrocity crimes. n444 The ICISS Report found that even among states that were staunchly opposed to infringement on sovereignty, "there was general acceptance that there must be limited exceptions to the non-intervention rule for certain kinds of emergencies." n445 At the United Nations, Kofi Annan was a strong proponent of R2P while Secretary-General, n446 and his successor, Ban Ki-moon, is no less committed. n447 [\*812] Responding forcefully to atrocity crimes can save lives, money, and preserve the moral authority of those with the will to act. n448 If the United States is truly interested in continuing its standing as a world leader, then it must be prepared to take whatever steps are necessary, but not necessarily alone, to respond to atrocity crimes. n449 This includes spending political capital in order to convince the U.S. public and the international community that it is the right thing to do. Teddy Roosevelt famously said of the Armenian genocide, "until we put honor and duty first, and are willing to risk something in order to achieve righteousness both for ourselves and for others, we shall accomplish nothing; and we shall earn and deserve the contempt of the strong nations of mankind." n450 The next Section embraces this sentiment and discusses how a principled approach to unilateral MARO will overcome concerns of pretext. Persuading the international community that intervention is necessary to respond to atrocity crimes is difficult on a case-by-case basis, let alone achieving consensus on a new norm. The primary concern about the use of force for humanitarian purposes is that this justification will serve as pretext for the national interests of powerful states. n451 Some argue that such a policy necessarily preferences militarily strong states over weaker states, erodes the principle of nonintervention into sovereign matters, and undermines the authority of the UNSC. While these concerns are legitimate in a world of real politick, the risk that an emerging norm will be abused can be limited by developing principled threshold conditions. Noninterventionists warn that carving out a humanitarian exception to the prohibition on the use of force is easily abused. n452 The issue of pretext [\*813] was at the forefront of concerns at the 2009 General Assembly debate on R2P. n453 The argument was that R2P is nothing more than a reformed version of humanitarian intervention and was akin to "renewed imperialism and major power intervention." n454 It must be noted that militarily strong states are also concerned about a norm of intervention, particularly if it obligates them to respond under an expanded R2P or MARO regime. n455 Some argue that an expanded R2P concept, or a right to intervene, could impact the principle of the sovereign equality of states. n456 But, it was a comparatively small, weak state, Guatemala, that drafted and negotiated the 2009 U.N. resolution adopting the principle of R2P. n457 This likely had something to do with Guatemala's past experience with atrocity crimes, and the country's recognition that more effective international efforts are needed to prevent and respond to these crimes. Additionally, the application of R2P and a unilateral MARO framework will always be inconsistent, favoring intervention in cases where the perpetrator state is militarily weak. n458 There are simply fewer incentives and pressure points to dissuade strong states. n459 Among the threshold conditions discussed below is that the use of force be proportionate to the underlying atrocity crime, which includes that there be minimal loss of civilian life in the planned MARO. A direct use of force against a well-trained armed force would likely result in greater loss of civilian life, thereby failing the proportionality test. There are obvious concerns about this Article's proposal to violate the general prohibition on the use of force for humanitarian purposes in order to develop a customary norm. Noncompliance, it is argued, "impinges on [\*814] the principle that power must be exercised in accordance with law." n460 Critics of unilateral action suggest that unauthorized intervention opens the door to noncompliance by other states, unsettles assumptions that states must comply with the prohibition against force, and diminishes U.N. primacy over the use of force. n461 Intervention, then, could quickly cause a downward spiral of conflict escalation and even more suffering. This argument lacks intellectual integrity in at least two ways. First, the focus of traditionalists is on the actions taken by states to end atrocities, rather than on the perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity. By shifting the burden, states that would take legitimate action are called into question and must defend their atrocity response, while civilian slaughter continues and mass murderers receive at least a temporary free pass. Second, concerns of noncompliance escalation are exaggerated and fundamentally misunderstand the nature and cause of armed conflict. n462 There is no evidence, empirical or otherwise, that interventions with the purpose of halting mass atrocities have led to an out-of-control spiral of conflict. n463 And even though intervention to prevent ongoing slaughter necessarily requires engaging the perpetrator state and likely its leadership, n464 this does not reflect a cascade of noncompliance. Rather it brings to an end the humanitarian noncompliance of the perpetrator state, might end an ongoing conflict, and, assuming the regime leadership is removed in the MARO, could prevent future conflicts by an otherwise aggressive state. Finally, and most controversially, it is not conflict that is the greatest threat to humanity: it is atrocity crimes. Although aggressive wars throughout history have caused significant human suffering, this suffering is only a fraction of that endured by victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, widespread war crimes, and ethnic cleansing. n465 MARO is not aggression, although it will often take the form of an armed conflict. If we must prioritize the two, atrocity crimes are a greater threat than armed conflict n466 and must be stopped, with force if necessary. [\*815] Developing norms are fragile and must be applied with discipline in order to persuade others to embrace the norm and dispel criticism. States interested in advancing a norm of unilateral MARO must be sure that it is applied in limited circumstances and with clearly articulated threshold conditions. Following these conditions - discussed in detail below and applied to the situation in Syria - will overcome suggestions that intervention is for pretextual purposes and erodes the rule of law. As part of a principled effort to stop atrocity crimes once and for all, MARO is the world community's opportunity to finally make good on the unfulfilled promise of "never again."

#### Humanitarian intervention is good.

Trahan 17 [(Jennifer Trahan, Associate Clinical Professor, at The Center for Global Affairs, NYU-SPS, and Chair of the American Branch of the International Law Association’s International Criminal Court Committee), “In Defense of Humanitarian Intervention”, OpinioJuris, <http://opiniojuris.org/2017/04/19/in-defense-of-humanitarian-intervention/>, 4/19/17] OM – TDI

Postings on Opinio Juris seem fairly squarely against the legality of the U.S. missile strike last week into Syria. Let me join Jens David Ohlin (blogging on Opinio Juris) and Harold Koh (blogging on Just Security) in making the contrary case.

When NATO intervened in Kosovo in 1999, member states did not have UN Security Council approval; yet all NATO members supported the intervention designed to stave off ethnic cleansing. True, many did not defend it as “humanitarian intervention” per se, except Belgium, which made the case for the legality of humanitarian interventions in briefing to the International Court of Justice. Still, all NATO members endorsed the military action.

Humanitarian intervention has also been cited as the legal justification for UK and US no fly zones in Iraq, and to justify ECOWAS’s interventions in Liberia in 1990 and Sierra Leone in 1998, prior to UN Security Council approval, which was later forthcoming.

And, after the Assad regime used sarin gas in August 2013, resulting in an estimated 1,400 victims, the UK was prepared to act under the doctrine of humanitarian intervention, arguing that the 3 criteria for intervention were met:

There is convincing evidence, generally accepted by the international community as a whole, of extreme humanitarian distress on a large scale, requiring immediate and urgent relief;

it must be objectively clear that there is no practicable alternative to the use of force if lives are to be saved; and

the proposed use of force must be necessary and proportionate to the aim of relief of humanitarian need and must be strictly limited in time and scope to this aim (ie the minimum necessary to achieve that end and for no other purpose).

So, despite many who would argue there is no such thing as “humanitarian intervention” or it is dead subsequent to the development of the responsibility to protect (R2P), humanitarian intervention keeps being invoked.

Why? Because there are times that UN Security Council dysfunctionality in voting, serves to shield the commission of atrocity crimes. China shielded President Bashir of Sudan while his armed forces coordinated with the Janjaweed militias to commit genocide in Darfur, and Russia has been shielding the Assad regime while it uses sarin and chlorine gas, not to mention other indiscriminate weapons and targeting of civilians. (We should not be outraged only at the regime’s chemical weapons use.)

Therefore, when R2P tells us that “pillar 3” forceful intervention requires UN Security Council approval, as it does, it is failing to do what it set out to achieve—to protect a people in peril from grave atrocities.

Remember, in 1999, Kofi Annan asked the General Assembly:

If, in those dark days and hours leading up to the [Rwanda] genocide, a coalition of States had been prepared to act in defence of the Tutsi population, but did not receive prompt Council authorization, should such a collation have stood aside and allowed the horror to unfold?

The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty gave a helpful response in 2001, not only setting criteria for intervention, but also, noting that if the UN Security Council failed to act, one should not be surprised if others did. The Secretary-General’s 2004 High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change then went on and also set similar criteria for intervention (as had the Independent International Commission in Kosovo (the “Goldstone Commission” before it).

So for those who claim we don’t know what humanitarian intervention is, these sources and the criteria they articulate suggest that we have a pretty good understanding of it. If we need more clarity as to its parameters to ensure the doctrine is not susceptible to abuse, then, rather than rejecting the doctrine entirely, it should be up to us international lawyers to figure them out.

R2P then backs off its promising start and ultimately concludes that UN Security Council approval is required for any forceful intervention. So, basically in answer to Kofi Annan’s question what to do when there is no UN Security Council approval, it answers: get UN Security Council approval. This cannot suffice.

Borne out of frustration with this dilemma, the French adopted their initiative “not to veto” in the face of mass atrocity crimes, and 112 states have joined the Accountability, Consistency and Transparency (ACT) Code of Conduct to act in the face of mass atrocity crimes. These were both extremely useful initiatives.

Yet, three of the permanent members of the UN Security Council will agree to neither initiative—Russia, China, and the U.S. I do not lump these countries fully in the same boat, because the US often makes clear the importance of deterring atrocity crimes, while not formally joining the initiatives, which it should.

The day that these hold-out P3’s join the French or ACT initiative, we no longer need to talk about “humanitarian interventions,” because the UN Security Council will be able to function as it was designed under the UN Charter, to both maintain international peace and security and to protect human rights (one of the purposes of the UN).

Another fallacy is that we read the veto as if absolutely anything can be vetoed, when the veto sits within the context of the UN Charter, which imposes obligations; we should explore further what is a legitimate versus an illegitimate veto that should be treated as null and void. The General Assembly could request an advisory opinion from the ICJ on this.

In the meanwhile, the UK has the right approach (as well as the Danish), that we have to leave a small carve out for the legality of humanitarian intervention, when narrowly construed. (The US has previously sometimes invoked what sounds like humanitarian intervention, while not fully formally endorsing the doctrine.)

Humanitarian intervention, narrowly construed, then clearly also would not constitute the crime of aggression, which is poised to activate this December 2017 before the International Criminal Court. (Anything in a legal “grey area” is excluded from that definition—and, at minimum, humanitarian intervention (sometimes supported and sometimes invoked) is within that legal grey area. The U.S., a non-State Party to the ICC’s Rome Statute, would be exempt from the crime’s jurisdictional reach, even if it does activate.)

It is unclear if the US’s missile strike was intended to fall within the doctrine of humanitarian interventions, as we don’t have a statement of the legal basis, which the U.S. should make clear, as well as what if any follow up plan it has. Harold Koh is right when he writes: “Going forward, all of this will require not just bombs, but diplomacy; not just tweets, but thoughtful diplomatic proposals; not just ‘America First,’ but genuine American multilateral leadership.” Just Security, 4/7/17.

One approach would be appointing a special envoy to pursue diplomatic negotiations, including partition of the country, similar to the partitioning of Bosnia under the Dayton Peace Accords. Republika Srpska within Bosnia was given entity status, yet its military and political leaders were later tried by the Yugoslav Tribunal for atrocity crimes. Clearly, diplomacy and war crimes trials are not mutually exclusive.

President Obama’s “red line” in response to which the US and international community did nothing was shameful. Yet, an argument can be made that at that point in time there was an alternative — to require Assad to relinquish his chemical weapons stocks. And, indeed, some, but clearly not all, of those stocks were destroyed pursuant to the legal regime established. So, by now, what could have been a viable alternative has been pursued, and Assad failed to adhere to it.

It is important to also note that humanitarian intervention can take many forms, and need not mean full-scale intervention, which should always be the last resort. Other forms would include limited no fly zones, protection of civilians in refugee camps, and establishing humanitarian corridors.

Furthermore, unilateral intervention is always the least best alternative. Certainly, endorsement by a regional organization (such as NATO or ECOWAS – as was done in the past), or even multilateral action not endorsed by a regional organization would be preferable. And, if there must be unilateral intervention, it should occur under close consultation with key US allies.

It is far too easy to insist on legal perfectionism and a strict readings of the UN Charter as we sit comfortably typing at our computers. We should not utterly shut the door on a doctrine designed to prevent atrocity crimes when all other means are failing, as they have been in Syria. I agree with Jens David Ohlin that we are “too focused on state sovereignty to the exclusion of any other legal categories” including “the right to be free from genocide and crimes against humanity.” The principles of humanity that have been a guiding principle since the time of Hugo Grotius, and the 1899 Martens clause, should still guide us today to seek a more responsible legal approach, one that does not prioritize sovereignty over humanity.

# neg

## iran advantage

### turn---accords---1nc

#### American presence is key to improve the Abraham Accords, which are key to stability.

Starr 22 [(Joel E. Starr, senior advisor for the Middle East and North Africa Center at the U.S. Institute of Peace. Prior to joining USIP, Starr served as the deputy assistant secretary of state for regional security in the State Department’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, where his division contributed the defense component to the 2020 Abraham Accords), “https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/07/bidens-trip-and-ukraines-war-could-boost-abraham-accords, 7/12/22] OM –TDI

President Biden’s Middle Eastern diplomatic mission this week contrasts with news reports and public discussion in the past year suggesting that the region has become a lesser priority for U.S. foreign and security policy. Biden’s visits to Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Palestinian West Bank territory build on a reality that Middle Eastern states have been knitting new relations, notably via the 2020 Abraham Accords. They are doing so in ways that Biden’s visit, and overall U.S. diplomacy, can advance.

Diplomacy on Openings for Peace

Biden will meet leaders from Israel, the Palestinian Authority and nine Arab states — an opportunity, he wrote on Saturday, to “deepen and expand” the “budding relations and steps toward normalization between Israel and the Arab world.” These steps emerge from the Abraham Accords and related agreements, in which the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan have normalized diplomatic relations with Israel. As this opening receives significant attention, policymakers also should consider a less noted opportunity rising from the four-month-old escalated Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia’s international isolation over its attack, and its poor military performance, is likely to weaken its appeal as a security partner. That could create points of vacuum in several Arab states that the United States should seek to fill, not least because of the chance that China otherwise will do so.

Following last year’s withdrawal from Afghanistan and end of U.S. combat operations in Iraq, policy debates and news media discussions reflected a sense of U.S. pullback from full engagement in the Middle East. USIP’s Lucy Kurtzer-Ellenbogen has noted that policymakers in Middle Eastern states have over years sensed a gradual “retrenching” of America’s role. Thus they are framing new cooperative efforts to ensure their security, with the dangers from Iran as their main focus. Those factors encouraged Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco and the UAE, alongside the United States, to send foreign ministers to a March conference in Israel — a “homegrown” initiative that has created cooperative working groups on regional security, clean energy, tourism, health, education and coexistence, and food and water security. Also in March, Israel, Jordan, Bahrain, Egypt, the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia sent senior military officials to a U.S.-convened meeting on sharing information on aerial threats from Iran, the Wall Street Journal reported.

President Biden’s trip, driven partly by the administration’s effort to build a stronger global response against Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, will let him encourage Arab states’ cooperation with Israel, notably on joint security against Iran, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said last week.

Biden’s trip will include a visit to the West Bank to meet Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Alongside the opportunities opened by the Abraham Accords, the long blockage of Palestinians’ demands for self-determination promise only continued violence with the waning in recent years of hopes for a Palestinian state beside Israel. Palestinian and some Israeli commentators have urged that Biden help restore what diplomats have called “a political horizon” for addressing the Palestinians’ needs.

The Ukraine Effect

Biden’s visit comes as the United States and NATO aim to deepen Russia’s economic and political isolation over its assault on Ukraine — and to contain the global economic disruptions of the war and consequent sanctions. News headlines have focused on Biden’s requests to Saudi Arabia and other states to increase oil production, replacing sanctioned Russian exports and reducing global oil prices. Yet analysts warn that Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil producing states may have limited capacity or inclination to do so. Saudi Arabia and Russia, the world’s largest oil exporters, have collaborated on their production levels for years as Saudi Arabia has abstained from joining United Nations condemnations of Russia’s attacks on Ukraine.

One option to engage Arab countries amid the Russia-Ukraine crisis has been less noted. Senate testimony in May by Assistant Secretary of State Jessica Lewis pointed to a new U.S. opportunity to advance cooperation between Israel and Arab nations while reducing risks for negative influence by Russia or China. Russia’s assault on Ukraine, notably its struggle to defeat the vastly smaller, more lightly armed Ukrainian forces, may open a strategic opportunity to dilute Russia’s security partnerships with some nations, she noted. “It is imperative,” Lewis said, “that we provide affordable or subsidized U.S. solutions, not only to off-ramp [defense] partners from Russia, but also to ensure that any global military capability gaps that emerge are not filled by [the] People’s Republic of China” (emphasis added).

Arab countries that U.S. diplomacy might encourage to join the new regional cooperation with Israel are Saudi Arabia, Oman, Algeria and Qatar. The last two have been among Russia’s biggest arms purchasers since 2016, according to the database on arms transfers maintained by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. All four will have noted the lackluster battlefield performance of Russia and its military equipment in the face of smaller Ukrainian forces using limited stocks of U.S.-made Javelins, Stingers and drones.

Algeria and Saudi Arabia were among four Arab states (with Iraq and Morocco) to abstain or not vote in the March 2 United Nations General Assembly condemnation of Russia’s new assault on Ukraine. Yet they and other states also cannot miss seeing the international isolation of the Putin regime, including sanctions that weaken its economy and target officials responsible for an unprovoked war and human rights atrocities. While any country builds its security partnerships on a complex web of factors, many tinged by political, economic or other interests, the performances of partner militaries and their hardware are relevant. Hence so is Assistant Secretary Lewis’ pinpointing of an opportunity.

Of these four Arab states, Saudi Arabia’s normalization with Israel would carry by far the greatest regional influence. But it (like Oman, Qatar and Algeria) has insisted on a restored peace process that can finally offer Palestinians hope for the future that was envisioned by the decades of diplomacy that aimed toward Israeli and Palestinian states side by side. Turning the Abraham Accords into a vehicle for real Middle East peace could mean making that restoration the price for these and other key countries joining them.

Part of security partnerships is arms sales, in which the Middle East’s main alternatives to Russia are the United States, France and China. China has increased its arms exports to Saudi Arabia in recent years. Thus, to the extent that Russia weakens its position as a security partner for Middle Eastern states, U.S. and allied policymakers should stay focused on the likelihood that China will seek to fill the points of vacuum. This is no hypothetical danger, but rather is already on tragic display in Myanmar, where China swiftly dropped all pretense of seeking peace in the civil war and moved to supplant Russia’s reduced ability to support the brutal military junta.

Security Partnerships

The United States’ security partnerships and arms provision include military-to-military relations and mandatory training that aim to strengthen democracies and protect human rights. Training aims “to ensure U.S.-origin equipment is not used to perpetrate human rights violations and to minimize the risk of civilian casualties by our partners,” stated Mira Resnick, Lewis’ deputy, in a Senate hearing last year on security assistance to the Middle East. She added: “We press and hold accountable our allies and partners to reduce civilian casualties. To adhere to the laws of armed conflict. To respect human rights. To enhance their security sector governance processes, and to understand when there is no military solution to a conflict.”

U.S. policy should continue its efforts to improve ways that American security assistance can advance long-term security goals — not least following last year’s surge in military coups. Human rights groups make a case for strengthening the training elements of U.S. security assistance. Analysts even within the U.S. military have noted inadequacies in how the United States measures the effectiveness of its training. Analysts at USIP urge that U.S. security assistance focus its training more on the good governance of police, military and other security institutions.

Finally, President Biden’s current visit reinforces the U.S. record of delivering on security guarantees in the Middle East, notably by supporting the Abraham Accords negotiated under its predecessor. Former Assistant Secretary of State Clarke Cooper noted that baseline record in the months before those negotiations. Distinct from security partners such as Russia and China, he noted, the United States has built and maintained relations that include “our commitment not just to make deals, but to build capabilities,” applying transparency and predictability. “To all those who would defend their nations,” he said, “a partnership with America offers something a purchase from Russia or China never will: friendship.”

### turn---arms sales---1nc

#### Removal of arms sales causes a strike and turns case.

Pearl interviewing Pinfold 15 [(Mike Pearl, journalist, author and screenwriter based in Los Angeles. He's been published in The Hollywood Reporter, The Awl, Grist, Death and Taxes, VICE's website and magazine, and VICE Motherboard's science fiction outlet known as Terraform, and Rob Geist Pinfold, Research Fellow at the Peace Research Center Prague and a Lecturer in International Peace and Security at Durham University's School of Government and International Affairs), “We Asked a Military Expert What Would Happen if the US Stopped Giving Money to Israel”, Vice News, https://www.vice.com/en/article/dpwnkm/what-would-happen-if-the-us-stopped-giving-money-to-israel-305, 3/5/15] OM – TDI

VICE: Hi, Rob! What would happen if the US stopped sending money to Israel?

Rob Pinfold: I think it would be a mess for Israel basically.

Would it be good for the US?

The US would have a lot less traction over Israel. It would be a downside for the US, and it would also be a downside for the [Middle East]. For a long time the US has been trying to use its aid politically to change Israel's behavior.

What behaviors wouldn't the US be able to control?

I think any end to this aid would mean that Israel would be much more likely to take radical moves that would not necessarily have the support of the international community. I think it would be dangerous.

What are the likely events in the short term?

I think that the big difference you'd see straightaway is an escalation in settlement building because the Israeli right would really be able to unleash it.

You see a lot, the Israeli government in particular, they've announced some big settlement-building initiatives of several thousand homes in East Jerusalem over the green line. And then the Americans say, "Na-uh, sorry, this is not happening," and then the idea is quieted for another five years, and then it happens again, ad nauseam.

But without any American influence over Israel, especially with this aid, I think you would see a drastic exploration in settlement building.

Would they attack Hamas targets in Gaza?

I think they would need to be provoked. Very, very rarely does Israel just willy-nilly launch itself into a conflict, not just because of influence from the US but also at the end of the day, Israel is a democracy—so actually instigating conflict has to have that legitimacy, otherwise it becomes a big issue.

But what if they were provoked?

Israel in the future would be much more unpredictable and any war would be likely to go on for a lot longer, because there wouldn't be one big power to really exert the pressure and squeeze both sides into a ceasefire.

And how would the US react if they couldn't influence them with money?

Military action is somewhat unfeasible, in my eyes, against Israel. It just wouldn't happen. You might have some sort of short-term sanctions against the regime by the US on Israel, and maybe on other belligerents as well.

And what would the outcome be?

Israel wouldn't lose the conflict, that's for sure. They get a lot of money from the States in terms of support in terms of the Iron Dome anti-missile program, but at the end of the day they have enough hardware already in the sheds to be able to thoroughly defeat any belligerents—for example, non-state-level actors like Hamas or Hezbollah, but also state-level actors like Iran.

I don't think it would be a question of turning the tide of battle it would just be a question of how long the war would go on, how bloody it would be, and who would get dragged in.

Who would get dragged in?

I think the US, even if they really fell out with and really strongly dislike[d] Israel, would probably still work toward a cessation of hostility as a superpower. I think that no matter what happens, we would go back to some sort of paradigm representing what we have at the moment. But the fighting would probably be longer and bloodier, and the US would have less of an ability to stop it straight away.

Would Israel make moves on Iran?

I think the Saudis would be ready to turn a blind eye to an Israeli attack [on Iran], which has been suggested before. So I think again the probability of mass-casualty warfare and violence would be much higher if the US, tomorrow, said, "Screw you, guys. I'm going home. This is too much effort."

What kind of warfare would we see?

In terms of Iranian retaliation, Iran has a lot of medium- to long-range missiles. They're not very accurate, but they stopped firing them at the end of the Iran-Iraq war, so they do have a very hefty stockpile that they could then fire at Israel. Israel would inevitably retaliate with their stock. So it'd be quite hard for them to launch a bombing campaign against Iran because they'd have to go through unfriendly territory on the way.

What might the targets of Israel's military action be?

I think you'd see one Israeli strike, one very pinpointed, strategic attack on Iranian nuclear assets. Then afterwards Israel would basically try to hold its own, because Iran would unleash its proxies on the region, which are primarily Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

I think we'd see fighting very close to Israel's doorstep and I think you'd see a lot of devastation of both Gaza and Lebanon. But on the flip side you'd also see a lot more damage to Israel's home front than you've seen in a very long time.

Would Iran have any luck?

The missiles that Iran has have overwhelmed the Iron Dome system. The Iron Dome system can shoot down the missiles that you saw [from] Hamas [during the war this past summer]. The Iron Dome can deal with that, but it wouldn't be able to do with the stockpiles of rockets that Iran has.

Would things escalate beyond exchanging missile attacks?

If there is more damage to the Israeli home front, the Israeli domestic scene would be more willing for the Israeli military to go all out on flattening large parts of Lebanon and Gaza. There would be much less resistance to a ground invasion, and much less resistance to moving troops in. Israel historically has very quick campaigns and very decisive victories. So I think the leashes would be off, so to speak. I think the Israeli army would be going en masse into Lebanon and into Gaza and wherever else they'd be getting attacked from. But the fighting would be mainly restricted to the area around Israel, unless they do some sort of massive campaign into Iran.

Does Israel have the fire power to successfully cripple the Iranian nuclear program?

That's a tough one because it's anyone's guess, really. I don't know exactly where and how the Iranians are hiding all their material.

They probably know.

It would still be very hard for Israel. Their planes would have to refuel in midair, in enemy territory. Their equipment is very limited. It's not known if they actually have any bunker-busting missiles, like the Americans have, that can penetrate deep underground. I think we'd probably have to see Israeli forces in Iran—special forces teams, demolition teams, that kind of thing.

It would have to involve some sort of covert support from the Saudis to have a very good chance of success. It would be very, very difficult and it would end in a lot of casualties on both the Israeli and the Iranian side. If the Israelis want to do it, there is nothing stopping them from doing it. If they see them as a potential threat, they will go in and they will go in hard.

Would the fighting be limited to just Iran, Lebanon, and Gaza?

I think it would definitely trigger a whole powder keg in the entire region. You look at the Middle East today, and it's the most unstable it's been in absolutely years. You have the Islamic State operating out of both Iraq and Syria. They're making headway in Lebanon as well. Egypt has its own problems with jihadists in the Sinai. It's very unstable… in Libya. [And] any conflict with Iran would not just be limited to Gaza, it would also spread to the West Bank where there are a lot of Iranian agents.

But in the long-term, if a terrible war weren't immediately sparked, how would a halt in funding from the US affect Israel's military budget?

In Israel, the military budget is very much sacrosanct. Any cut to the military budget, and you're putting the state in existential danger. Personally I think you'd see cuts to many other social, welfare, or educational programs within Israel before you'd see massive, damaging cuts to the army. They'd try to keep the military budget as steady as possible. So you'd see a damaging of Israeli society.

Could Netanyahu stay in power?

I personally don't think so. If any Israeli leader were willing to seriously jeopardize their ties [with the US], [causing] a complete cut off of all military and financial aid, I personally—and I could be proven wrong—I don't think the government would be able to withstand the pressure within Israel that would result from that.

What political change do you think the country would see internally?

If it happened today, I think you would see the rise of the Labor Party in the Israeli election.

What kind of economic impact would this have on the US and other countries?

I think the US would survive. The European Union is Israel's biggest trading partner, not the US. In Europe, they would cut off all money because they have been more critical of Israel than the US has been, traditionally. I think the crisis would be more on Israel's side than on Europe or the US.

Is there a possibility that any of Israel's enemies would look more favorably on the US's presence in the region?

I don't think that the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria would be welcoming the US, and developing ties with Uncle Sam…

Well, not them…

It might make a difference. It might make some sort of short-term blip, but I think the countries in the Arab world have enough reasons to be mad at the US the next day for whatever reason.

But speaking of the Islamic State, would they make a move?

I doubt that. They talk a lot about Jews in the world, and Jewish money, and Jewish power, and how much they hate Israel. But generally they have very little to actually do with Israel, in terms of fighting or invading Israel. They go for Jewish targets but they're not so much in the movement against Israel itself. In any one-on-one confrontation between the Islamic State and Israel, Israel would completely wipe the floor with them.

### china---1nc

#### Israel joining the BRI means it will always have some aid.

Helmy 23 [(Dr. Nadia Helmy, Associate Professor of Political Science, Faculty of Politics and Economics / Beni Suef University- Egypt), “Israeli plan to join BRI and its effects on U.S. national security”, Modern Diplomacy, https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2023/02/19/israeli-plan-to-join-bri-and-its-effects-on-u-s-national-security/, 2/19/23] OM – TDI

After China officially announced its Belt and Road initiative, the Israeli side worked from the outset to be an essential and genuine part of it. This was explicitly announced by the Israeli diplomat “Hagai Shagrir” in his capacity as Director of the Northeast Asia Department at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by stressing that:

“The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative brings more business opportunities to Israeli companies in the field of infrastructure projects, and Israel considers itself part of the 21st century Maritime Silk Road, which makes its way from the South China Sea to the Mediterranean”.

In another interview with “Hagai Shagrer”, Director of the Asia and Pacific Office at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he confirmed the possibility of Israel joining the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative by asserting that:

“The Belt and Road Initiative is a long-term vision and a positive initiative”

In view of the seriousness of Hagai Shagrir’s position, in his capacity as director of the Asia and Pacific Office at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as a liaison between China and Tel Aviv, his danger lies in his preparation by Tel Aviv to deal with China since he was a young man. In 1991, the Israeli diplomat “Hagai Shagrir” traveled to China, when he was just a young student, Shagrir traveled to China as a wandering tourist. Here, “Hagai Shagrir” has held his current position as the Director Responsible for the Asia Pacific Office since September 2016. Prior to that, Shagrir worked in two Israeli consulates in China: the Israeli consulate in Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong Province in southern China, and the Israeli consulate in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province in southwestern China. We find that at the present time, “Shagrir” pays several business visits to China, ranging between three or four times annually.

The Israeli shores, from Gaza to Haifa, represent one of the main stations of the Belt Road and the old road before Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian state, which was more than a thousand years ago, to connect the Indian Ocean with the Mediterranean Sea, through the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal, through the giant Israeli infrastructure project, known as (the Peace Railway, or the Eilat-Ashdod Port Railway).

The Israeli occupation authorities took the initiative to sign early on the partnership in the Asian Infrastructure Bank, which was established by China as part and essential input of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative.

The danger of Israeli planning also enables it to be part of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative to benefit from Chinese projects and investments, by completing (a railway project from the Gulf through Saudi Arabia, passing through Jordan to Palestine).

The idea of ​​this project for China is based on: building a railway extending from (the Palestinian shores, starting from Gaza to Haifa, as an important Chinese station on the Silk Road), and although the actual authority is for Israel over this region that is an important extension of the Chinese belt and road, and it is an occupation authority. However, China does not stop at that point for much, what is important is (the extent of Israel’s desire as an authority controlling this sensitive and very important area for China on the Mediterranean coast to deal with the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative).

Israel seeks to invest in the recent normalization agreements with the Arab regimes, and the undeclared relations with some other regimes, through projects that serve the Israeli integration into the Chinese initiative, most notably:

(A railway project that could extend from the Gulf through Saudi Arabia, passing through Jordan), and as long as the Chinese and Israeli sides talked about their joint plans to establish this railway line, all the way through (the occupied Palestinian territories to Haifa on the Mediterranean Sea, which if it happens, it will be the most aspiration To Israel, as in addition to reaping huge profits as a result of this short and effective line for it), it will perpetuate the Israeli side as a natural part within the international system in the region, which is (which harms Egyptian and Arab national security and the system of active forces in the Middle East region).

What appears to show that the Israeli side has a desire to participate in the projects of the Chinese initiative is the Israeli signing of the partnership in the (Asian Infrastructure Bank), in addition to the growing joint projects between the two sides in the field of economy and armaments that are integrated with the projects of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative.

And because of this strict American opposition to Chinese cooperation with Israel, Israeli objections continued in the face of American interference in its affairs to cooperate with Beijing. One of the most prominent phrases of the former head of the Israeli intelligence service (Mossad), “Yossi Cohen”, on June 7, 2020, who stepped down in June 2020 from his post, was his phrase:

“I don’t understand what the Americans want from China. If someone understands that, he should explain it to me… China does not oppose us and is not our phrase”

In this context, Washington considers with concern the impact of Israeli cooperation with China on its national security, and the United States of America’s fears increased following the Israeli mention of the possibility of officially joining the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative after Tel Aviv joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and here came Washington’s dealings with great concern, with China’s building the new port for Israel in the city of Haifa, with the vision of the CIA, that the permanent presence of China in the Israeli port means that there is a golden opportunity for Tel Aviv to collect intelligence information, such as: facilitating China’s monitoring of the movements of American ships, as it facilitates this for the Chinese Developing electronic monitoring systems that endanger US cyber security.

The visit of “William Burns”, Director of the CIA, to Israel in August 2021 brought to the fore the United States’ fears of growing economic and technological cooperation between Tel Aviv and Beijing, which Washington believes “affects its national security”. The most prominent here is that immediately after William Burns, Director of the CIA, visited Israel, Israel, and as a result of American pressure on it, replaced the Shanghai International Ports Group, which was supposed to manage a new container terminal in Haifa Port, with a well-known Emirati company, the “Shanghai International Ports Group DP World”.

Here, Washington considers its national security in danger when it comes to any kind of partnership between its main ally in the Middle East, “Israel” and China. Washington’s reservations also came when the well-known Chinese billionaire “Li Kaching” donated $130 million to the (Israeli Technion Research Institute).

We note here that all Chinese companies that invest or build major infrastructure projects in Israel have relations with the Israeli government, military entities, or armed forces. It is likely that any large-scale Israeli company in the People’s Republic of China will have unofficial or official links to the Chinese government, and it is expected that there will be cooperation with its intelligence and security services. Of course, Washington will not accept the transfer of technology related to US defense located in Israel to Beijing, and the US authorities have concerns that China may obtain technologies or collect intelligence information to threaten the national security of the United States of America in the field of cyber, satellite communications, artificial intelligence and robots.

Israel also views the Chinese initiative as a source of profit, in light of the availability of its modern infrastructure, which does not need a long time to be integrated or developed to integrate with the proposed initiative projects, unlike other Asian countries that seek to join the Chinese Silk Road, and perhaps one of the most important projects What the Chinese and Israeli parties aim to implement in this context is: the use and development of the road from (the port of Eilat on the Red Sea by land to the ports of Ashdod, Ashkelon and Haifa).

Chinese and Israeli interests actually intersect in several regions around the world, which are vital to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, including the African continent, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus region, where both Beijing and Tel Aviv seek to invest in those regions and sell advanced weapons to them, as relations represent The distinction between Israel, South Korea and Japan – who are opponents of Beijing – is a source of competition at the same time between China and Tel Aviv.

Signs of the American concern about the possibilities of (the militarization of the Chinese project of the Belt and Road through that Aviv) began, as Washington began to think deeply to rein in the Israeli side with all the implications of this trend of the necessities of deep thinking, on how to deal with this possibility, whose signs began with China establishing a base Military in the state of Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. There is also a report by the US Department of Defense “The Pentagon” that was submitted to the US Congress, which suggested this possibility. He refers to the possibility of building military bases or facilities for China in the state of Pakistan and in countries that have previous experiences in hosting foreign military bases, specifically in the Middle East region.

The same trend occurred on December 8, 2021, when the CIA warned that Beijing intends to establish a permanent military base on the coast of Equatorial Guinea, which would give it a naval capability in the Atlantic Ocean against the United States of America.

Washington fears that the Chinese presence in the city of Haifa and the granting of facilities there by Tel Aviv, may be a Chinese focal point for collecting information about the US Sixth Fleet present in that region, which Washington considers very dangerous.

### at: strike---1nc

#### Strikes happen without the US – IDF chief

Al Arabiya 4-5 [(Al Arabiya English, News organization that reports on affairs in the state of Israel) "Israel ‘ready’ to attack Iran, can do so without US help: IDF chief,", Al Arabiya, https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2023/04/05/Israel-ready-to-attack-Iran-can-do-so-without-US-help-IDF-chief, 4-5-2023] BZ – TDI

Israel is “ready” to attack Iran and can do so even without support from the United States, Israeli media quoted IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi as saying on Wednesday.

“We are ready to act against Iran. The Israeli army has the ability to strike both in distant countries and near home,” i24NEWS quoted Halevi as telling the IDF’s army radio.

He said that the IDF will enhance its capabilities for a pre-emptive strike on Iran in the next few years, and that such a strike would be “overwhelming” despite the geographical distance.

“We know how to act alone. We are a sovereign nation that reserves the right to make its own decisions. It would be good to have the United States on our side, but it is not an obligation,” he added.

These comments come amid growing tensions between Iran and Israel, with Iran accusing Israel of killing two of its military personnel in Syria last week and vowing to retaliate.

Israel accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, a claim that Iran denies. Israel has previously warned that if diplomatic efforts fail to curb Iran’s nuclear program, it would resort to military action.

There has been a rare public disagreement between Israel and the US, with President Joe Biden calling on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to step back from a bid to weaken the judiciary, which has triggered massive protests in Israel.

Netanyahu responded that he would not bow to foreign pressure but took a more conciliatory tone when he participated in a democracy summit called by Biden.

Following that exchange, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called his Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen and “reaffirmed the importance of the enduring US-Israel bilateral relationship,” according to State Department spokesman Vedant Patel said.

#### Israel can’t strike – US prevents it

Safaei 21 [(Sajjad Safaei, postdoc fellow at Germany’s Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology), "Israel Isn’t Strong Enough to Attack Iran," Foreign Policy, https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/09/17/israel-isnt-strong-enough-to-attack-iran/, 9-17-2021] BZ – TDI

Not for the first time in recent memory, Israel wants the world to know it is ready and willing to militarily strike Iran—alone if it has to.

In recent weeks, Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz has twice spoken of Israel’s readiness to strike Iran militarily to prevent it from advancing is nuclear program. “I do not rule out the possibility that Israel will have to take action in the future in order to prevent a nuclear Iran,” he said at a briefing of foreign ambassadors and envoys. And as though to add to the alarmist mood, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of General Staff Aviv Kochavi claimed that the “progress in the Iranian nuclear program has led the IDF to speed up its operational plans” for an attack on the country and that a recently-approved “defense budget … is meant to address this.” A dedicated team, he boasted, had been assembled to boost preparation for a strike on Iranian nuclear facilities should such a strike be ordered by Israel’s political leadership. For his part, Israeli Prime Minister Neftali Bennett has said his country is ready to “act alone” against Iran if it ever feels the need to do so. He made the remarks after an attack on an Israeli-managed tanker off the coast of Oman, for which Tel Aviv and its allies blamed Iran.

To be sure, Israel has in the past carried out relatively limited operations against Iran—such as raids on Iranian allies in Syria and nuclear sabotage—and may continue to do so in the future. But to what extent should we believe Tel Aviv is truly ready and willing to launch a strike on Iran because of advances in the Iranian nuclear program, knowing full well that this is likely to push the two countries and their allies into war? The political and military constraints on Israeli decision-makers suggests such a military showdown is highly unlikely.

To speak of an imminent and undisguised IDF strike deep inside Iranian territory is to overlook a long-established norm that has for decades governed U.S.-Israel relations: Israel cannot simply ignore the wishes and concerns of its chief patron, especially when core U.S. foreign policy priorities are at stake.

This norm was expressed in clear terms by no less a figure than Israel’s former premier and Defense Minister Ehud Barak in his autobiography My Country, My Life. Here, Barak spelled out the paradigm that has shaped—and will likely continue to shape—the contours of Israeli action against Iran. “There were only two ways,” he explained, that Israel could stop the Iranians from getting a nuclear weapon (read: “nuclear program,” for Barak willfully ignores U.S. intelligence assessments that Iran had halted pursuits for nuclear weapons in 2003). One way was “for the Americans to act.” The only other option was “for [the United States] not to hinder Israel from doing so.”

But according to Barak, “hinder” is precisely what consecutive U.S. administrations have done—and are still likely to do.

Even during the military interventionism of the George W. Bush presidency, Israel did not have a blank check to do as it pleased. As Barak notes in his memoirs, when Bush learned in 2008 of Israeli efforts to purchase heavy munitions from the United States, he confronted Barak and then-premier Ehud Olmert. “I want to tell both of you now, as president,” Bush warned, “We are totally against any action by you to mount an attack on the [Iranian] nuclear plants.”

“I repeat,” Bush further clarified, “in order to avoid any misunderstanding. We expect you not to do it. And we’re not going to do it, either, as long as I am president. I wanted it to be clear.” It deserves mention that according to Barak, Bush issued this warning despite knowing that Israel did not even possess the military capacity to assault Iran at the time.

According to Barak, this staunch opposition to a strike on Iran had a “dramatic” effect on him and Olmert since the Bush administration had supported Israel’s 2007 bombing of Syria’s nascent nuclear program just a year before. In both cases, Washington’s approval, or lack thereof, was demonstrably consequential.

Barak’s memoirs show that the same dynamic continued to govern U.S.-Israel relations during Obama’s presidency. He recalls how then-U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta “made no secret of the fact he didn’t want us to launch a military strike” at a time when the Obama administration was focused on putting international political and economic pressure on Iran. Panetta “urged me to ‘think twice, three times,’ before going down that road,” Barak wrote, and saw it as a given that Tel Aviv would keep Washington abreast of its decisions. “If you do decide to attack the Iranian facilities, when will we know?” he allegedly asked Barak.

According to Barak’s account, Israel was dissuaded from going forward with a supposed strike on Iran’s nuclear installations in summer 2012 “because of the damage it would do to our ties with the United States.” Washington’s demands continued to limit Tel Aviv after the finalization of the nuclear deal in 2015. Even then, Barak recalls, the Israelis could not simply act against Iran without a green light from the Obama administration: “We needed to reach agreement with the Americans about what kind of military strike we, or they, might have to take if the Iranians again moved to get nuclear weapons.”

As evinced by Barak’s autobiography, U.S. presidents are not taciturn about making their views and wishes known to Israeli officials, especially when primary U.S. foreign policy objectives are involved. Nor can Tel Aviv afford to ignore Washington’s express demands and concerns on such matters. And today, any flagrant Israeli violation of Iranian sovereignty will instantly clash with two mutually reinforcing goals that have come to define the Biden administration’s foreign policy: curbing Iran’s nuclear program through non-military means (efforts currently focused on reviving the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal) and winding down U.S. military presence in the Middle East.

These political realities make it unlikely Israel will pursue an overt strike on Iran. Just as important, however, are the military constraints that Israel faces.

To be sure, even without its ready-to-launch nuclear warheads, Israel is more than capable of delivering swift and devastating blows to Iran’s armed forces, both in the skies and seas. Its fleet of American fighter jets and bombers alone can irreparably trounce Iran’s air defenses as well as its dilapidated air force. Even Iran’s increasingly powerful, accurate, and far-reaching missile and drone systems don’t radically alter the balance of power in the skies. In short, in terms of military hardware, the IDF’s superiority over Iran’s armed forces is indisputable, not to mention otherworldly.

But this prodigious superiority will be rendered far less consequential in the event of an all-out war that lures the IDF ground forces into the battlefield. Why? Ever since the IDF’s embarrassing defeat during the 2006 war with Hezbollah, Israel’s top military brass have become acutely aware that the country’s land forces are ill-prepared for a full-scale war with a fighting force even moderately capable of packing a punch.

As shown by Israel’s own scathing inquiry into the 2006 war, as well as reports by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the U.S. Army, the 33-day war with Hezbollah demonstrated that the IDF ground forces had been woefully ill-prepared to fight a real war with a formidable foe.

Since then, there have been some signs of remedial measures undertaken by the IDF to address its shortcomings. Still, there is little reason to believe its ground forces have undergone a drastic improvement since the 2006 war. Unsurprisingly, when Gadi Eizenkot began his tenure as Chief of General Staff of the IDF a few months after Protective Edge (the 2014 Gaza War), he reportedly “found the ground forces in rather bad shape” and “an army that had gotten fat in … all the wrong places in the decade after the Second Lebanon War.” The picture looked more or less the same in late 2018 when the outgoing ombudsman of the Israeli Defense Ministry Maj. Gen. (res.) Yitzhak Brick warned lawmakers in a “contentious” meeting that the country’s ground forces were unprepared for a future war.

Mindful of the gaping chink in the IDF’s armor, Israel’s highest military and political echelons are unlikely to order an overt military operation inside Iranian territory, knowing full well that such an assault will most likely lock Israel and Iran in an irreversible spiral of escalation that promises to pit ill-prepared IDF ground troops against Iranian forces and their regional allies such as Hezbollah.

But if Washington’s red light and Tel Aviv’s own military calculus render a flagrant violation of Iranian sovereignty by the IDF unlikely, then what is to account for the public, at times even garish, saber-rattling emanating from Israeli statesmen? Such threats are partly tailored for domestic consumption. In a highly militarized social context that has in recent decades steadily drifted toward the far-right, talk of bombing Iran may be an effort to not appear weak before one’s political rivals.

It may also be read, however, as a bargaining posture to strengthen Israel’s position vis-à-vis the Biden administration on issues far closer to home than the Iranian nuclear program. By continuously breathing life into the specter of striking Iran—a source of great unease in Western capitals due its catastrophic ramifications—Israeli leaders can offer to forgo their non-existent plans to enter an all-out war with Iran in return for other gains: Biden dropping his opposition to illegal settlement expansion in the occupied territories (a secondary issue for the United States) as well as more military and financial aid.

#### New nuclear deal dampens the possibility of a strike

Bob 6-12 [(Yonah Jeremy Bob, Jerusalem Post's senior military correspondent, intelligence analyst and Literary Editor. He covers the Israeli military, the Mossad, the Shin Bet, defense technologies, Iran's weapons of mass destruction, cyberwar and war crimes allegations. Yonah is also well-connected to all of the top Israeli ministries from his former posts in the IDF, the Foreign Ministry and the Justice Ministry), "Israel won't consider a strike against Iran right before a nuclear deal," The Jerusalem Post | JPost, https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-746067, 6-12-2023] BZ – TDI

No one knows for sure whether Israel would pull the trigger and strike Iran’s nuclear program preemptively if it felt time was about to run out on any chance of preventing the ayatollahs from achieving a deployable nuclear weapons capability.

But we can pretty much assume that Jerusalem will not take any major action as long as there is momentum between the West and the Islamic Republic for a potentially imminent deal.

It probably does not matter whether that deal would be a full return to the 2015 JCPOA nuclear deal or to the “less for less” – partial freeze of nuclear violations for partial sanctions relief deal that has taken over the headlines since last week. Either of those options eliminates Israel’s argument to the world of there being an imminent threat, assuming there is no new clear and convincing evidence of such a threat.

This can be derived from the fact that only Israeli politicians seem more vocal about attacking lately, and no Israeli defense officials are expressing any special urgency to attack.

In fact, after then-IDF chief of staff Aviv Kohavi made a speech last month that some Israeli journalists saw as a hint to a new war footing with Tehran, The Jerusalem Post was assured that nothing could be further from the truth. But the Jewish state’s public record in sometimes attacking or allegedly attacking Iran since 2012 also clearly shows that Israel holds its fire much more during periods of a deal or potential deal.

The Post has been told that Israel’s security establishment did not stop its activities against Iran between 2012-2015, the period in which an interim deal was close to being closed, and which led to the JCPOA, but it seems they either slowed down or at least did not make it into the public record.

Likewise, from 2015 to 2020 there was little or no public record of attacks or alleged attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities.

That all changed in June 2020 when the IAEA Board of Governors condemned Iran (for the first time in nearly a decade) for failing to resolve nuclear questions raised by Mossad’s 2018 exposure of a number of undeclared nuclear sites and illicit nuclear material.

### at: middle east---1nc

#### Middle East war is more unlikely than ever because of our permanent military presence.

Karlin & Wittes 19 [(Mara Karlin, International Studies Professor at John Hopkins University, Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development 2015-2016, & Tamara Cofman Wittes, a Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution and U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs from 2009-2012), “America’s Middle East Purgatory: The Case for Doing Less”, Foreign Affairs, https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/events/americas-middle-east-purgatory-case-doing-less, January/February 2019] OM – TDI

LESS RELEVANT REGION In response to the Iraq war, the United States has aimed to reduce its role in the Middle East. Three factors have made that course both more alluring and more possible. First, interstate conflicts that directly threatened U.S. interests in the past have largely been replaced by substate security threats. Second, other rising regions, especially Asia, have taken on more importance to U.S. global strategy. And third, the diversification of global energy markets has weakened oil as a driver of U.S. policy. During the Cold War, traditional state-based threats pushed the United States to play a major role in the Middle East. That role involved not only ensuring the stable supply of energy to Western markets but also working to prevent the spread of communist influence and tamping down the Arab-Israeli conflict so as to help stabilize friendly states. These efforts were largely successful. Beginning in the 1970s, the United States nudged Egypt out of the pro-Soviet camp, oversaw the first Arab-Israeli peace treaty, and solidified its hegemony in the region. Despite challenges from Iran after its 1979 revolution and from Saddam Hussein’s Iraq throughout the 1990s, U.S. dominance was never seriously in question. The United States contained the Arab-Israeli conflict, countered Saddam’s bid to gain territory through force in the 1990–91 Gulf War, and built a seemingly permanent military presence in the Gulf that deterred Iran and muffled disputes among the Gulf Arab states. Thanks to all these efforts, the chances of deliberate interstate war in the Middle East are perhaps lower now than at any time in the past 50 years.

#### **Historical examples prove Iran-Israel won’t escalate.**

Riedel 21 [(Bruce Riedel, Senior Fellow – Foreign Policy, Center for Middle East Policy, Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology, Director – The Intelligence Project), "Why bombing Iran is (still) a bad idea," Brookings, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-bombing-iran-is-still-a-bad-idea/, 12-14-2021] BZ – TDI

Israeli officials in Washington on Thursday reportedly urged the United States to launch strikes against Iranian targets, in what would be an unprecedented escalation of hostilities. Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Mossad chief David Barnea pushed the Biden administration to engage in military action in order to get Iran to “soften its position at the negotiating table.”

While the talks in Vienna have yielded little progress, this appeal marks just the latest example of the failed paradigm with which both the United States and Israel have approached Iran: the belief that greater pressure and more aggression will force Tehran to capitulate, when the likelier outcome would be to provoke a similarly militant response.

Israel says it is under an increasingly dire threat, prompting President Herzog to assert, “If the international community does not take a vigorous stance on this issue, Israel will do so. Israel will protect itself.” Yet neither Israel nor the United States would be in this position if Trump had stayed in the deal, or if Biden had swiftly rejoined it upon taking office.

Retired Israeli General Isaac Ben Israel told Bloomberg that “Netanyahu’s efforts to persuade the Trump administration to quit the nuclear agreement have turned out to be the worst strategic mistake in Israel’s history.” With this statement, Ben Israel admitted that not only did Israel undermine its own security by pushing for Trump to renege on the JCPOA, but also that Israel undermined America’s security, as both countries share an interest in preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Such behavior is unacceptable from a partner. Unfortunately, Israel’s current Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is adopting much the same posture on Iran as his political rival and predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu.

If the Biden administration takes Israel’s advice, or, perhaps more likely, if Israel launches attacks that provoke an Iranian response and Washington gets dragged into the conflict, what would happen?

An Israeli strike on Iran will likely start a conflict that pulls in neighboring countries on both sides. Hezbollah will launch thousands of rockets, missiles, and drones at Haifa, Tel Aviv, and other targets. Hamas might also join the conflict. Iran or its Iraqi and Yemeni partners could strike Saudi Arabia as they have in the past; they might also expand attacks to include Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, given their now publicly normalized ties with Israel. Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar, which have tended to maintain relations with both Iran as well as the rest of the GCC and the United States, will be pressed to choose a side, a decision that will subject them to attack from their new adversaries. Jordan would be in a bind, given the enormous popular pressure to break the peace treaty with Israel. Oil prices would skyrocket.

If the war escalated, the United States might feel compelled to invade and try to hold Iranian territory. But as regional expert Kenneth Pollack once quipped, “If you liked the Iraq War, you’ll love the Iran War.” Indeed, Iran’s population is three times larger than Iraq’s was in 2003. Iran’s terrain is more mountainous and therefore challenging for an occupying force to control. Iranian nationalism is grounded in millennia of Persian civilization, so the splintering of national identity observed in Iraq is unlikely. While some might mistakenly imagine Iranians welcoming the fall of their authoritarian government, experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Vietnam, etc. should remind us that foreign invaders are rarely welcomed. Iran lost a half million lives fighting Iraq in the 1980s, in what Iranians believe was an American-inspired war to destroy their revolution, which only rallied citizens behind the regime.

Iran has already withstood decades of U.S. sanctions, including the past three years of “maximum pressure”: instead of fomenting a popular uprising against the government, as some American Iran hawks persist in believing, that strategy has empowered hardliners who now control all of the regime’s major institutions. This is due in major part to the widespread perception that then-President Rouhani’s willingness to trust that the Americans would uphold their commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal was naive. Indeed, even before Trump pulled out of the deal, Iranians’ hopes for a post-sanctions economic boom were disappointed, as many sanctions remained in place and more were added.

This is not the first time Israel has expressed panic about Iran, nor is it the first time tensions have run high. Yet at some point, through arrogance or error, military confrontation is more likely than not. Israel is not at existential risk from Iran. Tehran is well aware that Israel has its own nuclear arsenal with the capability to deliver weapons by American-built aircraft, French-inspired missiles, and German-built submarines.

In their recent expressions of regret that Netanyahu exhorted then-President Trump to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal, other senior Israeli national security officials — most of whom are no longer in office — have suggested the need for a different approach. Although they may have felt dissatisfied with the deal at the time, they now say the JCPOA was the only measure that ever successfully checked Iran’s nuclear program. Director of Central Intelligence William Burns says there is no evidence that Iran has embarked on weaponizing its nuclear program, and an effort to do so would take one to two years.

American officials need to avoid talking themselves into a dead-end where the only two choices are doing nothing or going to war. U.S. interests would be better served by engaging in a rational discussion of the issues that divide us from Iran than issuing threats that if Tehran does not comply with a deal we violated there will be heavy consequences. Washington should also be clear with Tel Aviv that an Israeli attack on Iran or Iranian targets would have serious negative implications for the U.S.-Israel relationship.

The Trump administration — egged on by Netanyahu — made an enormous mistake by violating the JCPOA. It destroyed an emergent American dialogue with Iran that offered to de-escalate tensions in the region and gave Iran an excuse to restart parts of its nuclear program that the JCPOA had boxed in. It also rightly raised concerns about the integrity of American commitments. The consequences of this violation are now coming home to haunt us. It is time for honest and thoughtful discussions with ourselves and our partners, not full-throated threats that will have their own dangerous results.

## credibility advantage

### turn---military presence---1nc

#### US military presence in countries with human rights abuses is the only way to improve

Blinken 21 [(Antony J., is the 71st U.S. Secretary of State), “Putting Human Rights at the Center of U.S. Foreign Policy,” U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/putting-human-rights-at-the-center-of-u-s-foreign-policy/>, 2/24/21] NH - TDI

The United States is committed to a world in which human rights are protected, their defenders are celebrated, and those who commit human rights abuses are held accountable. Promoting respect for human rights is not something we can do alone, but is best accomplished working with our allies and partners across the globe. President Biden is committed to a foreign policy that unites our democratic values with our diplomatic leadership, and one that is centered on the defense of democracy and the protection of human rights.

Today, the administration took an important step in that direction by announcing the U.S. intent to seek election to a seat on the UN Human Rights Council starting in January 2022. The United States has long been a champion of human rights. If elected to the Human Rights Council, we will use the opportunity to be a leading voice within the Council for promoting respect for human rights.

The Human Rights Council is an important multilateral venue dedicated to furthering international human rights efforts and has played a critical role in promoting accountability for human rights violations and abuses. From investigations into abuses in Syria and North Korea to promoting the human rights for women and LGBTQI persons and other minorities, and combatting racism and religious persecution, the Human Rights Council must support those fighting against injustice and tyranny.

We acknowledge challenges at the Council as well, including unacceptable bias against Israel and membership rules that allow countries with atrocious human rights records to occupy seats they do not merit. However, improving the Council and advancing its critical work is best done with a seat at the table.

We seek to return to the Human Rights Council to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies and partners to ensure that this important body lives up to its purpose. We do so with determination to listen, learn, and work toward a world in which human rights are universally respected.

### alt causes---1nc

#### Egypt.

Oswald 21 [(Rachel, George Washington University, staff writer at CQ Roll Call) “Military aid to Egypt shapes up as key human rights test for Biden,” Roll Call, <https://rollcall.com/2021/08/16/military-aid-to-egypt-shapes-up-as-key-human-rights-test-for-biden/>, 8/16/21] NH - TDI

U.S. taxpayers since 1987 have provided Egypt with $1.3 billion annually in grants known as Foreign Military Financing, which Cairo uses to purchase big U.S. weapon systems.

However, Congress has usually also provided a waiver that the State Department can use to disburse the restricted FMF grants. All State Department officials have to do is deem doing so to be in the U.S. national interest. In practice, that has meant the waiver is typically used and Egypt eventually gets access to the full amount of military grants — all while the human rights situation in the Arab world’s largest country has steadily deteriorated.

“It is not the 1970s any longer; the Soviets and the Arab nationalists are gone,” said Sen. Christopher S. Murphy, D-Conn., at a Foreign Relations Middle East subcommittee hearing last week that examined security assistance policies. “We’ve invested over $50 billion in Egypt’s army over the past 40 years. They did provide support to us in the Gulf War in 1991, but recently that army has been more focused on internal repression than on regional security.”

#### Saudi Arabia.

US DOS 23 [(U.S. Department of State, is an executive department of the U.S. federal government responsible for the country's foreign policy and relations) “United States-Saudi Arabia Relationship: Eight Decades of Partnership,” U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/united-states-saudi-arabia-relationship-eight-decades-of-partnership/>, 6/6/23] NH - TDI

The United States shares a strategic partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for over 80 years. Building upon the commitments made in the Jeddah Communique during President Biden’s visit to Saudi Arabia in 2022, the United States continues to partner with Saudi Arabia on political, security, counterterrorism, economic, and energy issues, including clean energy innovation, to advance our common vision for a more peaceful, secure, prosperous, and stable Middle East. In the past three years, the United States has completed new diplomatic facilities in Jeddah and Dhahran, and will launch the construction of a new embassy in Riyadh. These projects represent the physical foundation of the strong and lasting U.S.-Saudi relationship and our investment in that relationship for the decades to come.

The United States continues to work with Saudi Arabia to resolve regional conflicts and deal with global challenges. Our two countries are working together to end the conflict in Sudan, including in negotiating the Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan and enabling humanitarian assistance. Saudi Arabia has supported UN-led peace efforts in Yemen that have enabled over a year of de-escalation and created the best opportunity for peace since the war began.

### at: democracy---1nc

#### Democracy is resilient but solves nothing.

Doorenspleet ’19 — Renske; Politics Professor at the University of Warwick. 2019; “Rethinking the Value of Democracy: A Comparative Perspective”; *Palgrave Macmillan*

The value of democracy has been taken for granted until recently, but this assumption seems to be under threat now more than ever before. As was explained in Chapter 1, democracy’s claim to be valuable does not rest on just one particular merit, and scholars tend to distinguish three different types of values (Sen 1999). This book focused on the instrumental value of democracy (and hence not on the intrinsic and constructive value), and investigated the value of democracy for peace (Chapters 3 and 4), control of corruption (Chapter 5) and economic development (Chapter 6). This study was based on a search of an enormous academic database for certain keywords,6 then pruned the thousands of articles down to a few hundred articles (see Appendix) which statistically analysed the connection between the democracy and the four expected outcomes.

The first finding is that a reverse wave away from democracy has not happened (see Chapter 2). Not yet, at least. Democracy is not doing worse than before, at least not in comparative perspective. While it is true that there is a dramatic decline in democracy in some countries,7 a general trend downwards cannot yet be detected. It would be better to talk about ‘stagnation’, as not many dictatorships have democratized recently, while democracies have not yet collapsed.

Another finding is that the instrumental value of democracy is very questionable. The field has been deeply polarized between researchers who endorse a link between democracy and positive outcomes, and those who reject this optimistic idea and instead emphasize the negative effects of democracy. There has been ‘no consensus’ in the quantitative literature on whether democracy has instrumental value which leads some beneficial general outcomes. Some scholars claim there is a consensus, but they only do so by ignoring a huge amount of literature which rejects their own point of view. After undertaking a large-scale analysis of carefully selected articles published on the topic (see Appendix), this book can conclude that the connections between democracy and expected benefits are not as strong as they seem. Hence, we should not overstate the links between the phenomena.

The overall evidence is weak. Take the expected impact of democracy on peace for example. As Chapter 3 showed, the study of democracy and interstate war has been a flourishing theme in political science, particularly since the 1970s. However, there are four reasons why democracy does not cause peace between countries, and why the empirical support for the popular idea of democratic peace is quite weak. Most statistical studies have not found a strong correlation between democracy and interstate war at the dyadic level. They show that there are other — more powerful — explanations for war and peace, and even that the impact of democracy is a spurious one (caveat 1). Moreover, the theoretical foundation of the democratic peace hypothesis is weak, and the causal mechanisms are unclear (caveat 2). In addition, democracies are not necessarily more peaceful in general, and the evidence for the democratic peace hypothesis at the monadic level is inconclusive (caveat 3). Finally, the process of democratization is dangerous. Living in a democratizing country means living in a less peaceful country (caveat 4). With regard to peace between countries, we cannot defend the idea that democracy has instrumental value.

Can the (instrumental) value of democracy be found in the prevention of civil war? Or is the evidence for the opposite idea more convincing, and does democracy have a ‘dark side’ which makes civil war more likely? The findings are confusing, which is exacerbated by the fact that different aspects of civil war (prevalence, onset, duration and severity) are mixed up in some civil war studies. Moreover, defining civil war is a delicate, politically sensitive issue. Determining whether there is a civil war in a particular country is incredibly diffcult, while measurements suffer from many weaknesses (caveat 1). Moreover, there is no linear link: civil wars are just as unlikely in democracies as in dictatorships (caveat 2). Civil war is most likely in times of political change. Democratization is a very unpredictable, dangerous process, increasing the chance of civil war significantly. Hybrid systems are at risk as well: the chance of civil war is much higher compared to other political systems (caveat 3). More specifcally, both the strength and type of political institutions matter when explaining civil war. However, the type of political system (e.g. democracy or dictatorship) is not the decisive factor at all (caveat 4). Finally, democracy has only limited explanatory power (caveat 5). Economic factors are far more significant than political factors (such as having a democratic system) when explaining the onset, duration and severity of civil war. To prevent civil war, it would make more sense to make poorer countries richer, instead of promoting democracy. Helping countries to democratize would even be a very dangerous idea, as countries with changing levels of democracy are most vulnerable, making civil wars most likely. It is true that there is evidence that the chance of civil war decreases when the extent of democracy increases considerably. The problem however is that most countries do not go through big political changes but through small changes instead; those small steps—away or towards more democracy—are dangerous. Not only is the onset of civil war likely under such circumstances, but civil wars also tend to be longer, and the conflict is more cruel leading to more victims, destruction and killings (see Chapter 4).

A more encouraging story can be told around the value for democracy to control corruption in a country (see Chapter 5). Fighting corruption has been high on the agenda of international organizations such as the World Bank and the IMF. Moreover, the theme of corruption has been studied thoroughly in many different academic disciplines—mainly in economics, but also in sociology, political science and law. Democracy has often been suggested as one of the remedies when fighting against high levels of continuous corruption. So far, the statistical evidence has strongly supported this idea. As Chapter 5 showed, dozens of studies with broad quantitative, cross-national and comparative research have found statistically significant associations between (less) democracy and (more) corruption. However, there are vast problems around conceptualization (caveat 1) and measurement (caveat 2) of ‘corruption’. Another caveat is that democratizing countries are the poorest performers with regard to controlling corruption (caveat 3). Moreover, it is not democracy in general, but particular political institutions which have an impact on the control of corruption; and a free press also helps a lot in order to limit corruptive practices in a country (caveat 4). In addition, democracies seem to be less affected by corruption than dictatorships, but at the same time, there is clear evidence that economic factors have more explanatory power (caveat 5). In conclusion, more democracy means less corruption, but we need to be modest (as other factors matter more) and cautious (as there are many caveats).

The perceived impact of democracy on development has been highly contested as well (see Chapter 6). Some scholars argue that democratic systems have a positive impact, while others argue that high levels of democracy actually reduce the levels of economic growth and development. Particularly since the 1990s, statistical studies have focused on this debate, and the empirical evidence is clear: there is no direct impact of democracy on development. Hence, both approaches cannot be supported (see caveat 1). The indirect impact via other factors is also questionable (caveat 2). Moreover, there is too much variation in levels of economic growth and development among the dictatorial systems, and there are huge regional differences (caveat 3). Adopting a one-size-fitsall approach would not be wise at all. In addition, in order to increase development, it would be better to focus on alternative factors such as improving institutional quality and good governance (caveat 4). There is not sufficient evidence to state that democracy has instrumental value, at least not with regard to economic growth. However, future research needs to include broader concepts and measurements of development in their models, as so far studies have mainly focused on explaining cross-national differences in growth of GDP (caveat 5).

Overall, the instrumental value of democracy is — at best — tentative, or — if being less mild — simply non-existent. Democracy is not necessarily better than any alternative form of government. With regard to many of the expected benefits — such as less war, less corruption and more economic development — democracy does deliver, but so do nondemocratic systems. High or low levels of democracy do not make a distinctive difference. Mid-range democracy levels do matter though. Hybrid systems can be associated with many negative outcomes, while this is also the case for democratizing countries. Moreover, other explanations — typically certain favourable economic factors in a country — are much more powerful to explain the expected benefits, at least compared to the single fact that a country is a democracy or not. The impact of democracy fades away in the powerful shadows of the economic factors.8

### at: human rights---1nc

#### No internal link or impact.

Hirsh ’22 — Michael; senior correspondent at Foreign Policy. May 11, 2022; "Why Biden’s Anti-Putin Democracy Crusade Is Failing"; *Foreign Policy*; https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/05/11/us-russia-war-ukraine-democracy-autocracy/

In the beginning, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine appeared to be an ideal rationale for U.S. President Joe Biden’s global democracy campaign. What better endorsement could there be than the spectacle of a brave, doughty democracy fighting off a brutal autocrat?

As Biden put it in a major speech in Poland in March, Ukraine was now “on the front lines” in “the perennial struggle for democracy and freedom.” But despite Ukraine’s success on the ground against Putin’s military, the White House’s efforts in the months since to frame the conflict as a titanic worldwide battle between democracy and autocracy don’t appear to be working very well. Outside of Western European allies and longtime U.S. partners such as Japan, much of the rest of the world simply isn’t signing on. Problem one: Most of these countries either aren’t democracies or are so deeply flawed as democracies that they’re less than inspired by the rhetoric. Problem two: In the eyes of much of the world, the country that’s doing the preaching — the United States — is a badly broken democracy that ought to heal itself first.

These problems were evident at the White House this week, when Biden welcomed leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), most of whom are autocrats or represent one-party states that show no signs of going democratic. Among them: Cambodia’s longtime strongman Hun Sen; Thai Prime Minister Pravuth Chan-ocha, a former general who seized power in a 2014 coup; and the authoritarian leaders of Vietnam, Laos, and Brunei. To Biden’s relief, the head of Myanmar’s junta, Min Aung Hlaing, another ASEAN member, was not among them.

On Wednesday, Kurt Campbell, Biden’s lead White House advisor on East Asia, acknowledged that the talks would be “maybe a little bit uncomfortable at times” but did not directly address the issue of flagging democracy in the region. “I do think we will have a full exchange and we acknowledge that there are differences of view,” he said at a forum at the United States Institute of Peace.

Most of these countries have indicated they are nonaligned in the struggle between Russia and the West; Indonesia, another leading ASEAN member and a democracy, has even invited Putin to the G-20 summit it is hosting in November. The ASEAN countries are joined by nations across the Middle East, South Asia, Latin America, and Africa — countries that include a number of democracies but also a quasi-rogue gallery of autocrats and dubious democrats who represent the majority of the world’s population. And they are not persuaded that Russia, a major source of oil and gas supplies, needs to be cut off from the global system.

“Their attitude is, ‘Who are you to be telling us what to do or telling us what our rights are? People in your country who win the popular vote don’t even get elected president. So don’t preach to us!’” said Michael Coppedge, an expert in democratization at the University of Notre Dame who is one of the managers of an exhaustive international study by the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute, released last month.

According to a report by Freedom House, “Reversing the Decline of Democracy in the United States,” “[A]mid a 16-year decline in global freedom, democracy in the United States has suffered serious erosion.” The report found that the United States had dropped to level of flawed democracies like Panama, Romania, and South Korea and concluded, “The weakening of American democracy did not start with [former U.S.] President [Donald] Trump’s direct pressure on democratic institutions and rights, and his departure from the White House has not ended the crisis.”

Critics say that while the Biden administration’s framing of the conflict is working well within NATO and the West — joined by firm U.S. allies such as Japan and South Korea — the U.S. president needs to rethink his approach if he wants to corral more allies in his efforts to isolate and weaken Russia. The real issue being tested, they say, is not democracy per se but rather an issue that most countries can identify with more readily: the sanctity of their borders under post-World War II norms upheld by United Nations-sanctioned international law.

“This is about territorial integrity and non-use of force to change borders, along with international norms. Those are the core issues,” said Bruce Jentleson, a political scientist at Duke University and a former senior foreign-policy advisor to former U.S. Vice President Al Gore and the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff. “In that respect, it’s akin to Kuwait 1990,” when then-U.S. President George H.W. Bush won a broad international consensus against then-Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. In an email, Jentleson added that while he has “great admiration” for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s wartime leadership, Ukraine itself has long been known to be a “questionable democracy” and one of the world’s most corrupt countries.

Chas Freeman Jr., a former senior U.S. diplomat who helped to frame George H.W. Bush’s “new world order” concept during the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf crisis, agreed with this assessment. And Biden has indeed condemned Russia’s invasion as ​“a flagrant violation of international law.” But Freeman said the United States would have to work hard to restore its credibility on that front in the wake of its own more recent violations of international norms, including the use of torture and the invasion of Iraq.

“We need to return to the basic principles of international law that we foolishly set aside, but that’s going to be a problem,” Freeman told Foreign Policy. “The United States sponsored, created, and enforced what is now called the liberal international order after World War II. So you have the U.N. Charter, which lays out the basic principles of international law. You can’t go to war without a justification from the U.N. Security Council, which we had [in 1990-91]. But that was the last time we observed those norms. After that, every principle of international law that we pioneered, we violated.”

Returning to those basic principles, with appropriate mea culpas, may be the only course forward if the United States is to win over much of the world, Freeman said. What won’t work, he added, is evangelizing about the glories of democracy — an old American habit, and one that he believes the Biden team is resorting to for largely domestic political benefit.

“I’ve thought from the beginning that frankly this is a load of crap,” Freeman said. “It’s a very American conceit. And it’s particularly ironic that it should come to the fore during a period when our own democracy is manifestly in deep trouble and we’re not even sure we’re going to have a peaceful transition in 2024.”

Biden’s credibility problem extends to other major nations that have not gone along with Biden’s campaign — and which continue to temporize over the Russian invasion. For India, the issue has little to do with democracy and everything to do with border security, said Rani Mullen, a scholar at the College of William & Mary. Its increasingly autocratic leader, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is a populist fanning sectarian hatred between Hindus and Muslims while on the international stage, he pursues relations with both Moscow and Washington. Since the beginning of the year, India has dramatically stepped up its purchases of discounted Russian oil — which Modi desperately needs to shore up India’s weakening economy.

Modi’s stance is entirely about realpolitik, said Mullen, an expert in South and Central Asia. And that means maintaining workable relations with Russia so as not to encourage a deeper partnership between Moscow and China, the Indians’ most feared potential aggressor along with Pakistan, which has a cozy relationship with Beijing. For New Delhi, the most paramount issue is border integrity under the 1954 Panchsheel Agreement (which the Chinese call the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence”) between India and China.

“Ultimately, India’s stance is driven by thinking that alienating Russia will undermine its security,” Mullen said. “Democracy? What does it care? That’s the reality of it. It’s all about China. So framing Russian actions in a way that would guarantee mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity — that would strike a different chord.”

More broadly, the stark fact Biden must confront is that democracy has been in retreat since the Cold War. “The level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen in 2021 is down to 1989 levels. The last 30 years of democratic advances are now eradicated,” a report by the V-Dem Institute said. “Dictatorships are on the rise and harbor 70% of the world population—5.4 billion people.” The study found that liberal democracies can now be found in only 34 nations, down from its peak of 42 in 2012, which are home to only 13 percent of the world’s population.

A key fence-sitter in this global struggle over international norms is authoritarian China, which has sought to find a middle ground between Russia and the West. Chinese President Xi Jinping is sticking by his partnership with Putin, yet Beijing has mostly observed economic sanctions against Russia. Chinese officials say their country is loath to choose sides, but Washington has made that difficult by portraying the conflict as one that is primarily about Western-style democracy rather than global norms. As Robert Manning, a former U.S. intelligence official and senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, wrote in Foreign Policy this week: “The logic of ‘democracies only’ could lead to a bifurcated or maybe trifurcated world.”

China covets Taiwan much as Russia does Ukraine, but even Washington still officially embraces its long-time “one China” policy, acknowledging that Taiwan is part of a single China. Beijing is angry that this diplomatic mainstay is also fraying, with Biden’s State Department removing such language from its official guidance website, which no longer states that Washington “does not support Taiwan independence.” Nor has the Biden administration offered up any new initiatives to wean Beijing away from Moscow.

Other major nations, even those that are democratic, also are making calculations based on factors that have little to do with the threat to democracy. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro recently said he would continue to support Russia’s participation at international forums, such as the G-20, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

Some experts say the inconsistencies in Biden’s approach to democracy have hurt him as well. The president’s virtual democracy summit at the end of last year was widely criticized for the seemingly arbitrary way some countries were invited while others were snubbed. The Philippines’ anti-U.S. president, Rodrigo Duterte, was welcomed for example despite his violent campaign of extrajudicial executions, whereas Washington-aligned Singapore, which was rated “partly free” in Freedom House’s annual study of rights and liberties worldwide, was excluded. Singapore’s Freedom House ranking was also higher than some other invitees, such as Angola, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Lebanon. In the Philippines, Duterte will soon be replaced by Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the son and namesake of the country’s long-time dictator, who has said he wants to draw closer to Beijing.

“Countries that are not democratic are being treated as democratic. It’s completely a fool’s errand,” said Raffaello Pantucci, a visiting senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore. “It alienates people on the ground.”

## palestine advantage

### turn---anti-semitism---1nc

#### Connecting genocidal violence and the violence in Palestine serves to connect Israel to Nazism — causing anti-Semitic violence and Holocaust denial

Ben-Amots ’16 (Zach, October 2016, The Tower, “The Rise of ‘Soft’ Holocaust Denial”, <http://www.thetower.org/article/the-rise-of-soft-holocaust-denial/>)

After Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel died in July at the age of 87, American leaders mourned the loss of his globally respected advocacy for peace and tolerance. “Elie Wiesel was one of the great moral voices of our time, and in many ways, the conscience of the world,” President Barack Obama [wrote](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/07/02/statement-president-death-elie-wiesel).

Some anti-Zionist opportunists, however, [leapt to slander](http://www.timesofisrael.com/after-death-critics-attack-wiesel-legacy-over-israel-support/) Wiesel for his lifelong Zionism and support for Israel. Ali Abunimah, founder of the anti-Israel blog Electronic Intifada, called Wiesel “vile” and [tweeted](https://twitter.com/AliAbunimah/status/749422728961265664?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw), “Elie Wiesel will be remembered by Palestinians for his racism.” Jewish anti-Israel blogger Max Blumenthal falsely [called](https://twitter.com/MaxBlumenthal/status/749327999317610496) Wiesel a denier of the Armenian genocide and [tweeted](https://twitter.com/MaxBlumenthal/status/749328816191922176?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw), “Elie Wiesel went from a victim of war crimes to a supporter of those who commit them. He did more harm than good and should not be honored.” In an [op-ed](http://www.alternet.org/grayzone-project/huge-part-elie-wiesels-legacy-being-whitewashed), Blumenthal called Wiesel Islamophobic for [writing](https://www.algemeiner.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Elie-Wiesel-Hamas-Child-Sacrifice.pdf) about Hamas’s use of human shields.

These vitriolic attacks on Wiesel, which likely would not have surprised him, were only the latest examples of a growing trend in which anti-Zionists use the tragedy of the Holocaust to attack Israel. This tactic is nothing less than a form of soft Holocaust denial. Unlike the “hard” Holocaust denial practiced by neo-Nazis and other openly anti-Semitic groups, soft denial is the pseudo-intellectual hijacking of the meaning of the Holocaust in pursuit of delegitimizing the Jewish state. While hard denial forces us to prove that the Holocaust happened, soft denial forces us to prove that it still matters.

Noted historian Deborah Lipstadt was the first scholar to recognize soft denial as a serious problem. She has only spoken about the concept in speeches and short [blog posts](http://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/rise-soft-core-holocaust-denial/), and it has yet to be introduced into the popular lexicon. In a speech at Australia’s Shalom Institute, Lipstadt [stated](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNSTmDc4NLQ), “Soft-core deniers are people who do not deny the facts of the Holocaust, but who raise questions about it in a more covert fashion.” Lipstadt was intentionally alluding to pornography with her use of the term “soft-core,” as she stated, “Holocaust denial is, at its core, pornographic.”

Lipstadt frequently refers to soft denial as “squishier” and therefore harder to combat than hard denial. In that speech and [others](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIrUmKLdr1A) like it, Lipstadt cited examples of soft denial, like comparisons between the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the Nazis, along with hyperbolic uses of the word “Holocaust” to describe unrelated incidents, thus trivializing the Holocaust itself. Describing the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a genocide also fits this mold. “Some may see oppression; some may see discrimination. But to speak of a genocide is to create a situation which is completely untrue,” Lipstadt said.

### turn---humanitarianism---1nc

#### Humanitarian efforts justify western militarism

Stavrianakis 16 [(Anna, Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Sussex. Her main research interests are NGOs and global civil society; the arms trade and military globalisation; and critical approaches to the study of international security) “Legitimizing liberal militarism: politics, law and war in the Arms Trade Treaty,” https://hdl.handle.net/10779/uos.23423336.v1, University of Sussex, Sussex Research, 3/5/16] NH – TDI

In this article I argue, contrary to the predominantly optimistic emerging assessment of the treaty, that a key effect of the ATT is the legitimation of liberal forms of militarism exercised by major western states. It is not simply that these states have long been amongst the world’s largest military spenders, arms producers and arms exporters, and claim the ATT will bring no new responsibilities for them. The same applies to major non-western suppliers and non-signatories such as Russia and, increasingly, China. There is something more at stake: the liberal form that war-making and war preparation take when exercised by major western, liberal states. There is a distinct political economy, strategic orientation and – crucially – form of justification based on human rights, humanitarianism and morality that frame their arms transfers as part of broader war-making and war preparation practices. Arms transfers by liberal states that contribute to violations of human rights and IHL are hidden from view by the existence of regulatory regimes that include consideration of human rights and IHL. This legitimating function of regulatory regimes has been uploaded into the ATT in the way it introduces a balancing act in which states can weigh the risk of human rights violations against the interests of peace and security and justify exports in the name of the latter. With the effect of naturalising liberal states’ practices and allowing them to evade scrutiny, create the impression of responsibility and morality, and effect leadership of a liberal international order that is nonetheless reliant on coercion and violence, the ATT takes on a rather different hue as a means for the reworking and relegitimation of liberal forms of militarism.

The streamlining and depoliticisation of intra-western transfers find justification in discourses of contemporary liberal war-making, which are marked by risk-transfer and the notion of collateral damage and accidental civilian harm.132 The transfer of the risk on to civilians of being killed in risk-transfer war is “deliberate and systematic”, according to Martin Shaw, and “a completely predictable consequence of the protection provided to western aircrew.”133 In this, the concept of “double effect” has become central: the distinction between “those consequences that are intended and those that 19 are, as it is usually put, ‘merely’ foreseen.” 134 This means that military forces are not held responsible for civilian deaths and injury, as long as they are not deliberately intended. The character of liberal justifications thus disavows responsibility for civilian deaths and casualties, and explains them away as accidental, muting criticism and evading responsibility.135 And yet accidents, as “both technological acts and spaces of political subjectivity [are] partly productive of how these wars have been conceived,” as Owens argues. 136 This is visible in the formulations of the ATT: under the terms of Article 6, states must refuse arms transfers if they have “knowledge at the time of authorization” that the equipment “would be used in the commission of” war crimes or other violations of international law; this is a higher bar than the terms of Article 7, which requires exporting states to undertake a risk assessment to “assess the potential” that weapons “could be used to commit or facilitate” serious violations of IHL and IHRL.137 So transfers are only automatically prohibited if states know that transfers would be used in war crimes and other violations of international law – but the doctrine of double effect makes space for consequences that are not deliberately intended, merely foreseen. The claim that targeting is done carefully and civilian protection is emphasised allows civilian deaths and casualties to be explained away as accidents and therefore not fall foul of the automatic prohibition under Article 6, and not pose a risk under Article 7. Much of the risk assessment as suggested by the ICRC, for example, as to how states should apply IHL criteria to arms transfer decisions, focuses on the record, intention and capacity of states to respect and ensure respect for IHL.138 Given that western states do include reference to IHL in their arms transfer policies and military doctrines and training, any record of violation is deemed a mistake rather than a need for policy review.

This interpretive gap between policy and practice should prompt us to move away from an arms trade regulation frame towards a militarism frame, and start thinking about legitimation. The merging of human rights law and IHL tends to “criminalize low-tech violence rather than high-tech violence” and “[legalize] military necessity on the battlefield,” enhancing the legitimacy of war through the association with human rights.139 Humanitarian law “is firmest in areas of marginal military utility” in which more technologically sophisticated militaries can claim to exercise more humanitarian forms of war.140 And it is a claim with political effects: it marginalises 20 accountability and responsibility of high-tech liberal states, and it pushes attention on to low-tech war, as seen with the preoccupation with small arms, conflict in Sub Saharan Africa and organized crime in Latin America in the mainstream arms transfer control agenda.

### turn---military aid---1nc

#### Ending military aid to Israel will cause it to pursue worsehuman rights abuses

Erakat 16 Noura Erakat (human rights lawyer, assistant professor at George Mason University). “U.S. Should Stop Funding Israel, or Let Others Broker Peace.” The New York Times. July 15, 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/08/05/can-the-us-still-be-a-leader-in-the-middle-east/us-should-stop-funding-israel-or-let-others-broker-peace>

The Department of State annually notes Israel’s systematic abuse of human rights against Palestinians. Congress has nevertheless renewed aid to Israel without scrutiny either by willful ignorance or disregard. In the eyes of our 535 elected representatives, Israel can do no wrong. This has not always been the case. The Reagan administration halted its cluster munitions sales to Israel between 1982 and 1988 in response to Israel’s disproportionate and indiscriminate attack on civilians in Beirut. In 1991, the George H.W. Bush administration conditioned its loan guarantees to Israel on the cessation of its settlement expansion in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The United States has ample evidence of Israel’s human rights violations that should trigger these laws today. In its most recent offensive, Israel has dropped over 100 one-ton bombs, hardly precise and discriminate weaponry, onto the densely populated and besieged Gaza Strip. Human Rights Watch documented Israeli ground forces shooting and killing fleeing Palestinian families in Khuza’a between July 23 and 25. Amnesty International documented the killing of 45 civilians in the Occupied West Bank over the past three years. Cessation of American military aid to Israel will create at least two possibilities in the long run. On the one hand, it can restrain Israel, thereby creating more opportunities for a political resolution to the conflict. On the other hand, it could have the opposite effect and motivate Israel to pursue more maximalist policies, thereby increasing the cost of its transgressions. This will likely induce the international community to effectively intervene à la the South African model.

### at: colonialism---1nc

#### Israel is not a colonialist state.

**Dowty 22** Alan Dowty *is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame and a Visiting Scholar at the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies. From 1963-1975, he was on the faculty of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, during which time he served as Executive Director of the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations and Chair of the Department of International Relations. From 2003-2006, he was the first holder of the Kahanoff Chair in Israeli Studies at the University of Calgary, and from 2005-2007 he was President of the Association for Israel Studies.* Studies, Stroum Center for Jewish. “Why Israel Isn’t a Settler Colonial State.” *UW Stroum Center for Jewish Studies*, 19 Nov. 2022, jewishstudies.washington.edu/israel-hebrew/why-israel-isnt-a-settler-colonial-state/.

Back to settler colonialism: the early Zionist settlers of the first and second aliyot (1881-1914) did refer to themselves as colonists, a word that did not then carry much of the negative weight that it does today. They were establishing new settlements as part of an organized movement to establish a new national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, something that had not existed since antiquity (despite a continuously existing Jewish population).

It is fair to characterize this settlement as colonization, in the broad sense of establishing settlements in a previously foreign territory. But does it qualify as “settler colonialism”?

Definitions of “colonialism,” as a general concept, usually revolve around the control of one people over another, for economic gain or to impose their culture or religion on the colonized people. There are two important elements to this relationship. The first is the métropole, the mother country of which the colonists are the agents, a sponsor whose economic, cultural, or religious interests are being advanced by the implantation of their own people on foreign soil. The second is the subject population, which is in some respect related to the basic motivation of the colonization.

[Prevailing definitions of “settler colonialism”](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Settler-colonialism-and-the-elimination-of-the-Wolfe/9ead584d263031de5d99b4719b69d3c90422e872) add to this the further implication of an intention to replace, or even eliminate, the indigenous people and/or culture. This goes well beyond the usual motives of domination or exploitation.

Zionism does not fit this model. There was no métropole, no mother country of which the settlers were an extension. Jews who came to Palestine, first from Russia and later from elsewhere, generally fit the accepted definition of refugees who were escaping persecution (at least 80 percent of them by my calculation). In no sense (despite Turkish suspicions) did they represent Russian interests. They sought rather to leave their proverbial Diaspora baggage behind and build a new society based on ancient Middle Eastern roots, including a revived Semitic language.

Secondly, unlike the classical colonialist powers (such as France or Great Britain), Jewish settlers did not include the existing population in their basic design, except as incidental beneficiaries. The presence of another people was first and foremost a major inconvenience, which the early Zionists tried their best to ignore and minimalize, not to dominate or reshape. They did not recognize the Arab population of Palestine as another people with their own collective claims, arguing that as individuals Arabs would benefit from the progress that Jewish settlement would bring.

[*Theodore Herzl*](https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/theodor-herzl/) *looking out over the Rhine at the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. Via the* [*National Photo Collection of Israel*](https://gpophoto.gov.il/haetonot/Eng_Default.aspx)*, taken by* [*Ephraim Moses Lilien*](https://www.lbi.org/collections/rare-books/em-lilien/) *in 1901.*

There were occasional voices for “transfer” of Arabs from areas of Jewish settlement, but they were isolated. Far more typical was the response of Theodore Herzl (1960-1904), Zionism’s founding father, who in his [famous letter](https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbnm423?turn_away=true) to Arab notable Yusuf Zia al-Khalidi wrote “Who would think of sending [Palestinian Arabs] away? It is their well-being, their individual wealth that we would increase in bringing our own.”

In any event, if displacement of the Arab population was somehow a concealed element of Zionism, it clearly has been an abject failure. This population today, within the borders of Mandatory Palestine, has increased roughly tenfold since the days of the first aliyah.

Finally, Jewish “colonists” were not entering a terra incognita to which they had no historical connection. Whatever weight one assigns to ancient ties, they were seeking to restore to this space the same language, religion, culture, and ethnicity that had prevailed there 2000 to 3000 years earlier.

None of this is said to excuse the indifference of early (or contemporary) Zionists to the existence of another people, with their own valid historical ties, in the same territory. Nor does it justify injustices inflicted on Palestinians in the past or the present.

But this was not “settler colonialism” **as usually defined**. Better examples can be found in all the countries of the Western hemisphere, Australia, New Zealand, much of Oceania, and historically in Africa and Asia. Or in China’s rule in Sinkiang and Tibet. If there is to be a debate on settler colonialism, let’s expand the sample size.

#### Israel isn’t settler colonial.

Alan Dowty 11-10-**22**, Alan Dowty is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame and a Visiting Scholar at the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies. From 1963-1975, he was on the faculty of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, during which time he served as Executive Director of the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations and Chair of the Department of International Relations. From 2003-2006, he was the first holder of the Kahanoff Chair in Israeli Studies at the University of Calgary, and from 2005-2007 he was President of the Association for Israel Studies. Among his publications are basic texts on Israeli society and politics (“The Jewish State: A Century Later“), on the history of Israel (Israel, 2021) and on the Arab-Israel conflict (“Israel/Palestine,” 5th edition, 2023), as well as over 130 scholarly and popular articles. In 2017 he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in Israel Studies by the Israel Institute and the Association for Israel Studies., "Why Israel isn’t a settler colonial state”, Jewish Studies at the University of Washngton, https://jewishstudies.washington.edu/israel-hebrew/why-israel-isnt-a-settler-colonial-state/, sterling

In that regard, all of the broad comparative ratings of states by political scientists have ranked Israel as a democracy – sometimes a flawed democracy, but more democratic than not. And some of the definitions applied to Israel, in isolation, would disqualify the United States as a democracy if they were applied across the board.

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B&W photo of Herzl, during the First Zionist Congress, watches on the metal railing, turns his side to the camera and looks away. In the background is a bridge over the river and the houses of the city.

Theodore Herzl looking out over the Rhine at the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. Via the National Photo Collection of Israel, taken by Ephraim Moses Lilien in 1901.

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#### Bought and sold, not conquered.

Ezra Bernstein 3-27-**19**, The writer is a former Fulbright scholar in Israel, a recent graduate of the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, and co-host of the podcast “Israel-Palestine: Beyond the Headlines with Alec and Ezra.”, "Israel is neither colonialist nor settler-colonialist”, Jerusalem Post, https://www.jpost.com/opinion/israel-is-neither-colonialist-nor-settler-colonialist-584940, sterling

Israel is certainly not a colonialist entity in the classical Western sense. Early Zionists were not representatives of a foreign nation who came to a country to exploit the resources of the land and use the local population as labor. They did not come to achieve economic gain. The Zionists came to a country with which they had a long-standing connection and history, to re-achieve self-determination and avoid the peril of growing antisemitism. They came to build a new life.

It is also not a settler-colonialist entity. The fact that Jews came to settle in the land, does not mean that they are settler colonialists. All land prior to the War of Independence was purchased legally. How then can this be a settler colonialist entity?

To use an everyday example to illustrate the issue, let’s say someone decides they want to sell their house, so they put it on the market. A buyer comes and purchases the house at an agreed-upon price. The deed is transferred and now the buyer has a legal right to the house. Is this buyer now a settler-colonialist in this house?

In many instances, the land was purchased from absentee landlords – and there were customs in Mandatory Palestine where sometimes people would work the land even if they did not own it. However, it was then sold, so according to law, owners have a right to decide what they want to do with the land and who they want to have on the land. It may not have been completely desirable in the eyes of the people who had been working that parcel of land, but it was the law.

After the UN recommended partition of Mandatory Palestine (UN Resolution 181) and subsequently voted to declare Israel a state, there was an undisputedly defensive war in which Israel acquired more territory. Since it is admissible to acquire land through a defensive war, the pre-1967 borders are also completely legal under international law.

### at: framing---1nc

#### Ks of humanism are wrong.

Spencer ’17— Robert; Senior Lecturer in Postcolonial Literatures and Cultures at the University of Manchester. “Postcolonialism is a Humanism”; *For Humanism: Explorations in Theory and Politics*, Chapter 3; //dml

It is well over a decade since Bruce Robbins marked ‘a universalistic and humanistic impulse that has gradually emerged, within cultural studies generally and postcolonial studies in particular, but that was slow to be perceived as such because of the prevailing antihumanism.’10 Notwithstanding this renewed interest in Said’s humanism, I would maintain, however, that humanism’s partial rehabilitation has not gone very far at all. It has not yet affected fundamentally the kind of work that we postcolonialists do. It is one thing to concede that when it comes to, say, the assault on Iraq it is legitimate to talk about rights and duties, about war crimes and crimes against humanity. That is part of our obligations and activities as citizens. It is quite another thing, however, to let such convictions guide or animate fully our professional lives as critics too. My point in this chapter is not that we should all carry a card with the word ‘Humanist’ emblazoned on it, nor that we should begin each argument with a paean of praise to the idea, nor even that we should bother to use the word more often. I suppose I am arguing that in addition to being a critical undertaking postcolonialism ought also to be a moral and a political one as well. This being the case, I want to say, at the risk of sounding facetious, that postcolonial studies should be exercised above all not by crimes against hybridity but by crimes against humanity and by the moral and political aspirations of those movements that seek to withstand such crimes and to overthrow the system that inflicts them. Ours is the effort to understand where colonialism comes from as well as how colonialism can be superseded; ours is the responsibility to make connections between local injustices and then trace these to the general and related injustices of state and class power; ours is also the obligation to give due emphasis to the achievement of texts of various kinds in dramatising those injustices and exploring alternatives. This is another way of saying that, although Said’s humanism is not in such bad odour as hitherto, humanism has barely penetrated and informed the critical work that we do. Because humanism, at worst, conjures up images of men in pith helmets telling the world what to do, or else, at best, comes across as a quaint way of describing the convictions we employ when making political judgements, it has not been allowed to influence the priorities of a discipline that, alas, no longer sees itself, as its predecessors saw themselves, as part of a general movement for emancipation. It is now a trifling affair concerned with the ‘liminal’ spaces opened up by a global system that it either approves of or, more likely, that it despairs of being overturned.

Of course, it is not hard to find exclusionary and ‘metaphysical’ definitions of humanism that, far from being acclamations of universal rights and capacities, are in fact mere smokescreens for self-interest. Too many humanisms have excluded and denigrated certain groups whom they consider to be not (or at least not yet) fully human. This is especially true of the humanist rhetoric mouthed by the agents and spokespeople of colonial power. ‘The Mediterranean is the human norm’, according to the sententious narrator of A Passage to India, and through the Bosphorus and the Pillars of Hercules men ‘approach the monstrous and extraordinary’.11 So blatantly intolerable is this pompous and obnoxious way of thinking (remember it is, of course, not Forster himself speaking here) that Anthony Alessandrini observes that ‘it is becoming increasingly difficult to find anyone within the field of postcolonial studies willing to defend humanism in its most traditional form’.12 Impossible, in fact. What is more, it is of course quite right that this should be so. For the libertarian humanism that I am endeavouring to vindicate is as like the traditional version as a crab’s like an apple. Let nobody labour under the illusion that I am foolish enough to endorse the sort of crass, self-seeking and ultimately racist humanism for which to be black, say, in Aimé Césaire’s celebrated quip, is ‘like being a second-class clerk’: waiting for promotion, ‘en attendant mieux et avec possibilité de monter plus haut’. What one wouldn’t realise from the dismissal of humanism as a kind of unthinking belief in the superiority of white European men, is the sheer variety of humanisms that have come into being in response to such inadequate understandings of the term. In their Critical Humanisms, Martin Halliwell and Andy Mousley demonstrate the extraordinary durability and diversity of the humanist tradition.13 One thinks, in addition to their examples, of the ‘radical humanism’ of the Holocaust survivor Jean Améry,14 Karen Green’s feminist humanism,15 not to mention the variety of socialist humanisms enumerated by Barbara Epstein in this volume. Most of all, I believe our attention ought to be trained on the Marxist humanism of a tradition represented by Theodor Adorno, Ernst Bloch and Herbert Marcuse, and of Jean-Paul Sartre, to whose celebrated 1945 lecture ‘Existentialism is a Humanism’ this chapter’s title is a respectful nod.

My claim here is that the rejection over these last decades of the idea that human subjects are possessed of intrinsic rights and capacities bears out one of Theodor Adorno’s most cutting gibes: among its other functions, ‘philosophy is capable of making people stupid’.16 I therefore propose to describe what I believe are the deleterious consequences for postcolonial theory’s development of its constitutive antihumanism and especially of its neglect of the liberating resources of a specifically Marxist humanism. I hope it is not unfair to observe that the dominant though persistently disputed and by now fairly beleaguered variety of postcolonial criticism shares several identifying marks, or let us say precepts and assumptions, that might with some justice be termed ‘antihumanist’. I am referring less to such sophisticated as well as theoretically and politically distinct figures as Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, though I shall have a bit more to say in due course about the former, than to the myriad of other critics who draw on an idiom first promulgated by Bhabha and Spivak. I am not endeavouring to tick off, say, Bhabha for being a card-carrying antihumanist, not least because he has written in his preface to the new translation of Frantz Fanon’s The Wretched of the Earth in a surprisingly sympathetic way about humanism.17 Rather, in addition to showing that what Bhabha means by the term could scarcely be further from Fanon’s extremely militant account of a ‘new humanism’, I want to identify a kind of disposition or outlook among most postcolonialists that is not so much stridently antihumanist, though God knows there is quite enough of that, as habitually or routinely and even automatically antihumanist. To be a postcolonialist, it seems, is to leave one’s humanism at the door. To peruse the contents of any issue of the major journals in the field is more often than not to be confronted with theoretical disquisitions and analyses of texts that, whatever virtues of acuity and originality they possess and notwithstanding their informativeness, usually address their readers from a position that is tacitly antihumanist. They champion difference at the expense of equality, deal with narratives of cultural ‘hybridity’ without sufficient regard for the continuing exigencies of conflict and struggle, and choose to abide by the tenets and idiom of post-structuralism to the detriment of the revolutionary language and horizons of the previous generation of anticolonial militants. In so doing, my claim goes, many postcolonial critics have either forfeited or have else been completely oblivious of the very valuable resources of the language of humanism. They therefore leave unexplored the larger realities in which such texts and theories circulate, the world of imperialism, of capitalism (from which imperialism is inseparable) and of the counter-struggles of imperialism’s victims.

The reasons for this aversion to humanism are complex, to put it mildly. They have to do with the discipline’s snug consolidation within (as opposed to within and against) the Anglo-American university system as well as within those countries’ radically neoliberal economic dispensations, dispensations which the world of higher education increasingly and quite willingly serves. Speaking only of the British system in which I work, it is a melancholy duty to have to report that any number of essential academic freedoms and responsibilities have been buried in the last few years beneath an avalanche of corporate waffle and management newspeak. Few of us will need reminding of the consequences of the annexation of British universities by the language and priorities of corporate power: of how large our class sizes have become, of the casualisation of the academic labour market, of funding crises and cost-cutting, of the extortionate price of tuition fees (the intention of which is not to save money but to turn students into indebted and thus pliant consumers), and of the distortion of scholarly research by measuring it against the risibly crude standard of ‘economic contribution’. All of these developments deflect the inhabitants of these embattled institutions from the proper business of advanced education in the humanities, which is the cultivation of an aptitude for asking difficult questions about culture and society.18 Postcolonial studies’ materialist critics have long complained that the most prominent figures in the field, indeed the field itself, has been co-opted by its privileged position within this world of conformity and privilege.19 And yet it would hardly be worth saying such things if universities were not at the same time also places in which it is still possible to foster the ability and the confidence to think knowledgeably, rigorously and above all critically about texts of all kinds and about the realities with which texts deal. My point is that the characteristic emphases of the postcolonial field cannot be understood without reference to its institutional, geographical and economic position. We need to be more self-conscious about that position and more willing to work both within and against it. Now more than ever there is a danger that if postcolonial studies does not present itself consciously as a discipline concerned centrally with questions of critique and liberation, then it will, at worst, end up as a kind of area office within an enfeebled humanities sector. At best, it will become a disgruntled subsidiary of the humanities, dissatisfied with the system of which it forms a part but whose favourite concepts are to that system like so many toy arrows.

To let fall the word ‘revolutionary’ where one might be accustomed to hearing terms like ‘liminality’ is already, therefore, to out oneself as a humanist. This is because the concern with systems and with systemic alternatives is usually seen as the preserve of an older anticolonial past rather than of the postcolonial present. By demonstrating the differences between Marxist humanism on the one hand and postcolonial antihumanism on the other, I hope at least to show that postcolonial theory as it is currently constituted does not possess anything like the system-challenging ambitions of humanism, which seeks to marry critical and theoretical work to the larger context of the struggle to replace the manifestly inhuman imperatives of imperialism and capitalism. This is a quintessentially theoretical question of course, by which I mean that it is a crucial question about the very purpose and context of the critical work that we undertake. We have, in my view, delayed for far too long a rigorous and open discussion of what I see as the very considerable disadvantages of the antihumanist theory that so many of us seem almost automatically to deploy. Imperialism and its transformation is the proper subject of our discipline; that being the case, we must return in a suitably critical and discriminating spirit to the humanist thinkers whose subject this was.

## bmd pic

### bmd pic---1nc

#### The United States should substantially reduce its military presence in the State of Israel with the exception of Israel’s ballistic missile defense systems.

#### US military presence key to Ballistic Missile Defense

AJC 8/8 [(American Jewish Committee stands up for the Jewish people, the State of Israel, and the democratic values that unite us all.) “5 Things You Need to Know About Israel’s Iron Dome Defense System and Those Who Voted Against It,” https://www.ajc.org/news/5-things-you-need-to-know-about-israels-iron-dome-defense-system-and-those-who-voted-against, 8/8/2023,] ES - TDI

Earlier this year, **the U.S. Congress approved $1 billion in emergency funding for the Iron Dome system, which was needed after the May 2021 Gaza conflict where more than 4,300 rockets were fired on Israel by Gaza terrorists**. However, this approval came after months of political wrangling that threatened to undermine Israel’s safety.

**In an August flare-up between Israel and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, the Iron Dome once again** proved invaluable, intercepting 97 percent of projectiles **fired toward Israel that it engaged.**

Here are five things you need to know about Israel’s Iron Dome system and the effort to secure emergency funding.

[What to Know About the Gaza Strip, Terrorist Rocket Attacks, and More](https://www.ajc.org/news/what-to-know-about-the-gaza-strip-terrorist-rocket-attacks-and-more)

What is Iron Dome and how does it save Israeli and Palestinian lives?

**Iron Dome is an air defense missile system developed by two Israeli firms** with support from the U.S. Emphasis on defense. It is never used to attack or retaliate and poses no threat to Palestinians.

The strongest air defense system in the world **has three components: a radar that detects incoming rockets; a command-and-control system that determines the threat level; and an interceptor that, if the system determines human lives or infrastructure are at risk, seeks to destroy the incoming rocket before it strikes.**

According to Israeli officials, **it is about 90% effective in stopping short-range rockets fired by Hezbollah terrorists next door in Lebanon or Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists in neighboring Gaza. The system protects Israelis of all backgrounds and faiths.**

For example, **when Hamas and Islamic Jihad fired more than** 4,300 rockets **from Gaza into Israel this past May, more than** 1,500 targeted heavily populated areas**, including Israel’s largest city, Tel Aviv. Iron Dome shot down more than 90% of those rockets, greatly reducing the death toll.** Even with Iron Dome, about a dozen Israelis were murdered. That number would have been much higher without Israeli missile defense system.

It also saves Palestinian lives. Giving Israel a viable option to defend itself shifts its focus from a strategy of preemptive offensives against terrorists who hide among tightly-packed civilian areas to a defense system that intercepts real and present danger. It also reduces the need for ground operations in and around the civilian areas that terrorists use for launching missiles and rockets at Israeli civilians. Often ground offenses result in greater loss of lives.

[What to Know About Hamas, Hezbollah, and Rocket Attacks From Lebanon](https://www.ajc.org/news/what-to-know-about-hamas-hezbollah-and-rocket-attacks-from-lebanon)

Why and how does America fund Iron Dome?

**The U.S. and Israel have** maintained a strategic partnership **in the Middle East for decades. As the only true democracy in the region, Israel plays a vital stabilizing role, even though it is surrounded in part by hostile neighbors**. As a senator, President Joe Biden first referred to the strategic advantage America reaps from its close partnership with Israel, unrivaled in the region, when he declared: “Were there not an Israel, the U.S would have to go out and invent an Israel.”

**The U.S.-Israel relationship also gives Americans access to cutting-edge modes of defense. In fact, the U.S. Army has purchased two Iron Dome systems of its own.**

For these reasons, **lawmakers on** both sides of the aisle have worked to safeguard the Jewish state’s qualitative military edge (QME). **Making sure the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has superior capabilities helps de-escalate the violence when Israel is** forced to defend herself**.**

Even so, the political machinations of the annual budget process in Congress made it hard to predict how much funding Israel could expect from year to year. A [2016 Memorandum of Understanding](https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rm/261928.htm) signed by President Barack Obama and supported by overwhelming majorities on both sides of the aisle, put an end to that uncertainty. The commitment of $38 billion in military aid over 10 years, including an unprecedented commitment of $5 billion for missile defense assured **Israel that it could count on a** steady stream of American support **amid rising tensions**. Likewise, it encouraged **Israel to buy more of the advanced capabilities produced by the U.S. to support American jobs.**

Costing around $80,000 a piece, the Iron Dome’s interceptors are only used when there is a threat to human life or infrastructure.

Encourage members of Congress to reassert their support for the Jewish state.

Who voted against restocking Israel’s Iron Dome?

After a disheartening debate in September 2021 about whether America should support a system that saves Israeli and Palestinian lives, **the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a bill to restock Israel’s Iron Dome air missile-defense system by a vote of 420 in favor, 9 opposed, and 2 abstentions.**

A small group of Democratic lawmakers forced the stand-alone bill when they refused to support a Democratic measure aimed at avoiding a government shutdown in the U.S. Why? They didn’t want it to include a provision that would continue to protect Israeli civilians from rockets launched by terrorists operating across Israel’s borders – $1 billion to replenish the Iron Dome.

Eight Democrats – Reps. Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, Cori Bush, Andre Carson, Marie Newman, Jesus Garcia, Raul Grijalva – and one Republican, Rep. Tom Massie, voted against the supplemental funding. Two Democrats—Reps. Hank Johnson and Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez – abstained.

But the challenge to replenish the life-saving technology dragged on in the U.S. Senate where Democrats tried four times to fast-track the funding by unanimous consent.  Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) blocked every request, insisting that the funding come out of the $6 billion in proposed U.S. assistance to Afghanistan. The measure finally passed six months later in February as part of an omnibus spending package that also included $250 million for security at houses of worship and $14 million to support Ukraine.

What did a small group of lawmakers seek to accomplish by opposing this defense system?

We could use this space to talk about the false narratives on Instagram, the bully pulpit of Twitter, or [the new antisemitism targeting Israel](https://www.ajc.org/news/meet-the-french-philosopher-who-forecast-durban-new-antisemitism). But in this situation, it came down to a numbers game. The bill in question was a Continuing Resolution (CR) designed to keep the government funded and running past September 30. The bill also, controversially, proposed suspending the U.S. debt ceiling into December 2022.

With Republicans poised to vote against suspending the debt ceiling, Democrats needed every vote from their party for the measure to pass. A select group of far-left lawmakers seized this opportunity to make a statement. If the provision to protect Israeli civilians remained part of the bill, they would vote no.

Seeking to avoid a government shutdown, Democrats removed the provision and the measure passed on a 220 to 211 party-line vote, but then introduced a separate bill to fund Iron Dome.

Representative [Tlaib tweeted her intention](https://twitter.com/RashidaTlaib/status/1440842078842281988). “I plan on casting a no vote. We must stop enabling Israel's human rights abuses and apartheid government.”

[In his own tweet, American Jewish Committee CEO David Harris](https://twitter.com/DavidHarrisAJC/status/1440985483799105539) pointed out the ramifications of her words.

Here’s what [@RashidaTlaib](https://twitter.com/RashidaTlaib?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) is really saying:

Let Hamas & Hezbollah fire deadly rockets at will against 9 million Israelis—Jewish, Muslim, Christian…

Let these terror groups pursue their aim of genocide.

Deny Israel the right to defend itself.

SAY NO TO HER UNBRIDLED HATRED. <https://t.co/blNE5imUYV>

— David Harris (@DavidHarrisAJC) [September 23, 2021](https://twitter.com/DavidHarrisAJC/status/1440985483799105539?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

U.S. Representative Ted Deutch (D-FL) took to the floor of the House to [respond to his Democratic colleague](https://twitter.com/HowardMortman/status/1441092102784372744), saying “I cannot allow one of my colleagues to stand on floor of House and label Jewish democratic state of Israel an apartheid state...my colleague who just besmirched our ally...when there's no place on map for one Jewish state, that's anti-Semitism.”

It matters because Jewish lives matter. “**Insisting that the U.S. deny Israel defensive capability implies that Israeli lives are expendable and smacks of antisemitism**,” says Julie Fishman Rayman, AJC’s Senior Director of Policy and Political Affairs. Israel is the new [scapegoat](https://www.ajc.org/translatehate/scapegoat).

**A Continuing Strategic U.S.-Israel Partnership**

During his visit to Israel in July, U.S. President Joe Biden toured a display of the Iron Dome system at Ben Gurion airport.

**Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz thanked Biden for his support in replenishing the system.**

“Under your rule, honorable president, **security cooperation in the region has intensified and expanded in an unprecedented manner and Israel is grateful for this and also for your support** with record U.S. security assistance that included a billion dollars to replenish Iron Dome interceptors,” Gantz told Biden.

Biden also viewed the new Iron Beam system, which is designed to work in tandem with the Iron Dome to shoot down smaller projectiles.

At the same time, **the** U.S. Army **recently announced that it has completed an interceptor test of the Iron Dome system. The U.S. military has two Iron Dome batteries that were supplied in late 2020 and plan to field the systems as an interim cruise missile defense solution**. Currently, one is deployed to Guam since the fall of 2021.

“**It’s important to understand that implementation for the U.S. is about the ability to integrate this system into our air defense picture**,” said Maj. Gen. Brian Gibson, director of the U.S. Army’s Air and Missile Defense Cross-Functional Team, Defense News reported.

#### Iron Dome saves lives – removing support emboldens Iran & has global ramifications.

**Pfluger and Makovksy 21** [(August Lee Pfluger II is an American politician and retired military officer from the state of Texas. He is the U.S. representative for Texas's 11th congressional district. Michael Makovsky has a Ph.D. in diplomatic history from Harvard and is foreign policy director of the Bipartisan Policy Center, a think tank based in Washington, D.C.) “Memo to Progressives: Israel's Iron Dome Saves Palestinian Lives, Too.” Newsweek, https://www.newsweek.com/memo-progressives-israels-iron-dome-saves-palestinian-lives-too-opinion-1632789, 9/26/21.] ES - TDI

Progressives in the House of Representatives [stripped $1 billion](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-loses-out-debt-ceiling-fight-pits-progressives-against-democratic-leadership-1631400) for Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system from a must-pass continuing resolution to fund the government last week. In so doing, they were putting prejudice and politics above peace and handing a victory to the Iran-backed Hamas regime in Gaza, which tyrannizes Palestinians and terrorizes Israel. Thankfully, the House acted quickly to [pass overwhelmingly](https://www.newsweek.com/full-list-representatives-voted-against-funding-israel-iron-dome-1632385) an alternative, clean standalone bill to provide the full funding. The [Senate](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate) must now do the same, without the conditions and additional provisions some have [suggested they want to add](https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2021/09/22/lawmakers-consider-linking-iron-dome-with-palestinian-aid-in-continuing-resolution/). At stake is America's very commitment to Israel's right of self-defense, our U.S. allies, and the fight against terror.

**Iron Dome, a missile defense system co-developed with the United States, is capable of intercepting 90 percent of rockets fired at Israel's populated areas. It's essential to limiting conflict and** protecting Israeli and Palestinian civilians **alike**. But the most recent conflict with Hamas last May diminished Israel's stockpile of the expensive Tamir interceptors used by the Iron Dome system; **in 11 days of fighting, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad fired** 4,455 rockets **toward Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, and other Israeli population centers, about as many they did in the entire 50-day war in 2014**.

**To protect its citizens, Israel shot down 1,577 of these rockets. Despite these measures, 10 Israelis were killed.**

**Quickly replenishing the interceptors used in this fighting is important to protect Israel from further conflict**. The nation faces a rocket threat not just from Hamas in Gaza to the south but also from Hezbollah in Lebanon to north. And that threat is much graver: **Hezbollah's arsenal of 130,000 rockets** and missiles not only dwarfs Hamas's but is also more powerful and precise.

Moreover, other Iranian proxies have also fired missiles and drones into Israel from Syria. If these groups believed that Iron Dome's effectiveness was compromised, they might escalate their attempts to overwhelm the system, which could have drastic results for Israeli citizens.

Just as critically, **Iron Dome also serves to protect Palestinian civilians. Without Iron Dome, Hamas is emboldened, facilitating it to further tyrannize its Palestinian subjects**. **And should Hamas unleash a rocket barrage that kills many Israeli civilians, Israel would likely be compelled to launch a ground invasion and take over all of Gaza, costing many Palestinian (and Israeli) lives.** Instead, thanks to Iron Dome and its effectiveness, Israel eschewed a ground campaign and managed to take unprecedented precautions in minimizing civilian casualties as it retaliated against Hamas forces hiding behind innocent Palestinians.

President Biden recognized the importance of restocking of Iron Dome interceptors, [promising](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-21/biden-says-us-will-replenish-iron-dome/13353634) in May after the last conflict that he would "replenish Israel's Iron Dome system to ensure its defenses and security in the future." So did President Obama when he [urged](https://www.defensedaily.com/obama-signs-iron-dome-funding-bill-for-immediate-boost-in-interceptor-production-2/uncategorized/) [Congress](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress) to replenish Iron Dome after the 2014 conflict.

Indeed, seven years ago, Congress appropriated $225 million for Iron Dome immediately after that conflict ended. The bill passed unanimously in the Senate and was approved in the House by a 395-8 vote, signaling strong, bipartisan support for the funding. President Obama [signed](https://www.timesofisrael.com/obama-approves-225-million-in-iron-dome-funding/) the legislation within a few days.

Now, it has already been almost four months since the cessation of hostilities and since President Biden promised to replenish Iron Dome. Rejecting or even delaying this assistance callously and needlessly endangers innocent lives.

Last week, the House of Representatives voted near-unanimously to replenish the Iron Dome, with 420 votes in favor and just nine against or abstaining. Those nine voices opposing Israel's defense system would do well to remember how many innocent Palestinian lives it saves, if they can't muster support for Israeli lives.

This is especially important now. Following the Afghan withdrawal debacle and a mishandling of an Australian submarine sale, **U.S. partners are already questioning the credibility of American global leadership. A fight over Iron Dome would signal that America's commitments to its allies are subject to political whims, deflating our allies and emboldening our adversaries, thereby creating a more dangerous world.**

**Iran is certainly relishing any diminished U.S. commitment to Israel's fundamental right to defend its civilian population.**

The House has already taken action to replenish Iron Dome through standalone legislation, as it did in 2014. But the initial defunding and the prospect for further political wrangling and impediments in the Senate sets a terrible precedent.

A vital defensive system must not be allowed to become a political football.

**Given the benefits that Iron Dome provides to Israel, Palestinians, and America, it should continue to enjoy overwhelming bipartisan support**. The pro-Israel majority in both parties should not allow a small minority to transform the straightforward issue of helping Israel protect civilians into one that creates tension between or within either party.

**Nuclear war.**

**Wright ’20** — Thomas; Director of the Center on the United States and Europe and a Senior Fellow in the Project on International Order and Strategy at the Brookings Institution. April 2020; “The Folly of Retrenchment”; *Foreign Affairs*; <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-02-10/folly-retrenchment>

The **realists** and the **progressives** arguing for retrenchment differ in their assumptions, logic, and intentions. The realists tend to be more pessimistic about the prospects for peace and frame their arguments in **hardheaded terms**, whereas the progressives downplay the consequences of American withdrawal and make a moral case against the current grand strategy. But they share a common claim: that the United States would be better off if it dramatically reduced its global military footprint and security commitments.

This is a **false promise**, for a number of reasons. First, retrenchment would worsen regional security competition in **Europe** and **Asia**. The realists recognize that the U.S. military presence in Europe and Asia does dampen **security competition**, but they claim that it does so at [too high a price](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/restraint-new-foundation-us-grand-strategy) — and one that, at any rate, should be paid by U.S. allies in the regions themselves. Although pulling back would invite regional **security competition**, realist retrenchers admit, the United States could be safer in a more dangerous world because regional rivals would check one another. This is a perilous gambit, however, because regional conflicts often end up implicating U.S. interests. They might thus end up drawing the **U**nited **S**tates back in after it has left — resulting in a **much more dangerous** venture than heading off the conflict in the first place by staying. Realist retrenchment reveals a hubris that the United States can control consequences and prevent crises from erupting into war.

The progressives’ view of regional security is similarly flawed. These retrenchers reject the idea that regional security competition will intensify if the United States leaves. In fact, they argue, U.S. alliances often promote competition, as in the Middle East, where U.S. support for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates has emboldened those countries in their cold war with Iran. But this logic does not apply to Europe or Asia, where U.S. allies have behaved responsibly. A U.S. pullback from those places is more likely to embolden the **regional powers**. Since 2008, Russia has [invaded](https://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ukraine) two of its neighbors that are not **members of NATO**, and if the Baltic states were no longer protected by a U.S. security guarantee, it is conceivable that Russia would test the boundaries with gray-zone warfare. In East Asia, a U.S. withdrawal would force Japan to increase its defense capabilities and change its constitution to enable it to compete with China on its own, straining relations with **So**uth **Ko**rea.

The second problem with retrenchment involves **nuclear proliferation**. If the United States pulled out of NATO or ended its alliance with Japan, as many realist advocates of retrenchment recommend, some of its allies, no longer protected by the U.S. **nuclear umbrella**, would be tempted to acquire nuclear weapons of their own. Unlike the progressives for retrenchment, the realists are comfortable with that result, since they see deterrence as a stabilizing force. Most Americans are not so sanguine, and rightly so. There are good reasons to worry about [nuclear proliferation](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-10-15/do-nuclear-weapons-matter): nuclear materials could end up in the hands of **terrorists**, states with less experience might be more prone to **nuclear accidents**, and nuclear powers in **close proximity** have **shorter response times** and thus conflicts among them have a **greater chance** of spiraling into escalation.

Third, retrenchment would heighten **nationalism** and **xenophobia**. In Europe, a U.S. withdrawal would send the message that every country must **fend for itself**. It would therefore empower the far-right groups already making this claim — such as the Alternative for Germany, the League in Italy, and the National Front in France — while undermining the centrist democratic leaders there who told their populations that they could rely on the United States and NATO. As a result, Washington would lose leverage over the domestic politics of **individual allies**, particularly younger and more **fragile democracies** such as Poland. And since these nationalist populist groups are almost always protectionist, retrenchment would damage U.S. economic interests, as well. Even more alarming, many of the right-wing nationalists that retrenchment would empower have called for **greater accommodation** of China and Russia.

A fourth problem concerns regional stability after global retrenchment. The most likely end state is a **s**pheres-**o**f-**i**nfluence system, whereby China and Russia dominate their neighbors, but such an order is **inherently unstable**. The lines of demarcation for such spheres tend to be unclear, and there is no guarantee that China and Russia will not seek to **move them outward** over time. Moreover, the United States cannot simply grant other major powers a sphere of influence — the countries that would fall into those realms have agency, too. If the United States ceded [Taiwan](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-02-15/will-china-seize-taiwan) to China, for example, the Taiwanese people could say no. The current U.S. policy toward the country is working and may be sustainable. Withdrawing support from Taiwan against its will would plunge **cross-strait relations** into chaos. The entire idea of letting regional powers have their own spheres of influence has an imperial air that is at odds with modern principles of sovereignty and **i**nternational **law**.

A fifth problem with retrenchment is that it lacks **domestic support**. The American people may favor greater burden sharing, but there is no evidence that they are onboard with a withdrawal from Europe and Asia. As a survey conducted in 2019 by the [Chicago Council on Global Affairs](https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/publication/rejecting-retreat) found, seven out of ten Americans believe that maintaining military superiority makes the **U**nited **S**tates safer, and almost three-quarters think that alliances contribute to U.S. security. A 2019 [Eurasia Group Foundation poll](https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/9QHRCwpR0mHqMQmCVthSz?domain=egfound.org) found that over 60 percent of Americans want to maintain or increase defense spending. As it became apparent that China and Russia would benefit from this shift toward retrenchment, and as the United States’ democratic allies objected to its withdrawal, the **domestic political backlash** would grow. One result could be a prolonged foreign policy debate that would cause the **U**nited **S**tates to **oscillate** between retrenchment and reengagement, creating **uncertainty** about its commitments and thus raising the risk of **miscalculation** by Washington, its allies, or its rivals.

Realist and progressive retrenchers like to argue that the architects of the United States’ postwar foreign policy naively sought to remake the world in its image. But the **real revisionists** are those who argue for **retrenchment**, a **geopolitical experiment** of unprecedented scale in modern history. If this camp were to have its way, Europe and Asia — two stable, peaceful, and prosperous regions that form the two main pillars of the U.S.-led order — would be plunged into an **era of uncertainty**.

**competition---1nc**

#### The plan removes BMD:

**1. “Substantial” means significant and across the board.**

**Holmen ’13** — Holmen School District. December 9, 2013; “SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973”; https://www.holmen.k12.wi.us/board/policies\_and\_admin\_rules/300/a342-1%20504%20Rehab%20Act%20of%201973%2012-9-13.pdf

A **substantial limitation** is a **significant restriction** as to the **condition**, **manner**, or **duration** under which an individual can perform a particular major life activity as compared to the condition, or duration under which the average person in the general population can perform that same major life activity. The Supreme Court in “Toyota v. Williams” noted that to meet the “substantially limit” definition, the disability must occur **across the board** in **multiple environments**, not only in **one environment** or **one setting**. The implication for school related 504 eligibility decisions is that the disability in question must be manifested in all facets of the student’s life, not only in school.

#### 2. “Reduce” means to eliminate.

**US Code ’09** — US Code. 2009; 26 CFR 54.4980F-1; Lexis

  § 54.4980F-1 Notice requirements for certain pension plan amendments significantly reducing the rate of future benefit accrual.

(c) Elimination or cessation of benefits. For purposes of this section, the terms **reduce** or **reduction** include **eliminate** or **cease** or **elimination** or **cessation**.

**3. “Military presence” mandates the removal of BMDs.**

**Sharpe ’15** — Jeremy; specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs. He provides analysis on Arab political, military and diplomatic affairs, and on U.S. policy in the Middle East, to members of Congress and their staff. June 10, 2015; “U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel”; *Congressional Research Service*; http://goodtimesweb.org/diplomacy/2015/RL33222-Jun2015.pdf

X-Band Radar

One of the most **significant gestures** of **U**.**S**. **support** for Israel’s missile defense architecture has been the deployment of the AN/TPY-2 X-Band radar system (built by Raytheon) to Israel in late 2008. Not only is the X-Band system reportedly far more capable of detecting incoming missiles than Israel’s natively produced radar system,46 but the United States also has linked the X-Band to its global network of satellites in the **U**.**S**. **D**efense **S**upport **P**rogram (DSP) and to the global **U**.**S**. **B**allistic **M**issile **D**efense **S**ystem (BMDS). The DSP is the principal component of the U.S. Satellite Early Warning System to detect missile launches.47 According to various media reports, the X-Band system is now operational. It will remain U.S.-owned and is operated by **U**.**S**. **troops** and **defense contractors**—the first indefinite **U**.**S**. **military presence** to be **established** on Israeli soil. Reportedly, the system has been deployed to a classified location in the southern Negev desert.48

**solvency---top---2nr**

**Removing Iron Dome undermines Middle Eastern stability, the American economy and national interests, and the US-Israeli alliance.**

**Carafano & Milstein ’21** — James Jay; Vice President, Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute. Adam; Philanthropist, Co-Founder of Israeli-American Council and Adam and Gila Milstein Family Foundation. October 18, 2021; “What Is Behind the Left’s Opposition to Funding Israel’s Iron Dome?”; *The Heritage Foundation*; https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/what-behind-the-lefts-opposition-funding-israels-iron-dome

Clearly, the debate has little to do with the Iron Dome. The system is a **technological success**. By having the **capacity** to **shoot down** incoming missiles, Israel can defend its citizens against attacks primarily directed at civilian populations.

Funding the Iron Dome is also an **investment** in the **U**.**S**. **economy**. In March 2014, the United States and Israel signed a co-production agreement, enabling the United States to manufacture system components and provide the United States with increased access to Iron Dome’s technology. About 75 percent of the Iron Dome’s Tamir interceptor’s components are manufactured in the United States. This August, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Raytheon partnered to produce full Iron Dome interceptors in the United States.

Funding the Iron Dome **diminishes** the **likelihood for escalation** between Israel and the Palestinians and in other regions where the defensive missile defense system has been deployed. Funding for the Iron Dome is a much better buy than a **heavy American footprint** or the price of stopping and recovering from an **all-out conflict** in the **region**.

Calls to defund the Iron Dome are not only **counter** to **Israeli interests**, they cut against American interests. Removing investments from the Iron Dome undermines the **U**.**S**. **economy** and **weakens Israel’s** ability to **defend** itself, and, by extension, to defend American security interests in the Middle East. Israel is America’s eyes and ears in this turbulent region.

Defunding the Iron Dome system would weaken **Israeli security** and **undermine** the **U**.**S**.-**Israel alliance**. A key part of the security relationship between the two nations is the U.S. pledge to maintain Israel’s “**qualitative military edge**” over other countries in the region. One of the key ways the United States upholds Israel’s qualitative military edge is by providing security assistance, including **funding** for the **Iron Dome**.

There looks to be a big difference from what the Democratic Representatives sought and what Paul intended. Paul seldom misses an opportunity to make the case for fiscal conservatism. That is what prompted his opposition to the foreign aid bill.

“I support Israel,” Paul said during the debate over the measure. “I voted for hundreds of millions of dollars to support Iron Dome. I am glad the United States has a strong bond with Israel. But the United States cannot give money it does not have, no matter how strong our relationship is.”

Unfortunately, in trying to make this point by objecting to fast-tracking the Iron Dome funding bill, Paul allowed Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) to create more approval delays and squeeze concessions from Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y). Among those concessions was a promise to send hundreds of millions in aid to the Hamas-controlled Gaza strip.

Unlike Paul, the Squad had lots of things on its mind, though nothing to do with fiscal conservatism. They have been among the loudest cheerleaders for President Joe Biden’s multi-trillion-dollar spending package. Also, they are the hardest of the hardcore supporters of Islamic regimes and the Palestinians in the Congress.

There is, of course, nothing **objectionable** in caring about the future security and prosperity of Palestinians. A brighter future for the Middle East depends on **economic integration**, **regional security**, and **political liberalization** that fosters the peoples of this place living peacefully side-by-side. That future has to include the Palestinians.

This leaves a difficult question for opponents of the Iron Dome. How does removing protections for **innocent civilians** being **showered** by **missiles** furthers the cause of **building** a **better future** for the people of the Middle East? It doesn’t. And that raises broader questions about what the political far left is really up to.

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So here is the worry. Do the Squad and their ilk really believe the region would be **better off** if the Islamist voices from the Muslim Brotherhood to the Mullahs in Tehran were **empowered**?

The short answer appears to be “yes.” If true, then **blocking Iron Dome is the opposite of a humanitarian impulse**. It is a warning light that there is a deep sickness in the American left, like a black hole with a powerful gravitational force pulling the president’s party in a dangerous direction.

**solvency---iran---2nr**

**It uniquely prevents war.**

**Oren ’12** — Michael; Former Israeli Ambassador to the United States. March 18, 2012; “Invest in Iron Dome for peace”; *Politico*; https://www.politico.com/story/2012/03/investment-in-iron-domeis-investment-in-peace-074149

Last week, the Middle East nearly plunged into **new crisis**. The cause was not the civil war in Syria or ethnic strife in Iraq but, again, **terrorism** from **Gaza**.

Islamic jihad terrorists fired more than 250 **rockets**, **missiles** and **mortar shells** at **civilian** neighborhood**s** in **Israel**. A million Israelis — including 200,000 schoolchildren — showed courage under fire, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu displayed restraint. Still, as the **fire intensified**, the government had to consider ground action.

Israel conducted such an operation in Gaza in 2008, but since then, the entire Middle East has become a powder keg. Syria and Iran reportedly were colluding to exploit Israeli-Palestinian tensions to distract attention from their internal turmoil. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has urged his followers to “liberate Jerusalem.” Israel could have to defend itself on multiple fronts.

But the **crisis** was **averted**, thanks to a **technological marvel**. Israel’s **Iron Dome** anti-missile system succeeded in preventing almost all the terrorist rockets from hitting populated areas in Israel. Progressing from drawing board to deployment in only four years, Iron Dome became the first **anti-ballistic system** in history to succeed in **real combat conditions**, intercepting **11** Hamas **rockets** in April 2011.

Designed to take out short-range projectiles, Iron Dome is part of a multitier defense that eventually will include David’s Sling and the Arrow, capable of intercepting **medium-range** and **intercontinental missiles**. Israel has developed these systems with the United States — and through the generous assistance of Congress and the Obama administration.

We are profoundly appreciative of this bipartisan support and are deeply grateful for the more than two decades of U.S.-Israel cooperation on missile defense. These pioneering and proven systems represent a win-win **accomplishment**: Iron Dome, David’s Sling and the Arrow can also help defend **U**.**S**. **facilities** and **interests** around the world.

Three Iron Dome batteries are currently stationed in southern Israel. They are capable of interdicting **multiple targets** and of determining whether the rockets will hit **urban areas** or **crash harmlessly** into empty fields. The interceptors, which are expensive, are fired only at those rockets deemed likely to cause far more costly damage to **civilian** area**s**. As such, the system is economically efficient.

Yet an additional 10 batteries, at least, will be **necessary** to **protect** the **entire country**. Hezbollah’s rockets, for example, would terrorize Israel’s northern cities, while those of Syria and Iran could strike the center.

This need was **profoundly demonstrated** by last week’s events. By denying Islamic jihad the ability to **kill** and **maim** Israeli civilians, we gained precious time for effective Egyptian **mediation**. Another round of painful house-to-house fighting in Gaza — and possibly a **devastating war** — was avoided.

But the dangers persist. Indeed, while I was writing this article, another terrorist rocket was launched at Be’er Sheva. Fortunately, Iron Dome was able to intercept and destroy it.

Of course, we remain committed to resolving the conflict based on the principle of two states for two people. But until that is achieved, we have no choice but to rely on both our defensive and offensive capabilities. For America, as well as for Israel, an investment in the Iron Dome system is an **investment** in **diplomacy** — helping to create the conditions **conducive** to **peace**.

**No Israel strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities.**

**Leubell & Wallis ’23** — Maayan; reporter. Daniel; editor. June 30, 2023; “Israel no closer to attack on Iran nuclear sites, official says”; *Reuters*; https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-no-closer-attack-iran-nuclear-sites-official-says-2023-06-30/

JERUSALEM, June 30 (Reuters) - Israel is **not nearing** an attack on **Iran's nuclear sites**, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's national security adviser said on Friday, as talks between Tehran and Washington have sought to cool tensions.

Tzachi Hanegbi said it was still unclear what will come of talks Israel's main ally the **U**nited **S**tates has held with Iran in recent weeks in an effort to outline steps that could **limit Teheran's nuclear program** and **de-escalate tensions**.

Nonetheless, no agreement would obligate Israel, which views a nuclear-armed Iran as an existential threat, Hanegbi told Channel 13 television. Asked whether an Israeli decision on a **preemptive strike** against Iran was any **closer**, Hanegbi said:

"We are **not getting closer** because the Iranians have stopped, for a while now, they are **not enriching uranium** to the level that in our view is the **red line**."

Hanegbi added: "But it can happen. So we are preparing for the moment, if it comes, in which we will have to defend the people of Israel against a fanatic regime that is set on annihilating us and is armed with weapons of mass destruction."

Netanyahu has set a "red line" on Iran's uranium enrichment at bomb-grade 90% fissile purity. Iran has ramped up enrichment to 60% purity in recent years.

Having failed to revive a 2015 nuclear deal that had capped Tehran's enrichment at 3.67%, Iranian and Western officials have **met** to **sketch out steps** that could curb its **fast advancing nuclear work**.

The 2015 agreement limited Iran's uranium enrichment to make it harder for Tehran to develop the means to produce nuclear arms. Iran denies it has such ambitions.

Then-U.S. President Donald Trump ditched the pact in 2018 and reimposed sanctions that have crippled the Iranian economy. Tehran responded by gradually moving well beyond the deal's enrichment restrictions.

**Iron Dome technology creates the conditions for diplomacy and long-term solutions.**

**Oren ’12** — Michael; Former Israeli Ambassador to the United States. March 18, 2012; “Invest in Iron Dome for peace”; *Politico*; https://www.politico.com/story/2012/03/investment-in-iron-domeis-investment-in-peace-074149

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### solvency---credibility---2nr

**Removing the Iron Dome is “the opposite of a humanitarian impulse”.**

**Carafano & Milstein ’21** — James Jay; Vice President, Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute. Adam; Philanthropist, Co-Founder of Israeli-American Council and Adam and Gila Milstein Family Foundation. October 18, 2021; “What Is Behind the Left’s Opposition to Funding Israel’s Iron Dome?”; *The Heritage Foundation*; https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/what-behind-the-lefts-opposition-funding-israels-iron-dome

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**US leadership and credibility are dead. The plan can’t revive it.**

**Gardner-Bird ’22** — Samuel; Research Associate at the Quincy Institute. He received his B.A. from Tufts University, graduating summa cum laude. Prior to joining Quincy, Sam worked as an intern for the Eurasia Group Foundation, and as a Young Global Professional in the New American Engagement Initiative at the Atlantic Council. November 15, 2022; “The unipololar moment is over. When will the US get it?”; *Responsible Statecraft*; https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/11/15/the-unipololar-moment-is-over-when-will-the-us-get-it/

There was no mincing of words yesterday from former Global South leaders who see Washington’s unipolar leadership of the world **diminishing** and **hypocrisy** where the **U**nited **S**tates sees rules.

Speaking at yesterday’s Quincy Institute panel on the Global South and the “Rules-Based Order,” South Africa’s foreign minister Naledi **Pandor** compared the West’s response to Russia to the West’s treatment of Palestine, saying “when it comes to Palestinians…the same international law **does not apply**.”

Meanwhile, Brazil’s former foreign minister, Celso **Amorim**, came out against the **double** standards of the U.S.-backed “rules-based order,” stating, “I saw the rules being **changed** all the time, and they are still being changed now.”

And former Singaporean diplomat, Kishore Mahbubani, shared no love for President Biden’s framework of **democracy versus autocracy**, calling it a “**simplistic** black and white division of the world which is multicolored and so different.”

These statements point to the emergence of a new **non-alignment** within the Global South, a **counterpoint** to America’s typical posture of world leadership. Of course, these are not popular views in Washington, but that is precisely the point — if prominent leaders in the fastest growing regions don’t buy into the Western consensus, can the United States really **maintain** its global position for long?

Despite the National Security Strategy’s recent declaration that “the post-Cold War era is definitively over,” the **U**nited **S**tates is still **unwilling** to state what the international system has become in its wake: increasingly **multipolar**.

Rather than rethinking first order assumptions about foreign policy, the **U**nited **S**tates appears destined to press on its quest for global hegemony — committing thousands of troops to Europe, preparing for a “strategic competition” with China in the Indo-Pacific, and **rubber stamping** a bloated military budget.

Unfortunately, as yesterday’s panelists revealed, the rest of the world is **unlikely** to join in any U.S. crusade to “defend democracy” or line up to support a “**rules-based order**”: a phrase riddled with too many **inconsistencies** to **remain credible**.

**nb---at: iron dome bad---2nr**

**Decline triggers lashout and pursuit is inevitable. Extinction.**

**Beckley ’12** — Michael; Associate Professor of Political Science at Tufts University for International Security. Winter 2012; “China's Century? Why America's Edge Will Endure”; *Belfer Center*; http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/Chinas\_Century.pdf

One danger is that declinism could prompt **trade conflicts** and **immigration restrictions**. The results of this study suggest that the United States beneªts immensely from the free ºow of goods, services, and people around the globe; this is what allows American corporations to specialize in high-value activities, exploit innovations created elsewhere, and lure the brightest minds to the United States, all while reducing the price of goods for U.S. consumers. Characterizing China’s export expansion as a loss for the United States is not just bad economics; it blazes a trail for jingoistic and protectionist policies. It would be tragically ironic if Americans reacted to false prophecies of decline by cutting themselves off from a potentially **vital source** of **American power**.

Another danger is that declinism may impair **foreign policy decisionmaking**. If top government officials come to believe that China is overtaking the **U**nited **S**tates, they are likely to react in one of **two ways**, both of which are **potentially disastrous**.

The first is that policymakers may imagine the **U**nited **S**tates faces a closing “**window of opportunity**” and should take action “while it still enjoys preponderance and not wait until the diffusion of power has already made international politics more **competitive** and **unpredictable**.”158 This belief may spurpositive action, but it also invites **parochial thinking**, **reckless behavior**, and **preventive war**.159 As Robert Gilpin and others have shown, “[H]egemonic struggles have most frequently been triggered by fears of **ultimate decline** and the perceived **erosion of power**.”160 By fanning such fears, declinists may inadvertently promote the type of **violent overreaction** that they seek to prevent.

**US military presence is non-coercive and a force for good. Allies welcome our troops because of the security and economic benefits.**

**Kane ’19** — Timothy; Hoover Institution at Stanford University and PhD in economics from UCSD. 2019; “The United States as a Promethean Power”; *Hoover Institution*; https://www.hoover.org/research/united-states-promethean-power

The global scope of American military power has been described in many ways: **hegemony**, **primacy**, and **unipolarity**. Brooks, Ikenberry, and Wohlforth (2012)1 cover the nuances of the terminology well, and I agree with their preference for the term “Deep Engagement” that Joseph Nye coined in a 1995 article.2 The complex patterns and nuances of engagement remain poorly understood, with a focus on conflict that ignores the preponderance of cases, where **U**.**S**. **forces** have been **peacefully based** for **decades**. In short, foreign policy has focused on the heat instead of the light – countless studies, essays, and books on Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq stand in contrast to the negligible attention given to countries where the U.S. maintained large-scale and long-term troop basing such as Belgium, Korea, Turkey, and Kuwait.

Is the United States an empire? We may just as well debate whether an elephant most closely resembles a Tyrannosaurus Rex or Triceratops. Some will point to the imperial characteristics that are reflected in the United States force posture. But characteristics of dinosaurs or empires (size, martial strength, breadth) really have no meaning in a world where that entire order is extinct. The **21st century** is filled with a **new order** of **nation-states**, markedly different from eras prior to 1945.

American power is best understood not by its type: hard, soft, or smart, but its **motivation**. This is not to say the “imperial” motivation has disappeared from human affairs; self-preservation and domination are instinctive human qualities. But there is a new aspect to international relations that has been in place for more than a century, a form of altruism, illustrated by the **widespread support** that exists in the **U**.**S**. and other countries for **universal h**uman **r**ights. For many decades now, nations have routinely sought to advance something beyond their narrow national interests. I call this a **Promethean motivation**, and America a **Promethean power**.

The phrase is rooted in the myth of Prometheus, the rebellious god of ancient Greek mythology who stole fire from Zeus and gave it to the human race, sparking the beginning of technology, growth, civilization, and prosperity. Zeus was the ruler of the Gods of Olympus, archetype of the emperor/king. The Gods were rulers, and humans were mere subjects. Prometheus represents rebellion, the trickster God, undercutting the authority of the imperial order. Legend has it that Prometheus tricked Zeus – repeatedly – in order to help uplift the human race.

Critics of American intervention reflexively use the term “imperial” when discussing foreign affairs. By far the dominant theme of imperialism in American foreign policy has been voiced by Leftist thinkers such as Howard Zinn, Gabriel and Joyce Kolko, and Gore Vidal. But since 1990, the end of the Cold War, neo-isolationists on the right have adopted the term as well, notably Pat Buchanan and Congressman Ron Paul. Thus the tendency is for thinkers on the political extremes – globalists on the left, nationalists on the right – to find common cause, whereas centrists tend to view American power more favorably, as do many foreign scholars.

Following the 9/11 attacks and concerns about state failure abroad, proponents of American intervention began suggesting American empire in explicit and favorable ways. Such voices included Richard Haas, Sebastian Mallaby, and Max Boot. The fullest expression of this new theme is found in Colossus, a 2004 book by Niall Ferguson3 (now a colleague at the Hoover Institution), who argued “not merely that the United States is an empire, but that it always has been an empire” and that the ultimate threat to the nation is its own “absence of a will to power.” The book is an unappreciated gem, but one wonders if Ferguson and his intellectual opponents share the same framework, which refuses to draw a line between imperial states of the 15th-19th centuries and the modern states of the 21st.

Ferguson wonderfully skewers the slipperiness of the term hegemon, which remains “the most popular term among writers on international relations.” Hegemony refers to a coercive state, like an empire, but one that aims to create **mutually beneficial relationships**. Trying to define the nature of state power by the distribution of benefits (exploitative or shared) misses the point. The point is: what are first principles that motivate foreign action?

America on the world stage should be understood in the context of its revolutionary founding. The republic’s anti-imperial birth and its sense of manifest destiny have colored foreign affairs from early on. Consider again Thomas Jefferson’s “Empire of Liberty,” which was more than a poetic phrase. In 1809 Jefferson wrote to his successor James Madison, “I am persuaded no constitution was ever before so well calculated as ours for extensive empire & self-government.” In one of his final letters, written in 1824, Jefferson wrote, “where this progress will stop no-one can say. Barbarism has, in the meantime, been receding before the steady step of amelioration; and will in time, I trust, disappear from the earth.”

To simplify matters, let’s accept the framework of definitions on the Left (and also popularly understood by Americans throughout history). Define an empire as a nation that exploits foreign peoples, aiming to **colonize** them and/or **extract their resources** for the advantage of the empire and at the cost of the foreigners. And for the sake of clarity, recognize a bright line that distinguishes imperial relationships as those where subjugated peoples do not want but are forced to abide by foreign intervention. To be specific, the **U**.**S**. **role** in **So**uth **Ko**rea fails the imperial test, as does the post-1955 role of the U.S. in **Germany** and **Japan**. Those three countries accounted for nearly three-quarters of **U**.**S**. **troop deployments** since 1950. Not to mention **Spain**, **Turkey**, **Taiwan**, and **Kuwait**. All of these are voluntary alliances, and qualitatively distinct from forces based in Iraq.

**The US military is globally a force for good. Alternatives are worse.**

**Ikenberry & Deudney ’15** — John; theorist of international relations and United States foreign policy, and the Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. Daniel; American political scientist and Associate Professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University. August 2015; “America’s Impact: The End of Empire and the Globalization of the Westphalian System”; *Princeton Scholar*; http://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/gji3/files/am-impact-dd-gji-final-1-august-2015.pdf

In contemporary debates, this argument undercuts, modifies, and qualifies characterizations held by so many of the **U**nited **S**tates as essentially imperial, and the American order as an empire. In our rendering, the United State is not the last **Western empire**, but the first **anti-imperial** and **post-imperial great power** in the **global system**. Our argument is thus focused on the consequences of American foreign policy for the evolution of the international system, and we do not in this confined treatment offer an explanation for the origins of U.S. foreign policy. In short, we offer an argument about impacts rather than the sources of America’s antiimperial and pro-Westphalian role.

Empires and State Systems: Historical Patterns

Empire has been the historically predominant form of order in world politics. Looking at a time frame of several millennia, there was no global anarchic system until the European explorations and subsequent imperial and colonial ventures connected desperate regional systems, doing so approximately five hundred years ago.7 Prior to this emergence of a globalscope system, the pattern of world politics was characterized by regional systems. These regional systems were initially very anarchic, and marked by high levels of military competition. But almost universally, they tended to consolidate into regional empires which had fairly limited interactions with polities outside their regions.8 Thus, it was empires – not anarchic state systems – that typically dominated the regional systems in all parts of the world.

Within this global pattern of regional empires, European political order was distinctly anomalous because it persisted so long as an anarchy. Despite repeated efforts to consolidate Europe into one empire – or what the Europeans referred to as “universal monarchy” – this region remained a plural, multi-state political order. After the Peace of Westphalia ending the Thirties Year War, this plural anarchic system, the Westphalian system, and was sustained by a rough balance of power among its autonomous states and the weakness of the claimants of European empire. This Westphalian system was based on a roughly equal distribution of power among its major units, sustained by various balancing practices that thwarted a succession of regional European empire-builders, and had an elaborate system of public international law and ideological justification.9 While this system rested on a balance of power, it was juridically crystallized into a system of mutually recognized sovereigns.

Outside of Europe, however, the European states, including those that were most active in preventing empire within Europe, were extraordinarily successful in conquering and colonizing vast areas across oceanic distances.10 The Europeans did not invent empire, but they were spectacularly successful at empire building on a global scope, largely because of the imbalance of power that stemmed from European innovations in technology and organization.11 The Europeans conquered and dominated empires, states, and peoples in every previously loosely coupled or isolated regional system across the world. The Europeans also successfully planted numerous colonies of settlers, mainly in the temperate zones in North and South America, Oceania, and the southern tip of Africa.12 States from the Western European core of the Westphalian system thus brought into existence a global-scale political system made up of vast multi-continental empires of conquered peoples and a scattering of colonial “new Europes.”13

This pattern of European empire building was different from its predecessors, not just in its global scope, but also because the European states were continuously warring against one another for dominance within Europe. These struggles between states within Europe against empire in Europe were fought on a global scale. Thus the first “world war,” defined as a war fought across multiple continents, occurred in the later 18th century. In this struggle Britain sought to thwart French attempts to dominate Europe and the battle lines were in Europe, North America, South Asia, and across the global oceans. This pattern of the globalization of intraEuropean warfare continued in the 20th century with the wars triggered by German efforts to dominate Europe. The growing imbalance of power between the Europeans and the rest of the world during the 18th and 19th century enabled the Europeans to easily expand their empires at the expense of non-Europeans. But during the same periods, the Europeans found it very difficult to conquer each other within Europe. Thus vast armies wrought great destruction fighting over tiny parcels of land in Europe, while comparatively small European imperial expeditionary forces readily mastered non-European armies in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Thus a balance of power underpinned the Westphalian system in Europe, while an imbalance of power between Europe and the world underpinned imperial expansion.

Anti-imperial and anti-colonial rebellions and resistance are as old as empires, but successful rebellion against European imperial rule outside Europe began in the 18th century with the revolt of the colonial settler colonies in the Americas – first in North America and then in South America. This first wave of settler-colony rebellion marked the end of what historians refer to as the “first British empire,” as well as the first great European empire in the Americas, that of Spain. The success of this first wave of anti-imperial rebellion in Spanish America was crucially facilitated by the weakening of Spain during the Napoleonic wars for domination within Europe.

In the later-19th century, European empire building outside of Europe entered a second wave, enabled by the new industrial technologies that further amplified the imbalance of power between Europeans and non-Europeans, which in turn allowed the Europeans to extend their imperial domination into the large interior spaces of the continents, particularly in Africa and Asia.14 In the 20th century, further wars among the core European states weakened Britain, France, and Holland, the leading European colonial powers, thus creating opportunities for antiimperial independence movements in Asia and Africa. Paradoxically, the fact that the Europeans were continuously fighting one another fueled their imperial ambitions and successes, while at the same time, such wars weakened them and helped enable the success of rebellions against their empires.15 Thus as the British empire was reaching its territorial zenith in the early years of the 20th century, Britain was critically weakened by the world wars in Europe and Asia against the aspiring German and Japanese empire builders.

The territorial aggression of the Axis Powers constitute a third wave of empire building which was short lived and thwarted by the successful mobilization of the “United Nations,” a coalition led by the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China. A fourth wave of empire building, by the Soviet Union and the international communist movement in the second half of the 20th century, was thwarted and dismantled by the United States and its allies.

The Pattern of American Anti-Imperial, Anti-Colonial, and Pro-Westphalian Impacts

Against the backdrop of this evolution of the international system and the four waves of **empire** building and dismantlement, it becomes possible to see **more clearly** the many ways in which the **U**nited **S**tates played **important anti-imperial**, **anti-colonial**, and pro-Westphalian roles. 16

In each of the four waves of empire building and dismantlement, the United States had an impact. The **U**nited **S**tates was the first “**new nation**” to emerge from a **rebel**lion against European imperial rule during the first wave of modern empire. The United States also supported the independence of other European settler colonies throughout the Americas and, with the Monroe Doctrine, helped **sustain their independence** against European efforts to **recolonize** parts of the Americas. In the second wave of late 19th century empire-building, the United States, despite its great relative power, did not establish an empire of its own of any significance or duration. And during the latter part of the 20th century, the United States pushed **European decolonization**, thus facilitating the breakup of second wave empires. In the great world wars in the 20th century, the United States played an **important role** in thwarting a third **wave of imperial projects** of **Germany**, **Japan**, and **Italy**. In the second half of the 20th century, the United States played decisive roles, both ideological and military, in thwarting the fourth wave of empire building, the expansion of the communist great power, the Soviet Union, as well as communist coups and revolutions in many weak and small independent states.

The United States also played a variety of important roles in **building and strengthening** Westphalian institutions, moderating **inter-state anarchy**, and facilitating the ability of states to survive as **independent members** of international society. From its inception, the United States was precocious in its support for the law of nations, the institutions of the society of states, particularly the laws of war and neutrality, and public international law, as a means of restraining war and aggression. In both the 19th and 20th centuries, the **U**nited **S**tates, first regionally and then globally, inspired and helped **legitimate anti-colonial** and anti-imperial **independence movements** and national liberation struggles among peoples struggling against empires all over the world. In the 20th century, the United States led the efforts to institutionalize Westphalian norms of non-aggression and sovereign independence, first with the League of Nations and then with the United Nations Charter. In the second half of the 20th century, the American-led **l**iberal **i**nternational **o**rder institutionalized **free trade** and **multilateral cooperation**, thus providing the infrastructure for a global economic system, thus enabling **smaller** and weaker **states** to sustain their sovereign. Also in the second half of the 20th century, the American system of military alliances contributed to the dampening of violent conflicts among allied states, particularly in Europe and East Asia, thus protecting the Westphalian system from the return of violent conflict and empire-building.

## conditions counterplan

### conditions counterplan---1nc

#### The United States ought to substantially increase its military presence in the State of Israel on the condition of the State of Israel’s ending of

#### Rights abuses against the State of Palestine

#### The destruction of property owned by the State of Palestine

#### The removal of the citizens of the State of Palestine from the West Bank

#### Attempts to annex territory owned by the State of Palestine

#### US military aid would be conditioned upon the upholding of human rights

**Susskind 21** [Hadar Susskind, 5-19-2021, Susskind is an Israeli-American, an IDF veteran, and the President and CEO of Americans for Peace Now "For the Good of Both Countries, U.S. Military Aid for Israel Must Be Conditional," Time, <https://time.com/6073637/u-s-military-aid-israel-must-be-conditional/>] jason

As a dual American-Israeli citizen who has spent years in both countries, my commitment to Israel did not end with my army service. From my home in the U.S. the past 20 years, I’ve been in the trenches of the Israeli-Palestinian peace movement for nearly all of my life. It is from this vantage point of caring deeply for both Israel and the U.S., and in my capacity as President and CEO of Americans for Peace Now, that I am calling on the U.S. government to condition its annual 3.8 billion dollars of military aid to Israel. We are the first progressive Zionist organization to endorse conditioning aid, and we do not take this step lightly. But what has become abundantly clear, underscored by the horrifying images coming out of Gaza, East Jerusalem and inside Israel last month, is that continuing to give Israel military aid without conditions neither serves U.S. policy interests—nor, I would argue, does it serve Israel. My military service gives me first-hand experience regarding Israel’s security concerns. And my values lead me to support human rights, dignity, equality and statehood for Palestinians. This is in perfect alignment with U.S. government policy—which was reaffirmed by President Biden’s administration. These two principles were the guiding consideration for granting military aid to Israel: supporting its legitimate self-defense and encouraging it to take risks for peace, including territorial concessions, to bring about a viable Palestinian state. Last month’s terrifying escalation of violence laid bare what has been abundantly clear for many years: the Israeli government has no intention of moving towards two states. It’s been seven years since there’s been even a pretense of a peace process. A cabinet led by Naftali Bennett in the newly sworn-in Bennett-Lapid unity government offers no more promising indication that ending the occupation would be on the agenda, and just yesterday responded to the release of incendiary balloons with another round of missile strikes in Gaza. We can’t control what the Israeli government does, but we can ensure that U.S. taxpayer money is used to uphold U.S. values and to achieve U.S. policy goals. Our 3.8 billion dollars of yearly aid supports Israel’s defensive military capabilities, as do I. But it also manifests as American bombs killing hundreds of Palestinians in Gaza, including 67 children, and soldiers wielding American M-16s as they displace families in the East Jerusalem neighborhoods of Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan. If the U.S. wants to nurture peace and support international law, we must explicitly ensure that our tax-payer dollars serve our foreign policy objectives, that they do not go towards human rights violations, and that there are specific consequences if they do. This puts Israel on equal footing with every other country who receives U.S. aid, all of whom receive it conditionally. Conditioning aid goes further than restricting aid, which does not address fungibility and carries no meaningful consequences for violations of human rights. Conditioning aid can go further than simply investigating the use of U.S. military equipment, which in theory is already illegal under the Leahy law. If Israel continues its policy of expelling Palestinians from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, for example, the U.S. could cut some percentage of the aid. If new settlements are legalized or existing ones expanded—these international law violations would come with specific U.S. aid reductions. It might confuse some that a pro-Israel organization is taking this position. For far too long, we have allowed right wing politicians both in Israel and the U.S. to define what it means to be pro-Israel. Elected leaders either gave lip service to a two-state solution (while supporting government actions that made that more difficult to achieve) or have been part of a growing chorus of voices who openly call for a one-state Greater Israel. An occupation without end, or an apartheid one-state is not good for Israel. Arguing for positions that will bring a lasting, sustainable peace is pro-Israel. There is finally a shift in American politics around Israel, one that I would describe as seismic. Ten, five, even one year ago, it would have been inconceivable for sitting members of Congress to speak about conditioning aid to Israel. Aid to Israel was the third rail; it wasn’t even in the frame of discussion. Yet on May 14, eleven members of Congress made previously unimaginable speeches on the house floor; calling on Israel to halt atrocities in Gaza and affirming the humanity of Palestinians. Now is the time for congressional representatives to go beyond words and to coalesce these statements into policy. Lawmakers finally have the political space to stand up and proudly say, “I’m pro-Israel and I support conditioning aid, because it’s in the U.S’s interest, it’s in Israel’s interest, and it’s the right thing to do.”

#### Anything else greenlights future human rights abuses

**Hoffman 21** [Jon Hoffman, 06-09-2021, Jon Hoffman is a political science Ph.D. student at George Mason University. "Why the U.S. Should End Its Unconditional Military Aid to Israel," DAWN, <https://dawnmena.org/why-the-u-s-should-end-its-unconditional-military-aid-to-israel/>] jason

For decades, US military aid to Israel has been a sacred cow, with Republicans and Democrats in the United States shielding it from criticism, scrutiny and especially, any calls for restraint. The stark realities of U.S. military aid to Israel were on full display in the recent war on Gaza, which once again devastated the besieged strip. According to the Israeli military, 160 of Israel's U.S.-built F-16 fighter jets dropped 450 missiles on more than 150 targets in Gaza in a single raid alone. These strikes disproportionately targeted Palestinian civilian sites and, Amnesty International warned, "may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity." It's an all-too familiar story of the implications of America's unconditional military aid to Israel, which totals roughly $3.8 billion per year—more than any other country—and is often complemented with other arms deals and security benefits. But this story may finally be changing. The 11-day war between Israel and Hamas in May, which resulted in the deaths of more than 240 Palestinians in Gaza and 12 Israelis, has led to renewed calls for the cessation of that aid. The traditional bipartisan consensus in Washington on the need for it has started to unravel, with several prominent progressive Democrats scrutinizing arms transfers to Israel more than ever. Yet despite these shifts in his own party, and his own pledge to "revitalize" America's "national commitment to advancing human rights and democracy around the world," President Joe Biden continues to stick to the typical playbook of past American presidents. He offered unwavering and unconditional support for Israel, even in the face of documented Israeli abuses last month—including bombing the Gaza bureau of an American news agency, the Associated Press. The Biden administration blocked three resolutions at the United Nations Security Council calling for an immediate cease-fire as the fighting escalated, with Israel bombing more residential buildings in densely packed Gaza City. The White House claimed it was pursuing "quiet" diplomacy behind the scenes—all while immediately expressing the usual public support for Israel's "right to defend itself." Any mention of Palestinian civilian casualties came with heavy qualifications and after noticeable delay. The Biden administration also publicly ignored the Israeli provocations in Jerusalem—the looming expulsions of Palestinians from the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah, and the storming of the al-Aqsa mosque compound by Israeli security forces, targeting Palestinian protesters there—that had precipitated the conflict in Gaza. The Biden administration even secretly approved a $735 million weapons sale of precision-guided arms to Israel before a cease-fire was reached, effectively circumventing a debate and vote on it in Congress. Nevertheless, more progressive voices are steadily challenging the dominant narrative that has for so long served as the foundation for Washington's bipartisan consensus on writing these blank checks to Israel. It's time for the United States to fundamentally reassess this relationship, and recent events show why—morally, legally and strategically. Besides violating existing U.S. laws that are supposed to bar Washington from providing security assistance to countries that commit human rights abuses, military aid to Israel serves little to no strategic purpose for the United States. What this unconditional aid really does, instead, is allow Israel to act with impunity, directly implicating the U.S. in Israeli conduct, making it a complicit party. The cease-fire in Gaza may be holding for now, but it merely entailed a return to the status quo: Gaza is still under Israeli blockade, and Palestinians are still facing expulsion from their homes in occupied East Jerusalem. Nearly 7 million Palestinians—in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel proper—are all still under a system of Israeli authority and control that more and more observers are calling apartheid. Human Rights Watch released a comprehensive report in late April accusing Israel of committing "the crimes of apartheid and persecution," as defined under international law, in an effort to "maintain the domination of Jewish Israelis over Palestinians across Israel and the [Occupied Palestinian Territories]." It echoed an earlier conclusion from B'Tselem, Israel's largest and leading human rights organization, that labeled the Israeli government "an apartheid regime." Yet Israel still maintains its unwavering and unconditional support from Washington. U.S. law, however, is clear: The American government cannot provide security assistance to actors engaged in gross human rights abuses. Two laws are of particular importance here: Section 502b of the Foreign Assistance Act, and the Leahy Laws. The Foreign Assistance Act states that "no security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." Moreover, it emphasizes America's duty to "promote and encourage increased respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." That is echoed by the Leahy Laws, two statutory provisions which, in the State Department's own description, prohibit "the U.S. Government from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violation of human rights." One does not have to look far to find evidence of Israel's noncompliance with these American laws. Israel has violated five major internationally recognized human rights and humanitarian laws during its more than 50-year occupation of Palestinian territory: unlawful killings, forced displacement and the building of illegal settlements, abusive detention, unjustified restriction of movement, and various institutionalized forms of racial and religious discrimination. There were more abuses in the latest escalation in Jerusalem and Gaza.

### competition---1nc

**Reductions are only smaller amounts---explicitly excludes conditions.**

Court of Appeals of Oregon 06. Robert A. FOLKERS, Jr., Petitioner-Cross-Respondent, v. LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, Respondent-Cross-Petitioner. FDA-01-09; A123667.

Petitioner seeks judicial review of the decision of the Fair Dismissal Appeals Board (the board) dismissing his appeal.   After respondent Lincoln County School District (the district) unilaterally amended his employment contract by increasing the number of days of work without increasing his pay, petitioner appealed to the board.   The board concluded that the district's action was **not a “reduction** in pay” and, hence, not an action over which the board had subject matter jurisdiction. We affirm.

The pertinent facts are undisputed.   Petitioner was a licensed school administrator.   From 1993 to 1998, he was principal of a kindergarten-through-12th-grade school in the district.   In 1998, the district reassigned him to be assistant principal at a high school.   In 2000, petitioner signed a three-year contract with the district that set his monthly salary for the contract year and required 220 work days for the year.   During the first year of that contract, however, the district adopted a new employee compensation plan covering the period from July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2006.   Pursuant to that plan, the district set petitioner's salary at essentially the same amount for the 2001-02 contract year as for the previous year 1 but increased the number of work days for the contract year from 220 to 230.   The district sent petitioner a document informing him of the contract action.   Petitioner signed the document but inserted a statement that he objected to the listed salary and reserved his right to appeal.

Petitioner then filed an appeal with the board contesting the district's action, alleging that it amounted to an unauthorized “reduction in pay.”   In his notice of appeal, petitioner asserted that the district's action constituted a “reduction in pay” within the meaning of ORS 342.845(5)(a), which authorizes administrators to appeal such reductions to the board, and that the reduction was unauthorized because the district had neither “established nor otherwise attempted to establish any grounds for the action.”   The district moved to dismiss the appeal, contending that the appeal was untimely  and that, because the district's action was not a “reduction in pay,” the board lacked subject matter jurisdiction.

The board rejected the district's timeliness argument but agreed that it lacked subject matter jurisdiction.   The board determined that, under ORS 342.845(5),2 administrators may appeal only two types of actions:  reductions in pay and dismissals.   It rejected petitioner's contention that the district reduced his pay by holding his salary constant but increasing his work year by 10 days.   The board reasoned:

“The statute addresses **reductions** in pay.   We do not have jurisdiction to consider appeals of **changes in** other working **conditions**, whether they be changes in length of day, number of days, duties, location of work, or size of school.   If the legislature wanted us to solve such a complex equation, it would have set forth additional factors for our consideration in the statute.   It **did not**.   The statute **directs us to consider only reductions** in pay.   As we said in [McNair v. Springfield School District, FDA 01-06 (2003)], ‘A reduction in pay, using the natural and ordinary meaning of the terms “reduce” and “reduction,” means pay that has been **brought down to a** **smaller amount**.’  \* \* \* As in [McNair, **petitioner**] here **did not receive a reduction** in pay.   He received the same compensation he had received the prior year.”

**Conditions sever—reduce is a net decrase**

Waxman 82 [Speaker of the House, Public Law 87-253, Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982, 97th US Congress, Sept 8, 1982, Lexis]

E) Prior to approving any application for a refund, the Secretary shall require evidence that such **reduction** in marketings has taken place and that such reduction is a **net decrease** in marketings of milk and has not been **offset** by **expansion** of production in other production facilities in which the person has an interest or by transfer of partial interest in the production facility or by the taking of any other action. which is a scheme or device to qualify for payment.

### solvency---say yes---2nr

#### Conditioning empirically works.

Beinart ’19 [Peter Beinart is a Senior Columnist at The Forward and Professor of Journalism and Political Science at the City University of New York. He is also a Contributor to The Atlantic and a CNN Political Commentator, “It’s Time to End America’s Blank Check Military Aid to Israel,” Forward, 5-20-2019, https://forward.com/opinion/424591/its-time-to-end-americas-blank-check-military-aid-to-israel/]

One reason conditioning aid has become inconceivable is that any American president who proposed it would be labeled anti-Israel, if not anti-Semitic. But by that standard, these epithets should be affixed to most of the presidents of the mid to late twentieth century. During the cold war, as Nathan Thrall details in his indispensable book, The Only Language They Understand, presidents we now routinely think of as pro-Israel routinely used American aid to influence Israeli policy. When Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, after attacking Egypt alongside Britain and France in 1956, mused about annexing Egyptian territory, Dwight Eisenhower threatened to end all US aid unless Israeli troops withdrew immediately. In 1975, when Israel refused Henry Kissinger’s demand for a partial withdrawal from the Sinai desert, which it had conquered in 1967, Gerald Ford vowed a “reassessment” of “our relations with Israel,” and refused any new military or economic assistance until the withdrawal was done. When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1977, Jimmy Carter told Menachem Begin that Israel’s use of American armored personnel carriers violated the Arms Export Control Act, which prevented American weaponry from being used for offensive operations. Unless Israel left Lebanon immediately, Carter warned, future arms sales “will have to be terminated.” In 1982, when the Reagan administration determined that Israel’s use of cluster bombs in Lebanon may have violated America’s Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement with the Jewish state, Reagan banned new sales of the bombs to Israel for six years. In 1991, George H.W. Bush initially refused to give Israel the $10 billion in loan guarantees it requested to resettle Soviet immigrants until it froze settlement growth in the West Bank. This history not only undercuts the claim that conditioning American aid reflects hostility to Israel, it also undercuts the claim that conditioning aid doesn’t work. In recent years, former diplomats like Dennis Ross, and establishment American Jewish leaders like Malcolm Hoenlein, have insisted that only American reassurance, not American pressure, produces Israeli concessions. But during the cold war, American pressure produced Israeli concessions again and again. When Eisenhower threatened American aid in 1956, Israeli troops began leaving Egypt within 36 hours. Ford’s threat to halt new arms sales forced a partial Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai in 1975 and Carter’s threat forced Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon in 1977. The following year, Carter again threatened aid during the Camp David talks that led to Israel leaving the Sinai completely. And although Bush failed to restrain settlement growth, his initial refusal to provide loan guarantees, according to the Oxford historian Avi Shlaim, “forced” Israel to participate in the 1991 Madrid Conference, where for the first time it publicly negotiated with a delegation of Palestinians.

## assurance da

### link---top---1nc

#### US-Israel relationship key to assuring allies

**Pfluger and Makovksy 21** [(August Lee Pfluger II is an American politician and retired military officer from the state of Texas. He is the U.S. representative for Texas's 11th congressional district. Michael Makovsky has a Ph.D. in diplomatic history from Harvard and is foreign policy director of the Bipartisan Policy Center, a think tank based in Washington, D.C.) “Memo to Progressives: Israel's Iron Dome Saves Palestinian Lives, Too.” Newsweek, https://www.newsweek.com/memo-progressives-israels-iron-dome-saves-palestinian-lives-too-opinion-1632789, 9/26/21.] ES - TDI

Progressives in the House of Representatives [stripped $1 billion](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-loses-out-debt-ceiling-fight-pits-progressives-against-democratic-leadership-1631400) for Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system from a must-pass continuing resolution to fund the government last week. In so doing, they were putting prejudice and politics above peace and handing a victory to the Iran-backed Hamas regime in Gaza, which tyrannizes Palestinians and terrorizes Israel. Thankfully, the House acted quickly to [pass overwhelmingly](https://www.newsweek.com/full-list-representatives-voted-against-funding-israel-iron-dome-1632385) an alternative, clean standalone bill to provide the full funding. The [Senate](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate) must now do the same, without the conditions and additional provisions some have [suggested they want to add](https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2021/09/22/lawmakers-consider-linking-iron-dome-with-palestinian-aid-in-continuing-resolution/). **At stake is America's very commitment to Israel's right of self-defense, our U.S. allies, and the fight against terror.**

Iron Dome, a **missile defense system co-developed with the United States, is capable of intercepting 90 percent of rockets fired at Israel's populated areas. It's essential to limiting conflict and** protecting Israeli and Palestinian civilians **alike**. But the most recent conflict with Hamas last May diminished Israel's stockpile of the expensive Tamir interceptors used by the Iron Dome system; **in 11 days of fighting, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad fired** 4,455 rockets **toward Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, and other Israeli population centers, about as many they did in the entire 50-day war in 2014**.

**To protect its citizens, Israel shot down 1,577 of these rockets. Despite these measures, 10 Israelis were killed.**

**Quickly replenishing the interceptors used in this fighting is important to protect Israel from further conflict**. The nation faces a rocket threat not just from Hamas in Gaza to the south but also from Hezbollah in Lebanon to north. And that threat is much graver: **Hezbollah's arsenal of 130,000 rockets** and missiles not only dwarfs Hamas's but is also more powerful and precise.

Moreover, other Iranian proxies have also fired missiles and drones into Israel from Syria. If these groups believed that Iron Dome's effectiveness was compromised, they might escalate their attempts to overwhelm the system, which could have drastic results for Israeli citizens.

Just as critically, Iron Dome also serves to protect Palestinian civilians. Without Iron Dome, Hamas is emboldened, facilitating it to further tyrannize its Palestinian subjects. And should Hamas unleash a rocket barrage that kills many Israeli civilians, Israel would likely be compelled to launch a ground invasion and take over all of Gaza, costing many Palestinian (and Israeli) lives. Instead, thanks to Iron Dome and its effectiveness, Israel eschewed a ground campaign and managed to take unprecedented precautions in minimizing civilian casualties as it retaliated against Hamas forces hiding behind innocent Palestinians.

President Biden recognized the importance of restocking of Iron Dome interceptors, [promising](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-21/biden-says-us-will-replenish-iron-dome/13353634) in May after the last conflict that he would "replenish Israel's Iron Dome system to ensure its defenses and security in the future." So did President Obama when he [urged](https://www.defensedaily.com/obama-signs-iron-dome-funding-bill-for-immediate-boost-in-interceptor-production-2/uncategorized/) [Congress](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress) to replenish Iron Dome after the 2014 conflict.

Indeed, seven years ago, Congress appropriated $225 million for Iron Dome immediately after that conflict ended. The bill passed unanimously in the Senate and was approved in the House by a 395-8 vote, signaling strong, bipartisan support for the funding. President Obama [signed](https://www.timesofisrael.com/obama-approves-225-million-in-iron-dome-funding/) the legislation within a few days.

Now, it has already been almost four months since the cessation of hostilities and since President Biden promised to replenish Iron Dome. Rejecting or even delaying this assistance callously and needlessly endangers innocent lives.

Last week, the House of Representatives voted near-unanimously to replenish the Iron Dome, with 420 votes in favor and just nine against or abstaining. Those nine voices opposing Israel's defense system would do well to remember how many innocent Palestinian lives it saves, if they can't muster support for Israeli lives.

**This is especially important now. Following the Afghan withdrawal debacle and a mishandling of an Australian submarine sale, U.S. partners are already** questioning the credibility of American global leadership**. A fight over Iron Dome would signal that America's commitments to its allies are subject to political whims,** deflating our allies and emboldening our adversaries**, thereby creating a more dangerous world.**

**Iran is certainly relishing any diminished U.S. commitment to Israel's fundamental right to defend its civilian population.**

The House has already taken action to replenish Iron Dome through standalone legislation, as it did in 2014. But the initial defunding and the prospect for further political wrangling and impediments in the Senate sets a terrible precedent.

**A vital defensive system must not be allowed to become a** political football**.**

Given the benefits that Iron Dome provides to Israel, Palestinians, and America, it should continue to enjoy overwhelming bipartisan support. The pro-Israel majority in both parties should not allow a small minority to transform the straightforward issue of helping Israel protect civilians into one that creates tension between or within either party.

### link---ukraine---1nc

#### **US-Israeli aid provides a model for assurances in Ukraine. If there is no model no agreement can take place.**

Ciaramella 6-8 [(Eric Ciaramella, senior fellow in the Russia and Eurasia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His work focuses on Ukraine and Russia), "Envisioning a Long-Term Security Arrangement for Ukraine," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/08/envisioning-long-term-security-arrangement-for-ukraine-pub-89909, 6-8-2023] OM – TDI

Introduction

Ukraine’s long-term security will be among the most vexing questions the United States and Europe will face in the years ahead. With membership in the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) still far down the road, the country is stuck in a dangerous gray zone: outside the European security order and facing an acute military threat of indefinite duration. President Joe Biden and other Western leaders have made clear that they will not send their countries’ own forces to defend Ukraine while it is under attack.3 What is more, in surging equipment to Ukraine ahead of its counteroffensive, the United States and European countries have drawn down their stocks without a clear plan to sustain high levels of military aid thereafter.4

That is why Ukraine and its partners must come up with a security arrangement now: one that is solid enough to shake the Kremlin’s belief that it can wait out the West. It is not wise to put off this discussion until the outcome of Ukraine’s counteroffensive is clear. Nor should achieving clarity on Ukraine’s long-term security relationship with the West be viewed solely as a tool to facilitate a hypothetical diplomatic endgame, which is still far from certain. Rather, it is urgent to design and implement a formula so that Kyiv can build a robust, sustainable self-defense force even if the war rages on for the indefinite future.

This might seem like a tall order, and no exact model for such a complex multilateral arrangement exists. But Ukraine and its partners are closer to a solution than it may appear. The massive military support the United States, Europe, and others have provided since the onset of Russia’s full-scale invasion, and the political and bureaucratic innovations that have accompanied this aid, is a solid foundation upon which to chart a formal long-term plan. Ukraine’s government has made a serious proposal with the Kyiv Security Compact to translate this ongoing support into a more enduring framework.5 And the United States’ close defense relationships with non-treaty-allies—notably Israel—can offer lessons for how to make an arrangement work.

This paper examines what a long-term security arrangement for Ukraine might look like and how to make it credible and sustainable. Drawing upon an analysis of Ukrainian requirements and insights from existing successful security models, it proposes a latticework of multilateral agreements and commitments centered around training and equipping a substantial future military force. It would obligate the parties to ensure Ukraine’s ability to defend itself, but not to fight on the country’s behalf. The proposal recognizes the sustainment challenges Ukraine’s partners face and emphasizes long-range planning, coordination, prioritization, standardization, and defense industrial solutions, all of which would save costs over time.

The United States, together with Europe, must lead the discussion on security commitments to Ukraine. No other country can match its ability to source, coordinate, and deliver timely, impactful security assistance, intelligence support, and defense-industrial solutions. A strong U.S. pledge to Ukraine would also prompt Europe to make larger and more enduring security commitments, thereby creating an equitable and sustainable transatlantic formula for supporting Ukraine’s self-defense. The proposed framework would allow for contributions from the EU and individual member states; non-EU countries, such as the United Kingdom, Norway, and Türkiye; and Ukraine’s non-European partners.

Critically, Kyiv and its partners need not wait until the war is over to design and implement a security arrangement. They can put much of the proposal here in motion now as many of its elements are already, to a certain extent, in place. A long-term pact must be closely linked to Ukraine’s EU accession process too, with the country’s security policy and defense industrial base gradually integrating with those of the union, albeit heavily linked to the United States. Once the war ends, the arrangement can be enhanced to bridge the period until Ukraine joins the EU, which will confer its own security guarantee.

The proposed plan is not necessarily an alternative to NATO membership, which will remain a key demand from Ukraine’s leaders and public. Rather, it recognizes that the allies are not ready to admit the country and offers a way to anchor it into the European security system for the time being. It is, in theory, an interim solution. But with NATO membership still an uncertain prospect, this solution must be credible enough to endure. It also proceeds from a clear understanding that Russia will remain a threat to Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity—and thus to Europe’s security—for a long time, while preserving room to maneuver with Moscow if it changes course.

No Time Like the Present

The interest of the United States and Europe in Ukraine’s long-term security is clear and compelling.6 Russia’s invasion poses a threat to European security and prosperity, which Washington has a strong interest in upholding. Russia and any other would-be aggressors must be deterred from attempting to change borders through military force. At the same time, the United States and Europe are not willing to deploy their own forces to defend Ukraine at present due to their desire to avoid a direct war between nuclear powers.

Western leaders have signaled that they will support Ukraine “for as long as it takes.”7 But such well-intentioned statements have not dampened Russian President Vladimir Putin’s confidence that time is on his side. In his mind, the West is fickle: it will tire of the war, curtail support for Ukraine, and move on to other matters. Many in Kyiv share his assessment. Ukrainian officials worry that the West’s rhetoric will not be matched by sustained support, and that time will work to Russia’s advantage. For both sides, the U.S. presidential election in 2024 looms large: with some leading contenders critical of ongoing military support for Ukraine, Washington’s long-term policy is uncertain.8

The United States and its allies recognize that they must develop an arrangement “on sustained security and other commitments”9 to help Ukraine defend itself in a protracted war, and during an even longer period of postwar economic reconstruction and military reconstitution. President Volodymyr Zelensky, for his part, contends that Russia’s aggression will not end and that peace, whenever it comes, will not be durable unless his country’s long-term security is guaranteed.10 At the same time, Western officials are hesitant to clarify what an arrangement might look like. Discussions have reportedly run aground amid disputes over the details.11 With the trajectory of the war uncertain, the reluctance to develop an enduring framework for Ukraine’s role in the European security order is understandable—but it is also shortsighted.

Western misgivings stem from a belief that it would be futile to think about a long-term security arrangement until the outcome of Ukraine’s counteroffensive, or even the war, is clear.12 U.S. officials describe a “window of opportunity” this year for Ukraine to advance on the battlefield, with some viewing it as Kyiv’s best chance to turn the tide of the war decisively in its favor.13 Many in the West expect a Ukrainian breakthrough would prompt Putin to come to the negotiating table on terms more favorable to Ukraine.14 Some, meanwhile, hope that a resounding military defeat for Russia would unleash even more radical changes that lead to a wholesale reversal of Kremlin policy toward Ukraine—and possibly Putin’s ouster.

This wait-and-see approach has led Ukraine and its partners to avoid tough conversations about the country’s long-term security in the hopes that an answer will reveal itself in time. Reinforcing this reluctance is the fact that there are competing theories about how a security arrangement would fit with various scenarios for how the war will end.

According to one line of thinking, a security plan for Ukraine should be held in reserve as a tool to facilitate peace talks.15 In other words, refraining from firm commitments now would allow the West to later deploy a security arrangement to prod Kyiv into accepting a negotiated settlement that falls short of its stated goal of liberating the country’s entire territory. At the same time, tying a security arrangement to peace talks would hold the prospect of bringing Russia into the conversation. Without Russian buy-in, the theory goes, no arrangement will endure.

However, waiting to define a security arrangement is likely to result in less room for maneuver, not more. Even a Ukrainian military success this year would be unlikely to end the war.16 Conditioning a security arrangement on peace talks that could still be years away would leave Ukraine in an untenable limbo and would delay important decisions about the structure of its future military force. On the other hand, if the Ukrainian counteroffensive is less successful, a hastily presented plan might look like a consolation prize. It is also not sensible to hope for the emergence of a “good tsar” who might reverse Russia’s course. Not only has Putin’s regime proven resilient in the face of military setbacks, but also the depth of Russian elite hostility toward Ukraine means that a true change in the Kremlin’s approach will require a national reckoning that is, at best, a distant prospect.

Some Western officials are reluctant to articulate a long-term vision also because they fear that doing so before Ukraine liberates all of its territory17 might force it into a premature peace that legitimizes Russia’s aggression and causes permanent partition.18 To be sure, the territorial issue will be challenging if the time comes for an armistice or peace settlement. But most measures discussed in this paper—training, equipping, and defense industrial solutions—can be codified into a long-term arrangement that neither depends on Ukraine regaining control over its entire territory nor precludes it. Security commitments would be active from the outset rather than triggered by a future Russian attack, making redundant the stipulation of boundaries within which the arrangement would apply.

A third school of thought centers on the notion that Ukraine will not be secure until it is in NATO and that any other security arrangement would undermine that goal.19 There are compelling moral and practical arguments in favor of admitting Ukraine into the alliance,20 but there is currently no consensus among the allies to do so.21 They have even indicated that membership will be at best a long-term prospect after the end of the war.22 An interim security arrangement would acknowledge this fact. It would also not prejudge a decision by the allies to admit Ukraine one day nor foreclose the possibility that both sides might decide to make this arrangement permanent. Either way, it would improve Ukraine’s interoperability with NATO in the meantime.23

In sum, the arguments in favor of delaying discussion on a security arrangement for Ukraine are not persuasive. Bringing clarity to the long-term vision now holds the prospect of diminishing Putin’s war optimism and persuading him that he is fighting a losing battle.24 It would also assure Ukraine of the West’s continued commitment to its sovereignty regardless of how the war develops. Some sort of Western-backed security arrangement will be a requirement for most foreign private companies to invest in reconstruction efforts in the years ahead.25 Finally, a multilateral security arrangement would drive down the cost of sustaining Ukraine’s military and spread the burden equitably among Ukraine’s partners through a predictable framework that emphasizes long-range planning, prioritization, standardization, and defense industrial solutions, including support to indigenous firms.

A Wartime Compact—and Beyond

Zelensky and numerous Ukrainian officials have suggested that Ukraine could replicate Israel’s security model with a capable army, a dynamic industrial base, a skillful intelligence apparatus, a strategic culture centered on self-defense, and a multifaceted relationship with the United States.26 A multilateral security arrangement for Ukraine based on this model is not a far-fetched idea, although there are important differences, not least of which is the fact that Israel, unlike Ukraine, has nuclear weapons and does not face aggression by a nuclear superpower.

The right formula for such a future security arrangement, as one European diplomat has said, “needs to be less than Article 5 but more than the Budapest Memorandum.”27 This might seem like a tough needle to thread, but the Kyiv Security Compact (KSC) that Ukraine’s government issued in September 2022 provides a helpful point of departure for discussions. It envisions a core group of partners committing to a “multi-decade effort” to support Ukraine’s development of a “robust territorial defense posture,” including by training and equipping its forces, investing in its defense industry, and enhancing its intelligence capabilities.28 The KSC is a change from previous Ukrainian requests that partners commit to sending troops or imposing a no-fly zone, both of which were nonstarters in the United States and Europe.

The United States and Europe must further develop this framework, incorporating lessons from the former’s relationship with Israel and other countries that are not its treaty allies. A credible arrangement should be based on the following five principles:

Strong political and legal codification that ensures the arrangement will endure regardless of electoral cycles and leadership changes in the United States and Europe

A predictable, multiyear pipeline for military supplies that enables Ukraine to plan and sustain a future force structure capable of deterring Russian aggression

Support for Ukraine’s defense industry, as well as targeted defense industrial investments in the United States and Europe to prepare for a long war and an extended period of Ukrainian military reconstitution

Mechanisms for political consultations, information sharing, and coordination to ensure that Ukraine’s military needs are met in a timely fashion

Clear linkage to Ukraine’s EU accession process and postwar reconstruction

Political and Legal Codification

Mindful of the Budapest Memorandum’s failure to prevent Russia’s aggression, Ukraine’s leaders insist that any new security arrangement be built on more solid political and legal footing.29 Thus, the KSC proposes that signatories make interlocking commitments to Ukraine, through a “joint strategic document” and a series of bilateral “legal and political commitments…both at the executive level of government and by the respective legislatures.” This structure may seem convoluted, but there is a logic to it. A “minilateral” framework document signed by Ukraine and a core group of its partners30 should assert the overarching goals and parameters of a security arrangement, much like formal defense treaties do.31 Signatories would then enumerate their specific commitments to Ukraine in separate bilateral documents. A framework text is not only symbolically important; it would also be a clear reference point for all subsequent defense cooperation activities and agreements between Ukraine and its partners.32 It would have a diplomatic multiplier effect as well, giving greater heft to the commitments than the sum of their parts.

The legal codification of these commitments is a thornier question, but it is necessary to ensure that they are enduring. A formal treaty would be the ideal outcome, but the KSC avoids setting the bar so high after Ukraine’s partners, especially the United States, expressed skepticism about the idea. Existing U.S. partnerships with non-treaty allies show that there is a wide range of other models to draw inspiration from. For example, there is no formal defense treaty between the United States and Israel but the U.S. commitment to Israeli security is governed by law. This includes the requirement to maintain Israel’s “qualitative military edge” (QME): the technological and tactical advantage to deter and, if necessary, defeat, a numerically superior adversary.33

The concept of QME dates from the Cold War, when NATO allies in Europe had to maintain a qualitative edge in their training and weapons systems in order to offset the Warsaw Pact’s quantitative advantages. It has been the framing for U.S. military aid to Israel since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. In 2008, Congress codified a definition for QME and required the executive branch to certify that any arms sales to Israel’s neighbors do not damage its QME.34 Successive administrations have described QME as the cornerstone of U.S. policy toward Israel and have used it to govern arms sales, training, and exercises.

Israel’s QME does not offer a perfect parallel to Ukraine’s case. True QME for Ukraine is impossible because, unlike Israel, it does not have nuclear weapons and its only relevant adversary is a nuclear superpower. Moreover, Washington does not sell weapons to any of Kyiv’s potential adversaries, and so the regional balancing effect of QME in Israel’s case is irrelevant to Ukraine’s. But Ukraine is a far larger country than Israel and can field a substantial, well-equipped, high-readiness deterrent force. The Ukrainian military is already demonstrating on the battlefield that it is capable of inflicting serious losses on an invading force.

If QME proves inapt, Ukraine and its partners might consider adopting a new term—for example, “qualitative deterrent balance”35—as a guiding star for long-term security assistance. Framework nations would commit to helping Ukraine match or offset Russian battlefield advantages with a mixture of superior equipment, training, and intelligence, as well as public-private solutions such as cooperation with Western technology firms. The exact term matters less than setting out a clear strategic vision with which Kyiv and its partners can align their activities over time and to remove any lingering doubts about the durability of the arrangement.

Critically, the strong bipartisan support for Israel’s QME provides continuity across administrations and largely insulates the relationship from changes in political leadership or party control in Washington. The dialogue between the executive and legislative branches on issues related to Israel’s security is not always smooth, and it probably would not be in Ukraine’s case either. But QME has gained a talismanic quality over time, ensuring stability and predictability regardless of which party controls the White House and Congress.

The United States’ commitment to Taiwan’s security offers another model of a legal framework that has survived political changes in Washington. It is codified in the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), which was adopted in 1979 to preserve unofficial relations with the island in the wake of the U.S. recognition of the People’s Republic of China. The TRA stipulates that Washington will provide Taipei with “defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.”36 The TRA is not a mutual defense treaty—in fact, it was adopted in part to offset the United States’ decision to abrogate the one dating from 1954 and to withdraw its forces from the island, two of Beijing’s conditions for establishing diplomatic relations with Washington.

Aspects of the Taiwan case are not applicable to Ukraine, such as the United States’ policy of “strategic ambiguity” as to whether it would intervene if the island were attacked. And, as with Israel’s case, the executive branch and Congress do not always see eye to eye on the details of this defense relationship. But the fact that the TRA has enjoyed strong bipartisan support for more than four decades and is a central pillar of U.S. policy shows the important role Congress can play in making a security commitment more credible and enduring.37

The Israel and Taiwan examples underscore the importance of a strong legal and political foundation. For Ukraine’s arrangement, each signatory must find its own way to signal domestic cross-party support and codify its commitments into law. This is an especially critical step for the United States to take ahead of the 2024 presidential election. Clarifying that U.S. support for Ukraine will continue no matter who wins the election would reduce Putin’s confidence that he can wait out the Biden administration, assure Ukraine that it will not be cast aside, and persuade Europe to increase its commitments. This will require the Biden administration to share ideas with, and solicit views from, leaders in Congress in order to build the broadest possible bipartisan coalition.

Multiyear Aid and Financing

If Ukraine is to have a robust deterrent force—the core of any security arrangement—it will need significant external support. A detailed analysis of its long-term force requirements is beyond the scope of this paper. Planning for the cost of Ukraine’s future force will depend on a variety of assumptions, the most important of which regards the state of the war.38 A protracted, high-intensity conflict would require Ukraine to field the largest, heaviest, highest-readiness force possible, whereas a prolonged ceasefire, armistice, or negotiated settlement would lessen some of the requirements. Other factors, such as the postwar state of Russia’s armed forces and the strength of multilateral security commitments,39 will also influence Ukraine’s future requirements.

At present, most of the planning assumptions entail significant uncertainties. But Ukraine’s backers can clarify a key one immediately: a stable, predictable multiyear framework for external military aid. The Israel model, again, offers a useful example.40 Since 1999, the United States and Israel have signed ten-year memoranda of understanding (MoUs) that lay out annual U.S. security assistance levels agreed by the two governments. The most recent one, signed in 2016, is valued at $38 billion, or $3.8 billion per year, a portion of which is devoted to missile defense programs.41 As executive-level agreements, the MoUs do not commit Congress to appropriate the funds. To date, however, it has largely adhered to the funding levels stipulated in them.42

A multiyear MoU for Ukraine would be a central pillar of a long-term security arrangement and would have advantages over the current crisis-driven funding approach. In addition to signaling enduring U.S. support, it would allow Kyiv to start planning its future force structure and making major acquisitions in anticipation of its postwar military reconstitution effort.43 Putting a price tag on a ten-year or even five-year aid program might seem like a political nonstarter, especially in the United States, where some members of Congress have criticized what they see as a “blank check” for Ukraine. But a multiyear MoU could mitigate that unease by setting out a vision for stable and predictable financing rather than relying on supplemental appropriations. What is more, there is already bipartisan interest in one.44

European and other countries would be likelier to make major multiyear pledges if they are confident of the United States’ commitment. Norway’s announcement in February of a five-year, $7-billion military and civilian aid package for Ukraine shows what such pledges could look like.45 To date, U.S. aid accounts for roughly 63 percent of the $70 billion in international military and security assistance pledged to Ukraine.46 Part of the reason the United States’ share eclipses that of Europe is the efficiency with which the Department of Defense can source and deliver emergency security assistance. Over time, a predictable multiyear framework could even out U.S. and European commitments, thus dampening criticism in the United States that the country is shouldering too much of the burden.47

In the case of the United States, Congress would decide whether to appropriate funds at the levels set out in any MoU and, most importantly, whether they are flexible enough for Ukraine to acquire major defense systems. Typically, Congress authorizes and appropriates security assistance for one or two years, and the executive branch must “obligate” the funding—decide how it will be spent—before it expires at the end of the relevant fiscal year. But due to the complexity of planning and contracting and the uncertainty of future appropriations, those compressed timelines have made it difficult for Ukrainian and U.S. officials to balance Ukraine’s urgent needs with longer-term ones.

Congress might consider authorizing and appropriating funds for multiyear use, as it has done for certain Ukraine-related aid.48 It might also consider offering Ukraine the use of “cash flow financing,” a statutory mechanism that allows Israel to pay for major arms purchases in installments using assumed future appropriations.49 Paired with a multiyear MoU, cash flow financing would allow Ukraine to acquire more expensive capabilities—such as U.S. fighter aircraft, air-defense systems, and modern armored vehicles—that would otherwise be difficult to buy with single-year funding amid other urgent priorities.50 Cash flow financing is not without controversy, however, because it creates future obligations to appropriate aid in order to honor contracts with U.S. firms signed in previous years.51

MoUs are flexible policy tools that would offer the opportunity for Ukraine to make its own commitment to the United States and partners too. They can include explicit expectations of Ukraine regarding things such as defense-sector reforms, transparency in contracting matters, and strict monitoring and accountability requirements. The Department of Defense’s Office of the Inspector General is already engaged in ensuring that all U.S. weapons sent to Ukraine reach their intended recipients.52 An MoU could strengthen this mechanism by requiring regular reporting by and consultations with the Ukrainian government. Enhanced end-use monitoring can help ensure that sensitive U.S. and allied technology does not fall into Russia’s hands or end up on the black market.

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#### Current US military operations in Israel prevents Iran nukes

Ignatius 1-26 [(David Ignatius, Columnist covering foreign affairs, Education: Harvard College; Kings College, Cambridge) “The U.S. and Israel remind us that the Iran threat still looms”, The Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/01/26/us-military-israel-joint-exercise-iran/>, 1/26/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

With little public fanfare, the United States and Israel this week staged a massive military exercise in the Mediterranean clearly meant to simulate a strike against Iran. It was a reminder that no matter what else is happening in the world, the poisonous kettle of the Iranian nuclear program keeps bubbling. “Juniper Oak 23,” as it was dubbed, was the largest joint U.S.-Israeli military exercise ever, according to Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder, a Pentagon spokesman. What caught my attention was that it involved all the weapons systems that would be needed for a U.S.-Israeli assault against Iran’s nuclear facilities. The simulated operations included “electronic attack, suppression of enemy air defenses, strike coordination and reconnaissance, and air interdiction,” which are “exactly what the United States and Israel would need to conduct a successful kinetic attack on Iran’s nuclear program,” wrote Bradley Bowman and Ryan Brobst, two analysts with the pro-Israel Foundation for Defense of Democracies. They noted that the exercise included “three successive waves of attacks” by B-52 bombers. The Biden administration would doubtless rather focus publicly on other military issues, starting with the war in Ukraine and the “pacing threat” posed by an increasingly powerful China. But Iran is a problem that doesn’t go away, even as three successive American presidents have tried to reduce U.S. military involvement in the Middle East. The joint show of force is a boon for Benjamin Netanyahu, newly elected again as Israeli prime minister. Israeli media showed him Wednesday intently watching video transmissions of the exercises, sitting next to Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi, the Israeli chief of staff. Netanyahu’s new government is fragile, and his proposals to reduce the power of the Israeli judiciary have drawn fierce criticism, including massive street demonstrations in Tel Aviv and other cities. At such a delicate moment, the Biden administration probably wouldn’t want to do Netanyahu any favors. But this week’s exercise shows that U.S.-Israeli military cooperation is largely impervious to internal politics in either country. According to the U.S. Central Command, which oversees American operations in the region, the exercise involved roughly 6,400 U.S. troops, 12 ships and more than 140 American aircraft. The Israelis contributed more than 1,500 troops, a Centcom statement said. Over four days, U.S. and Israeli forces dropped more than 180,000 pounds of live munitions. In addition to the B-52 strategic bombers, the American arsenal on display this week included F-35 deep-penetration fighters, the USS George H.W. Bush aircraft carrier strike group, HIMARS rockets, armed Reaper drones and KC-46 tankers that could help Israeli or U.S. planes refuel on a mission over Iran. Juniper Oak was a show of 21st-century combat power, involving “all aspects of warfighting — some of which are seen and some of which are not,” said Gen. Michael Erik Kurilla, the Centcom commander. Kurilla said in a statement on Thursday that the exercise had included simulated operations in space and cyberspace. U.S. and Israeli military officials would not confirm officially that Juniper Oak was planned with Iran as a potential target. But that has been an open secret ever since the two countries began organizing the exercise in November. The show of force comes as the Biden administration’s efforts to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal have stalled. The administration hasn’t formally withdrawn from its diplomatic efforts. But State Department spokesman Ned Price said this month that “a return to compliance with the [Iran nuclear deal] isn’t on the agenda … because the Iranians turned their back on it.” Iran has pressed ahead with its nuclear enrichment program, ever since President Donald Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018, and now has breakout capability, according to Rafael Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency. “They have amassed enough nuclear material for several nuclear weapons, not one, at this point,” Grossi said this week. In the nuclear realm, deterrence is the essence of good strategy. And that’s the baseline for assessing this week’s rehearsal for a military attack on Iran. President Biden has said the United States will never allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon and that he would use force as a “last resort” to stop Tehran from going nuclear. This week’s exercises makes that U.S. threat a little more credible — and, if the logic of deterrence holds, reduces the likelihood of an actual conflict. That’s the theory, at least. What Juniper Oak suggested was that a military action, if it ever came, would likely be massive.

#### Only US military presence prevents Iran nukes and prolif

Eilam 21 [(Dr. Ehud Eilam, Dr. Ehud Eilam has been dealing with and studying Israel’s national security for more than 25 years. He served in the Israeli military and later worked for the Israeli Ministry of Defense as a researcher. He has a PhD and has published six books in the US/UK), “How Israel, with US Assistance, Can Deter Iran from Producing Nuclear Weapons”, Air University, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Wild-Blue-Yonder/Article-Display/Article/2851993/how-israel-with-us-assistance-can-deter-iran-from-producing-nuclear-weapons/>, 11/23/2021] //lynbk MD – TDI

 Iran seeks to produce nuclear weapons. Israel and the United States wish to prevent Iran from reaching its goal. Therefore, during the current negotiations with Iran—let alone if they fail—the United States and Israel should deter Iran from developing nuclear weapons. It requires delivering Israel a certain arsenal. If eventually Israel has no choice but to attack, then it will need US military and diplomatic support to deter Iran and Hezbollah from escalating the fight. Returning to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action? There are other highly important issues such as the Covid-19 Pandemic. The United States has to deal with Russia, China, Iran, and hot spots such as North Korea.1 The Director of US National Intelligence claimed in mid-April 2021 that Iran presents “a continuing threat to US and allied interests in the region.”2 The biggest problem is that Iran wants to produce nuclear weapons. In such a case, Saudi Arabia will get a nuclear weapon too and Turkey and Egypt might do the same.3 The Middle East will become much more dangerous, including US troops who are deployed there. The agreement about Iran’s nuclear project, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCOPA), was signed on 14 July 2015. The Trump administration pulled out of the JCPOA on 8 May 2018. Iran did not do the same and later breached the JCPOA. Israel has been opposing the JCPOA since it allowed Iran to both keep its nuclear program and to continue with its missile program and also to support its proxies against Israel. All that is very concerning for Israel because over the years the Iranian regime had repeatedly announced its desire to destroy Israel. The biggest problem for Israel is Iran’s nuclear program, which Israel sees as an existential threat. Israel’s Defense Minister Benny Gantz warned on 17 June 2021 that “all options are on the table” regarding Israel’s preparedness to carry out a raid on Iran’s nuclear sites The Biden administration seeks to negotiate with Iran. Israel can support not causing an escalation or attack to Iran.4 However, there should be a military option. The goal is to deter Iran so it will stop breaching the JCPOA while urging Iran to accept serious constraints. Currently, the talks face difficulties. Iran’s new president, Ebrahim Raisi, a hardliner, might make it more complicated to reach an agreement. In early February, US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said, "If Iran chooses to narrow the space for diplomacy by confronting the United States, there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that he will be prepared to defend U.S. troops and vital interests, including with appropriate force."5 However, the Biden administration probably would not consider bombing Iran’s nuclear sites even if the talks with Iran collapse. Presenting a military option during the negotiations can serve the United States. Furthermore, if there is a dead-end and Iran rushes to produce nuclear weapons then deterring Iran will be crucial. It could be done officially or not, but it must be reliable. Iran will retaliate after a US strike in Iran, but it might not necessarily lead to war. Nevertheless, the Biden administration will not want to take this risk and might prefer other options to deter Iran such as relying on Israel in this matter. How Israel Can Deter Iran There are close ties between Israel and its American patron. A Gallup poll from late March 2021 revealed that 75 percent of Americans view Israel positively.6 On 10 April, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin visited Israel and reaffirmed that US commitment to Israel is “ironclad.”7 On 13 April, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan ensured Israeli officials that Iran will never hold a nuclear weapon.8 There are certain disputes between the two countries on the best way to handle Iran. However, in the past, they managed to overcome various disagreements and they can do it again. It is possible to deter Iran in such a way that Iran will accept constraints not only on its nuclear program but in other areas as well, such as its missile project. Yet putting too much pressure on Iran might cause a crisis and even ignite a war. Israel might be willing to take this risk due to the danger Iran imposes on Israel, but the Biden administration opposes a war. Even if the war might only be between Israel and Iran, it could potentially drag the United States into it. Therefore, to reduce the probability of war, Israel and the United States will have to deter Iran only in regard to Iran’s nuclear program. There has been an ongoing covert war between Israel and Iran, which includes all kinds of actions and strikes. On 12 April 2021, Iran accused Israel of sabotaging the Natanz nuclear site, a key facility in Iran’s nuclear program.9 If Iran continues to refuse to be flexible during the talks, or if the negotiations fail, the Biden administration might rely on imposing sanctions. The Biden administration might also allow covert actions, aiming at deterring Iran from producing nuclear weapons. Yet it might not be enough. The chief of general staff of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) Lieutenant-General Aviv Kohavi mentioned in late January 2021 that the IDF prepares “a number of operational plans, in addition to those already in place,” in regard to Iran.10 It could serve in deterring Iran from producing nuclear weapons. The United States is committed to keeping Israel’s qualitative military edge.11 Israel had assimilated some of the finest American weapon systems, mostly fighter—bombers such as F-15 and F-16 and, since 2016, the F- 35.12 There were reports that Israel asked to receive the F-22 fighter, yet there are severe constraints in this matter.13 One of them is that the aircraft is no longer in production. Actually, the F-22 is not Israel’s most urgent need. The F-22 is built for air-to-air combat; a field the Israeli Air Force (IAF) already enjoys a clear edge over its Iranian counterpart. Iran’s obsolete air force, with its old Mig-29 and F-14, are no match to Israel’s elite fighters. The IAF can defeat the Iranian air force without US support during a raid on Iran’s nuclear sites. Israel, therefore, does not require the F-22, as part of building deterrence against Iran, to convince the latter not to produce nuclear weapons. In 1981, Israel destroyed Iraq’s nuclear reactor. In 2007 Israel annihilated Syria’s nuclear reactor.14 Unlike in Syria and Iraq, in Iran such a mission will be much more difficult. The distance to the targets, from Israel, is much longer compared to reaching Iraq or Syria. In Iran, there are also several nuclear sites, not only one, as it was in Iraq and Syria. In order to gain surprise, those targets will have to be attacked at the same time, which requires sending quite a large force. However, Iran will also have to split its forces to defend all those objectives. In addition, the IAF has much better capability than it had in 2007, let alone in 1981. Nevertheless, the IAF needs US assistance in several fields to create a reliable deterrence against Iran. Some Iranian nuclear sites are well-fortified. The IAF has US bunker-buster bombs—the GBU-28. However, those bombs might not be powerful enough to crack Iran’s highly protected nuclear sites such as Fordo. For that, the IAF requires the MOP (Massive Ordnance Penetrator), a huge American bomb.15 In October 2020, there was a bill in the US Congress calling the Department of Defense to “consider selling Israel bunker-buster bombs capable of penetrating heavily fortified underground facilities.”16 Dennis Ross claimed in July 2021 that the Biden administration must make it clear to Iran “the costs of pursuing a threshold capability.” To do so, the Biden administration should consider giving Israel the MOP.17 Israel’s fighter-bombers can’t carry the MOP because it requires heavy bombers, which the IAF does not possess. The IAF needs to obtain from the United States a strategic bomber. Israel will not get the B-2, but the B-52 is old enough, having been in service since the mid-1950s. This factor will make it easier for the United States to provide the B-52 to Israel. Another option, although a very problematic one, might be if the IAF uses its C-130J, a transport plane, yet one that might be able to carry the MOP to Iran. It will be a very dangerous operation, but the IAF can take this risk since the threat to Israel is so high. Having the B-52 and at least the MOP in Israeli hands might deter Iran from producing a nuclear weapon so Israel might not have to attack at all. Despite that, the Biden administration might refuse to deliver Israel the MOP, suspecting Israel might attack, due to its fear in this matter or because of miscalculations. However, without the MOP, Israel might have no choice but to attack with the bombs it has and hope it might be sufficient. In such a case, Iran’s nuclear sites might not absorb much damage. The IAF can strike them again later but this is not a good outcome for both Israel and the United States. The IAF does not have to handle the entire Iranian air defense, only the Iranian forces that might jeopardize Israeli planes. The IAF conducted hundreds of sorties against a strong air defense inside Syria since 2012 almost without absorbing any losses. Only one time, on 10 February 2018, an Israeli F-16 was shot down. The IAF and the Syrian air defense can learn vital lessons from their clashes. Syria can share this knowledge with Iran since the two are allies, and Iran might have learned some lessons from the aerial campaign in Syria. This will serve both sides during an Israeli raid in Iran. Iran’s air defense has the S-300—a sophisticated antiaircraft system.18 The IAF might be able to handle the S-300 with kinetic strikes and electronic and cyber warfare without US support. The IAF, in suppressing air defense and for carrying out other missions in Iran as well, will use not only fighter-bombers but also command and control aircraft and drones. The IAF can probably create deterrence in this field—i.e., convince Iran its air defense is not capable enough for Iran to rely on in protecting the production of nuclear weapons. The IAF is looking to get the US KC-46 tankers.19 They are badly needed since the IAF will have to fly more than a thousand miles just to reach Iran. Now the IAF has only the aging Ram (Boeing 707) former civilian aircraft adapted for aerial refueling. However, the KC-46 will not arrive in Israel soon. Therefore, Israel can approach its new allies, Arab Gulf states. The latter, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE that fear Iran, might allow the IAF to cross their air space and even to land there in some remote site for refueling. The IAF can also fly over Iraq to shorten the distance to the targets and save fuel. Iraq, which is under strong Iranian influence, is not friendly to Israel, but Iraq’s air force is weak so it can’t pose a serious threat to the IAF. The cooperation with Gulf Arab states, and since Iraq is not an obstacle, will help Israel to reach Iran which will be part of deterring Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Deterrence During a Raid Despite all the effort to deter Iran from producing nuclear weapons, it might not work. Israel might have to attack Iran’s nuclear sites as a last resort. It will require US military and diplomatic support. During a raid in Iran, the IAF might lose some aircraft. Israeli aircrews, who will have to abandon their aircraft near Iran, might be forced to parachute into Iraq or the Gulf waters. Israel might require US forces who are based there to assist in rescuing them. It might deter Iranian troops or Iran’s proxies from trying to capture those Israeli aircrews, but it could also put US troops in danger. Besides this risk, there is also the US desire to avoid any action that will be seen as an official US involvement in the Israeli raid, even if it means only saving the lives of Israelis troops. Iran can retaliate by conducting terror and cyberattacks against Israeli and US objectives, blaming the United States for assisting Israel in the raid even if it is not true.20 Iran can also fire its long-range missiles, drones, and cruise missiles.21 The IDF trained in this matter, including with the US military, in the 'Jenifer Cobra' exercises.22 Sending US troops to protect Israel from Iranian missiles is clearly a defensive act, but it can be considered as supporting the Israeli attack on Iran. It will also put US troops in harm’s way, and it will not deter Iran. If Israel strikes Iran’s nuclear sites, it will serve the interests of many states. Nevertheless, Israel might face severe international criticism, such as in the UN. Israel will have to handle it, particularly in the Security Council. The Biden administration might officially oppose the Israeli raid, but it can still prevent a harsh resolution against Israel, or else Israel might look vulnerable. If the United States has Israel’s back it can help to deter Iran from escalating the fight. Hezbollah is a powerful non-state actor, an Iranian proxy, based near Israel in Lebanon. Hezbollah has 150,000 rockets and missiles that might be fired if Israel bombs Iran.23 IDF will respond by launching a massive offensive. The IDF carried out in mid-February 2021 an exercise, aimed against Hezbollah, as part of a buildup that has been going on since the last war between them in 2006.24 The IDF will rely on its own forces, but due to the scale and intensity of such a war, the IDF might require US assistance mostly in getting ammunition. This US aid might help in deterring Hezbollah from continuing the war. All in all, Israel and the United States can deter Iran from producing nuclear weapons by having a military option. It will be required in several situations. First of all, it can urge Iran to negotiate an agreement that will make Iran accept major constraints. Second, if diplomacy fails, deterrence should be used to stop Iran from producing nuclear weapons. It requires delivering Israel the B-52 and at least the MOP. In some fields, the IAF can manage without US support. Third, if Israel has no choice but to attack then US military and diplomatic support will be needed to deter both Iran and Hezbollah from escalating the fight.

#### Diplomacy Fails – US withdrawal lead to increased Iran attacks, same can happen in Israel

Agha 22 [(Hussein Agha, senior associate member of St. Antony’s College, Oxford University) “The United States’ Clueless Diplomacy Won’t Stop a Nuclear Iran”, Foreign Policy, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/03/25/iran-nuclear-deal-biden-irgc-clueless-diplomacy/>, 3/25/2022] //lynbk MD – TDI

The Iran nuclear deal of 2015 is dead. It has lost all meaning. What Iran has achieved since then-U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the agreement in 2018 is irrevocable. Iran has mastered nuclear processes and developed novel ways of defending its nuclear sites. More notably, Iran cannot and will not give up on a national project it has so heavily invested in over many decades and paid for in treasure and in blood. It is an issue of self-esteem, statecraft, ideology, and threat perception. Even with the best of intentions and the strictest of commitments, the old nuclear deal cannot be sustainably revived; it will be unstable. Whether an agreement is signed in Vienna or not is of little consequence. Reaching arrangements on nuclear technicalities is important, but it will be incomplete if not anchored in a pertinent political setting. The conflict is not technical; it is political. Miss the politics and the technical arrangements wobble; address the politics and the other details will follow. The rot started to set in long before Trump’s withdrawal; the political climate shifted when Iran did not feel that sanctions were truly lifted and the United States became increasingly frustrated with Iran’s regional behavior and its missile program. Neither side had to withdraw for the spirit of the deal to eventually fizzle out. At present, the United States does not have an overarching, coherent policy on Iran; it proceeds piecemeal without a political foundation. “Putting Iran back in the box” is unachievable; it will not begin to solve the problems that a nuclear Iran exemplifies. The 2015 deal was achieved because it was part of wider, albeit vague, political considerations. Today, the political context is completely different, and negotiations are proceeding as if it is still 2015, when both parties were more willing to trust each other and anticipation for cooperation on broader issues was more evident. Seven turbulent years later, those budding early hopes have been irretrievably dashed. When an agreement on the nuclear deal is reached, a likely possibility, it will be an absolute win for the Iranians, not different from the Taliban’s victory in Afghanistan and a triumph for the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The Americans long believed that the struggle for power in Iran was between extremists and moderates, or between fundamentalists and reformists. That is simplistic; the real, often inaudible, struggle has been between the IRGC and the official state and its military. The military defends the state; the IRGC defends the revolution. The tension between them is palpable. It’s not unlike the strain between Joseph Stalin’s “socialism in one country” and Leon Trotsky’s “permanent revolution” in the Soviet Union. The IRGC was formed to counter the influence and power of the regular military and to protect the Islamic system from intrusion and coups. It often challenges the regular armed forces, and its intelligence arm does not always see things the same way as Iran’s primary intelligence agency. The 2015 deal was between the world powers and the Iranian state represented by President Hassan Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. The IRGC was not properly present in those talks. It did not like the deal. Sometimes its criticism was vocal and loud; other times it was guileful and insidious. It had to go along with the deal, because that was the wish of the supreme leader, who did not take a strong position for or against but allowed the deal to go through, waiting for it to collapse. Surreptitiously, and sometimes overtly, he was on the side of the IRGC. With the Vienna process, the Iranian domestic balance of power was beginning to shift, intensified by displeasure with the flimsy economic returns of the original deal, U.S. withdrawal from it, Israeli attacks on nuclear sites and scientists, and the expansion of the IRGC’s reach in the region. The IRGC had always had its eye on fully taking over the nuclear file from the state; Vienna provided the opportunity and the push, and the U.S. administration has been an unwitting partner in that effort. The United States has unknowingly helped the IRGC prevail. U.S. faltering on reversing Trump’s withdrawal from the deal and stuttering on lifting the sanctions catapulted the IRGC into a central position. Contemplating removing the group’s designation as a foreign terrorist organization is not a last-minute afterthought; it is a natural progression of the Vienna talks. Iran was allowed, with little U.S. resistance, to determine the form, structure, agenda, calendar, pace, and the level of participants in the talks to suit its goals—an incredible feat. The United States started on the wrong foot. It showered the Iranians with gratifying gifts: removing the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen from the State Department terrorist list, pressuring the Saudis to unilaterally end the war there, reassessing U.S. military sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, quietly rolling back support for the Abraham Accords by downgrading them and reverting to the old much-tried and tired discourse on Arab-Israeli peace, lifting a handful of sanctions targeting Iran’s energy sector as evidence of Washington’s good faith approach, withdrawing U.S. combat troops from Iraq, and withdrawing shambolically from Afghanistan. The withdrawal from Afghanistan was a pivotal moment. It demonstrated to Iran that the United States will leave under pressure, is ultimately helpless in an asymmetrical war, is incompetent in its flight, does not rescue even its closest cohorts, would leave the field to its declared enemies, and could be desperate enough to rely on tiny Qatar to bail it out and represent it with the Taliban, whom the United States has fought for 20 years. It is naive to believe that all of these factors were not noticed by the Iranians and have not played a central role in shaping their approach to talks in Vienna. The new powers in Iran wanted, just like the Taliban in their negotiations with the United States in Qatar, two things: time and a shielding diplomatic cover. Just like the Taliban, they got them. The IRGC got valuable time from the United States in return for just turning up in Vienna. The Taliban used time to prepare to capture Kabul under the protection of diplomatic negotiations that ended U.S. military attacks. In Vienna, the IRGC employed time to charge forward in the nuclear file and harass U.S. presence in the region by attacking U.S. targets in both Iraq and Syria under the cover of talks that bestowed protection from U.S. military strikes and a ceiling to Israeli military attacks. Iran did not even have to negotiate directly with U.S. officials. What the United States got in return is not evident. Afghanistan has fallen to the Taliban, and the Iranian nuclear project had its most remarkable growth and is now largely under the patronage of the IRGC. The U.S. administration refuses to acknowledge that it has been taken for a ride and persists in advancing brighter narratives. Tehran has a clear, comprehensive, and consistent strategy. From early on, it said it was not interested in negotiations; the United States unilaterally left the 2015 nuclear deal, and it has now to return and lift sanctions. It is unclear what the American strategy is. Stressing the primacy of “diplomacy,” inserting the Europeans in the talks when Washington constantly called for direct engagement with the Iranians, waving vague “deadlines,” and threatening “other” or “all” options, in case the talks fail, does not make a strategy. There is no more talk of a “longer, stronger, broader” deal, of Iran’s missile program or its regional activities. Iran had the backing of Russia and China, both of which pretended to be impartial parties in step with the Europeans but were, in fact, developing a ubiquitous strategic alliance with Iran that goes beyond the nuclear issue. They exuded optimism and bonhomie that kept discussions going, which was what Iran wanted. The Americans believed that Russia and China were as concerned with Iran going nuclear as themselves; that is not the case. They may not be much pleased with a nuclear Iran, but their geostrategic priorities lie elsewhere—in their faceoff with the United States. They want a seat at the table, but their calculations have to do with other issues. The United States did not make best use of the historical mistrust between Persians and Russians that goes back centuries; it actually made their reconciliation easier by being oblivious to the new emerging ties between the two countries. Iran is scrambling to take advantage of the Ukraine crisis to further its own interests, such as selling its much-yearned-for oil at current high prices, and Russia is less forthcoming in its support of the West now, as shown by the apparent stalling tactic of linking the deal to sanctions on Russia. Having made the most out of and exhausted the talks, Iran is ready to move to the next stage of its strategy and sign a deal that allows it to continue with its plans under new boundaries and with plenty of opportunities. A deal for Iran is not the endgame but a station on a long journey of confronting its enemies and buttressing its power. It is not important by itself. The nuclear deal is of lesser concern than other factors—the survival and security of the regime and the capacity to project regional leadership, ascendancy, and supremacy. Kicking out U.S. forces from the Middle East and restricting U.S. reach feature prominently in Iranian plans. Iran is also building and supporting parallel institutions across the region to compete with traditional state structures inherited from the West. Where this vision will end is not entirely clear; it is a work in progress. The IRGC in Iran, the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, various militias in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Palestinian territories, the Houthis in Yemen, and others elsewhere—these are parts of the same project and are integral to IRGC strategy. They are obliquely present in Vienna. There are two insurmountable black holes in the American approach to Iran’s nuclear issue: If Trump’s 2018 withdrawal from the Iran deal was “catastrophic,” as his successor Joe Biden’s team keeps on reminding us, then why didn’t the new administration unilaterally and immediately stop and reverse what it views as a calamitous policy? Surely, a catastrophe should not be allowed even one extra day with or without negotiations. The Americans were concerned about appearing weak, but do U.S. concessions at the start of talks project more American weakness than added concessions down the line? A little more time under sanctions may have, in fact, suited Iran’s plans. Iran has often calculated that the daily benefit in advancing its nuclear program outweighs the daily suffering from sanctions. Paradoxically, the early lifting of sanctions might have provided the leverage that the sanctions themselves have clearly failed to do, as Iran was openly committed to abiding by the 2015 deal. If the United States had moved quickly to rejoin the deal and lift sanctions, Iran would have had to rapidly acquiesce and comply. The balance of power would have still favored the state, away from the IRGC, for which reviving the old deal was not the highest priority. The Biden administration appeared to be suggesting that Trump’s withdrawal strategy was fine until negotiations were concluded; it did not seem to have a better alternative to replace it with. Trump consistently argued that withdrawing from the deal and imposing further sanctions were a path to talks. The much-maligned Trump policy is exactly what Biden’s people have championed: sanctions until Iran comes to the table and negotiates a new deal. It is absurd that what the U.S. administration considers to be its most commanding leverage with Iran (sanctions) is at the same time a crucial component of what the administration itself considers to be a defective and dangerous procedure that achieved the opposite of what it intended and is responsible for Iran’s nuclear advances. Some in Washington probably thought, “What’s the hurry? Let’s leave the Iranians to stew more under sanctions.” That was a mistake. Iran was hurting and openly admitted that, but it was not stewing. Washington forgot that the mullahs have been under sanctions for more than 40 years but have hardly changed their political comportment. There were no indications that further pressure would produce the desired results. Recent film footage from Tehran does not display misery and desolation; it certainly confirms more prosperity than, say, Baghdad or Cairo. Meanwhile, suffering is celebrated and is of an exalted value in Shiite Islam, not dissimilar to Christ on the cross for some Christians—this is not well understood by those calling for more or longer sanctions. Lifting U.S. sanctions is important for Iran, but it’s not the most urgent task, except for a thin wedge within the ruling elite. When Tehran engaged in Vienna, it had a complex scale of interests and practices that determined its conduct. The United States had a simpler goal: stopping Iran from acquiring a bomb, which is most of what the talks were about. Tehran’s nefarious conduct in the region and its ballistic missile program could be discussed at a later date. The other black hole is the Iranian demand for “guarantees” that a nuclear deal will not suffer a Trump-type cancellation. In the Middle East, it is ordinarily seen as peculiar that a democracy such as the United States can reverse public pledges through sheer personal whims. That type of conduct is more associated with despots and dictators. The agreements that are reached with America are presumed to be institutional, not personal. The “no guarantees” school would have validated and legitimized the repeal of past commitments and rendered future undertakings meaningless and governed by private impulses. It would have allowed a future Arab leader, under various pretexts, to decide to withdraw from peace treaties with Israel, irrespective of legal niceties. For the Iranians, the absence of guarantees echoes that a nuclear agreement signed with the United States does not have sufficient American political backing for it to be enduring, hence Iran has to tread carefully and be extra cautious in giving up material assets as it tests the fortitude of U.S. compliance to a deal, which could undermine the agreement. Perhaps the most severe hazard of not allowing Iran the assurances it seeks lies in a different place. If the United States is unable to give guarantees, then without question, Iran will not be expected to give them as well. This means that if circumstances arise when Iran feels the need and can swiftly acquire the capability to go fully nuclear, it can do so without technically rescinding its obligation to the new nuclear agreement, as it includes no guarantees of nonwithdrawal. Iran could withdraw without breaking the agreement—a ludicrous outcome. Iran would not leave abruptly à la Trump; it would creep toward the exit with minimum clatter. A no-guarantee clause; the precedence of Trump’s withdrawal; interpretations of texts; accusations of noncompliance; the expertise to neutralize future sanctions; the deepening of ties with Russia, China, and regional parties; and possible Israeli attacks that Iran will claim are U.S.-approved may all contribute to the justification of Iranian withdrawal from the agreement. If estimates of Iranian progress in their nuclear project are true, the West might not have the necessary time or motivation to gather its wits and resources to confront such a prospect. Further talks may frustrate, and other options could turn obsolete. In essence, the nuclear agreement will unravel, permitting Iran additional time and cover to pursue its goals. Agreements work when the politics in which they are embedded is right; that was what happened in 2015, despite the fragility of the milieu. The Oslo Accords between the Israelis and Palestinians, though dissimilar in nature, is a vivid example. They were signed 30 years ago, were supposed to conclude in five years, functioned for three years, and, when the politics changed, went into deep freeze, never reaching their final destination without any party formally withdrawing from them. As the Oslo Accords clearly reveal, accepting an agreement and not repealing it does not guarantee that it will be implemented. A deal in Vienna may suffer the same fate if the politics is left to fester. The Iranian nuclear program was launched in the 1950s with the help of the United States. Western cooperation ceased only following the 1979 Iranian Revolution. When Iran, irrespective of what regime is in power, looks around and sees itself fenced in by a nuclear Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and Israel—and further afield the United States, the United Kingdom, France and North Korea—it wonders why it has been left out. As a proud nation and an ancient civilization, Iran feels a profound cultural imperative not to be excluded from the nuclear club. The problem for the region and the world may not be a nuclear Iran but its behavior, which, puzzlingly, is not subject to the agreement. Indeed, there will always be historical trajectories invigorated by profound psychological narratives and intense collective self-awareness that cannot be reversed through violence or diplomacy—only delayed. If a deal is finally sealed at long last, U.S. and Iranian officials are likely to leave the talks in the same emotional state—buoyed by disparate cultural references. After the Iranians sign an agreement in Vienna, what may echo in their minds on the flight home to Tehran is a well-known Islamic teaching attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, loosely translated as: “a believer should not be stung two times in the same spot.” And, as they exhale a sigh of relief on their way back to Washington from the Austrian capital, the Americans may be humming along with the singer Kelis: “You might trick me once; I won’t let you trick me twice.” Both will be disappointed.

#### U.S.-Israel arms cooperation key to containing Iran

Shufutinsky 19 [(Dmitri Shufutinsky, Master’s in International Peace and Conflict Resolution) “US and Israel Should Help Craft Regional Policy to Contain Turkey’s Erdogan,” Algemeiner, https://www.algemeiner.com/2019/04/30/us-and-israel-should-help-craft-regional-policy-to-contain-turkeys-erdogan/ , 4/30/2019] //lynbk MD - TDI

Turkey poses a long-term threat to the security of the Middle East. Containing neo-Ottomanism requires a defensive policy that integrates Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and the Kurds into a regional alliance. A new era has dawned in the northern Levant. The Republic of Turkey has left behind its Kemalist, secular foundations in pursuit of Islamist, authoritarian governance. The Justice and Development Party (AKP), headed by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has alienated the US, Israel, and the EU, and abandoned the country’s pro-Western and NATO credentials. The AKP has adopted a neo-Ottoman policy of imperialism, seeking to usurp the position of “leader of the Muslim World” from Saudi Arabia. In colonial language reminiscent of Mussolini’s fascist Italy, Erdogan has threatened to conquer the Greek Isles, Cyprus, and the Levant. And he has taken concrete steps towards advancing this vision, despite alienating European and Arab allies. Some analysts have called for maintaining ties with Turkey in the hope that the AKP government will fall and relations with a more moderate leader can resume. But this is wishful thinking. Despite poor showings in local elections and a recent poor economic performance, ultra-nationalist and neo-fascist organizations like the Grey Wolves have been emboldened since the AKP’s rise. The AKP has also sought to Islamize the still-secular North Cyprus, turning the conflict from an ethno-national one into a religious one. Ankara has hopes of changing the peace process in Cyprus from one of reunion with equal rights, to a two-state solution. This would be the pretext for an eventual annexation of the island (or at least its northern portion). Given Ankara’s increasing interference in the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean, it is necessary to build and strengthen a multilateral mechanism among the region’s most affected states and “statelets” to contain it. The US is already providing major support to both the Kurds in Syria and the burgeoning “Axis of Antiquity” of Greece, Israel, and the Republic of Cyprus. The Kurds and the eastern Mediterranean coalition have a common interest in challenging Erdogan’s hegemonic ambitions and protecting their sovereignty. These actors — perhaps with guidance from Washington — must iron out a cohesive plan to make it happen. Turkey’s decision to buy the S-400 missile defense system from Russia at the expense of Washington’s F-35s has angered the US, to the point of threatening sanctions. Last summer, the US damaged Ankara’s economy with tariffs and threatened sanctions if it attacked the Kurds in Syria. The Syrian Kurds are floating the idea of diplomacy with Turkey if it stops occupying the enclave of Afrin — but without it, they say, there will be war. Meanwhile, Athens has expressed interest in acquiring F-35 fighter jets. Greece’s military is inferior to that of Turkey, and F-35s would provide a valuable deterrent to prevent further violations of airspace. With that said, Greece would have to make the purchase at a relatively low price, given its economic situation. Washington should consider a Greek F-35 sale at a discount, on condition that they also be used to protect Cypriot airspace in the event of Turkish military provocation on the island. Greece already has Patriot missiles. To further deter Turkey, the US should consider stationing THAAD missiles in Crete, where the US maintains a military base. It should also seriously consider pressing Britain to allow Patriot and THAAD missile defense systems to be placed at its Akrotiri and Dhekelia military bases in Cyprus. Greece is building a joint radar system on Crete with the Israelis, that is possibly aimed at monitoring Turkish aggression. Israel should consider placing Arrow, Iron Dome, and David’s Sling systems near the Crete radar installation to ensure its protection, and consider selling the systems to Nicosia as well to prevent a Turkish attack. These systems would be extremely valuable in view of Turkish aggression aimed at gas exploration in Cyprus. The Cyprus gas project is critical to Israel’s economic and diplomatic interests in the coming decades, and must be protected at all costs. The defensive nature of these weapons systems should nullify any possible Turkish diplomatic criticism of “militarization” of the northern Levant. Meanwhile, as the Kurds increasingly consolidate their power in northern Syria, the US and Israel should look to mediate a possible peace agreement or cooperation mechanism between Iraqi Kurdistan and Rojava (Kurdish Syria). While the primary goal of the Kurdish fighters is aimed at counterinsurgency against the remnants of jihadists, these forces will also need the capability to deter Turkey and Iran’s “axis of resistance” should diplomacy fail. **The US and Israel should consider deploying Iron Dome, David’s Sling, Arrow, THAAD, and Patriot missile systems in the broader Kurdish region, under the full control of Washington and Jerusalem**. **These systems would protect the Kurds from missile attacks**, such as those previously **launched by Iran**. **They would also protect Israel, regional Arab allies, and US military bases in the region, which may be more vulnerable to attack after the US’ designation of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terror group**. More can be done to integrate the Kurds and Israelis into the greater energy scheme in the eastern Mediterranean. Israel has oil in the Negev, the Meged oil field, and the Golan. Jerusalem could easily replace Tehran when it comes to supplying oil to Greece and Italy, both of which secured waivers from Washington when sanctions on Iran were resumed last year. **This would further tighten Israel’s alliance** with Athens and the new right-wing government in Rome. Kurds in the northern portions of Syria and Iraq also control vast oil sources and are selling it to stimulate the local economy. Adding Kurdish and Israeli oil — even if only temporarily — to the energy pipelines being built from the Mediterranean to southern Europe would enrich Israel, stabilize Kurdistan, and give the Kurds and Israelis more regional clout. Doing so would also undermine European excuses that they must continue buying oil from Iran or Arab dictatorships in the Gulf. **A coalition of this kind** in the eastern Mediterranean and northern Levant **would allow for greater US involvement in the region, which would help to ensure a successful outcome while shoring up the regional economy**. This would contribute toward regional stability, wean Europe off “autocratic oil,” and contain Ankara’s neo-Ottoman aspirations in the region through purely defensive means. **It would also foster “local multilateralism”** without resorting to the bloated and ineffective approach of the EU, UN, and Arab League.

#### US stepping up now in Israel to prevent Iranian Nukes

Ravid 5-8 [(Barak Ravid, Barak Ravid is a Contributing Correspondent at Axios based in Tel-Aviv. He covers everything that matters from Cairo to Tehran. Barak also writes for Walla News in Israel) “U.S. and Israel looking at Iran from ‘much closer point of view’”, Axios, U.S. and Israel looking at Iran from "much closer point of view", 5/8/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

The U.S.-Israel talks on Iran this week were positive and showed that the two countries are looking at the issue from a "much closer point of view," a senior Israeli official told Axios. Why it matters: The talks at the White House, which were the first of their kind since the new right-wing Israeli government assumed office, took place amid growing concerns over the unprecedented advancement of Iran's nuclear program. The discovery by UN inspectors of uranium enriched to 84% — nearly the level needed for nuclear weapons — at Iran's underground nuclear facility Fordow caused even more alarm. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials have stressed in recent weeks the need for a credible military threat against Iran. Driving the news: The Israeli delegation, led by Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer and national security adviser Tzachi Hanegbi included senior officials from the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Defense and the intelligence community who deal with Iran. The U.S. team, led by national security adviser Jake Sullivan, and the Israeli delegation “reviewed with significant concern advances in Iran’s nuclear program," the White House said in a statement. The White House added that the two teams discussed the enhancement of the security partnership between Israel and the U.S. and pledged to strengthen coordination on measures to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and to "further deter Iran’s hostile regional activities." The officials also discussed the recent joint Israeli-U.S. military exercises, which Israeli officials said were focused on training for a possible military strike against the Iranian nuclear program. What they're saying: "The talks on Iran were really good. The discussions were on a very high level of openness," a senior Israeli official who attended the talks said. A second Israeli official with direct knowledge of the meeting said the talks reflected the fact that Israel and the U.S. are much more aligned on Iran than before. “A nuclear deal is not on the agenda, and the Iranians are helping Russia in Ukraine. We are in a new world and a different environment, and we are looking at this issue from a much closer point of view," the Israeli official said. The official added that the talks were serious. “It was a real discussion on Iran and not just a meeting to check the box. There was a lot of openness on the U.S. side," the official said. Yes, but: The Israeli government was disappointed that the U.S. didn’t support the proposal by the E3 — France, Germany and the U.K. — to push for a censure resolution against Iran during the International Atomic Energy Agency board meeting earlier this week, Israeli officials said. U.S. Iran envoy Rob Malley said at an event hosted by U.S. liberal advocacy group J Street last week that the Biden administration wanted to see whether IAEA director general Rafael Grossi could get an agreement with the Iranians on inspections. Grossi met with Iran’s president and with its atomic energy chief this weekend, and the officials agreed on a road map for increasing IAEA inspections in Iran’s nuclear facilities. State Department spokesperson Ned Price said on Tuesday the U.S. will judge Iran on its actions. "We expect Iran to follow through with the commitments that it made," he said. Senior White House officials declined to comment.

## elections da

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#### Biden PC is stable but draining slowly – it’s key to winning the election

Cadelago 12-9 [Christopher Cadelago, 12-9-2022, "Biden earned political capital this fall. He’s quietly spending it. ," POLITICO, https://www.politico.com/news/2022/12/09/biden-2024-democrats-00073207, accessed 6-6-2023] lynbk bo - TDI

White House officials and senior Democrats believe the party’s better-than-expected fall has relieved considerable pressure on Joe Biden to act quickly on a reelection bid.

But they’re still making moves.

Biden aides have been working with outside advisers to help sketch out components of a reelection ramp up, including Obama alum Jim Messina, with whom the president has discussed polling in recent weeks, according to two people familiar with his involvement. Messina did not return calls for comment.

They are also reengaging donors and zeroing in on key staff roles and hires to fortify a unit that could operate outside the close-knit group that runs operations at the White House. They’re further along on finalizing a headquarters for the campaign, too, with Wilmington, Del., the likely destination, although Philadelphia has not been ruled out.

“We’re aware that there is no deficit of people who speculate, but very few individuals are actually knowledgeable about anything of that nature,” White House spokesperson Andrew Bates said.

Those in the White House have proceeded like Biden will run. His family will play an outsized role in making the final decision and first lady Jill Biden, initially reluctant, is said to have warmed to another campaign.

There were initial family discussions over Thanksgiving in Nantucket and more are expected over Christmas. The anticipated timeline, according to those close to the deliberations, is for the campaign to launch towards the end of the first quarter of 2023 — after the president’s State of the Union address and the introduction of his budget.

Those familiar with the planning stress they feel no pressure to move more quickly. Biden world officials believe that Democratic wins in the midterm elections have quieted naysayers. More specifically, they argue the president’s fall momentum has stopped potential rivals from pushing forward.

Now any talk inside the White House about the 2024 primary has turned instead to “if he doesn’t run, what kind of circus is released?” said one Democrat familiar with the White House’s thinking.

The posture reflects a new, more confident mood among Biden and his advisers as he prepares for a likely reelection bid. Largely gone is chatter around whether Biden would step aside for a new generation of Democrats. That’s been replaced by maneuvers by the president to position himself for the rigors of another run.

Biden re-shaped the next primary schedule in his own image by moving to put South Carolina first. He has also been traveling to key battleground states including Arizona, which he steered clear of ahead of the midterms.

“The signals are pretty strong that he’s running,” said Joe Trippi, a Democratic operative who managed Howard Dean’s 2004 presidential campaign. “I don’t see any reason for an official announcement any time soon. But if you look at what he’s been doing, he’s already told us.”

Donors are still being directed to the Democratic National Committee and the outside Building Back Together outfit, and they say there hasn’t been a proactive move to start raising money for the campaign. That’s typical, some operatives said, of the post-election period when candidates and campaigns often give donors a break. But many have still seen an uptick in calls and emails from Biden aides and party allies — and hundreds of invitations have gone out to the various White House and other related holiday parties in Washington to keep supporters engaged.

Biden has also been road-testing new variations on a possible re-election pitch that combines the coming effects of three huge spending packages involving roads, computer chips and climate protections. And according to two people familiar with recent conversations, senior advisers to the president who will be closely involved in guiding an eventual campaign have been calling party operatives in recent weeks to begin conversations about convention planning and building a national field operation, something that was scaled down during the 2020 campaign due to the limitations imposed by the pandemic.

“He’s got a lot of time,” said Joel Benenson, the veteran Democratic strategist. He suggested Biden could use the coming months to further establish his footing on top priorities around the economy and downplay the need to act right away on 2024 “in a way that could be very Bidenesque and connect with families and people.”

Of the timeframe facing the president, Benenson added: “It’s the political conversation that insiders are having. I just don’t see any reason to accelerate it — on anybody’s part.”

While Biden may have more time to announce a reelection bid, it is not infinite. Biden aides have frequently pointed to the timing of President Barack Obama’s re-election announcement as a guide. That came on April 4, 2011. But the difference, some aides have reluctantly acknowledged, is that there were never any questions as to whether Obama would run again.

Senior Democrats believe if Biden were to wait too long to make an announcement, it would renew and hasten questions surrounding his age (he turned 80 late last month). They also caution that the favorable political environment he currently enjoys could shift quickly, though White House aides are bullish about the work done and how it’s shaping the landscape.

“The same coalition President Biden built to expand the map for Democrats in 2020 powered our historic midterm wins, including unprecedented youth turnout,” said Bates. “At the same time, the president galvanized independent voters with a message widely adopted across the party, highlighting the differences between his values and ultra MAGA Republicans’ agenda.”

Biden aides and allies are loath to discuss names publicly, but in recent weeks the White House has taken subtle steps to try and elevate former President Donald Trump by leaning into the rash of unfavorable storylines involving him. Many of Biden’s closest advisers anxiously believe that if the president opts against another bid, it would leave an unsettled and untested field of contenders to fend off Trump’s return. Others aligned with the effort openly revel in the idea of the former president maintaining a presence on the political landscape.

“Trump is doing a damn good job of making sure the Republican Party will be a shitshow,” said Dick Harpootlian, a longtime South Carolina Democrat and an early and loyal Biden backer.

Trippi noted the GOP writ large has the same problem it’s had now for three cycles.

“They can’t win with him and they can’t win without him,” he said, noting that if Trump’s MAGA base doesn’t turn out and a challenger like Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis were to defeat Trump in a primary, “God bless ’em because it’ll be the last thing they do.“

“Does anyone really believe Trump could lose the nomination and then tell his base he lost fair and square so go out and vote for the Republican nominee?” he pointed out. “So let them have that fight, because I don’t see a winner coming out of it either way.”

Biden does have some major decisions to make around the structure of a reelection bid.

Chief among them is how to balance operations between the White House and campaign headquarters when the latter finally launches. Veterans of past presidential reelection campaigns note that much of what the campaign is judged by originates at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., making it critical that trusted aides are in place and communication is smooth.

“There were certain equities in limited supply, starting with the president’s time,” said David Axelrod, Obama’s longtime adviser. “There was a lot of cross pollination between the campaign and the White House.”

What Biden seems almost certain to avoid, as of now, is a high-profile primary challenger. Those discussed as alternatives, California Gov. Gavin Newsom and New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy, among others, have notably re-upped their support for him. And Biden’s play to promote South Carolina to the front of the line amounted to a show of force to close off any avenues for a long-shot challenge.

“One risk point has always been early momentum from insurgent campaigns and Biden has pretty much ended all of that,” said Jim Hodges, the former South Carolina governor.

Democrats that still harbored doubts about how successful another Biden run would be have come away from conversations with his aides convinced he will launch one anyway. And Hodges said he’s heard the same thing privately from Democratic elected officials who he’s casually been in touch with for months.

“Now, it’s even firmer about their support and their belief that he’s going to run,” he said.

#### The forces Biden to politically taxing fights before the election

Leifer 3-14 [(Joshua Leifer, Joshua Leifer is a Jewish Currents contributing editor and a member of the Dissent editorial board. His essays and reporting have also appeared in The Guardian, The Nation, Jacobin, +972 Magazine, and elsewhere. He is currently working on a book about American Jewish identity. He lives in New Haven, CT, where he is a history PhD student) “Biden Won’t Stop Netanyahu’s Judicial Coup”, Jewish Currents, <https://jewishcurrents.org/biden-wont-stop-netanyahus-judicial-coup>, 3/14/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

EVEN BEFORE Benjamin Netanyahu’s return to power in November 2022, the Biden administration began working behind the scenes to try to contain the right-wing Israeli prime minister and his more extreme political partners. In October, ahead of the Israeli elections, AIPAC stalwart Sen. Robert Menendez, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, visited Netanyahu to warn him against forming a coalition with Itamar Ben-Gvir, leader of the far-right Kahanist Jewish Power party. Netanyahu ignored him. In November, with coalition negotiations ongoing, US officials urged Netanyahu not to appoint Bezalel Smotrich, hardline settler leader of the Religious Zionism party, as defense minister. Netanyahu appointed Smotrich finance minister instead, but still granted him substantial authority within the ministry of defense. Last month, as Netanyahu prepared to give Smotrich power over the Civil Administration, the Israeli body that oversees the occupation of the West Bank, US officials warned that they would consider this a step toward annexation. Again, Netanyahu ignored them, and Smotrich officially took the reins. In each case, the Biden administration’s maneuvering proved ineffective at stopping Netanyahu from empowering his far-right allies. Now, as Netanyahu’s government pushes forward with its plan to strip the country’s judiciary of its independence—sparking unprecedented protests in cities across Israel—left-wing and liberal activists in Israel and the US are calling on Biden to intervene. Yet there is little indication that the Biden administration will do so—or that it can. It is not only that Biden’s personality, along with domestic political concerns, make any dramatic measures to pressure Israel highly unlikely. The US government’s longstanding, unconditional commitment to Israel’s defense—a policy that Secretary of State Antony Blinken has called “sacrosanct”—all but guarantees that the Biden administration’s response to the Netanyahu government’s “judicial revolution” will fall far short of deterring the Israeli prime minister or holding his government accountable. Biden “will go to great lengths to avoid a sustained public confrontation” with Israel, said Aaron David Miller, a veteran former advisor to six secretaries of state. From the Biden administration’s perspective, he noted, **any dramatic measure taken in response to Israeli actions would risk spurring a Republican backlash as the 2024 US election campaign enters its initial stages**. In terms of geopolitics, Miller added, “Israel and the Palestinian issue is way down on the list of priorities” as the war in Ukraine grinds on and the US presses toward great-power conflict with China. Then there is Biden himself, who “is not a confronter,” Miller said. A dependable ally of establishment Jewish groups, Biden has long worked to shield Israel and successive Netanyahu governments from consequences for human rights violations. “His pro-Israeli credentials and sensibilities are inextricably tied up with his DNA,” Miller said. “On the narrow question of judicial reform, I think the administration is not prepared to impose any sort of sanction.” Yet **if the Biden administration were willing to expend the political capital**, “there’s a huge range of things that they could do to express their displeasure” with Israel, said Hadar Susskind, president and CEO of Americans for Peace Now, a liberal Zionist organization. Two of the most severe diplomatic steps that a US administration could take, explained Alon Pinkas, former Israeli Consul General in New York, include recalling the US ambassador to Israel for consultation—a move that typically reflects a profound fissure in the relations between two countries—and abstaining from votes on resolutions criticizing Israel at the United Nations Security Council, which the US customarily vetoes. These measures would entail no material consequences, but would signal the US’s intense disapproval. While the former is unlikely, Pinkas acknowledged, the latter has happened before. In 2017, at the end of President Obama’s tenure, the outgoing administration abstained from a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlement construction, thereby allowing it to pass. A US abstention on declaratory resolutions is “sort of meaningless at the UN,” Pinkas said, “but it’s very meaningful in terms of the US–Israel relationship.” For the Obama administration, this was a signal of exasperation and discontent—though not of a shift in the US government’s overall friendly policy toward Israel. Susskind also suggested that **the Biden administration could signal its willingness to reconsider the terms of US military aid to Israel.** While the US cannot cut military aid to Israel or impose conditions on its use overnight, Susskind explained, Biden could in theory announce the establishment of a State Department commission that would explore conditioning aid to Israel ahead of next year, when deliberations will begin over whether to renew or modify the current $38 billion Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two countries, which expires in 2029. Susskind named several additional “more targeted steps” that Biden could take, mainly reversing measures taken by the Trump administration. These include undoing former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo’s decision allowing settlement goods to be labeled as “Made in Israel”; reopening the US consulate in East Jerusalem, which has remained closed since President Trump shuttered it in 2019; and increasing US contributions to Palestinian civil society as a means of countering the effects of the 2018 Taylor Force Act, which slashed US funding to the Palestinian Authority. “They would all be clear, unequivocal signals that we won’t just sit here and do nothing,” Susskind said. There is, however, no evidence that the Biden administration is considering any of the measures, big or small, that Susskind and Pinkas described. In fact, the Biden administration recently used backchannel maneuvering to avoid publicly criticizing Netanyahu’s government at the UN. In February, US officials successfully pressured the Palestinian Authority to abandon its push for a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlements—after Netanyahu’s government announced the legalization of nine outposts in the occupied West Bank and the approval of 10,000 new settlement housing units. In shutting down the resolution, the Biden administration circumvented a choice between risking a spat with Netanyahu and Israel-advocacy organizations by abstaining or flagrantly contravening its own policy preferences on settlements by maintaining its customary veto. (Although multiple US administrations have officially opposed Israeli settlement construction, there is no precedent for a US administration going beyond abstention to support such a resolution. Since 1973, the US has vetoed UN Security Council resolutions critical of Israel more than 53 times.) To date, the starkest indication of the Biden administration’s displeasure with Netanyahu has been its withholding of a formal White House invitation to him since he returned to power. Typically, explained Pinkas, “when the secretary of state comes to Israel, he leaves behind an open invitation to visit the White House, and later they set up the dates.” But since Secretary of State Antony Blinken’s late January visit to Israel/Palestine, where he delivered a subtle rebuke of Netanyahu’s judicial reform plan, no such invitation has been extended. “That’s sort of a protest that’s taking place,” said Pinkas. This mild censure has had no perceptible effect on the Israeli government’s ongoing legislative blitz: On Monday, the Knesset advanced several of the most controversial parts of the judicial overhaul plan, including a measure that would prevent the Supreme Court from striking down any law passed with a majority of 61 votes, and another which would only allow the Court to strike down laws with a supermajority of 12 of 15 judges. Even if Biden’s snub has telegraphed US displeasure with Netanyahu, it has not persuaded him to change his government’s course. Indeed, the Biden administration’s preference for non-confrontational measures all but ensures that Netanyahu will proceed with his coalition’s judicial overhaul. In any case, domestic political realities may leave Netanyahu little choice. He is now beholden to the hardliners within his own party and to his extremist partners within the governing coalition, whose demands he must heed to stay in power. “I don’t think he controls this anymore,” Pinkas said. The only realistic path to a different coalition configuration would be another round of elections. And that is a risk that Netanyahu—who hopes to remain in power to avoid being convicted of the corruption charges for which he is on trial—almost certainly won’t take. If this reflects the emergence of a new Israeli political paradigm, one in which the most extreme right calls the shots, the Biden administration has yet to adjust. Ultimately, the proposed elimination of judicial review in Israel is simply not a matter on which the Biden administration is willing “to go out on a limb,” Miller explained. “The administration isn’t going to do any of these things,” he said of the various steps being discussed by opponents of the judicial overhaul, “unless the Israelis go qualitatively and quantitatively beyond anything we’ve seen before in their actions towards the Palestinians.” It is also very unusual for the US government to intervene directly in what it considers to be the domestic politics of an important ally—which appears to be how the Biden administration understands the judicial overhaul plan. Yet in practice, the Netanyahu government’s attack on the judiciary is inseparable from the issue of the occupation. It is not the case that the former is merely a domestic matter, while the latter remains an international conflict. The settler right has not hidden the fact that the crippling of the judicial branch is meant to enable the realization of its territorial-maximalist agenda: the annexation of the West Bank and the forced transfer of Palestinians out of the territories under Israel’s control. The Biden administration’s tepid response to the Netanyahu government’s “judicial revolution” portends a similarly inadequate reaction to the eventual de jure codification of apartheid rule.

### link---popularity---1nc

#### Majority of voters support sending military aid and weapons to Israel

Blanton 21 [(Dana Blanton) “Voters support Israel, favor sending aid and weapons”, Fox News, <https://www.foxnews.com/official-polls/poll-voters-support-israel-favor-sending-aid-weapons>, 5/26/2021] //lynbk MD – TDI

Most American voters side with Israel in the Mideast conflict, and over half favor the United States helping with money and weapons, according to the latest Fox News survey. By a 56-38 percent margin, voters approve of providing the Israeli government with financial aid for its military, and are almost as supportive on selling weapons to Israel (51 percent favor, 44 percent oppose). Progressives like Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders (D) oppose a $735 million dollar weapons sale, but the Biden administration has committed to helping Israel. In general, 59 percent of voters say they side more with the Israelis, while 24 percent sympathize with the Palestinians. Among Republicans, 78 percent back the Israelis and 10 percent the Palestinians. Democrats divide more evenly: 42 percent side with the Israelis and 35 percent the Palestinians. Republicans are also much more inclined than Democrats to favor both giving financial aid to Israel (71 percent vs. 47 percent respectively) and selling it weapons (67 percent vs. 42 percent). A ceasefire between Israel and Hamas has held since May 21. Two-thirds of voters (66 percent) report closely following the Mideast conflict, including 25 percent who are following news about it "very" closely. Democrats and Republicans (70 percent each) are equally likely to be monitoring it closely, while independents are less so (49 percent). More voters disapprove (52 percent) than approve (43 percent) of the job President Biden is doing handling foreign policy generally. For his overall performance as president, Biden receives positive ratings: 54 percent approve vs. 42 percent disapprove. Conducted May 22-25, 2021 under the joint direction of Beacon Research (D) and Shaw & Company (R), this Fox News Poll includes interviews with 1,003 randomly chosen registered voters nationwide who spoke with live interviewers on both landlines and cellphones. The total sample has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points.

### link---significance---1nc

#### Israel important issue for Republicans and Democrats

Kampeas 5-3 [(Ron Kampeas, JTA's Washington Bureau Chief. He worked previously at The Associated Press, where he spent more than a decade in its bureaus in Jerusalem, New York, London and, most recently, Washington) “Republicans, Dems accuse each other of dissing Israel, as 2024 campaigns get going”, The Times of Israel, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/republicans-dems-accuse-each-other-of-dissing-israel-as-2024-campaigns-get-going/>, 5/3/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As the 2024 election gets into gear, both Republicans and Democrats are again using Israel as a wedge issue. A lot has changed in both countries since the last presidential election, but in the halls of Congress, the battle over Israel is playing out in familiar ways. Republicans have accused US President Joe Biden of snubbing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whom he has yet to invite to the White House amid policy disagreements. Democrats, meanwhile, say that the Republicans’ proposed spending cuts endanger foreign aid to Israel. And leaders of both parties have indicated that, even amid a high-stakes fight over the debt ceiling, displaying support for Israel remains a priority. Representative Kevin McCarthy, the Republican House speaker, took time this week to lead a bipartisan delegation to Israel, where he addressed the Knesset. That was just a week after Representative Hakeem Jeffries, the Democratic minority leader from New York, led his own delegation to Israel, and laid a wreath to mark its Memorial Day. Also visiting Israel recently to demonstrate his support: Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who is expected to launch his bid for the GOP presidential nomination this month. McCarthy’s speech in Israel’s parliament was nonpartisan, but his remarks to reporters were less so. McCarthy told Israel Hayom, a right-leaning news outlet, that Biden was wrong not to invite Netanyahu to Washington, saying Netanyahu has waited “too long” since returning to office in December. “If that doesn’t happen, I’ll invite the prime minister to come meet with the House,” McCarthy said. “He’s a dear friend, as a prime minister of a country that we have our closest ties with.” Amir Ohana, the speaker of Knesset and a member of Netanyahu’s Likud Party, had hinted that his invitation to McCarthy was a sort of rebuke to Biden. The US president has indicated that he is not interested in seeing Netanyahu until the prime ministers limits the influence of his far-right coalition partners, and walks back his controversial effort to weaken the judiciary. Biden has said the judicial overhaul would undercut Israel’s democracy. As McCarthy was getting ready to leave Israel, Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz, a senior Democrat, was telling colleagues that Republican budget maneuvers were imperiling US assistance to Israel. Wasserman Schultz’s warning came after House Republicans, voting on party lines, passed a debt limit bill that would curb and then reduce government spending. What, exactly, the bill proposes to cut and keep is not clear. But Wasserman Schultz, a Jewish representative from South Florida, said that the bill’s language mandates cut across all non-defense spending, including foreign aid. That means, she said, that the $3.3 billion Israel gets annually in defense assistance could be reduced by as much as $726 million. “That puts Israel’s security at risk,” Wasserman Schultz told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. “Without any specificity or explicit protection we can’t be sure that Israel is safe.” McCarthy has pitched the debt limit bill as an opening gambit: It has no chance of advancing as it is in the Democratic-led Senate, and McCarthy has said he will get to specifics once negotiations start. Legislation is needed to lift the amount the government is able to borrow, or it could risk a default on its debt. On Sunday, a McCarthy spokesperson told JTA that security assistance to Israel would remain untouched, and McCarthy made the pledge explicit in his Knesset speech the following day. “As long as I am Speaker, America will continue to support full funding for security assistance in Israel,” he said. In some ways, this week’s debate mirrors the way Israel was discussed in 2011, the last time a Democratic president was up for reelection as Republicans controlled the House. Back then, Republicans chided president Barack Obama for being insufficiently friendly to Israel, while Democrats warned that Republican spending cuts would harm aid to Israel. But Wasserman Schultz said that in one respect, that year’s Republican spending bill was not as risky for Israel. Before the 2010 election, Representative Eric Cantor, a Jewish Republican, pledged that Israel spending was sacrosanct, and the Republicans’ subsequent bill said that aid to Israel would not be reduced. “They have nothing in that bill with specificity that ensures that foreign aid to Israel will be protected,” Wasserman Schultz said regarding this year’s spending bill. Wasserman Schultz hasn’t been the only one to seek assurances that aid to Israel would be left alone. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby, has also asked that Israel cuts be taken off the table. “We are continuing our work with congressional leaders to ensure full funding of security assistance to Israel, without additional conditions,” Marshall Wittmann, AIPAC’s spokesman, told JTA. “This is a top legislative priority, as it is in the security interests of the U.S and our ally Israel, and we are pleased that many members of Congress have already written senior members of the Appropriations Committee in support of this funding.” Wasserman Schultz said that while she welcomed McCarthy’s reassurance on Israel, she worries that Republican cuts could impact foreign aid overall. AIPAC and other pro-Israel groups have also said that foreign aid generally — not just to Israel — is essential to preserving US influence internationally. “Words matter but the actions in the House Republican Default on America bill that passed the House doesn’t match the rhetoric,” she said in a text message on Monday, using a derisive name for the Republican bill. “But even if his Caucus allows him to follow through on those words, the drastic cuts called for in the Default on America Act would decimate support for our partners and diplomatic efforts in the region and undercut Israel’s overall security.” Asked in Jerusalem about the debt limit negotiations, McCarthy said that in at least one respect, he and the prime minister were in the same boat. “The president still hasn’t talked to me,” he said, just hours before Biden invited him to the White House to launch debt limit negotiations. “I’m a little like Netanyahu.”

#### Biden has his hands full cuz of Israel-Iran conflict – it will define his foreign policy

David 1-13 [Aaron David, Steven Simon is the Robert E. Wilhelm fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a research analyst at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. His new book, Grand Delusion: The Rise and Fall of American Ambition in the Middle East, will be released in April. Twitter: @sns\_1239, 1-13-2023, "Biden is about to have his hands full in the Middle East," No Publication, https://cis.mit.edu/publications/analysis-opinion/2023/biden-about-have-his-hands-full-middle-east, accessed 6-9-2023] lynbk bo

For most of his first two years in office, US President Joe Biden has been extremely fortunate to have avoided sustained entanglement with the Middle East, a place where more often than not, US foreign-policy ideas—good and bad—have gone to die.

Biden may have a harder time avoiding the Middle East in 2023 and beyond, though. The administration’s top foreign-policy priorities remain Russia’s war against Ukraine and a rising China. Yet Biden may soon have his hands full with smaller yet determined regional powers eager to advance their own interests and unwilling to play by US rules. With five states—Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, and Libya—in various stages of dysfunction, the Arab world will remain a source of instability, with the exception being wealthy Persian Gulf states (Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) that are acting with greater independence from Washington while insisting on US support.

But it’s really the two non-Arab powers, **Iran and Israel—**one, the United States’ foremost regional adversary, the other its closest regional friend—that may **set the agenda for the next two years**. And the implications of that are not particularly uplifting.

With Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s return to office, the Biden administration now confronts the most extreme right-wing government in Israel’s history, one likely to cause a serious rise in—if not an **explosion of—tensions over the Palestinian issue and** Iran’s nuclear program. If you believe the rhetoric of its extremist ministers—and there’s no reason not to—this coalition is determined to alter Israel’s democratic system, transform society along Jewish exclusivist lines, sow tensions with Israel’s Arab citizens, and erect a gravestone over the buried hope of a Palestinian state by permanently lashing the majority of the West Bank and Jerusalem to Israel.

How bad the situation in the West Bank becomes may be tied to the degree to which Netanyahu can exercise influence over coalition partners he desperately needs to pass legislation that will postpone, if not nullify, his ongoing trial. Being not as far right as other members of his party, Netanyahu would much prefer a coalition without extremists and may be already thinking about broadening his government at some point. But his legal travails are existential. Without some skyhook, he almost certainly faces prison if convicted—or, more likely, a plea bargain and an exit from politics. He cannot, therefore, jettison the extremists; for the time being, he’ll have to manage them.

Netanyahu will do what he can to smother or divert their most egregious policies, but it’s hard to see how he can completely control them and easy to see how the fiefdoms they’ve carved out in their respective governmental roles could wreak havoc in relations with Israeli Arabs as well as Palestinians in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

Itamar Ben-Gvir, now the newly created minister of national security, ran on a platform of demonizing Palestinian citizens of Israel and will have a great deal of authority over the border police, an additional 2,000 troops he’s taken from the Israel Defense Forces, and Israel’s national police force. He will be free to reset their rules of engagement and permissible tactics, particularly in the mixed cities where Arabs and Jews interact. He will be able to redirect forces from the West Bank to the Negev or Galilee, which will not only endow him with unprecedented coercive power within the Green Line but also in effect erase it by creating a unitary jurisdiction for Israeli law enforcement.

Bezalel Smotrich, perhaps the more dangerous of the two ministers, will have near-total authority for managing the lives of the inhabitants in Area C (more than 60 percent of the West Bank)—some 400,000 Israelis and 280,000 Palestinians—with responsibilities for all authorities related to infrastructure, planning, construction, energy, electricity supply, environmental protection, and more. Smotrich’s strategic goal is to dilute the influence of the Ministry of Defense and work to apply Israeli civilian law to these areas, effectively accelerating annexation.

It doesn’t take much imagination to see how any number of provocations could trigger broader unrest that some Palestinian groups can and will exploit. The Palestinian Authority has lost the ability, and perhaps the will, to help control it. And this will only encourage extremists among both Israelis and Palestinians to engage in a self-perpetuating cycle of violence and terrorism.

And sooner rather than later, a blow up will become Biden’s problem. **Depending on how bad the situation becomes, he’ll likely face action in the United Nations Security Council, forcing him to defend or criticize Israel.** And it’s **not in Biden’s** political **interest to be caught between Republicans**, who will demand that he supports Israel, **and** a growing number of **progressives within the Democratic Party who** want him to **criticize Israel’s actions against Palestinians**. European allies will press him to restrain Netanyahu, as will the countries of the Abraham Accords. And hovering above it all will be serious unrest and violence.

As we saw in May 2021, Hamas seized on Israeli actions in Jerusalem to trigger a serious escalation with Israel that lasted almost two weeks and forced Biden personally to intercede with Netanyahu and Egypt to press for a cease-fire. The conflict resulted in at least 256 Palestinians killed, including 67 children, and 13 Israelis, among them 2 children. The next confrontation could easily be much worse.

If Netanyahu’s return presages increased tensions on the Palestinian front, it may also serve to heighten the urgency of the Iranian nuclear issue. Netanyahu has made the Iran nuclear threat his signature issue; he seems more than ever to be a man on a mission. “I have come back to office … for one main reason,” Netanyahu said in late December 2022, “to do everything I can to prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons.” And the circumstances are now more propitious for Netanyahu’s view of the Iranian challenge than ever before.

Prospects for a return to the nuclear accord seem remote at this point; Biden even conceded last month that the deal was dead, though he didn’t want to say it publicly. Iran’s brutal crackdown on unprecedented demonstrations calling for the end of the regime, now in their fourth month, combined with Tehran’s supply of drones to fuel Russia’s war against Ukraine have raised anti-Iranian animus in Washington. Given congressional opposition, it’s arguable whether the administration could even do a deal on the nuclear issue with Iran, as it would involve providing Tehran with sanctions relief at a time that Iran is killing its own citizens and helping Russian President Vladimir Putin kill Ukrainians.

Israel, which has the most to lose from a nuclear armed Iran, is getting increasingly nervous about Iran’s stockpiles, which it helped unleash by urging former US President Donald Trump to dump the nuclear deal. Beginning last summer, then-Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz, then-Israeli National Security Advisor Eyal Hulata, and Mossad chief David Barnea have traveled to Washington to urge the Biden administration to plan for an attack on Iran and conduct another round of joint exercises to test the plans and fine tune bilateral coordination. On Oct. 25, 2022, U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan was updated on U.S. military plans and the proposed exercise was scheduled.

As Gantz prepared to leave office with the advent of a new government, he said the need to block Iran’s nuclear program militarily was something that most Israelis agree on—regardless of their party affiliation. And in an address to new Israeli Air Force pilots, he said that for some of the pilots, an attack on Iran was in their future. US officials have avoided predictions, but no experts have disputed Israeli leaks about more intensive US-Israeli planning for some sort of strike on Iran.

The question is: What sort of strike? Only the United States has the capacity to destroy deeply buried centrifuges without putting troops on the ground to kick down the front door. Only the United States has the airplanes capable of carrying so-called bunker busters, bases on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf, and sea-based airpower to carry out a sustained coordinated air campaign to destroy Iran air defenses as well as command and control centers, attack designated targets, return to assess the bomb damage, and keep returning until nothing but the rubble bounces.

Plans to do this were created under the Obama administration and are well developed. Israel can join in, of course, by launching ground attack missiles from its submarines, joining the United States in airstrikes, sharing intelligence, and carrying out sabotage and assassinations that might hobble an Iranian response.

Thus, the world is currently facing an Iran with strong incentives to proceed with enrichment and an international reputation that lowers the diplomatic cost of action for an attacker; a strategic regional adversary—Israel—that has declared its intention to use force and showcased a national consensus in favor of using it; a US administration that, despite a tense relationship with Israel, has made its support for combined operations against Iran abundantly clear; and a US military that has the capacity to destroy Iran’s nuclear infrastructure. These developments do more than just suggest the United States is entering a new phase fraught with risk.

Of course, one must question how much of this is theater. US hand-holding could be more about reassuring Israel that the United States is onboard while conveying the message that Israel cannot succeed on its own. Talk about military action in both Jerusalem and Washington might also have as much to do with encouraging Iran to reenter nuclear talks and delay weapons-grade enrichment as it does with signaling an impending attack. And the whirlwind engulfing Iran’s government and its self-imposed restraints on enrichment might nudge it toward compromise.

To put it mildly, Biden shouldn’t expect much good news from the Middle East in the next year or so. Washington’s capacity to shape events, let alone control them, is limited on the two challenges he faces: how to avoid an explosion between Israelis and Palestinians and how to put the brakes on Iran’s nuclear program. Biden’s options run from bad to worse. Perhaps Fortuna will intervene—the Iranian regime collapses and Netanyahu, shackled to extremist ministers, decides to jettison them in favor of a more centrist national unity government.

One could be forgiven for sensing that on both Iran and the Palestinian issue, the United States is drifting without a clear sense of exactly what to do. Shifting into a more assertive deterrence posture by credibly threatening war if Iran goes too far may buy time, but time eventually runs out. And even if the worst practices of the new Israeli government don’t come to pass, it’s only a matter of time until the Israeli-Palestinian conflict produces a major blow up. In short, the situation Biden confronts is likely to get worse before it gets worse. And perhaps in view of our prognosis, it’s fitting that we give poet William Butler Yeats the final word: “And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,/Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?”

## lashout da

### lashout---1nc

#### Israel feels secure now because US backing deters Iran

Jean- Pierre 23’ [( Karine, US press secretary “Readout of President Joe Biden’s Call with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel,” The White house, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/07/17/readout-of-president-joe-bidens-call-with-prime-minister-benjamin-netanyahu-of-israel-2/>, July 17, 2023] - TDI

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. spoke today with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel to discuss a broad range of global and regional issues of mutual concern.   The President underscored his iron-clad, unwavering commitment to Israel’s security and condemned recent acts of terror against Israeli citizens.  The two consulted on our close coordination to counter Iran, including through regular and ongoing joint military exercises. They noted that U.S.-Israel partnership remains a cornerstone in preventing Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.  The President stressed the need to take measures to maintain the viability of a two-state solution and improve the security situation in the West Bank.  To that end, he welcomed Israel’s willingness to consider new steps to support Palestinian livelihoods, and recognized promising steps by the Palestinian Authority to reassert security control in Jenin and other areas of the West Bank.  He expressed concern about continued settlement growth and called on all parties to refrain from further unilateral measures.  The two leaders agreed to consult with regional partners with the aim of convening a meeting soon in the Aqaba/Sharm format as soon as possible. They also consulted on progress towards establishing a more integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Middle East, including through efforts to deepen and expand normalization with countries in the region and beyond. Finally, President Biden reiterated, in the context of the current debate in Israel about judicial reform, the need for the broadest possible consensus, and that shared democratic values have always been and must remain a hallmark of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

#### The plan causes Israel to feel isolated, lash out, and go nuclear

McConnell 17 – [Scott, PhD in History from Columbia University, Founding Editor of The American Conservative, Former Editorial Page Editor of The New York Post, and Writer for Fortune, The New Criterion, National Review, and Commentary, “The Special Relationship with Israel: Is It Worth the Costs?”, Middle East Policy Council, Volume XVII, Number 4, <https://mepc.org/special-relationship-israel-it-worth-costs>, Winter 2017] TDI

NO EXIT

So why does the United States stay in the relationship? Surely domestic politics accounts for a good deal of the explanation. But there is another, strategic, reason that is seldom mentioned publicly. It was expounded clearly by Ariel Roth, a professor at Johns Hopkins University and an Israeli army veteran. In an essay in International Studies Perspectives, Roth argued that the key U.S. interest in the Middle East is stability and unfettered access to the region’s oil. This is indisputable; it is the point James Forrestal made to President Truman more than 60 years ago. And what is the greatest threat to stability? Well, says Roth, it is Israel itself. Because of its unique history and the heavy weight of the Holocaust in the consciousness of Israeli leaders, Israel is uniquely terrified of being “alone” in the international arena. As a result, any suspicion on the part of its leaders that the United States is backing away from it might incite Israel to behave more aggressively than it already does. Those who decry the special relationship “are blinded to how Israel’s sense of vulnerability causes. . . behaviors that have the potential to undermine American interests.” Israel needs constant “reassurance” that it “does not stand alone.” Supporting Israel through “constant affirmation” and generous arms shipments is the best way to pursue American interests “without the fear of a panicked and unrestrained Israel bringing a cataclysm to the Middle East.”20

This claim is at once alarming and compelling. Roth is asserting that the principal ally of the United States in the twenty-first century — its main source of strategic advice, the nation whose leaders have an unequaled access to American political leadership — is not a rational actor. The United States is in the position of a wife whose spouse is acting erratically. A “panicked and unrestrained Israel,” armed with an estimated 200 nuclear weapons, could do an extraordinary amount of damage. The only conclusion one can draw is that the special relationship would now be very difficult to exit, even if Israel had no clout whatsoever within the American political system, even if the United States desired emphatically to pursue a more independent course.

I submit that this argument has long been internalized by those U.S. officials who recognize that the special relationship brings the United States far more trouble than benefits. It is the principal reason no major American figure has ever advocated simply walking away from Israel. Even those who argue that America should make its aid conditional on a more forthcoming Israeli attitude towards peace with the Arabs invariably recommend that the necessary Israeli territorial withdrawals be rewarded by iron-clad American defense guarantees and other sweeteners. Most intelligent people understand there is something uniquely evil about the Holocaust and the circumstances under which Israel came into existence, even as they are uneasy with the current special relationship. For those who recommend a U.S. security guarantee following a peace settlement, the overture made by the Arab League — offering full recognition and normalized relations with an Israel that relinquished its 1967 conquests and allowed a viable Palestinian state — is a development of enormous promise. Regrettably Israel has ignored this opening.

Can the costs of America’s special relationship with Israel be quantified? Is it, as A.F.K. Organski put it in his 1990 book, the “$36 billion dollar bargain?” That figure, derived from military and financial assistance to Israel form 1951 to 1983, led Organski to conclude, not surprisingly, that Israel’s net value as a Cold War ally is blindingly obvious. Or is the figure closer to $3 trillion, as economist Thomas Stauffer estimated after factoring in the rise in the price of oil, the financial assistance to neighboring states, the cost of the agreements to guarantee Israel’s oil supplies and myriad other factors?21 I believe the answer is nearer to Stauffer’s figures, but it is plainly a judgment call. The essence of the relationship is not its dollar cost, but the fact that the United States has come to perceive its interests in the Middle East through Israel’s eyes. This is what renders it special. One can debate how important Israel was in encouraging the United States to invade Iraq, but there is no doubt that, if Israel had opposed the invasion, no American politician would have supported it. The same can be said about the possibility of an attack on Iran.

This is also the case with the outbreak of Islamophobia in the United States. The editor of a major liberal magazine — a high-profile intellectual — has written that he doesn’t feel First Amendment protections should apply to Muslims. Would Martin Peretz have arrived at this independently of his feelings for Israel? It would be hard to find a knowledgeable person who believes so. Peretz is hardly alone. Thus, one can likely chalk up a portion of America’s retreat from its own liberal principles to Israel.

In the coming years, as the prospect of a two-state solution disappears, it is likely that Israel will continue its inexorable march toward becoming a state between the Jordan River and the sea, with one set of laws for Jews, who will have the rights of citizens, and another for Arabs, who will be denied full citizenship. What will it cost America’s broader relationship with the Muslim world to maintain a special bond with a state based on this kind of ethnic discrimination? That also would be difficult to quantify. And yet this scenario may be impossible to escape. The threat of Israel’s turning itself into a nuclear-armed desperado striking at will at the oil states in the Gulf cannot, alas, be entirely dismissed. That may be, as Ariel Roth argues, a compelling reason to maintain the special relationship pretty much unchanged.

#### That link turns the aff since Iran escalates, getting the bomb, to respond to Israel lashout

Sinaee 22’ [(Maryam, British Iranian Journalist and Political Analysist “Iran Ready To Build Nukes If Attacked: IRGC-Linked Social Media,” Iran International, https://www.iranintl.com/en/202207301168, July 30, 2022] -TDI

Two Telegram channels with links to IRGC have suggested that Iran may build nuclear warheads “in the shortest possible time” if attacked by the US or Israel. Bisimchi Media (Radioman Media) Telegram channel on Saturday published a short video [entitled “When Will Iran’s Sleeping Nuclear Warheads Awaken”](https://t.me/BisimchiMedia/89986) in which it said the Islamic Republic will begin building nuclear bombs in the shortest possible time “if the US or the Zionist regime make any stupid mistakes.” The video also says that uranium enrichment in secret underground facilities of Fordow, near Qom, has brought Iran to the threshold of nuclear breakout and joining the nuclear powers’ club and stresses that transforming the country’s “peaceful nuclear program to a nuclear weapons program” is possible in a very short time. Israeli has repeatedly threatened in recent months to use all means at its disposal to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear threat, and has said its armed forces are preparing for action if necessary. “The nuclear facilities of Fordow have been built deep under mountains of Iran and are protected against trench-busting bombs and even nuclear explosion… all infrastructures required for nuclear breakout have been prepared in it,” the video said while adding that the facilities at Natanz may be highly vulnerable to a possible attack by Western powers and Israel but Fordow will immediately assume war footing and begin the nuclear breakout project within a short time if Natanz comes under missile attack. The video report also suggests that Iran’s ballistic missiles have the capability of “turning New York into hellish ruins”, citing Iran’s space program, which has so far been mostly a failure. An underground uranium enrichment facility in IranSepah-e Qods Telegram channel republished Bishimchi Media’s video with the caption [“Iran Prepared To Carry Out Top Secret EMAD Project](https://t.me/quds_hajghasem/120370): Building First Nuclear Warhead If Natanz Comes Under Attack”.

### link---dependence---1nc

#### Israel is fully dependent on the US – any crisis could escalate existentially

Freilich 17 [(Chuck, Adjunct Associate Professor of Political Science, Dept of Political Science, Columbia University) “Israel’s Dependence on the United States is Existential” Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/israels-dependence-united-states-existential>, 2/7/17] NH - TDI

Let's start with American financial aid. To date, Israel has been the beneficiary of approximately $125 billion in U.S. aid, an unimaginable sum, more than any other country since WW II, and which is slated to further increase to some $165 billion by the end of the new ten-year aid package, in 2029.

U.S. aid constitutes some 3 percent of Israel's total state budget and about 1 percent of its GDP, a highly significant sum, but one which it could do without if we truly wanted or had to. Conversely, a huge uproar erupts every time the government considers a budget cut of similar, or even smaller, proportions. Moreover, U.S. aid constitutes some 20 percent of the total defense budget, 40 percent of the IDF budget, and almost the entire procurement budget. There is no alternative to U.S. aid, except at the price of a change in the national order of priorities.

Even if we were to assume that Israel can do without U.S. financing, no other country would be both willing and capable of supplying us with weapons in such quantities even if we paid cash, especially advanced ones, like the F35. There is simply no alternative to American weapons, and our dependence on the United States is almost complete; the bitter truth is that without the United States, the IDF would be an empty shell.

Furthermore, Israel's dependence on the United States is not limited to financial aid and weapons sales. The United States provides technologies for the development of unique weapons systems that Israel needs, such as the Iron Dome and the Arrow rocket and missile defense systems. It mans the radar deployed in Israel which is linked to the global American satellite system, thereby providing us with additional warning time before missiles from distant countries, such as Iran, hit.

The United States also cooperates with Israel in a variety of areas related to counter-terrorism, the cyber threat, and prevention of the proliferation of WMD. The United States has prepositioned a huge store of weapons and munitions in Israel, some of which are available for Israeli use, and conducts joint military exercises with the IDF, which provide it with the opportunity to learn some of the most advanced military tactics. Intelligence cooperation is so broad and deep that Israel's capabilities would be totally different without the United States.

On the strategic level, a deep dialogue takes place on a variety of issues, including the Palestinians, the Iranian nuclear program, Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas, and more. Moreover, there is a de facto U.S. security commitment to Israel's existence, which comprises an important part of its overall deterrence. Israel may be able to face Iran on its own, on the basis of its independent capabilities, but it is unclear how we could handle the nightmare scenario of a Middle East with multiple nuclear states.

Imagine a crisis between a number of nuclear states, lacking in means of communications between them, some of which are extremist and sworn to our destruction, and whose mutual relations are not much better. The United States would have a vital role in containing a crisis such as this and in preventing a downward spiral. The nuclear agreement with Iran, so disparaged by our leaders, has apparently provided a greater gain of time than any other option could have, including military action. In so doing, it once again demonstrates Israel's great dependence on the United States, even in the face of this existential threat. The United States has also provided a diplomatic shield from international efforts to deprive Israel of its purported nuclear capabilities.

Among the world powers, only the United States seeks to promote a settlement with the Palestinians on terms that are acceptable to most of Israel's population. No other state so consistently supports Israel's demands for security and recognition as the nation-state of the Jewish people, and its opposition to the so called "right of return." No other power so consistently defends Israel in almost every international organization and leads the battle against its delegitimization and diplomatic isolation. We saw how the great heroes in Jerusalem trembled when the United States merely abstained recently from a non-binding Security Council resolution on the settlements.

The United States is Israel's largest trading partner, at least partially due to the bilateral free trade agreement, the first the United States signed with any country. Israel's hi-tech sector exists and flourishes largely because of the United States.

So maybe Israel can survive without the United States, significantly reduce its standard of living, withdraw into itself. Maybe. What is abundantly clear is that it would be a far less secure and far poorer existence, with severe isolation and a lifestyle fundamentally different from that which most Israelis have become accustomed to.

Significant changes are underway in American society that do not bode well for the future of the bilateral relationship, inter alia, the rise of population groups that are less identified with Israel (Hispanics, those with no religious identification, the young) and the dwindling numbers of the secular Jewish population, Israel's traditional base of support. It is high time that our leaders finally adopt a considered and responsible approach towards the United States, adapt our policies to those of the United States to the extent possible, narrow and minimize those disagreements that are truly unavoidable, and act in a serious and cautious manner towards our great ally. It is a matter of existential importance.

### link---military presence---1nc

#### Israel can’t strike – US alliance prevents it

Safaei 21 [(Sajjad Safaei, postdoc fellow at Germany’s Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology), "Israel Isn’t Strong Enough to Attack Iran," Foreign Policy, https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/09/17/israel-isnt-strong-enough-to-attack-iran/, 9-17-2021] BZ – TDI

Not for the first time in recent memory, Israel wants the world to know it is ready and willing to militarily strike Iran—alone if it has to.

In recent weeks, Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz has twice spoken of Israel’s readiness to strike Iran militarily to prevent it from advancing is nuclear program. “I do not rule out the possibility that Israel will have to take action in the future in order to prevent a nuclear Iran,” he said at a briefing of foreign ambassadors and envoys. And as though to add to the alarmist mood, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of General Staff Aviv Kochavi claimed that the “progress in the Iranian nuclear program has led the IDF to speed up its operational plans” for an attack on the country and that a recently-approved “defense budget … is meant to address this.” A dedicated team, he boasted, had been assembled to boost preparation for a strike on Iranian nuclear facilities should such a strike be ordered by Israel’s political leadership. For his part, Israeli Prime Minister Neftali Bennett has said his country is ready to “act alone” against Iran if it ever feels the need to do so. He made the remarks after an attack on an Israeli-managed tanker off the coast of Oman, for which Tel Aviv and its allies blamed Iran.

To be sure, Israel has in the past carried out relatively limited operations against Iran—such as raids on Iranian allies in Syria and nuclear sabotage—and may continue to do so in the future. But to what extent should we believe Tel Aviv is truly ready and willing to launch a strike on Iran because of advances in the Iranian nuclear program, knowing full well that this is likely to push the two countries and their allies into war? The political and military constraints on Israeli decision-makers suggests such a military showdown is highly unlikely.

To speak of an imminent and undisguised IDF strike deep inside Iranian territory is to overlook a long-established norm that has for decades governed U.S.-Israel relations: Israel cannot simply ignore the wishes and concerns of its chief patron, especially when core U.S. foreign policy priorities are at stake.

This norm was expressed in clear terms by no less a figure than Israel’s former premier and Defense Minister Ehud Barak in his autobiography My Country, My Life. Here, Barak spelled out the paradigm that has shaped—and will likely continue to shape—the contours of Israeli action against Iran. “There were only two ways,” he explained, that Israel could stop the Iranians from getting a nuclear weapon (read: “nuclear program,” for Barak willfully ignores U.S. intelligence assessments that Iran had halted pursuits for nuclear weapons in 2003). One way was “for the Americans to act.” The only other option was “for [the United States] not to hinder Israel from doing so.”

But according to Barak, “hinder” is precisely what consecutive U.S. administrations have done—and are still likely to do.

Even during the military interventionism of the George W. Bush presidency, Israel did not have a blank check to do as it pleased. As Barak notes in his memoirs, when Bush learned in 2008 of Israeli efforts to purchase heavy munitions from the United States, he confronted Barak and then-premier Ehud Olmert. “I want to tell both of you now, as president,” Bush warned, “We are totally against any action by you to mount an attack on the [Iranian] nuclear plants.”

“I repeat,” Bush further clarified, “in order to avoid any misunderstanding. We expect you not to do it. And we’re not going to do it, either, as long as I am president. I wanted it to be clear.” It deserves mention that according to Barak, Bush issued this warning despite knowing that Israel did not even possess the military capacity to assault Iran at the time.

According to Barak, this staunch opposition to a strike on Iran had a “dramatic” effect on him and Olmert since the Bush administration had supported Israel’s 2007 bombing of Syria’s nascent nuclear program just a year before. In both cases, Washington’s approval, or lack thereof, was demonstrably consequential.

Barak’s memoirs show that the same dynamic continued to govern U.S.-Israel relations during Obama’s presidency. He recalls how then-U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta “made no secret of the fact he didn’t want us to launch a military strike” at a time when the Obama administration was focused on putting international political and economic pressure on Iran. Panetta “urged me to ‘think twice, three times,’ before going down that road,” Barak wrote, and saw it as a given that Tel Aviv would keep Washington abreast of its decisions. “If you do decide to attack the Iranian facilities, when will we know?” he allegedly asked Barak.

According to Barak’s account, Israel was dissuaded from going forward with a supposed strike on Iran’s nuclear installations in summer 2012 “because of the damage it would do to our ties with the United States.” Washington’s demands continued to limit Tel Aviv after the finalization of the nuclear deal in 2015. Even then, Barak recalls, the Israelis could not simply act against Iran without a green light from the Obama administration: “We needed to reach agreement with the Americans about what kind of military strike we, or they, might have to take if the Iranians again moved to get nuclear weapons.”

As evinced by Barak’s autobiography, U.S. presidents are not taciturn about making their views and wishes known to Israeli officials, especially when primary U.S. foreign policy objectives are involved. Nor can Tel Aviv afford to ignore Washington’s express demands and concerns on such matters. And today, any flagrant Israeli violation of Iranian sovereignty will instantly clash with two mutually reinforcing goals that have come to define the Biden administration’s foreign policy: curbing Iran’s nuclear program through non-military means (efforts currently focused on reviving the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal) and winding down U.S. military presence in the Middle East.

These political realities make it unlikely Israel will pursue an overt strike on Iran. Just as important, however, are the military constraints that Israel faces.

To be sure, even without its ready-to-launch nuclear warheads, Israel is more than capable of delivering swift and devastating blows to Iran’s armed forces, both in the skies and seas. Its fleet of American fighter jets and bombers alone can irreparably trounce Iran’s air defenses as well as its dilapidated air force. Even Iran’s increasingly powerful, accurate, and far-reaching missile and drone systems don’t radically alter the balance of power in the skies. In short, in terms of military hardware, the IDF’s superiority over Iran’s armed forces is indisputable, not to mention otherworldly.

But this prodigious superiority will be rendered far less consequential in the event of an all-out war that lures the IDF ground forces into the battlefield. Why? Ever since the IDF’s embarrassing defeat during the 2006 war with Hezbollah, Israel’s top military brass have become acutely aware that the country’s land forces are ill-prepared for a full-scale war with a fighting force even moderately capable of packing a punch.

As shown by Israel’s own scathing inquiry into the 2006 war, as well as reports by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the U.S. Army, the 33-day war with Hezbollah demonstrated that the IDF ground forces had been woefully ill-prepared to fight a real war with a formidable foe.

Since then, there have been some signs of remedial measures undertaken by the IDF to address its shortcomings. Still, there is little reason to believe its ground forces have undergone a drastic improvement since the 2006 war. Unsurprisingly, when Gadi Eizenkot began his tenure as Chief of General Staff of the IDF a few months after Protective Edge (the 2014 Gaza War), he reportedly “found the ground forces in rather bad shape” and “an army that had gotten fat in … all the wrong places in the decade after the Second Lebanon War.” The picture looked more or less the same in late 2018 when the outgoing ombudsman of the Israeli Defense Ministry Maj. Gen. (res.) Yitzhak Brick warned lawmakers in a “contentious” meeting that the country’s ground forces were unprepared for a future war.

Mindful of the gaping chink in the IDF’s armor, Israel’s highest military and political echelons are unlikely to order an overt military operation inside Iranian territory, knowing full well that such an assault will most likely lock Israel and Iran in an irreversible spiral of escalation that promises to pit ill-prepared IDF ground troops against Iranian forces and their regional allies such as Hezbollah.

But if Washington’s red light and Tel Aviv’s own military calculus render a flagrant violation of Iranian sovereignty by the IDF unlikely, then what is to account for the public, at times even garish, saber-rattling emanating from Israeli statesmen? Such threats are partly tailored for domestic consumption. In a highly militarized social context that has in recent decades steadily drifted toward the far-right, talk of bombing Iran may be an effort to not appear weak before one’s political rivals.

It may also be read, however, as a bargaining posture to strengthen Israel’s position vis-à-vis the Biden administration on issues far closer to home than the Iranian nuclear program. By continuously breathing life into the specter of striking Iran—a source of great unease in Western capitals due its catastrophic ramifications—Israeli leaders can offer to forgo their non-existent plans to enter an all-out war with Iran in return for other gains: Biden dropping his opposition to illegal settlement expansion in the occupied territories (a secondary issue for the United States) as well as more military and financial aid.

#### Us military support prevents Israel lash out

Diehl & Lepgold 03 [(Paul- Ashbel Smith Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas at Dallas, Joseph- Assistant Professor of International Affairs and Government at Georgetown University “Regional conflict managment,” pg 194, Rowman and littlefield , https://books.google.com/books?id=1WAjK3SPtlsC&pg=PA194&lpg=PA194&dq=military+aid+to+israel+restrains+their+ability+to+fight+iran&source=bl&ots=-46T5x30n4&sig=ACfU3U3dyTYjoQBI5LxiXX\_GQSwxKZF5Gw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAtLyFvaiAAxWdPEQIHV7JDaQ4ChDoAXoECAIQAw#v=onepage&q=military%20aid%20to%20israel%20restrains%20their%20ability%20to%20fight%20iran&f=false, February 4, 2003)] - TDI

The United States has employed the various strategies available to a hegemonic power for promoting a transition from a regional cold war (crisis man-agement) to cold peace (conflict reduction):

1. ﻿﻿﻿Restraining its client Israel (notably in times of local wars, when it posed a threat to Arab capitals, such as at the end of the 1967 and 1973 wars, or when its use of force could potentially cause an escalation of the conflict, such as during the 1956 war and the Gulf War) and applying diplomatic and economic pressure to induce its moderation in the regional peace process, for example, during the reassessment crisis of spring 1975.122
2. ﻿﻿﻿In recent years, and especially after the outbreak of the Intifada in recent months, the United States restrains Israeli reactions to the provocative acts committed against it from Lebanon and the Palestinian territories so as to prevent escalation in these two fronts.123
3. ﻿﻿﻿Reassuring its allies through arms supply and security cooperation and military assistance (to Israel, Jordan, the Gulf states and post-Camp David Egypt), crucial financial assistance (to Israel, Egypt, and Jordan) and security guarantees (to the Gulf states). The reassurance to Israel is designed to make it easier for Israel to make territorial concessions to its Arab neighbors.
4. ﻿﻿﻿Coercing revisionist regional powers by sanctions and use of force: In contrast to its attitude toward its friends in the region, the United States has imposed economic sanctions and arms embargoes on states perceived to be hostile toward it, its regional interests, and the advancement of the peace process. specifically Ira. Libya. Imn, and Sudan. 124 A notable example of a containment strategy toward revisionist powers by the imposition of diplomatic and economic sanctions and an arms embargo is the Clinton administration's dual containment vis-à-vis both Iran and Iraq. 25
5. When diplomatic and economic means were insufficient for defending its key interests, the United States was willing to resort to military means to maintain the regional order. Washington exereised deterrence, 126 later compellence, and when both of these strategies failed to prevent aggres-sion, ultimately was willing to fight and defeat a regional aggressor (Iraq in the Gulf War). 127
6. ﻿﻿﻿Establishing a regional security regime in the Gulf following the 1991 war.
The failure of the regional balance of power to deter Iraq, the inability to establish regional collective security due to revisionist status quo split and the conditions in the aftermath of the war led to the internationalization' of security arrangements. Some of the U.S. objectives in the Gulf included

## politics da

### link---plan unpopular---1nc

#### The plan is bad – it doesn’t have public support which proves it will deteriorate relations.

Afrasiabi 19 [(Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, Iranian-American political scientist and author or co-author of several books on Iranian foreign policy, including Iran Nuclear Negotiations: Accord and Détente Since the Geneva Agreement of 2013; Iran Nuclear Accord and the Remaking of the Middle East (2018); and Trump and Iran: Containment to Confrontation (2020).), “A nuclear war in the Persian Gulf?”, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, https://thebulletin.org/2019/07/a-nuclear-war-in-the-persian-gulf/, 7/2/19] OM – TDI

Key Findings

A majority of Americans say the US military presence in the Middle East should be maintained (45%) or increased (29%). Just 24 percent think it should be decreased.

A majority support long-term military bases in Iraq (55%, up from 41% in 2014) and Kuwait (57%, up from 47% in 2014). Nearly half favor keeping bases in Afghanistan (48%, up from 43% in 2014).

A combined majority (54%) say alliances in the Middle East benefit both Middle East partners and the United States or mostly benefit the United States.

## terror da

### terror---1nc

#### **Hezbollah doesn’t strike, but only because it’s afraid of US retaliation**

Williams 22 [Stephanie T. Williams, Daniel L. Byman Director and Professor, Security Studies Program - Georgetown University, Senior Fellow - Foreign Policy, Center for Middle East Policy, November 2022, "Hezbollah's dilemmas," Brookings, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hezbollahs-dilemmas/, accessed 7-24-2023] bo - TDI

The Lebanese Hezbollah is no longer the same organization that in 2006 battled the Israeli army to a standstill: the group today is more global, but has a weaker domestic position than in the past. For the last decade, Hezbollah has focused its formidable energies on helping its longtime ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s regime in Syria, win the country’s civil war. As that conflict winds down with Assad secure in power, Hezbollah is pulled in many competing directions. Lebanon itself is in crisis, with Hezbollah’s own legitimacy declining. Iran is pushing Hezbollah to be even more expansive, continuing to help fight Israel and to bolster militant groups in Iraq, Yemen, and other countries. Hezbollah retains its enmity towards Israel and remains a dangerous threat, but the group appears careful to avoid activities that might escalate into all-out war. The United States can put more financial pressure on Hezbollah and otherwise attempt to weaken the group, but the group’s fate will ultimately depend on Lebanese and regional dynamics, with the group exercising considerable influence in Lebanon and the region, though not necessarily seeking greater conflict with Israel or the United States. Until the Lebanese themselves put their own house in order by reducing corruption, engaging in economic reform, and improving transparency, there will be limits on how much the United States can, or should, engage with Lebanon.

In July 2022, the Lebanese Hezbollah sent unmanned drones to threaten Israel as it attempted to begin production at Karish gas field. Israel viewed the drone flights with alarm and shot them down. Yet for all the concern, the Hezbollah threat did not stop Israel and Lebanon – where the group is a powerful political player – from negotiating a deal over the field, heralded as an important step forward in bilateral normalization.1 Indeed, despite Hezbollah’s bluster, it proved willing to allow the deal to move forward and eventually even praised it, suggesting it might want to rock the boat but not tip it over.

Although Hezbollah’s blustering over Karish seemed to suggest the group was ending its decade-long focus on Syria and returning to menace its historic enemy, the Lebanese group is no longer the same organization that in 2006 battled the Israeli army to a standstill: Hezbollah today is more global, but has a weaker domestic position than in the past. For the last decade, the group focused its formidable energies on helping its longtime ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s regime in Syria, win the country’s civil war. As that conflict winds down with Assad secure in power, Hezbollah is pulled in many competing directions. Lebanon itself is in crisis, with Hezbollah’s own legitimacy declining. Iran is pushing Hezbollah to be even more expansive, to continue to help fight Israel, and to bolster militant groups in Iraq, Yemen, and other countries.

Hezbollah itself has multiple strategic aims. It has long moved away of its vision of imposing an Iran-like theocratic state in Lebanon, instead seeking at least a strong, and perhaps a dominant, political role in the country while working with other communities. Hezbollah is also committed to its fight with Israel, regarding the Jewish state as fundamentally illegitimate and, as part of this struggle, assisting Palestinian militant groups. The group also seeks to advance Tehran’s foreign policy interests, working with Iran’s minions and would-be allies around the world. Hezbollah balances these competing, and at times conflicting, priorities, but the group is likely to remain **cautious about renewing any conflict with Israel or striking the United States**.

To understand Hezbollah’s dilemmas, it is important to examine the different theaters in which the Lebanese group operates. These include Hezbollah’s changing position in Lebanon; the group’s relationships with its longtime state sponsors, Syria and especially Iran; Hezbollah’s role in various conflicts in the Muslim world, often at Iran’s behest; its stance towards Israel, its traditional nemesis; and finally, the broader terrorism threat it might pose to the United States. An examination of these different theaters suggests Hezbollah is likely to be cautious in the years to come, trying to play multiple roles yet avoiding all-out clashes with Israel or other steps that might prove disastrous for the group. The United States has limited influence in Lebanon, but it can take small steps to weaken Hezbollah.

#### US Israel partnership is key to counter- terrorism efforts

US DOS 20 [(US Department of State “Country Reports on Terrorism 2020: Israel, West Bank, and Gaza,” Us department of State, https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/israel/, 2020] -TDI

Overview: Israel remained a committed counterterrorism partner, closely coordinating with the United States on a range of counterterrorism initiatives. Owing to COVID-19, Israel and the United States held numerous interagency counterterrorism dialogues virtually to discuss and collaborate on regional threats. Counterterrorism issues were also at the center of the agenda during numerous high-level U.S. visits to Israel. Israel faced threats from the North from Hizballah and along the northeastern frontier from Hizballah and other Iran-backed groups, including as many as 150,000 rockets and missiles aimed at Israel, according to some Israeli estimates. Israeli officials expressed concern that Iran was supplying Hizballah with advanced weapons systems and technologies, including precision-guided missiles. This concern included Iran’s work to assist Hizballah and other proxies in indigenously producing rockets, missiles, and drones. To the South, Israel faced threats from terrorist organizations including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and ISIS-Sinai Province. Rocket attacks originating from Gaza resulted in several injuries and property damage. There were sporadic attempts to infiltrate Israel from Gaza by armed militants, none of which resulted in Israeli casualties. Other sources of terrorist threats included the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and lone-actor attacks. 2020 Terrorist Incidents: In December, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi said 2020 registered the lowest number of Israelis killed by terrorism in the country’s history. Nonetheless, Israel still experienced terrorist attacks involving weapons ranging from rockets and mortars to vehicular attacks, small arms, and knives. The following is a representative list of IDF-announced terrorist and ethno-religious attacks: In February, Palestinian Sanad at-Turman carried out a ramming attack against IDF soldiers in Jerusalem, injuring 12. In April, on the national Memorial Day for Israeli victims of terrorism, a 20-year-old Palestinian stabbed a 62-year-old Israeli woman in Kfar Saba. The assailant was shot by a bystander and was hospitalized in serious condition; the victim was hospitalized in moderate condition. In August a 23-year-old Palestinian man from Jenin stabbed a Rosh Ha’ayin man 20 times, leaving him in serious condition. Hamas and other terrorist groups including the PIJ launched more than 175 rockets and more than 150 incendiary balloons from Gaza toward Israel, some of which landed in civilian areas. Iron Dome, Israel’s air defense system, intercepted many of the rockets. Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Israel has a robust legal framework to combat terrorism and promote international legal assistance in the investigation and prosecution of terrorists. For a portion of 2020, the Palestinian Authority (PA) suspended security coordination with Israel; for details, see “The West Bank and Gaza” section below. Israeli security forces took numerous significant law enforcement actions against suspected terrorists and terrorist groups, including the following: On April 7, Israeli law enforcement arrested an Israeli Arab citizen, Ayman Haj Yahya, for allegedly collaborating with Iranian intelligence and with a PFLP operative. Israeli authorities assert that Yahya received funding, training, and instructions to establish a terrorist cell. In April, Israeli authorities discovered and thwarted planned IED attacks at a soccer stadium in Jerusalem and against IDF vehicles and posts near Ramallah by a Hamas cell from Bir Zeit University. In September the Israeli Security Agency arrested an East Jerusalem woman, Yasmin Jaber, for allegedly heading a cell to recruit Israelis and Palestinians for IRGC-QF and Hizballah. In October, Israel’s General Security Service arrested two minors in Beit Umar near Hebron in connection with allegations that Hamas had recruited them for terrorism. Israeli authorities assert that they had received from Hamas weapons, ammunition, uniforms, and money for West Bank attacks. Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Israel is a member of FATF and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism. FIU, the Israeli Money Laundering and Terror Finance Prohibition Authority, is a member of the Egmont Group. The 2019 Israeli Deduction Law requires the Ministry of Finance to withhold from its monthly tax revenue transfers to the PA the amounts Israel estimates the PA pays to Palestinians connected to terrorism, including to the families of terrorists who died in attacks. The PA calls these prisoner and “martyr” payments, and argues they are social payments for families who have lost their primary breadwinner. The United States and Israel argue the payments incentivize and reward terrorism, particularly given the higher monthly payments the longer an individual remains imprisoned, which corresponds to more severe crimes. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, the Israeli security cabinet did not approve the 2019 prisoner/martyr report until November. In May, some Palestinian banks closed relevant prisoner and “martyr” payment accounts for fear of criminal liability resulting from an Israeli military order extending such liability to banks facilitating payment transfers, though the Israeli government later suspended the order’s implementation until the end of the year. In October, Defense Minister Gantz signed an order confiscating an undetermined sum (described in the media as “hundreds of thousands of new Israeli shekels”) that Hamas and the PA had sent a group of “martyr” families inside Israel. In December, after the PA announced a resumption of cooperation with Israel, the Israeli government transferred all pending tax revenue to the PA but declared it would deduct $184 million for prisoner and martyr payments, to be prorated monthly in the coming year. Countering Violent Extremism: Although the COVID-19 pandemic constrained activities during the year, the Israeli government continued work on its “City Without Violence” and “Israeli Hope” initiatives. The Ministry of Community Empowerment adopted City Without Violence and widened the scope of the program to more municipalities, with additional tools in different fields to counter violence and crime. The Ministry of Community Empowerment also supported and funded Israel’s national community-based prevention initiative, “The Israeli Authority for Community Safety,” in collaboration with the Israeli National Police. More than 250 municipalities implemented community, education, and social welfare projects to counter violence, crime, and substance misuse. The Community Safety Authorities’ principles include prevention and health promotion, local capabilities, and community engagement. The Office of the President expanded its work on Israeli Hope programs and activities to develop and reinforce the partnership between various sectors of society, in areas such as education, academia, employment, sports, and local government. It did this in partnership with four population sectors: secular, modern Orthodox, ultra-Orthodox (Haredi), and Arab. Israeli Hope in Education and Israeli Hope in Academia encourage a more diverse and equitable higher education system, to prepare graduates for life in a society valuing coexistence and partnership. Israeli Hope in Employment concentrates on promoting employment diversity, representation, and cultural competence, placing emphasis on integrating the ultra-Orthodox and Arabs into the economy. The Israeli Hope in Sports program aims to encourage tolerance and seeking an end to violence and racism. In each area, the program attempts to create meaningful and broad cooperative efforts between individuals and public organizations, and in the private and the volunteer sectors in efforts to promote understanding and tolerance. International and Regional Cooperation: In May, Israeli officials told reporters that Israel had provided sufficient intelligence to Germany regarding Hizballah’s activities on German soil to influence Germany’s decision to take further action against Hizballah. This was the latest in a series of collaborative counterterrorism efforts between Israeli intelligence services and their partners in Europe and Australia over the past several years. Israeli officials credited these efforts for successfully thwarting terrorist attacks by ISIS, Hizballah, and other violent extremist groups. The West Bank and Gaza Overview: The Palestinian Authority continued its counterterrorism and law enforcement efforts in the West Bank, where U.S.-designated terrorist organizations Hamas, the PIJ, al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, and the PFLP remained active to various extents. PA officials expressed a commitment to nonviolence but halted security coordination with Israel in May, before officially resuming it again in November, proclaiming the decision as necessary to deter Israel’s application of sovereignty to parts of the West Bank. Despite stopping official coordination with Israel, PA security forces in the West Bank constrained the ability of terrorist organizations and individuals to conduct attacks, in part by arrests targeting those suspected of planning attacks against Israelis. Per Oslo Accords-era agreements, the PA exercised varying degrees of authority over the West Bank, with the IDF securing Areas B and C, as well as periodic Israeli entry into PA-controlled areas (Area A) for counterterrorism operations. The IDF and the Israeli Security Agency also arrested individuals and members of terrorist organizations operating in the West Bank, including a group of 21 Hamas members in early September in the largest operation in the West Bank since 2014. The United States, through the multinational office of the U.S. Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority (USSC), worked with the PA Ministry of Interior and PA security forces on training (including counterterrorism) and reform efforts (including professionalization and police primacy), except during the May-September cessation. During that period, USSC staff from other member states under U.S. leadership continued to assist the PA until the resumption of security coordination with Israel, as it developed professional security forces capable of some, but not all, counterterrorism functions.

#### Military Aid to Israel prevents Terror

Daroff 5-1 [(Willaim Daroff, CEO OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF MAJOR AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS) “Military Aid to Israel Offers Valuable Returns”, Newsweek, <https://www.newsweek.com/military-aid-israel-offers-valuable-returns-opinion-1797655>, 5/1/2023] //lynbk MD – TDI

As we commemorate Israel's 75th birthday and the longstanding friendship between the United States and the Jewish State, we must reassert our bond—and spurn efforts to diminish it, as cooperation between both nations safeguards Israel from the destruction of war, maintains regional stability, protects vital American strategic interests, and ultimately saves countless lives. This partnership is now being threatened by a few fringe members of Congress calling on President Biden to restrict military aid to Israel. The benefits of U.S. military aid to Israel are well known and well documented. Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, the U.S. has allocated over $150 billion in military and economic aid to Israel. **American support helped Israel develop a strong military that can repel a variety of attacks from terrorism**, ballistic missiles, and the many other dangers menacing Israel's borders. U.S. assistance also enables Israel to maintain its qualitative military edge over adversaries such as Iran, ensuring that it can defend itself effectively against any global threat. U.S. military aid to Israel is not simply about Israel's defense—it also serves critical and undeniable American national security interests. Israel is a key ally in an important region. Our military partnership enables the U.S. to maintain an active presence without having to deploy U.S. troops and potentially put Americans in harm's way. Israel's thriving defense industry produces cutting-edge military technologies, such as the Iron Dome missile defense system, which has saved thousands of lives. Military aid to Israel also contributes to new scientific innovations that benefit the entire world, including the development of breakthrough medical devices and water-conservation technologies. Additionally, more than 75 percent of security assistance provided to Israel is spent in the United States. This spending boosts the U.S. economy and helps support thousands of high-quality American jobs across the country**. Efforts to cut or condition military aid to Israel would have lasting and disastrous implications for Israel's ability to defend civilians from existential threats**. Moreover, such proposals are far too often fodder for those who viscerally oppose the very existence of Israel, the world's only Jewish State, as well as those who hide their antisemitism behind the fig-leaf of anti-Zionism. Cutting military aid not only lessens Israel's ability and readiness to defend itself, but also, intentionally, or otherwise, incentivizes those who seek to do harm to the prospects of a lasting peace in the region. The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is on record strongly opposing any attempts to limit or condition U.S. security assistance to Israel. Israel faces threats from all its borders and beyond. Cutting back on funding or attaching strings to aid fundamentally weakens Israel's ability to counter these very real threats. Such actions would also undermine Israel's role as a friend and ally of the U.S. and hurt the collective welfare and harmony of the Middle East. **Proposals to cut or condition U.S. military aid to Israel ultimately enable extremists and those who seek to perpetuate violence.** **These initiatives ignore Israel's right to defend herself and serve to play into the hands of those who wish to harm Israelis and destabilize the region**, who will read such moves as weakening Israel, as well as indicating a lack of U.S. support for the Middle East's only thriving democracy. We must not allow hate and bigotry to drive policymaking. Nor can we risk a breakdown in the prospect of future peace talks, as Israelis must be confident that they will be able to defend themselves from those who would seek to destroy them. Instead, we must work towards a future where Israelis and Palestinians can coexist peacefully and securely. Notwithstanding a small but vocal fringe in Congress pushing a dangerous and false narrative, President Biden demonstrates his unwavering support for the US-Israel relationship by rightly recognizing that adding further conditions to U.S. aid would be "irresponsible." As American Jewish leaders, we are grateful for the President's commitment on this issue. We confidently anticipate that vast super-majorities in Congress will continue to honor this 75-year-old bipartisan endeavor, as they have consistently for decades. Moves to cut or attach strings to U.S. aid to Israel not only harm Israel's ability to defend itself, but also undermine important U.S. national security interests, as well as the potential for peace negotiations in the region. **By incentivizing those who engage in terrorism and deny Palestinians the prospects for a better life, such proposals create more discord and dissent**. On Israel's 75th anniversary, let us reaffirm our commitment to this important partnership, and reject any and all efforts to weaken it.

#### Hezbollah will use bioweapons risking extinction---state sponsorship shields defense.

Jill Bellamy **van Aalst 13**. CEO of Warfare Technology Analytics, advises business and government clients on biological warfare and bio-defense within the EU and NATO, develops and runs biological and nuclear war-games for EU MoD and NATO states, she is a Subject Matter Expert on the Syrian and Iranian biological weapon complex. June 2013. “Hezbollah’s UAV Biological Weapon Capability: A Game Changer?” New English Review. http://www.newenglishreview.org/custpage.cfm/frm/140408/sec\_id/140408

Unmanned aerial vehicles have similar flight characteristics to cruise missiles, but are under active human guidance and thus are more flexible. They would be especially attractive for biological weapons delivery.2 Recent events in Syria and international concern over Syria’s chemical weapon stockpile, one of the largest in the world, has overshadowed a far more dangerous clandestine military weapons program. On July 24, 2012, Syria’s Foreign Ministry spokesman, Jihad Makdissi, announced that Syria would not use chemical or biological weapons it retains against its own civilians. This announcement unintentionally acknowledged both the chemical and biological weapons programs Syria has run for years. This announcement riveted both the intelligence community and non-proliferation advocates who have sought to cast doubt on Syrian biological weapons capabilities. Syria’s chemical weapon stockpiles have long been monitored. Chemical weapons are relatively easy to understand and as a result, media attention has focused on Syrian chemical weapon stockpiles. In the shadow of this biological weapons are less well understood. Syria’s biological weapons programs run out of the Syrian Scientific Research (SSRC) in Damascus have not been the focus of much media attention. That despite these weapons are far more dangerous and more likely to be deployed. Perhaps less clear is Syria’s close relationship and support of Hezbollah and Hezbollah’s arsenal of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The merging of Syria’s biological weapon program with Hezbollah and/or Iran’s UAV programs could create an international public health emergency more catastrophic than a natural outbreak. In an article by Arie Egozie entitled “Israel F-16 downs another Hezbollah UAV,” Egozie notes: An Israeli air force F-16 has shot down an unmanned air vehicle launched from Lebanon by Hezbollah militants. The threat was detected over the Mediterranean Sea on 25 April 2013 and was destroyed shortly after by an air-to-air missile. The encounter occurred at 13:30 local time, and an air force helicopter transporting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for an official visit to the north of the country landed as fighters scrambled. Israel's latest interception of a UAV is the fifth such action to have been performed by its air force in the past decade. Ababil Iranian UAV launch ready Iran is believed to have supplied Hezbollah with 12 Ababil UAVs.3 The Ababil carries an 88 pound conventional payload, with a range of approximately 150 miles. Given the unique characteristics of UAV’s it is conceivable that Hezbollah, under orders from Iran, and provided with advanced technology could deploy biological weapons utilizing this platform. Historic Precedence Concern over the use of UAV’s as a possible platform for deploying biological weapons is not new. According to a classified version of the October 2001 US National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) Iraq was “working with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which allow for a more lethal means to deliver biological and, less likely, chemical warfare agents.”4 The NIE judged that the UAVs were “probably intended to deliver biological warfare agents.” Further, it declared that “Baghdad’s UAVs could threaten Iraq’s neighbours, US forces in the Persian Gulf and if brought into the United States, the US Homeland.”5 The unique characteristics of biological weapons put immediate geographic targets at risk. Due to lengthy incubation periods, rDNA, synthetic biology, transmissibility, and virulence could place the global community as a whole at residual risk. Ironically, the casualty risk to Israel from a UAV mounted with BW may actually be rather negligible compared to the likely impact on the larger global community. This is especially acute with regard to regions with limited health care infrastructures and low or non-existent bio-defence capabilities. Could Hezbollah Acquire a UAV BW Capability? Biological and nuclear weapons fall into the highest level of WMD threat, because their effect, for a given low weight, is far greater than for chemical and radiological weapons.6 As a consequence, they were given a priority, comparable to that given nuclear weapons.7 Hezbollah has acquired almost every type of conventional weapon Iran has ever produced and works closely with Syria. As Hezbollah is considered by some to run their own laboratories in Lebanon, it is likely that Syria has already transferred weaponized biological agents to these labs. To put the threat Hezbollah’s potential BW program poses and the possible use of their current UAV stockpile as a deployment platform into clearer focus, in 2005, France's Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin, at an Interpol bio-terrorism conference held in Lyon, emphasized that nowadays terrorists are highly likely to use weapons of mass destruction including biological weapons. Given Hezbollah’s possible laboratories, they could easily maintain an advanced BW capability. Hezbollah’s state sponsorship by both Syria and Iran vastly increase their ability to successfully deploy BW using UAV’s. Why a Biological Weapon Payload Poses a Unique Risk Weaponizing biological agents suitable for a UAV payload requires stabilization and field testing techniques which are available to nearly all national military defence laboratories such as those that exist today in Syria and Iran. Technical thresholds such as stabilization, field testing and dispersal are factors which determine not only kill ratios of a weaponized agent, but the success rate a terrorist group or organization is likely to achieve. Hezbollah’s BW capability should be considered as synonymous with that of Iran. In this sense it would be far more lethal, more likely to go global and produce pandemic disease. On the technical side, Hezbollah has been trained by Iran’s Quds forces in Sudan on BW. The type of BW is likely to be highly advanced, not a homemade version of anthrax collected from soil samples. Additionally, BW received from Syrian programs running at the SSRC in Damascus, is technically very sophisticated. Iran would have the capability to provide Hezbollah with technical mounting of UAV’s with BW. Moreover, in contrast to a conventional payload which may present issues of accuracy, a biological payload does not. Technical Considerations regarding Hezbollah’s BW Mounted UAV’s It is important to understand the advanced technical knowledge Iran and Syria possess both in terms of their BW Complex and mounting a UAV BW payload. A New Yorker article notes ‘the vast majority of drones in the United States will probably be used for agriculture. Drones can be used to more precisely spray crops, keep track of growth rates and hydration, and identify possible outbreaks of disease before they spoil a harvest.’8 Among advanced BW agents, stabilization and deployment are significant issues due to the sensitivity of biological agents to environmental factors, not only during storage but during application.9 Stabilization is problematic due to the susceptibility of organisms to inactivation of biochemical compounds in the environment. The loss of viability can result from exposure to high physical and chemical stress environments such as high surface area at air-water interfaces, (frothing), extreme temperatures or pressures, high salt concentrations, dilution, and or exposure to specific inactivating agents.10 Stabilization of the BW agent for mounting, requires initial concentration of the agent; freeze drying (lyophilisation particularly related to anthrax), spray drying, formulation into solids, liquid or gas solutions; and deep freezing.11 Exact technical methods of concentration include: vacuum filtration, ultrafiltration, precipitation, and centrifugation. Freeze drying is the preferred method for long-term storage of bacterial cultures because freeze-dried cultures can be easily rehydrated and cultured via conventional means.12 Global Security. Org. offers an interesting analysis and details further the technical threshold which Iran and Syria have overcome: A toxin agent is most effective when prepared as a freeze-dried powder and encapsulated. Such encapsulation, however, is not necessary for weaponization. Infectious biological agents are generally stabilized and then spray dried.13 Under appropriate meteorological conditions and with an aerosol generator delivering 1-5 micron particle-size droplets, a single aircraft can disperse 100 kg of anthrax over a 300 km 2 area and theoretically cause 3 million deaths in a population density of 10,000 people per km2. The mean lethal inhalator dosage is 10 nanograms. Hezbollah’s BW Scenarios for mass casualty bio-terrorism It is unlikely Hezbollah or either of their state sponsors would choose b. anthracis (anthrax), to use in a drone attack on Israel. It is more likely they would consider highly pathogenic strains of transmissible Category A or B agents. It is also likely they have war-gamed each scenario utilizing UAV’s as the delivery platform. The use of a UAV would likely increase probability of consistent dissemination and stability of the agent.14 Aerosolization of biological agents using spray devices is the method of choice since the extreme physical conditions associated with explosive dissemination can completely inactivate the biological agent. (Aerosol dispersal allows for control of particle size and density to maximize protection from environmental degradation and uptake of the enclosed biological agents in the lungs of targeted populations.)15 Dissemination efficiency rates of aerosol delivery systems are in the range of 40-60 percent. Cruise missiles, aircraft carrying gravity bombs or spray attachments, and fixed-wing or rotor craft with attached sprayers are all vehicles for delivery of biological agents. The delivery of biological agents by explosive devices is much less efficient (~1-5 percent).16 The preferred approach is dispersion via the use of a pressurized gas in a submunition. Other preferred platforms from an efficiency standpoint include small rotary-wing vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft fitted with spray tanks, drones, bomblets, cruise missiles, and high-speed missiles with bomblet warheads. The Syrian biological weapons program, run primarily out of the SSRC in Damascus, Cerin, Homs and Aleppo, are designed to be highly agile and compartmentalized. They utilize such technologies which are far superior to maintaining and continually upgrading a BW stockpile. For this reason, Syria, Iran and other nations who now run BW programs generally do not stockpile these weapons. The lack of a stockpile, even the lack of signatures on UAV mounted payloads, makes it far more difficult to identify, than during the Cold War Era. Additionally, the weaponized agents Syria and Iran possess are sophisticated. Much of their expertise is gleaned from joint scientific research and development between Syria, Iran and North Korea. The technical obstacles faced by non-state sponsored terrorist organizations does not exist for Hezbollah or Hamas. Unfortunately, in most major transit hubs current detection technologies are not going to pick up what either Syria, Iran or others are working on today. Detection technology has not been able to keep pace with advances in the life sciences. Even multi-agent analysis is complicated by interferences between assays and the large number of BW probes.17 Moreover if a UAV BW payload was launched from Lebanon, detection in airports, train and bus stations would be a moot point. Drones, especially swarms loaded with BW, would have an increased chance of success particularly if some were targeted on unpopulated areas. It is worth noting that due to biological weapons’ unique characterises, a relatively light payload could produce exceptionally high kill ratios compared to a chemical warhead. It is the quality not the quantity that counts. Thus making small drones the ideal deployment platform for BW. Should Hezbollah decide to arm their arsenal of Ababil UAV’s18 or other drones, with biological warfare agents and target Israel, perhaps using a swarm of UAV’s, the likely and unfortunate casualties will be populations in nations who do not possess a bio-defence infrastructure. These are states that do not have the economic means to stockpile vaccines and medical counter-measures, who do not have the laboratory capacity or the health care capacity to conduct mass casualty care. With several BW agents such as smallpox, incubation periods can be lengthy. Some incubation periods would be over three weeks, transmission could occur several kilometres downwind given good meteorological conditions. This means a drone could lay down BW in an unpopulated area. The BW payload, should the drone be destroyed, could go undetected until populations become symptomatic. Lengthy incubation periods mean silent transmission which would come in waves. As A-symptomatic civilians travel to other regions of Israel and internationally. A war game, called Atlantic Storm, illustrates the existential risk to the global community from BW verses chemical or nuclear weapons. Should Hezbollah use a highly transmissible and virulent pathogen, it is still the international community and not necessarily Israel, who will bear the brunt of mortality and economic costs. It is therefore the international community who must confront this increasing threat. Future drone technology trends will no doubt make them more tempting for use as BW platforms. As drones get smaller, making detection more difficult, small amounts of BW which could produce high kill ratios, may well be the technology of future BW warfare.19

## liberal militarism k

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#### Liberal humanitarianism fails. The guise of a ‘values-based foreign policy’ is the worst of all worlds, undermining primacy via hypocrisy and the US’s global policeman status undermines true humanitarianism.

Fiori 19 [(Juliano, Head of Humanitarian Affairs at Save the Children UK, leading a team dedicated to critical reflection for strategic purposes) “Humanitarianism and the End of Liberal Order,” https://www.manchesterhive.com/view/journals/jha/1/1/article-p1.xml?body=fulltext, Journal of Humanitarian Affairs, 1/1/19] NH - TDI

The first thing to say about liberal order is that it hasn’t been that liberal. Since the Second World War, the production of subjects obeisant to the rule of liberal institutions has depended on illiberal and authoritarian methods – not least on the periphery of the world system, where conversion to Western reason has been pursued with particularly millenarian zeal, and violence. The wishful idea of an ever more open and global market economy has been continuously undermined by its champions, with their subsidies and monopolistic distortions. And as liberal hopes for a pacific and technocratic utopia have taken leave of empirical reality, the assumption of progress has been sustained primarily through myth-making and cognitive gymnastics. Fake news is not the antithesis of liberal truth but its progeny.

Nonetheless, the notion of liberal order is useful to the extent that it signals the role of liberal ideas and politics in the consolidation of Western hegemony and, more specifically, the expansion of American power. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms, set out in 1941, provided particularly American inspiration for the post-war development of liberal global governance.1 But the principles of great-power trusteeship and balancing, reflected in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in 1944, were decisive in the creation of the United Nations.2 Despite the early proliferation of liberal institutions under the aegis of the UN, Cold War prerogatives undermined cosmopolitan aspirations for world government. Cancelling each other out in the Security Council, the US and the Soviet Union prioritised bilateral negotiations. UN institutions were then often used, and even designed, explicitly as vehicles for the pursuit of US interests: the World Food Programme, for example, was established in 1961 to channel American agricultural surplus to the developing world.

 Liberal internationalism as we know it today, with its particular political and cultural associations with the US, is a product of the 1970s. As Samuel Moyn has argued, it was in the second half of that decade that human rights had its first breakthrough as a cosmopolitan political agenda to promote individual entitlements that transcend national citizenship (Moyn, 2010). In his inaugural address, in January 1977, President Jimmy Carter declared that ‘Our commitment to human rights must be absolute’ (quoted in Moyn, 2014: 69). Under the guardianship of the UN, following the UDHR in 1948, the concept of human rights had lacked prescriptive force; only once adopted by the US as an instrument of order and hegemony did it become the basis for a global movement.

 For many liberal commentators at the turn of the 1990s, the collapse of the Soviet Union represented a final victory for Western liberal democracy – an unexpected Hegelian denouement in the knotweed of History. Their euphoria – albeit short-lived – provided the entrance music for a new ethical order, constructed by the US, with a basis in liberal humanitarian norms. Without any direct and immediate threat to its hegemony, the US merged its geostrategy with a humanitarian ethics. In 1991, after the Gulf War, the US invaded Iraq in the name of humanitarian concern. The following year, to the applause of numerous humanitarian NGOs, it led a multinational military task force into Somalia, with the stated aim of protecting relief operations. These humanitarian wars, and others that followed during the 1990s, were waged not only to respond to a perceived evil but also to define good and evil and the limits of acceptable behaviour (Fiori, 2018).

Other Western governments also now looked to humanitarian agencies as allies in the liberal transformation of the developing world. During the Cold War, humanitarian NGOs had generally been limited to operating in countries under Western tutelage, but even those inspired by anti-communism were cautious about structural integration into Western security strategies. At the beginning of the 1990s, NGOs shrugged off their scepticism for the morality of state power, working more closely with Western military forces.

Private and government funding for humanitarian operations increased. With the help of news media, humanitarian agencies boosted their political capital, presenting themselves as providers of public moral conscience for the West.

A new political economy of humanitarian aid developed, reinforcing the symbiosis between humanitarianism and the state. The sufficiency of a humanitarian minimum became justification for cuts in public expenditure, particularly as NGOs offered themselves as subcontractors for the provision of essential services at home and abroad. Western governments placed pressure on NGOs to carry out neomanagerial reforms that would promote cultural synergies with their own overseas aid departments, now reorganised according to the business imperatives of the New Public Management. And NGOs used these reforms to accelerate the professionalisation of the aid sector (Fiori et al., 2016).

But at the turn of the millennium, there were indications of a downturn in the influence of humanitarian ideas on Western geostrategy. The strategic value of humanitarian intervention diminished as the US launched its totalising war on terror. Humanitarianism was little more than an afterthought to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Since then, despite the continued rise in donations to humanitarian agencies, the political currency of liberal humanitarianism and its institutions has steadily waned.

In recent years, liberal order has been flagrantly challenged by a visceral and affective politics, produced by globalisation itself. Global income inequality increased significantly with the acceleration of globalisation following the end of the Cold War: from a Gini coefficient of 0.57 to one of 0.72, between 1988 and 2005 (Anand and Segal, 2014: 968). Then, following the 2008 financial crash, capital doubled down. While those most responsible for the crash rewarded themselves with hefty bonuses, those experiencing the worst of its rippling social consequences rebelled against systemic injustices.

Left-leaning protest movements of indignados took to the streets. They rejected economic austerity and promoted progressive social reform. But they soon became marginal to the spreading politics of anger. In the main, the global backlash is now directed against progressive neoliberalism – the dominant ideological variant of late liberalism – with its ‘flexibilisation’ of everything in the economic sphere and its disintegration of tradition in the social sphere.

Globalisation has uprooted people symbolically as well as materially. A growing ‘impulse’ for social protection has received little response from the receding welfare state.3 In the absence of an economic resolution, the assertion of cultural sovereignty has become a fuite en arrière – a retreat, to nostalgic fantasies of grandeur, fascistic tropes of national belonging and religious fundamentalisms.4 Ressentiment has given rise to diverse anti-modern social phenomena, from ISIS to the Tea Party to the Hindu nationalist movement associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party (Mishra, 2017). And latterly, with considerable contribution from contemporary technologies of mass communication and voter manipulation, it has been institutionalised through the ballot box.

The election (or near-election) of demagogic, rightwing nationalists in Europe in recent years seems indicative of a growing preference for illiberal democracy in the cultural home of liberalism. In opposition to liberal migration and trade policies, Europeans have increasingly opted for a closing-inwards of the nation state, calling into question the viability of the European project itself. The Brexit referendum, in June 2016, provided a clear example of this.

Politics on the periphery has taken a similarly illiberal turn, with more violent consequences. In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte boasts of carrying out extrajudicial killings and threatens to kill corrupt state officials, and he has launched a bloody war on drugs, for which he has been rewarded with record approval ratings. In Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, a captain of the Army Reserve, was recently elected president; he publicly pays homage to former military dictators and torturers, and his talk of gunning down opponents has provided licence for the spread of political violence.

 The election of Donald Trump in the US, in November 2016, was a watershed for electoral politics, giving global significance to rightward shifts elsewhere. With Trump in the White House, the US itself has become the greatest threat to the liberal order it once authored, not because of his own idiosyncratic way of doing politics but because of the strategic realignment that his presidency represents.

According to Trump, his administration’s security strategy is guided by ‘principled realism’. The apparent incoherence of his foreign policy is as indicative of what this entails as his specific interactions with other governments. With every diplomatic encounter imagined as a stand-alone opportunity to strike a winning ‘deal’, the norms-based, multilateral system of global governance becomes at least irrelevant, if not a hindrance, to the US. Trump’s consistent disregard for multilateralism and his authoritarian posturing towards allies and enemies alike now confirm the trend away from liberal internationalism that, despite cosmopolitan rhetoric, was already evident under the presidency of Barack Obama.

This trend is not simply part of the secular fluctuation in American foreign policy between idealism and realism: its 2 end is a rupture with the American exceptionalism essential to both traditions. The National Security Strategy of 2017 proposes that ‘the American way of life cannot be imposed upon others, nor is it the inevitable culmination of progress’ (White House, 2017: 4). Renouncing progressive historical narratives, the Trump administration signals the end of the ‘American century’ and discards the particular universalism that has sustained liberal order.

Posing direct, if distinct, challenges to US power, China and Russia do not seek to create an alternative to the multilateral system. On the contrary, they now become defenders of the institutions of liberal order, pointing to the humanitarian hypocrisy of the US. But as they vie for leadership of the multilateral system, they also attempt to resignify it, demonstrating almost no concern for liberal ideals themselves.

Liberalism might yet be recovered as the basis for global order. But it is unlikely that liberal institutions undermined in recent years can recover their legitimacy; and it is unclear what will emerge in their stead. ‘The crisis’, Gramsci noted, referring to the detachment of the masses from traditional ideologies and authority, ‘consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying out and the new cannot be born’ (Gramsci, 1971: 276). The same is true of the current ‘interregnum’, during which a struggle for meaning, narrative and reason is constitutive of the struggle for power that will eventually give birth to ‘the new’.

Humanitarianism has been a defining feature of liberal order. But it is not simply a pillar of liberal ideology. Indeed, essential to any universalist politics of the human, its liberal character is contingent. Amid the crisis of liberal order, humanitarian norms and practices are increasingly contested, and the concept of humanitarianism itself is being redefined.