

A Tale of Three Cities. U.S. Hypocrisy and Joe Biden's "Rules Based International Order". Philip Giraldi

Washington's Hypocrisy on its "Rules Based International Order"

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One might actually be willing to consider that there might be some value in the "rules based international order" being promoted by the Joe Biden Administration if such a thing actually existed and was applied equally to all transgressors. Of course, in reality, the "rules" being referred to are neither agreed upon nor driven by any broad international consensus and are merely a trick that is exploited to further the interests of the United States and its closest allies. In fact, the "rules", such as they are, are most frequently ignored to give a pass to the bad behavior being exhibited by the US and its friends.

If the "rules" were actually intended to place limits on violent interactions among nations, consider for a moment the actual record of the United States in that regard. Recent opinion polls demonstrate that the US by a large margin is considered by other nations to be the most dangerous country in the world. That judgement is based not only on historic memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also the Vietnam War and the overthrowing of alleged "leftist" regimes in places like Iran, Chile and Guatemala. Armed interventions on a greater or lesser scale have been a regular features of US initiatives throughout the Caribbean and Latin America ever since the Spanish-American War.

More recently there has been the global war on terror, unleashed on the entire world based on US condemnation of countries that were not perceived to be toeing Washington's red line on what constitutes terrorism. This has led to pointless and ultimately failed interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Somalia in which, by some estimates millions of civilians have died directly or indirectly, and the US itself has sustained the war-making through the printing of trillions of dollars in essentially fiat currency and running up enormous debts, a chicken that will come home to roost before too long. In Afghanistan, and also in Yemen and Iraq, the US has engaged in targeted assassinations as well as profile killings of civilians

using drones.

The most troublesome aspect of all the violence that the US has initiated is that there are no actual rules in sight, apart from the Blinken-Biden-Austin clowns in Washington citing unsubstantiated threats coming from countries incapable of actually doing any harm like Iran or countries like Russia and China that had previously no intention of confronting the American military colossus.

So Washington is the beating heart of policies that have created turmoil worldwide while also moving the Doomsday clock closer to the finality that might well come with a nuclear war. And all the posturing is literally for nothing, for a bad cause supporting a corrupt, autocratic regime in a country that is no democracy with no visible off ramp. The hypocrisy of those in the White House and in Congress, as well as in the media, who are so reckless with the lives and fortunes of their fellow citizens literally defies belief.

If Washington is the first of the three cities that I am considering, Moscow must certainly be number two as it is on the receiving end of the US hypocrisy, being accused of having deviated from the “rules based” international order by invading Ukraine one year ago. Russia, however, sees things differently. The Kremlin has argued that it has repeatedly sought to negotiate a settlement with Ukraine based on two fundamental issues that it plausibly claims threaten its own national security and identity. First is the failure of Ukraine to comply with the Minsk Accords of 2014-5 which conceded a large measure of autonomy to the Donbas region, an area indisputably inhabited by ethnic Russians, as is Crimea.

Recently former German Chancellor Angela Merkel has let slip that there was never any intention to comply with the Minsk Agreement, implying that it was all a charade to enable strengthening Ukraine to join NATO and, if necessary, fight Russia. In fact, the Accords were ignored right from the beginning, with Ukrainian militias and other armed elements using artillery to shell the Donbas, killing an estimated 15,000 mostly ethnic Russian residents, a number which appears to be confirmed by independent sources.

The second vital national security issue for Moscow was over plans to offer NATO membership to Ukraine, which would place a possibly superior hostile military alliance at its doorstep. Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly observed that the issues were both negotiable and that Zelensky only had to agree to maintain his country as “neutral,” i.e. not linked to any military alliance, and to honor some reasonable autonomy for Donbas. Reportedly it was the United States and Britain that pushed Ukraine into rejecting any and all of the Russian demands in a bid to initiate a war of attrition using Ukrainian lives to destabilize Putin’s government and reduce its ability to oppose US and Western dominance.

And there is of course the back story, that the United States had long been meddling in Eastern Europe in spite of a pledge not to take advantage of the break-up of the Soviet Union to expand NATO eastwards. The US had brought about “regime change” in Ukraine in 2014 to remove a government friendly to Moscow. But in this case, the increasing involvement of the US and NATO in the fighting has been an extremely dangerous development because it has escalated the conflict and turned it into what might become a devastating nuclear exchange. One would like to see an immediate truce initiated to stop the fighting followed by serious negotiations to come to a settlement of the territorial dispute. But, of course, the United States, which has provided Zelensky with more than \$100 billion in aid, has made it clear that it is not interested in a negotiated settlement

unless Putin is willing as a confidence building first step to withdraw from all occupied Ukrainian territory, including Crimea. In other words, he must surrender.

So whether Moscow has broken with the “rules based international order” depends very much on how one defines threats. Certainly, at a minimum, Washington has behaved far worse than Russia over the past twenty years, which rather confirms that the “rules” are essentially a convenient fiction. And finally, my third city to consider is Jerusalem, the claimed capital of the state of Israel. As the Jewish state is arguably either Washington’s closest ally or, as many believe, the tail that actually wags the White House dog, it is instructive to look at its behavior to examine whether the US applies a uniform standard to friend and foe alike when it doles out punishment to accused rule breakers.

If the United States is considered by the world community to be the most dangerous “superpower” country, Israel has to be considered the leading pariah among smaller, more regionally focused nations. And its control over the White House, the Congress and the national media in the US is such that it is never held to account for anything. Most recently, there was an attack by Israeli soldiers on a Palestinian refugee camp in Jenin on the West Bank in which ten Arabs were killed. In retaliation, a Palestinian gunman subsequently shot dead seven Israelis in Jerusalem before being killed himself. Speaking from the Oval Office, President Biden only saw fit to mention the Palestinian counter-attack, saying merely that “This was an attack against the civilized world.” The initial Israeli attack which killed ten was not even cited, suggesting that Israeli atrocities killing Palestinians do not bother the civilized world that the Bidens live in.

In another White House demonstration of where its priorities lie, last year’s shooting dead by an Israeli soldier of Palestinian American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh led eventually to a milk-toast call for an inquiry by the White House, even though Biden and company openly bought into the Israeli government lie that it was an accident, likely triggered by a lot of Palestinian terrorist shooting in the area, which was not true. And don’t expect any real pushback against Israel’s policy of shoot-first from Congress, which only [last week](#) removed Congresswoman Ilhan Omar from the Foreign Affairs Committee because she was “antisemitic” due to her criticism of Israel’s behavior.

The Israeli Defense ministry indicated that it would not cooperate with any inquiry into its behavior and the Abu Akleh story has since disappeared. Israel has also killed other American citizens without any consequences, including Rachel Corrie and 34 sailors on board the USS Liberty naval vessel in 1967. Never before has a government killed Americans only to be rewarded with a \$3.8 billion gift from the US taxpayers every year. The Jewish state’s government has also recently indicated that its free-fire policy against Palestinian civilians and their foreign supporters will not be modified. Israeli soldiers and policemen who kill Palestinians, who are routinely described as “terrorists,” are almost never investigated or prosecuted and have been, in some cases, praised in the media and promoted.

And Israeli control over major parts of the US federal government appears to be tightening. In a press conference last week, the United States State Department [refused to confirm](#) that Israel is in illegal occupation of large parts of Palestine, nor will it acknowledge that Israel has a nuclear arsenal.

Israel’s track record vis-à-vis its neighbors is somewhat similar to the American pattern of rules enforcement, though it rarely even bothers to excuse its behavior. It even started a

major war, having attacked all its neighbors, after complaining falsely that they were “threatening,” in 1967, after which it illegally seized and occupied their territory. It is currently bombing Syria on a regular basis and has also attacked Iran, Lebanon and the Palestinians in Gaza. It has assassinated Iranian scientists and technicians.

Israel has invaded and occupied southern Lebanon and facilitated a massacre of Palestinians settled in camps there. Neither Syria nor Iran has ever attacked Israel or even threatened to do so, but Israel persists in claiming that it is threatened and is trying to convince Biden to join it in attacking the Iranians. The new, extreme racist right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is in particular stepping up the pressure on Palestinians through actions that are illegal under international law without a squeak coming out of the White House. Home demolitions, property seizures, checkpoints and other round the clock harassment of Palestinians also are increasing in frequency as the Israelis expand their occupation of the West Bank. And Israel even sponsors actual terrorists in the form of the weaponized settlers who beat and destroy Palestinians at will with no consequences even when they kill an unarmed Arab or a child.

And some Israelis are also thinking of something grander, in the form of genocide, when it comes to their Palestinian neighbors. A prominent right wing Israeli member of parliament has perhaps suggested what he and many of his colleagues would like to see done to the remaining Palestinians. Zvika Fogel, a member of the governing coalition has called for a “final war” against the Palestinians to “subdue them once and for all”, following international condemnation of security minister Itamar [Ben-Gvir’s incursion](#) into Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied East Jerusalem, an additional illegal move intended to assert total control over access to Muslim holy sites. Fogel responded to the criticism, saying in [an interview](#) that Israel’s policy of going to war with Palestinians “every two or three years” was no longer good enough and that there should be one last war to “subdue them once and for all. It would be worth it because this will be the final war...”

So, it is a tale of three cities. Moscow is engaged in a war that at least has a rationale, even as one should and must oppose armed interventions between two neighboring countries. The Russian operation has been opposed by the United States, which has heedlessly escalated the war and produced a situation that can be devastating for all life on the planet. Washington is also the grand hypocrite in the game in that it has behaved far worse than Moscow over the past twenty years. And then there is Jerusalem, or if one prefers, Tel Aviv. A monstrous Israel is preeminent in how it wins the prize for being the absolute worst in its inhumanity and war crimes, without a rebuke from Washington or Joe Biden ever about “rules based international order” violations.

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