

Trump vs Biden: Lose/Lose for Palestine

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With the Netanyahu regime of Israel on the cusp of violating international law once again, this time by annexing large parts of Palestine, the United States is not only not opposing, but actually encouraging this crime. Of course, the U.S. is no fan of international law, as demonstrated in just the last few years by its withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA); sanctions against Iran and Venezuela; financing of anti-government terrorists in Syria; supporting Saudi Arabia's genocidal war against Yemen, and moving the U.S. embassy to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, to name just a few.. And it isn't just international law that the government disdains: U.S. law decrees that, for a nation to receive aid from the U.S., it must adhere to basic human-rights requirements. Israel doesn't even come close, but gets \$4 billion from the U.S. annually.

Pundits advise us that Trump's chances of reelection shrink by the day. After all, he mishandled the coronavirus pandemic which has now killed over 115,000 U.S. citizens, and he watched the economy crash due to the pandemic. His early, rosy proclamations about how he was not worried about it, that it would 'miraculously' go away in the spring, etc., have all proven to be false.

Additionally, with civil unrest in the U.S. reaching levels not seen in decades, the result of deeply embedded racism within the police departments across the nation and in what passes for the U.S. justice system, he has only made things worse.

From quoting racists from the era of the 1960s ("when the looting starts, the shooting starts"), calling demonstrators "thugs" and saying local police should "dominate" them, to using tear gas to disperse peaceful demonstrators in front of the historic St. John's Episcopal Church, so he could stand in front of it and wave a bible aloft, he has done nothing to address the anger and pain that people are experiencing all over the country.

So with the bumbling Trump so much out of step with much of the country, enter Joe Biden. It remains a mystery to this writer how he won the nomination over Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, but he has now earned enough votes to ensure that he will be the nominee. And what would a Biden presidency mean for Palestine?

Nothing positive, unfortunately. Biden has stated that, while he disagrees with the move of the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, he would not change it. And although he says he opposes the annexation of the West Bank, he would not, as president, withhold financial aid to Israel as leverage to bring that country into compliance with international law. This is not without precedent.

In 1988, then Secretary of State George Schultz proposed a plan to help solve the Palestine-Israel issues. It included an international conference, a six-month period to bring about Palestinian self-determination, and scheduling talks at the end of that year to finally resolve

the entire conflict. This proposal was immediately and entirely rejected by then Prime Minister Yizhak Shamir.

The U.S., in response, issued a new memorandum, emphasizing economic and security agreements with Israel, and accelerating the delivery of seventy-five F-16 fighter jets. It was hoped, apparently, that this would induce Israel to accept Schultz's plan. If that was the hope, it failed completely. "Instead, as an Israeli journalist commented, the message received was: 'One may say no to America and still get a bonus.'"

So violation of international law in the context of Palestine will be as meaningless to a President Biden as it has been to President Trump and was to Presidents Obama, Bush, Clinton, etc. This may seem puzzling, considering that U.S. government spokespeople are forever proclaiming the U.S. to be a model of freedom and democracy, one that supports the human-rights struggles and self-determination of peoples around the world. One wonders if that fairy tale is believed even by those who mouth it, considering all the evidence that belies it.

We will look at just a few of those facts; time and space prevent a more in-depth study:

- Ottoman Empire: In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson said this: "The [Turkish](#) portion of the present [Ottoman Empire](#) should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development...." Very pretty words, indeed, but without any substance. They troubled his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing. In his private notes, Lansing wrote the following: "Will not the Mohammedans of Syria and Palestine and possibly of Morocco and Tripoli rely on it? How can it be harmonized with Zionism, to which the President is practically committed?"
- Chile: In 1970, Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile in elections that international observers agreed were fair and democratic. But Allende was a socialist, so the U.S. fomented unrest, and after three years, Allende was overthrown, replaced by the brutal dictator, General Augusto Pinochet. His reign of terror lasted sixteen years, during which thousands of Chileans disappeared or were tortured, and all political parties were banned.
- Libya: in 2011, Italian journalist Yvonne Devito said this about Libya, prior to the U.S. invasion: "Libya is considered to be the Switzerland of the African continent and is very rich, and schools are free for the people. Hospitals are free for the people. And the conditions for women are much better than in other Arab countries." Yet the U.S. decided to invade, at least partly because of Muammar Qaddafi's uncompromising support for Palestine. Today, thanks to U.S. intervention, Libya is a failed state, its people living in fear and poverty.

It must be remembered that Biden has been in office every year since 1969, with the exception of the last four. So he has been a part of every U.S. international debacle in forty-seven of the last fifty-one years. This includes his support of the invasion of Iraq to rid that nation of weapons it didn't have.

Biden's apparent prejudice against the Palestinians is in keeping with his general racism. He strongly opposed desegregation in the early part of his career, and he co-wrote the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. This bill increased the number of police officers and prisons, brought longer prison sentences and, perhaps worst of all, introduced

financial incentives to lengthen those sentences.

And now he has proclaimed that a Biden presidency will mean business-as-usual for the U.S. in its relations with Israel (giving it everything it wants), and Palestine (continuing to finance and foster its brutal oppression). One must wonder if the \$785,732.00 that he has received from pro-Israeli lobbies for his presidential run has influenced him in any way.

This is the United States of America: not the 'land of the free and the home of the brave', but the land of racism, oppression, police brutality and brutality abroad. It is a government that runs amok on the world stage; it is estimated to have killed at least 20,000,000 people just since the end of World War II. And the killing continues to this day.

The 2020 election, regardless of who wins the presidency, will not change this ugly and bloody record of domestic and international violence. Suffering around the world, and certainly in Palestine, will only increase.

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