

US Declines Israel's Invitation to Start WW3 (For Now)

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Global Research, April 15, 2024

[Caitlin's Newsletter](#) 14 April 2024

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

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Iran has carried out its long-promised retaliation for Israel's attack on its consulate building in Damascus, launching a [massive barrage](#) of drones and missiles which it claims hit and destroyed Israeli military targets, while Israel says they dealt only superficial damage with a few injuries. The US and its allies [reportedly](#) helped shoot down a number of the Iranian projectiles.

Just as [we discussed](#) in the lead-up to the strike, the western political-media class are acting as though this was a completely unprovoked attack launched against the innocent, Bambi-eyed victim Israel. Comments from western [officials](#) and [pundits](#) and [headlines](#) from the mass media are omitting the fact that Israel instigated these hostilities with its extreme act of aggression in Syria as much as possible. Here in Australia the [Sydney Morning Herald write-up](#) about the strike didn't get around to informing its readers about the attack on the Iranian consulate until the *tenth paragraph* of the article, and said only that Iran had "accused" Israel of launching the attack because Israel has never officially confirmed it.

UPDATED: Iran Launches Major Drone and Missile Attack on Israel
Tel Aviv condemned the move as a "dangerous escalation" and claimed to have repelled most incoming projectiles
by Will Porter [@TheWillPorter](#) [#Iran](#) [#Israel](#) [#IRGC](#) [#drones](#)
<https://t.co/GOjbAm3OqU> pic.twitter.com/Q2PtxbMAjy

— Antiwar.com (@Antiwarcom) [April 14, 2024](#)

In any case, Iran [says](#) the attack is now over. Given that we're not seeing any signs of

massive damage, Iran's [reported claim](#) that its retaliation would be calibrated to avoid escalation into a full-scale regional war seems to have been accurate, as does Washington's [reported claim](#) that it didn't expect the strike to be large enough to draw the US into war.

A new [report from Axios](#) says Biden has personally told Netanyahu that the US will not be supporting any Israeli military response to the Iranian strike. An anonymous senior White House official told Axios that Biden said to Netanyahu, "You got a win. Take the win," in reference to the number of Iranian weapons that were taken out of the sky by the international coalition in Israel's defense. Apparently helping to mitigate the damage from the Iranian attack is all the military commitment the White House is willing to make against Iran at this time.

And thank all that is holy for that. A war between the US alliance and Iran and its allies would be the stuff of nightmares, making the horrors we've been seeing in Gaza these last six months look like an episode of Peppa Pig.

But Washington merely declining to get involved is nowhere near enough. As the Quincy Institute's Trita Parsi [quipped](#) on Twitter, "Biden needs to PREVENT further escalation, not just declare his desire to stay out of it."

Not significant enough.

Biden needs to PREVENT further escalation, not just declare his desire to stay out of it. <https://t.co/KQ0paadDtY>

— Trita Parsi (@tparsi) [April 14, 2024](#)

Indeed, Israel has already made it clear that it is going to be moving forward with an escalation against Iran. Israel's Channel 12 [cites](#) an unnamed senior official saying the Iranian counter strike is going to receive an "unprecedented response".

"Israel has already informed the Americans and governments in the region that its response is inevitable," The Economist [reports](#). "Its military options include launching drones at Iran, and long-range airstrikes on Iran, possibly on military bases or nuclear installations."

It's unclear at this time how much the latest message from the Biden administration will affect the calculations of this position, but the mass media are reporting that White House officials are worried Israel is getting ready to do something extremely reckless that could draw the US into a war it would rather avoid.

NBC News [reports the following](#):

"Some top U.S. officials are concerned Israel could do something quickly in response to Iran's attacks without thinking through potential fallout afterward, according to a senior administration official and a senior defense official.

"Those concerns stem in part from the administration's views of the approach Israel has taken to its war against Hamas, as well as the attack in Damascus.

"President Joe Biden has privately expressed concern that Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu is trying to drag the U.S. more deeply into a broader conflict, according to three people familiar with his comments.”

Read this piece on why Bibi chose to radically escalate with his April 1 strike on Iran's diplomatic compound. It's by Paul Pillar, who knows the territory—he was once in charge of analysis of the Middle East for CIA & all other US intelligence agencies. <https://t.co/w4dZjkdy3w>

— Robert Wright (@robertwrighter) [April 13, 2024](#)

People have been raising this concern for some time now. Earlier this month Responsible Statecraft's Paul Pillar [wrote up a solid argument](#) that Netanyahu stands a lot to gain personally from drawing the US into a war with Iran to help him with his legal and political troubles and take the focus off of Israel's genocide in Gaza.

Whether that's the case or not it's pretty absurd for the Biden administration to just sit around passively hoping this doesn't happen as though it wouldn't have a say in the matter, and as though there's nothing it can do to prevent such an occurrence right now. Biden has had the ability to end this insane cycle of escalation in the middle east since it started six months ago by demanding a ceasefire in Gaza and demanding that Israel rein in its murder machine, just as US presidents [have done successfully in the past](#).

Biden [could end all this with one phone call](#). The fact that he doesn't means he's a monster, and no amount of mass media reports about how “concerned” and “frustrated” he is regarding Israel's actions will ever change that.

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