



Benjamin Netanyahu Is Trying to Drag the U.S. Into War With Iran

Description

WORLD : There is a line from the immortal anti-war poem i sing of Olaf glad and big, in which the protagonist, Olaf, a World War I-era conscientious objector who eventually dies in prison at the hands of the state, declares, “There is some sh*t I will not eat.”

The basic problem we confront in the Middle East today is that when it comes from Benjamin Netanyahu, there is nothing Joe Biden will not eat.

Biden has been the object of Bibi’s bullying for years. Netanyahu delighted in humiliating then–Vice President Biden on the latter’s trip to Israel in 2010, announcing on the day of his arrival a massive expansion of “settlements” in east Jerusalem. At some point, one would think, it would become a question of self-respect, of manhood—for Biden to stand up to Netanyahu.

But no.

Yet Biden is hardly alone among the American political and media class who assume the prone position when the Israeli Duce saunters into the room. Of course, there was a time when American officials like Secretary of State James A. Baker were comfortable telling Bibi where to go.

Even Bill Clinton, who slobbered over the Israel lobby, found Netanyahu so obnoxious that he reportedly snapped, “Who’s the f*cking superpower here?”

But that is long in the past. Both the lobby and the Israeli government have long known that ol’ Joe marches in time to the tune they call. At a fundraiser at a D.C. hotel in December, Biden told his donors, “We’re not going to do a damn thing other than protect Israel in the process. Not a single thing.”

He’s been as good as his word. Biden’s response to Netanyahu’s savagery has been to grant Israel carte blanche—in addition to what has been described as “unprecedented” intelligence sharing and diplomatic cover, Biden has approved more than 100 arms sales to the Israeli regime since October 7th, including, according to a report in the Times of Israel, “thousands of precision-guided munitions, small-diameter bombs and other weapons.”

Last month, the administration shipped over 1,800 2,000-pound MK84 bombs and 500 500-pound MK82 bombs to the Israelis. The former have, according to a Washington Post report, “been linked to previous mass-casualty events throughout Israel’s military campaign in Gaza.”

To give a sense of proportionality, consider that the US dropped a total of one 2,000 pound bomb during its campaign against ISIS. Israel has dropped hundreds on Gaza. Meanwhile, Biden is currently lobbying Congress for an \$18 billion arms transfer that would send dozens of F-15 fighter jets to Israel.

Having destroyed the open-air prison that was Gaza (though without, it should be pointed out, doing much in the way of degrading Hamas) Netanyahu has set his sights on bigger things. What Bibi now wants is to provoke a wider war in order to bring the U.S. in and place American power in the service of his long-held dream of striking Iran.

On April 1st, he took steps to make the dream a reality when Israel bombed an Iranian embassy compound in Damascus that killed two Iranian generals and five officers. Former CIA analyst Paul Pillar has written that “hitting the embassy compound constituted a direct attack on Iran.”

An unprovoked attack on a diplomatic compound is a flagrant violation of international laws and norms, but when has that ever counted for anything among the Israeli (and American) governing elite?

That attack was understandably overshadowed here by the senseless, obscene slaughter of seven aid workers from World Central Kitchen that very same day.

But of the two, it was the attack on the Iranian diplomatic compound that may have the more serious strategic ramifications—depending on whether Iran responds in kind, and how.

The Syrian compound strike was clearly carried out with the goal of dragging Washington into a war the IDF could never hope to win on its own, barring the use of nuclear weapons—of which Israel has hundreds thanks to its spies pilfering the technology from the U.S.

The state of play then: Biden’s own USAID administrator, Samantha Power, just admitted that famine has broken out in Gaza. The IDF has slaughtered over 33,000 thousand civilians, including over 25,000 women and children, while barely making a dent against Hamas.

But the last point matters little because the war was always about ethnically cleansing the Gaza Strip. And once that goal is in the rearview, Bibi’s war aims will transform and become about Iran and its proxy, Hezbollah. As it happens, this is a war that Netanyahu and his neoconservative supporters have been thirsting over for many years.

In response to yesterday’s largely symbolic Iranian drone attack, Biden reiterated his pledge of “ironclad” support for Israel.

And overall, the president’s reaction to the Iranian counter-attack was in keeping with his history of subservience to Israel, cutting short a weekend in Delaware to scurry back to the White House in order to speak with his actual boss, the Prime Minister, and meet with members of the National Security Council.

So far, Iran seems to be trying to “thread the needle”—by responding in such a way that satisfies their

population's (understandable) demands for revenge while stopping short of triggering World War III.

The big question is whether the Iranian attack will prompt Netanyahu and his American enabler-in-chief to do just that.

BY James W. Carden

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