Full accountability

written by David M. Weinberg | 15.09.2024

After American-Turkish anti-Israel activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi mistakenly was shot by IDF troops during an altercation in northern Samaria ten days ago, Washington fumed, thundered, and threatened Israel.

President Joe Biden was "outraged." He called Eygi's death "totally unacceptable." He demanded "full accountability" from Israel and "continued access" into investigation of the circumstances of the shooting (suggesting that IDF investigations cannot be trusted).

Biden went on to decry "ongoing violence" in the West Bank by "extremist Israeli settlers" – a false accusation that has become the standard line in Washington's whippings of Israel. And then came the holy (im)moral equivalency statement: "I will continue to support policies that hold all extremists – Israelis and Palestinians alike – accountable for stoking violence and serving as obstacles to peace."

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin broadened the US demand for "accountability" from Israel by insisting that the "unprovoked and unjustified death" proves that Israel needs to completely reexamine the IDF's rules of engagement for operating in the West Bank. Secretary of State Antony Blinken expanded on this, fulminating that the Israeli military needs an "overhaul" and must make "fundamental changes" in its rules of live fire engagement.

Leaving aside the Eygi incident and Washington's misdirected ire, one wonder's where the US wrath was after Hamas purposefully executed six Israeli hostages (including an American citizen) one week earlier in one of Hamas's terror attack tunnels.

But of course, the US and all decent people worldwide condemned the Hamas murders. The Biden-Harris administration was "pained" by the murders (not outraged), and toothlessly jabbered that "Hamas leaders will pay for these crimes." But this was not followed-up by any moves against Hamas and its regional backers; anything concrete that would impose "full accountability" on Hamas.

Rather, the Hamas execution of Israeli hostages was followed-up by pressure on

Israel to make concessions to Hamas and essentially concede defeat to them. President Biden took to the microphone to accuse Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of “not doing enough” to secure a hostage deal.

FULL ACCOUNTABILITY from Hamas might have included the following actions:

* Unflinchingly supplying Israel with more and better arms to crush Hamas, instead of agonizing over the deaths of Hamas supporters and pontificating about armament restrictions. This might also include leverage on British and Canadian leaders to back down from their arms embargoes against Israel.

* Rethinking of the “humanitarian train” for Gaza including enormous quantities of fuel and food, which everybody knows has been hijacked by Hamas to preserve its governing capabilities. How about cutting back a few fuel and flour trucks for Hamas every time that Hamas even threatens to torture or execute an Israeli hostage?

According to a report this week by the authoritative expert Ehud Yaari of Israeli TV Channel 12, Hamas has earned over half a billion dollars by seizing and then selling to Gazans almost every supply truck sent into Gaza over the past year.

This allows Hamas to recruit, renew, and pay for its terror troop force, prolonging the war in every way: prolonging the suffering of Gazans whom Hamas continues to exploit as human shields, prolonging the agony of destroyed and displaced Israeli communities in Israel’s south, prolonging the painful price paid by IDF soldiers on the battlefield, and prolonging the hostage torment.

But the Biden administration continues to insist on literally giving Hamas oxygen to persevere underground with most of the hostages and to toughen its stance on releasing hostages, instead of being forced to the surface and to accede defeat.

And then the administration outrageously slaps sanctions on Israeli civil protest organizations that call for a change in this insane “humanitarian supply” policy, a policy to aid an enemy that is without precedent in the annals of warfare.

So much for “full accountability” from Hamas.

* Adoption of a penalization policy against Hamas, something that actually hits its most sensitive spot: the loss of territory.

International legal expert Prof. Eugene Kontorovich suggested to the Biden administration a formula to get the hostages back and end the war very quickly: “For every day Hamas does not give up the hostages, America will recognize 100 square dunams (roughly 25 acres) of Gaza as a permanent Israeli buffer zone. For every murdered hostage, 1,000 square dunams (250 acres). The war would be over in days.”

* Recalibration of the American obsession with straightaway establishing a Palestinian state, nay the doubling down on sworn fealty to the so-called “two state solution.” (See Kamala Harris’s pledge to do so during the presidential debate this week). This, despite the indisputable fact that blabbering at this moment about a Palestinian state is the very picture of victory for Hamas terrorism and constitutes encouragement for more acts of massacre.

How do Biden-Harris not understand that merely discussing Palestinian statehood now gives Hamas more sway in Palestinian politics than it ever had, especially in Judea and Samaria? Is Hamas a suitable partner for ruling Gaza or establishing a “unified” Palestinian state? Or the current Palestinian Authority, which received Gaza under its control and failed, and is unable to contend with Hamas alone in Jenin and Tulkarem, and which encourages terror through payments and glorification of terrorists?

And don’t confuse Washington with facts like the support of three-quarters of Palestinians in the West Bank for the October 7 Hamas-led massacre, or the support of governors in the Palestinian Authority for terrorism and the active participation of Fatah in the surging wave of terror attacks currently threatening to engulf central Israel.

Instead of pushback against the increasingly genocidal Palestinian national movement overall, we get more perilous pablum about the “urgency” of Palestinian statehood. Instead of action to retaliate and truly deter Hamas from ever raising a hand against a hostage again, we get diplomatic rewards for Palestinian intransigence and violence.

So much for “full accountability” from Hamas.

* US pressure on direct backers of Hamas to end their sponsorship of the terrorist organization. The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies in Washington DC has outlined a dozen measures that the Biden-Harris administration should do

immediately to hold Hamas and its allies “fully accountable.”

This includes pressure on Qatar, Turkey, and Lebanon to extradite Hamas leaders for prosecution. Khaled Mashal, for example, lives a life of royal luxury in Qatar, sitting on an estimated $4 billion personal fortune. Why? He is a US “Specially Designated Global Terrorist”! Where is the American “outrage” at this “totally unacceptable” situation?

HOW ABOUT threats to remove Qatar’s status as a major non-NATO ally; to move Al Udeid air base assets; to impose sanctions on Qatari officials, instrumentalities, and assets; to impose sanctions on Qatar’s virulently genocidal (against Israel and the entire West) Al-Jazeera media network?

Qatar should be compelled to close all Hamas offices and operations, freeze and turn over to the US all Hamas-connected assets, and turn over to the US or Israel all Hamas officials who remain in the country. And in the process, this might also set the stage for Qatar to jettison leaders of Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Islamic State.

How about sanctions against Hamas networks in foreign countries, including South Africa, which aside from harboring Hamas, is otherwise busy indicting Israel for war crimes in The Hague?

How about the imposition of sanctions on Turkish and Lebanese officials who provide material support to Hamas, which means almost all senior government ministers in these countries? How about the freezing and turning over to the US of all Hamas-connected assets in these countries, including the late Ismail Haniyeh’s assets reported to be in Turkish banks?

How about intense pressure on Egypt to permanently cut off Hamas supply routes above and below the Egypt-Gaza border, and to open its border for Palestinian refugee relief? The pressure should include threats to withhold a significant amount of US foreign assistance and impose sanctions on Egyptian officials and instrumentalities responsible for the Hamas smuggling operation; the same type of sanctions that Washington is so slap-happy and super-quick to impose on supposed Israeli vigilantes.

How about targeting China with economic and political pressure for subsidizing Hamas through oil imports and from Iran? (US oil sanctions on Iran are already

on the books, they just are not being enforced by Biden-Harris.) The administration should move forward with identifying Chinese ports that accept Iranian oil, as mandated by the newly enacted SHIP Act, and impose secondary sanctions on those ports.

How about fighting back against Hamas allies within international organizations such as the UN and ICC? The White House should end its opposition to threats of sanctions against the ICC and its chief prosecutor and instead lead an aggressive diplomatic campaign to get the ICC's top donors such as Japan and Germany to end the illegitimate and baseless investigation of Israeli leaders (which also puts Americans at risk). The administration could also leverage US funding of the UN regular budget and other agencies to fight back against pro-Hamas, anti-Israel activity…

In short, instead of giving freebies to Hamas while pressuring Israel, instead of expressing "pain" when Hamas perpetrates outrages while expressing "outrage" when Israel acts uncompromisingly to crush its enemies – it is time for well-placed "full accountability" demands from the US that can help Israel win the war.

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