

Democrats and Republicans: US enablers of Israeli onslaught on Rafah

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The week begins as Israel is stepping up its genocidal campaign against the people of Gaza, both in Rafah, the last unoccupied portion of the enclave, and throughout the Gaza Strip.

A catastrophe of monumental proportions is unfolding in southern Gaza. Over the weekend, another 300,000 Palestinians have been forced to flee from Rafah as the Israel Defense Forces begins its final assault in southern Gaza, bombing neighborhoods and moving troops and tanks into place. The IDF is directing them into the Mawasi area, the far southwest corner of the territory, where they will be trapped between Israeli forces, the Egyptian border and the Mediterranean Sea—effectively confined in an open air prison, without shelter, supplies of food and water, or protection from Israeli bombs and missiles.

On Sunday, Israeli tanks plowed back into the Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza, with a pre-war population of more than 100,000, claiming that the Palestinian ruling party Hamas is rebuilding its political and military network there. Gazan officials said that there were no medical services or humanitarian aid being provided in the entire northern half of Gaza, which includes Gaza City and Jabalia. United Nations relief officials said acute famine exists throughout that region. Media reports said as many as 200,000 people were fleeing the fighting in the north.

The imperialist powers of the US-NATO axis, above all the Biden administration, are fully culpable in this latest stage of the Gaza genocide, which has lasted for seven months.

Biden is currently engaged in political posturing, in an effort to defuse the mass opposition among students and working people to the Israeli genocide. But his cynical and insincere “criticisms” have not had the slightest effect on the actual conduct of Israeli military

operations, nor are they intended to do so.

While a number of Democrats issued hand-wringing professions of concern over the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza Sunday, the essence of US policy in the region was summed up by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham.

Speaking on NBC’s “Meet the Press” program, Graham denounced suggestions by his interviewer, Kristen Welker, that Biden had withheld only the largest weapons, such as 2,000-pound bombs, which would cause thousands of civilian deaths if use in a congested space like Rafah. Why couldn’t Israel accomplish its purpose with precision weapons and kill fewer people, Welker asked.

Graham responded:

Well, I think it’s impossible to mitigate civilian deaths in Gaza as long as Hamas uses their own population as human shields... Listen, you know, here’s what I would say about fighting an enemy who wants to kill you and your family. Why did we drop two bombs—nuclear bombs—on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? To end a war that we couldn’t afford to lose... when we were faced with destruction as a nation after Pearl Harbor, fighting the Germans and the Japanese, we decided to end the war by bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki with nuclear weapons. That was the right decision. Give Israel the bombs they need to end the war they can’t afford to lose and work with them to minimize casualties.

As a matter of historical fact, the dropping of nuclear

bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the Truman administration was not necessary to “end a war.” Rather, it was intended to demonstrate that American imperialism was willing and able to use nuclear weapons and slaughter tens of thousands of innocent civilians to secure its global domination.

Graham, echoing similar statements by Representative Tim Walberg five weeks ago, is advocating a policy of mass murder: Palestinians remaining in Gaza should simply be killed.

What the media presents as a significant conflict within the US political establishment involves, at most, tactical considerations. The Biden administration continues to arm and defend Israel as it escalates its genocidal assault on Rafah. The Democrats and Republicans joined hands last month to pass nearly \$100 billion in additional funding to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and the preparation for war against China. And they are united in their crackdown on protests against the genocide within the United States.

A particularly cynical role is played by figures like Senator Bernie Sanders, who also appeared on “Meet the Press.” He told Welker that he favored cutting off US military aid to Israel.

Sanders, however, said nothing about Biden and the role of the United States as the principal enabler of the genocide in Gaza. The omission is deliberate. Sanders is a leading supporter and surrogate for Biden on the campaign trail, portraying his reelection as essential to preserve American democracy.

When Welker asked about his comment earlier in the week that there was a danger that Gaza could become Biden’s Vietnam, Sanders replied, “What I worry about is that this war in Gaza right now is not only strongly opposed by young people, but a whole lot of people in the Democratic base.”

It couldn’t be clearer. Sanders has shifted his public posture, mouthing some criticisms of the war, in order to protect Biden’s reelection campaign and divert mass popular opposition to the Gaza genocide into a dead end.

In a video posted last week, Socialist Equality Party presidential candidate Joseph Kishore, stated, “In the 2024 presidential elections, it is meaningless to talk about a ‘lesser evil’ in the conflict between Biden and Trump, the Democrats and Republicans.”

This is a political conclusion that must be drawn by

workers and young people opposed to the genocide in Gaza. The critical question is the independent intervention of the working class in the fight against the genocide, imperialist war and the capitalist profit system.

The *World Socialist Web Site* calls for the escalation of the genocide in Gaza to be met with an escalation of mass protests throughout the world. Workers should take up the fight against the genocide, which is being waged in the interests of the same ruling class that exploits them, through strike activity and other forms of protests to stop the shipment of arms and other goods used by Israel to carry out its assault on Rafah.



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