



Biden Rolls Over As Netanyahu Defies Rafah “Red Line”

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Glenn Greenwald: The White House did get to a certain point where it seemed like they were at least pretending to impose a condition on Israel. They were drawing what was called a red line. Namely that the Biden White House was supposedly telling Israel that it was not going to tolerate Israel invading and bombing the refugee camp at Rafah, which is where more than a million Palestinians have now congregated. One of the only places in Gaza that they can be safe. Although the Israelis have attacked that refugee camp several times before. And here in Politico on March 10th, the headline was: *Biden warns of a 'red line' for Israel over Rafah*. So it seemed like, at least in terms of what the Biden White House wanted the media to convey to Americans that Joe Biden was finally setting a condition on what the Israelis could do, namely, this safe space for Palestinian civilians, the only place they can be in this refugee camp, is a bridge too far for us. We will not let you go there and invade there, because it will kill far too many Palestinian civilians on top of the Palestinian civilians, the massive, tragic number you've already killed. And then under that it says: Cyprus aid ship gets ready to open humanitarian sea corridor to Gaza. And here is the news report from Politico, just ten days ago. Quote, "U.S. President Joe Biden warned the Israeli government against a further intensification of bloodshed in the Gaza Strip as worries grow over the humanitarian disaster in the enclave. Quote, 'We cannot have another 30,000 more Palestinians dead', Biden said in an interview with MSNBC on Saturday. Asked whether an invasion of Rafah in the south of Gaza and the border with Egypt was a red line, Biden replied in the affirmative: 'It is a red line.'" It's a red line. Now, that is presidential talk for this isn't something that we're just against, this is something we will not allow. We will not tolerate it. We will not permit it. So Biden called that a red line, meaning this is something that the Israelis cannot cross.

One of the things that Barack Obama did that provoked the most criticism from the Iraqi media was when he declared what he called a red line for Bashar al Assad in Syria, which was the use of chemical weapons. And when the media began reporting that Bashar al Assad had in fact used chemical weapons against various factions in Syria against whom he was

fighting, meaning he had crossed the red line that President Obama said – and there's a lot of people who dispute whether those reports are actually valid – but the White House, the Obama White House, accepted that the Assad government had used chemical weapons as part of that war that the United States was involved with. Even though President Obama has said that's a red line, he did essentially nothing once they accepted the reports that the Syrians had used chemical weapons. But in general, it's considered a major blow to presidential credibility for the President or the White House to declare that something is a red line and then have a country cross it with absolutely no consequences. And yet, unsurprisingly, I think, we warned that the Netanyahu government is being very clear that they have absolutely no intention of observing Biden's, quote, 'red line'. They don't care in the slightest. Just like they won't allow the United States to bring in humanitarian aid through American trucks and force the Americans in front of the world to suffer one of the gravest humiliations the American government has had to suffer in air dropping aid to a group of people because their own ally refuses to allow them in to provide aid. Now that the Netanyahu government is very ready to humiliate the Biden White House again by saying we don't care about the American red line, even though the United States is paying for our war and arming us, and even though it will continue to do so, we're not going to limit ourselves to what the Biden administration tells us we can and can't do.

Here, from Politico: *Netanyahu vows to defy Biden's 'red line' on Raffi*. Israeli prime minister insists his priority is to prevent another terror attack like the October 7th Hamas raid. The article states. Quote, "When asked Sunday whether Israeli forces would move into Rafah, Netanyahu replied, quote, 'We'll go there. We're not going to leave them, you know, I have a red light. You know what the red line is? That October 7th doesn't happen again. Never happens again.'" So Netanyahu recognises that Biden set a red line, and he said, I don't care what the red line is. We're going to go there. We're going to go do exactly what Joe Biden said we can't do. I have my own red line which matters more. Now, if it were the case that the Israelis were fighting this war independently, that if they weren't a dependent on the United States and the American people, the American people weren't forced to pay for their war and pay for their weapons, there would still be international conventions and institutions to which the Israelis would be accountable. There's things like the Geneva Conventions and the laws of war that were implemented after World War two to prevent things like the Holocaust and war crimes and collective punishment from happening again. But at least you could make the case that there's no reason why the Israeli government should take orders from the United States. It's their war, and they ought to fight it how they choose to fight it.

The problem is, that's not the reality. Israel is anything but independent. Israel is completely dependent on the United States for fighting this war. And so if the United States says, this is a redline for us strategically, because we believe that if you do this, well, you'll create huge amounts of problems for our national security, or this is a red line for us, ethically or morally, that we will not support and don't want to be associated with in front of the world, the killing of thousands more Palestinian civilians, children and women and innocent men and the Israelis just turn around and say, we don't give the slightest concern for what your red lines are, any country with dignity, any political leader, with any dignity, would have to then

follow through and say, well, if you're going to cross our red line, we're not going to pay for your war anymore. This is so basic. If your child is financially independent of you, it means you get to set the rules. Once they're financially dependent and could live on their own and support themselves as adults, then they can make their own rules about how they live their lives. But until that happens when you're still paying their bills as a parent, you have the right to set rules for what you want to support. And the United States has every right, in fact, every obligation, if it's paying for Israel's war and arming Israel's war to say there are certain things with which we don't want to be associated. And the Biden administration said that, the White House said that invading the Rafah refugee camp is a redline for us. And now you have the Israelis saying, we don't care about your redlines. Netanyahu saying, we're going to ignore your red line. So the only solution is an obvious one, which is that the United States will have to say to the Israelis, that comes next, we're not going to pay for your war anymore, then we're not going to arm your war anyone. You think that's what Joe Biden is doing?

Here's what he's doing instead, from The New York Times on March 12th: *The White House Denies that Joe Biden Has Ever Set Any, quote, 'Red Lines' for the Israel-Hamas War in Gaza.* "The Biden administration repeated its warning that Israel should not attack the city of Rafah, the southernmost city in the enclave, without protections for more than a million people there". Quote, "The president didn't make any declarations or pronouncements or announcements," said Jake Sullivan, the president's national security adviser, referring to an interview Mr. Biden gave over the weekend in which he was asked, whether he had a 'red line' Israel should not cross in its prosecution of the war." Now, we just showed you that on that MSNBC interview, Biden was asked: Is this a red line for the United States? That Israel can't enter the Rafah camp. And Biden said, absolutely, it's a red line. There you see it; asked whether an invasion of Rafah in the south of Gaza, on the border with Egypt was a red line, Biden replied in the affirmative: it's a red line.

And now you have The New York Times: White House denies that Biden has set a red line. So this happens all the time. Joe Biden goes on television, he makes some kind of a statement, maybe he doesn't intend to, maybe he doesn't know what he's saying and then the White House has to pretend that he never said it, because obviously Joe Biden is not setting White House policy. This is proof of that. But what is also proof of is the country that's really in charge. Even though you would think the United States being a much bigger country, a much larger country, a much more powerful country, a much richer country, a country that funds Israel, funds its military, fund its worth, you would think the United States would be the country in charge, so that if the United States says, this is a red line you cannot cross, Israel wouldn't be able to cross it, at least not without consequences. And yet everybody knows that's not how things work when it comes to the United States and Israel. The country that dictates how things work is the dependent country, which is Israel. And Netanyahu has been heard on tape talking before about how easy it is to provoke the American public to side with this foreign country, Israel, over their own country, over their own government. And they believe with good reason that the American public, at least the parts that wield a lot of power, political and financial power in Washington, will be on the side of Israel over the United States. Including a lot of people who define themselves as being America First, but

who believe that for some reason, the money that the United States has, that American taxpayers generate should not be used at home, but should instead be sent to Israel to pay for their war and their military, instead of being used at home to improve the lives of American citizens. And so you have this bizarre situation where Joe Biden has now set a red line that the Netanyahu government has mocked and laughed at. And instead of doing anything about it, Joe Biden is now denying, the White House is now denying that Joe Biden ever set a red line. And so, not only will Israel be able to continue to block food from entering Gaza, not only will they be able to continue and expand the mass famine, the world will stand by and watch not hundreds or thousands, but tens of thousands of Palestinians die of famine. Obviously, children who suffer malnutrition on this level of severity and duration never really recover. Their growth is interrupted. Their development is impeded in ways that are irrevocable, to say nothing of the psychological destruction of having the entire society in which you live completely destroyed by the most powerful bombs that the world knows. But now the one place in Gaza where refugees are huddled is about to be invaded, very shortly after that the Biden White House said this is a red line, that is off limits.

And whatever else you want to say about the war, and obviously we have made our own perspective of this very clear over many months, and we know there are people in our audience who don't see it that way, the key point that has to be understood, that has to be acknowledged, is that this is an American war. This is Joe Biden's war. And whatever happens in Israel, or more accurately, in Gaza by Israel over the last six months and however many months more this lasts, is something that goes directly on Joe Biden's ledger on his legacy. As the Israeli general said, the minute they cut us off, the war ends. We can only fight this war because the Biden administration is giving us the money and the weapons to do so. And that has all kinds of moral and ethical implications, but it has great strategic implications for the United States as well, because obviously, the Israelis know that and the Palestinians know that, the entire world understands that. I promise you they do that what is happening in Gaza is not only an Israeli war, but it's an American war. And it's crucial to understand that it's Joe Biden's war as well.

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