

## "New Territory." Israel Strikes Iranian Embassy, Killing Several

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**Glenn Greenwald (GG):** Today however, in Syria – this is from the Wall Street Journal: *Israel Blamed for Attack Killing Iranian General in Damascus*. "A missile strike hit the Iranian diplomatic building in Syrian capital, Syria and Iran say, risking an escalation of hostilities." Quote, "The Iranian Revolutionary Guard said that seven of its members were killed, including senior military advisers in Syria. The strike also killed diplomatic staff, Iran's ambassador to Syria told reporters. Israel and Iran have engaged in a long running covert war across the Middle East, in which Israel has carried out hundreds of airstrikes targeting Iranian targets and their allies, Iran. Iran has blamed Israel for killing Iranian nuclear scientists and military leaders. Iran, meanwhile, has built up a network of militia allies arrayed against Israel in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq. Quote, 'We're in new territory. Israel and Iran have always been engaged in a shadow war, but this is no longer a shadow war. This is coming out in the open', said Ali Vaez, the Iran project director and senior adviser to the president at International Crisis Group, a conflict resolution organization."

So it's one thing for Iran to kill Iranian soldiers on Syrian soil or Iraqi soil, as they've been doing, but this was an attack on the Iranian embassy, which is basically an attack on Iran. And not only does that mean that Iran is now obliged to retaliate, but it means that they're going to want to. They've killed seven Iranian senior soldiers. Now, the argument of the Israelis and of course, the Israelis, the Americans can always invent theories to justify whatever they do, the argument is, that these weren't regular Iranian forces. These were members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, which are deemed to be supporters of terrorism, and therefore Israel has the right to act against them. But they're just military soldiers of the sovereign country of Iran. And the Iranian embassy is considered by everybody to be a legitimate diplomatic location. So it's essentially as if Israel today bombed Iran. Now, remember, the United States is very much heavily involved in the Israeli war in Gaza. Over the last week, the Israelis visited Washington and asked for and received billions of dollars more in some of the most sophisticated fighter jets, as well as 2,000 pound bombs

of the kind that Israel has been dropping on Gaza that the United States doesn't even use in civilian areas because of how deadly they are. So at the same time that Joe Biden is pretending for electoral purposes, to be so angry with Israel, to have lost his patience with Netanyahu, all these other leaks that we're constantly being subjected to, the Biden administration is quietly doing exactly what it vowed six months ago would do, which is giving Israel all of the weapons it wants and needs and request to carry out the war in Gaza. And meanwhile, there are all kinds of American military assets deployed in that region explicitly to protect Israel in the event that there's a regional conflict. And it's not just a theoretical deployment, it's something that the United States has actually undertaken. Since October 7th, the United States has bombed Iraq and bombed Syria and bombed Yemen. Iraq and Syria on the basis that there are Iranian forces there that have attacked the United States. And, of course, Yemen, because of the retaliatory strikes on commercial shipping. So the United States is already involved in a regional escalation, as well as the Israeli war in Gaza and now with this serious escalation, with the Israelis bombing the Iranian embassy in Damascus, killing seven senior Iranian military officials, that escalation is almost guaranteed.

And what is always so amazing to me is it's very common to hear people in United States, it's very common to hear this on the right, on the Trump supporting populist right, obviously, it's very common to hear this on the left, for people to say, Oh, I really am against endless war. I'm so tired of endless war. I hate the military industrial complex. They always bring America to war. And yet, there seems to be an implicit belief on the part of a lot of people who say these things: Well, I'm really against endless war, except I want to be involved in the war in Gaza against Hamas. I want to be involved in the bombing of Syria. I believe in the bombing of Iraq. I support the bombing of Yemen. Joe Biden is the first ever American president to explicitly threaten China with war over Taiwan and cause very little objection in bipartisan Washington. If anything, there's a sense in both parties that we need to be even more confrontational with Beijing, where a Cold War, if not a hot war, seems inevitable. We have bases essentially encircling China in places like South Korea and Japan, the Philippines and Guam, all kinds of new nuclear submarines in Australia. And of course, there's a lot of people who still believe that we ought to be financing the war in Ukraine. So people love to say, in principle, I'm against endless war, I'm tired of the US military industrial complex, and yet the list of countries that people seem very comfortable bombing seems to be quite long. And I don't think there's going to be much of an angry objection to bombing the Iranian embassy in Damascus, now that Israel did it.

Now, part of the crucial context for this is what's going on in Israel. As most of you probably know, before October 7th, Benjamin Netanyahu had a serious domestic political problem on his hands. There was a virtual civil war in Israel over the fact that the Israeli right was trying to remove the power from the Israeli Supreme Court to nullify laws enacted by the Knesset. And the Israeli center and the Israeli left were saying that that would be to defang the Israeli constitution, to give no checks, to take away all the checks on majoritarian power. And the Israeli right has been saying that the Supreme Court is an anti-democratic force in Israel because it overrides laws that the majority of people want based on very vague standards, not like in the US, where the Supreme Court does it, based on a 250 year body of constitutional

law. But of course, in the US, a lot of people believe the Supreme Court is overturning democratic laws, striking down democratic laws unjustly as well. But in Israel, there's even more of a division. And on top of that, Netanyahu has a series of corruption trials that he's facing that he's only not involved with because he's currently in power. And this has always been the concern of a lot of people, is that Netanyahu has a heavy personal incentive to continue this war as long as possible, because polls overwhelmingly show that the minute the Israelis can, they will remove him from office with a new election. They hate Netanyahu. They blame him, remember, for October 7th, there's still the question of how Israel allowed October 7th to happen without even detecting it. And of course, the Netanyahu government still bears the blame of that, much else.

So here from yesterday, the New York Times, quote: *'Replace him': Thousands Rally Against Netanyahu's Government in Tel Aviv*. Quote: "It was one of the largest demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government since the start of the war in October." Just this last week, two very pro-Israel journalists from an Israeli newspaper funded by Miriam Adelson, who is Sheldon Adelson's widow, the billionaire Sheldon Adelson – who was a huge funder of pro-Israel causes before he died, and now his wife is and she inherited the pro-Israel newspaper they had – dispatched two journalists to Mar-A-Lago to go interview Donald Trump about the war in Israel. And they walked away extremely concerned by things that Trump said, basically saying, Look, the world has turned against you. This war needs to end. And then quickly, almost similar to things that they're claiming Joe Biden has been saying, but the difference and The York Times even quoted one of the most fanatical pro-Israel neocons, John Podhoretz, in saying this is, while Biden's rhetoric isn't great on Israel from a pro-Israel perspective, his actions are, he's been giving the Israelis everything they want and need, whereas Trump, according to this article and according to the reaction the pro-Israel journalist, was almost critical of the Israeli government and the Israeli war. Now, of course, because of how politically damaging that could be, the Trump campaign rushed to clarify that of course Trump supports the war in Gaza and supports whatever the Israeli government is doing. But clearly his instinct was to say this war needs to end.

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**END**

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