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USA

# As Biden Expands the War in the Middle East, His Opposition Grows

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**With tens of thousands marching in American streets to demand a ceasefire in Gaza and an end to U.S. military support for Israel, President Joseph Biden now faces new opposition, including from within his own party in Congress over his undeclared war on the Houthi in Yemen.**

Last week Biden, joined by the British and others, ordered hundreds of missiles to be fired at dozens of targets in Yemen in retaliation for Houthi attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea. Democrats in Congress are furious with their party's leader for failure to abide by the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the power to declare war, and the War Powers Act, passed to restrain presidential power in 1973 after President Richard Nixon unilaterally extended the Vietnam War to Cambodia.

Pramila Jayapal, the leader of the Progressive Caucus in the House of Representatives, called the weapons launched at the Houthis in Yemen an "unacceptable violation of the Constitution." Democratic Congresswoman Cori Bush, who is also a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, said, "The people do not want more of our taxpayer dollars going to endless war and the killing of civilians. Stop the bombing and do better by us." Also condemning the unconstitutional war-making were Democratic representatives Rashida Tlaib, Mark Pocan and Ro Khanna. Most Republicans supported Biden's action, but a few also complained of his failure to seek Congressional approval.

Biden argues that these actions are not part of a widening Middle East war sparked by Israel's genocidal bombing of Gaza, but he has also authorized strikes on Hezbollah Kataib, a pro-Iran, Shiite militia in Iraq, and a weapons storage warehouse of an Iranian-allied group in Syria. The Houthis, Hezbollah, and Iraqi militias may hope, in supporting their ally Hamas, to deter Israel's bombing campaign and to put more pressure on the United States, but they risk triggering a war involving Iran, Israel and the United States. As do Israeli and U.S. responses to them.

The Middle East is an armed American military camp. The United States currently maintains 2,500 troops in Iraq and 900 in Syria—where Russia also has troops—and has about three thousand troops each in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, 8,000 in Qatar, 9,000 in Bahrain, and 13,500 in Kuwait. In the last several days the U.S. deployed a team of intelligence officers to help Israel with targeting, ostensibly to reduce the horrific toll on human life in Gaza. In Middle Eastern waters there are also a dozen U.S. warships with their crews and some 2,000 U.S. Marines.

Meanwhile in Gaza, Israel continues its bombing and attacks that have now killed 27,000 Palestinians, 10,000 of them children, with over 7,000 believed to be buried under the rubble. Some 60,300 have been wounded, many of them maimed. Oxfam says that the rate of death is higher than in any other twentieth century conflict. All of this has moved South Africa to accuse Israel of genocide in Gaza, leading to a hearing before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Activists in the United States have signed petitions and participated in protests in support of South Africa's case.

So, while Biden maybe trying to prevent an expansion of the war, he opposes a ceasefire and continues to support Israel's war on the Palestinians, as well as military actions in Yemen, Iraq, and Syria. Not only Israel, but also its sponsor and benefactor, the United States should be on trial for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. So say millions around the world who are appalled by the current atrocities, fearful of a broader and larger war, and who demand a ceasefire and justice for Palestine.

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