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By-Editors

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## ***Bought-And-Paid-For: Biden's Long History Pandering to the Israeli Lobby***



[Source: [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)]

***Part 4 of: WHO IS JOE BIDEN, REALLY? — CAM exposes his 30-year history as a pawn of U.S.-Israel policy despite its ongoing violation of Palestinian rights and crimes against humanity.***

*While Democrats accused Donald Trump of being a Russian agent, they don't seem to care that Biden is a bought-and-paid-for agent of the Israeli lobby.*

In the late 1980s, Rannie Amiri, an independent commentator on political affairs, [challenged then-Senator Joe Biden on his stance toward the Israel-Palestine conflict](#) following a campus speech that Biden gave, asking him:

**Rather than succumb to the influence of various lobbying groups in Washington, such as AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee—which promotes the views of Israel's right-wing Likud Party], and the untold amount of money they use to dictate policy, wouldn't it be more prudent to examine the real effects that collective punishment, daily humiliation, and countless civilian casualties inflicted by the Israelis**

**have on an occupied population, and use that understanding to formulate a more rational approach toward the Palestinians?**

According to Amiri, Senator Biden responded by walking directly from the podium to where he stood and, nose-to-nose, tried to refute his analysis about the influence of the Israeli lobby and the heavy-handed approach employed by Israel toward the Palestinians.

At the end of the exchange, Biden turned, put his arm around Amiri's shoulder, and addressed the audience.

**If this was not such a fine, articulate, and sincere young man, and he implied that my vote had been bought, I would give him a swift kick in the ass.**

The audience roared in applause, and Amiri sat back down to his chair defeated. However, a friend rose up to defend him, telling Biden: "If my father heard you say such a thing, I believe he would have done the same to you first."

#### **Bought-And-Paid-For**

Amiri's remarks obviously hit a sore spot in Biden which remains relevant today—over 30 years later.

During the 2020 presidential election, pro-Israel Political Action Committees (PACs) provided Biden with \$3,830,209, compared to \$955,174 for Donald Trump—indicating that Biden's vote on the Arab-Israeli conflict has indeed been bought—as it has been for many years.

*The Jewish Democratic Council of America (JDCA), a Jewish lobby group that promotes Democratic Party candidates, proclaimed that "no candidate for president in either party has ever run with as long and as strong of a pro-Israel record as Joe Biden."*

Characterizing Biden as a "mensch [Yiddish term for man who does good deeds]," the JDCA pointed out that Biden, as Vice President, supported "unprecedented levels of security assistance to Israel," helping to shape the record \$38 billion, 10-year memorandum of understanding between the U.S. and Israel signed in 2016.



Biden with right-wing Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu in 2016.  
[Source: [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)]

During the 2014 Operation Protective Edge, which left more than 2,000 Gazans dead and 10,000 wounded, Biden was a key advocate securing support for "life-saving technologies like the Iron-Dome David's sling and arrow anti-rocket and missile defense systems."



An Israeli missile launched from the Iron Dome defense missile system, designed to intercept and destroy incoming short-range rockets and artillery shells, in the southern Israeli city of Sderot. [Source: [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)]

Eric Lynn, a senior Pentagon official, told *The Times of Israel* that **as soon as that request was made by the Israelis in the middle of the conflict and taken to the president, Vice President Joe Biden's words and President Obama's words were, 'Get it done.'**

#### ***Young Biden and Golda***

Biden was raised by Catholic parents who were staunchly supportive of Israel and imbued him with a great respect for the Jewish state and need for a Jewish homeland following the horrors of the Holocaust.

Biden's connection to Israel deepened in 1973 when the then-thirty-year-old freshman Senator met with Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir as part of a tour of Israel on the eve of the Yom Kippur War.

Biden considered the meeting "one of the most consequential" of his career. Meir chain-smoked as she went into vivid detail about the Six-Day War, [reading letters from soldiers who had been killed](#), and then pored over maps detailing the regional security threats facing Israel.

Next to her sat Yitzhak Rabin, the future Prime Minister who had commanded the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in the Six-Day War.

When Biden expressed concern about Israel's security, Meir allegedly told him "not to worry—we have a [secret weapon in our conflict with the Arabs! You see we have no place else to go.](#)"



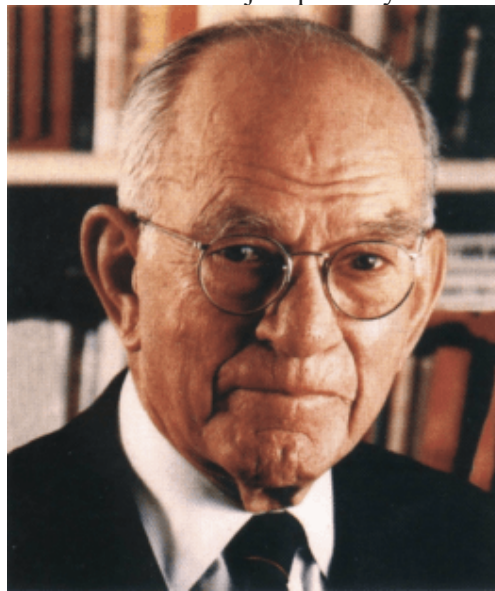
(Left) Newly elected Democratic senator from Delaware, Joe Biden, on December 13, 1972; (Right) Prime Minister Golda Meir speaking at the United Nations, October 22, 1970. [Source: [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)]

Biden at the time was somewhat critical of Israeli policies, warning Meir that Israel's actions in the territories it had captured during the Six-Day War, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip, were leading to [“creeping annexation.”](#)

Believing that Israel was militarily dominant in the region, he suggested that the Jewish state might initiate a first step for peace through [unilateral withdrawals from areas with no strategic importance](#)—something Meir rejected.

Biden was further critical of the Nixon administration for being [“dragged by Israel.”](#) complaining that it was impossible to have a real debate in the Senate about the Middle East as Senators were fearful of saying things unpopular with Jewish voters.

However, after returning from his visit with Meir, Biden became more unequivocal in his support for Israel, moving away from the position of J. William Fulbright (D-AR.), Biden's predecessor as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who warned that, “by underwriting intransigence,” Israel's supporters in the U.S. were “encouraging a course which must lead toward her destruction—and just possibly ours as well.”<sup>[1]</sup>



J. William Fulbright [Source: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._William_Fulbright)]

#### *[One of Israel's Champions in Washington](#)*

In October 1975, Biden co-sponsored a Senate resolution advanced by Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) [condemning a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly](#) equating Zionism with racism, and another in July 1975 legitimately expressing [disapproval of attempts to expel Israel from the United Nations](#).

Five years later, Biden signed a letter with four other members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (Frank Church (D-ID), Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), Jacob Javitz (R-NY) and Richard S. Stone (D-NY) urging reconsideration of the Carter administration's rejection of [an Israeli request to renew an agreement giving Israel preferential access to the U.S. strategic stockpile on diamonds](#), including the right to buy industrial diamonds at a negotiated price.

In May 1982, Senator Biden co-sponsored a resolution sponsored by Edward Kennedy (D-MA) [barring weapons sales to Jordan](#), which had been at war with Israel since 1948, and which aimed to ensure that [Israel retained its “qualitative military edge in the Middle East.”](#)





Joe Biden (left) and Edward Kennedy (right) co-sponsored legislation that aimed to ensure Israel's qualitative military edge in 1982. The photo above was taken in 1972 when Biden first campaigned for the Senate. [Source: [delawareonline.com](http://delawareonline.com)]

Biden at this time was a [leading opponent in the U.S. Senate](#) of the [proposed sales of advanced weapons systems like the F-15 fighters and AWACS radar aircraft to Saudi Arabia](#) and other Arab states. In September 1981, he was quoted in *The New York Times*, stating: [“If the administration tries to bring this deal up here now without modification, we will beat them.”](#)

Several months later, Biden voted to not only dramatically [step up aid](#) to Israel—over the objections of President Reagan who was strongly pro-Israel—but supported a measure that would ensure U.S. aid to Israel would forever be equal to the amount of U.S. debt repaid by the country.

“It’s one of the most [extraordinary proposals I have heard](#),” said Illinois Republican Charles H. Percy, the then-chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who opposed the measure. “The first time in the history of the United States. It makes the American taxpayer responsible for all Israeli debts and all future debts.”

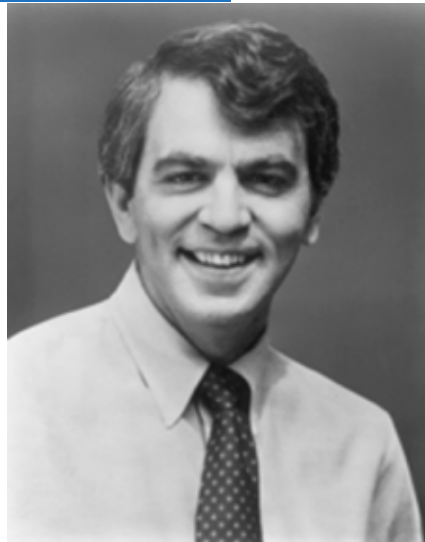
#### [Support for Lebanon War and Exchange with Menachem Begin](#)

In June 1982, at the height of the Israeli war on Lebanon, which left 20,000 Lebanese civilians dead and was considered “Israel’s Vietnam,”<sup>[2]</sup> Biden was one of 36 Senators who met with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin on Capitol Hill.



Israeli soldiers rampaging in Southern Lebanon following June 1982 invasion.  
[Source: [honestreporting.com](http://honestreporting.com)]

Biden's colleague, Paul Tsongas (D-MA), expressed indignation at reports that Israel used [cluster bombs against civilians in Lebanon](#).



Paul Tsongas [Source: [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com)]

Tsongas said that [“the love affair with Israel from the time of Golda Meir is gone](#) because of Begin. How can I be concerned about human rights in El Salvador and the Soviet Union and not speak out on Lebanon?”

Biden by contrast told Begin that he supported the war in Lebanon and went even further than Israel's position, according to Begin, when he stated that he would [“forcefully fend off anyone who invaded his country, even if it meant killing women or children.”](#)

Begin said that he [“disassociated myself from these remarks. I said to him \[Biden\]: No, sir; attention must be paid.](#) According to our values, it is forbidden to hurt women and children, even in war ... Sometimes there are casualties among the civilian population as well. But it is forbidden to aspire to this. This is a yardstick of human civilization, not to hurt civilians.”

Biden and Begin, also at the meeting, clashed over the issue of settlements.

Biden said he felt that Israel had to halt the policy of establishing new Jewish settlements in the West Bank, stating that Israel was losing support in this country [the U.S.] because of the settlement policy.

According to eyewitness reports, Biden [banged the table](#) as the exchange with Begin grew heated, and Biden threatened to [cut off U.S. aid to Israel](#) over the settlement issue.

Begin's reply became lore among his followers: "This desk is designed for writing, not for fists," he said, according to an account written by a confidante just after Begin's 1992 death.

**Don't threaten us with slashing aid. Do you think that because the U.S. lends us money it is entitled to impose on us what we must do? We are grateful for the assistance we have received, but we are not to be threatened. I am a proud Jew. Three thousand years of culture are behind me, and you will not frighten me with threats.**

Begin added that U.S. aid to Israel was not a one-way street, stating that "we do a lot for you. And, also in recent battles, we did a lot for the United States."



Menachem Begin [Source: [mondoweiss.net](http://mondoweiss.net)]

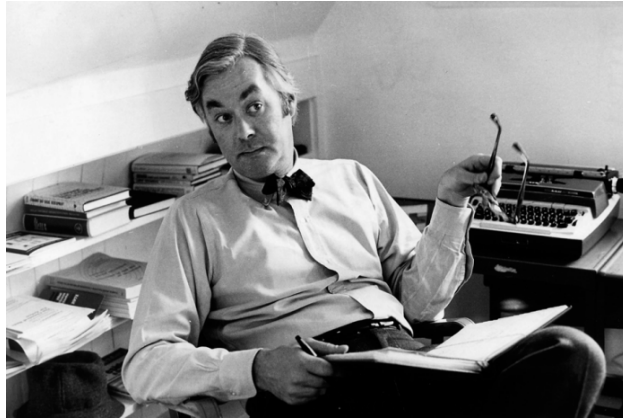
A couple of weeks later, following the massacre of more than 700 Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by Lebanese Christian militias allied with Israel, Biden reaffirmed his support for the Lebanon war at a retreat held by the United Jewish Appeal Young Leadership Cabinet. Biden spoke there alongside the executive director of AIPAC and future Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, stating that Israel's presence in Lebanon was "vitally important."



Image from the aftermath of the Sabra and Shatila massacre which Biden refused to condemn. [Source: [trtworld.com](http://trtworld.com)]

Biden later appeared at the annual conference of Herut Zionists of America (Herut was Begin's original party) where he blamed the lack of Middle East peace on [Saudi Arabia](#), [Jordan and the Palestinian Liberation Organization \(PLO\)](#) and pledged that his next order of business in the new Senate would be to "educate my colleagues on the financial sacrifices Israel has made as a result of Camp David [accords signed by Jimmy Carter in 1979 ending Israel's conflict with Egypt]."

In February 1984, Biden co-sponsored a resolution promoted by neoconservative Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) [requiring that the U.S. Embassy in Israel and the residence of the U.S. Ambassador to Israel be moved to Jerusalem.](#)<sup>[3]</sup>



Daniel Patrick Moynihan [Source: [nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com)]

The move was later fulfilled under President Donald Trump in a blow against the Palestinians whose aim had long been to establish East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state.<sup>[4]</sup>

### ***The Best \$3 Billion Investment***

In June 1986, four years after his exchange with Begin and thirteen years after meeting Golda Meir, Biden gave an impassioned speech before the U.S. Senate in which he stated:

**It's about time we stop apologizing for our support for Israel. It is the best \$3 billion investment we make. If there weren't an Israel, the US of A would have to invent an Israel to protect her interests in the region.**

These interests centered on control of Middle Eastern oil, which was enabled by Israel's function as a regional Gendarmerie.

A year after Biden's speech, the U.S. topped the \$3 billion threshold in the amount of aid it dispensed to Israel.

At the time, the Republicans were viewed as the party that was less friendly to Israel compared with the Democrats, as was exemplified by Biden.

In February 1986, Biden met with the former Israeli ambassador to the U.S., Meir Rosenne, and then-embassy staffer Yosef Lambden in an attempt to burnish his pro-Israel credentials in preparation for his first presidential run.



Meir Rosenne [Source: [haaretz.com](https://www.haaretz.com)]

In their conversation, Biden asserted his belief that U.S. officials had not done enough for the Jews during World War II—an accurate assessment—and should not publicly criticize Israel as they would not do so to other favored allies like Great Britain, adding that Israel was “America's best investment, where we get the biggest bang for our buck.”

In Biden's view, a fatal mistake in U.S. policy had occurred in 1982, when the Reagan administration decided to strive for strategic consensus in the Persian Gulf and shifted the



center of gravity from America's true friend, Israel, to others [referring to the sale of warplanes to Saudi Arabia].

Biden went on at the meeting to compare the PLO to the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which originally fought British colonial rule during the country's War of Independence (1919-1921).

Lambden wrote that,

**as someone of Irish descent, [Biden] considered the IRA to be like any other terror organization which would never compromise with the moderates, with the lowest common denominator always holding sway.**



Yasser Arafat, [Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization](#) (PLO) from 1969 to 2004 and [President](#) of the [Palestinian National Authority](#) (PNA) from 1994 to 2004. [Source: [american.aljazeera.com](#)]

This assessment ignores the circumstances that gave rise to the IRA and PLO and the fact that both were ridden by factional divisions between radicals and moderates and often amenable to diplomacy.

In 1974, the PLO [adopted a ten-point platform](#) that allowed for engagement in diplomatic channels, and provided validation for future compromises made by the Palestinian leadership in its goal of establishing a Palestinian state consisting of the West Bank and Gaza.<sup>[5]</sup>

By contrast, Israel, fearing that the Palestinians would exploit any territorial compromises or gains to improve its position for attacking and ultimately destroying it, largely pursued a rejectionist course—with the exception of some efforts in the late 1990s under Ehud Barak. Israel believed that it would prevail in any conflict because of its military superiority.<sup>[6]</sup>



Biden felt he had to show his pro-Israel orientation while running for president in 1988. [Source: [haaretz.com](#)]

During the meeting with Meir and Lambden, Biden reiterated his commitment to Israel when he stated the U.S. should “[tell the Arabs that Israel is foremost among its friends](#), and that if the Arabs had a problem with that, they should be aware that they would have a problem with the U.S. as well.”

Biden ended by saying that “Israel wouldn’t be sorry if he were elected to the White House”—a statement that holds just as true today, nearly 35 years later.

### *[Choosing Goliath over David](#)*

While his ideological conviction appears strong, Biden’s strong support for Israel has at its core always been opportunistic.

Early in his career, Biden had taken rather nuanced and balanced positions on the Arab-Israeli conflict that dissipated over time. Biden told Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Michael Oren that he lives by the dictum “[Never crucify yourself on a small cross.](#)” The message: The Palestinians are not influential enough to champion, and that taking up their cause would be political suicide.<sup>[7]</sup>

In a 2013 speech, Biden bragged that he had “[done more fundraisers for AIPAC \(the main Israeli lobbying organization\) in the ’70s and early ’80s than—just about as many as anybody.](#)” One year, he even participated in their [membership drive](#).



Biden speaks at AIPAC conference. [Source: [timesofisrael.com](https://www.timesofisrael.com)]

In the mid 1980s, Senator Biden’s personal assistant, Sam Lauter, a University of California Berkeley graduate, was on the board of the Democratic Majority for Israel, which tries to enhance support for Israel in the Democratic Party and was a decades-long AIPAC leader.

Lauter had [met Biden at an AIPAC conference in the early 1980s](#). His mother, [Naomi](#), a close friend of Nancy Pelosi, was involved in AIPAC’s founding in the 1950s and was a key Bay Area leader of the group.



Democratic political strategist Sam Lauter with Joe Biden in 2019 at a fundraiser in U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein's house. [Source: [jweekly.com](https://www.jweekly.com)]

During Biden's 1988 presidential run, the youth director of his campaign, [Jonathan S. Kessler](#), was a former AIPAC staffer, and one of his fundraisers, [S. Harrison Dogole](#), a Philadelphia businessman, sat on AIPAC's national advisory council and had a hand in two pro-Israel PACs. His national finance chair also began in political fundraising through AIPAC and other pro-Israel groups.

When Biden made another presidential run in 2008, his finance chairman, [Michael Adler](#), a wealthy Miami real estate investor and bundler for Biden in 2020, was also an AIPAC lobbyist.

According to the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Biden had been the pro-Israel lobby's "anointed candidate" in the 1988 race, and after the election he continued to be among the top ten Senate recipients of money from pro-Israel PACs, receiving [tens of thousands of dollars from them each year](#).

Biden was also among the highest recipients of [pro-Israel honoraria](#)—cash payments from private groups for attending events like private meetings and seminars, or for delivering speeches. These not only ran around Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulations but could be used by candidates to pay their personal debts.

#### ***"Part of Our Mishpucha:" The 1990s and 2000s***

The effect of Biden's ties to the Israeli lobby had become evident by the 1990s and 2000s when (1) Biden no longer publicly challenged any Israeli leaders on the settlements issue, (2) helped block peace overtures, (3) more vocally criticized Palestinians for promoting terrorism, and (4) sought to expand U.S. support to Israel even when it was taken over by the far-right Likud Party.

In 1991, when President George H.W. Bush tried to topple Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir [by withholding loan guarantees over settlement activity](#), which Bush was trying to curtail, Biden [signed up](#) as an original co-sponsor to [Republican-led legislation](#) in the Senate that would have funded loan guarantees [without condition](#).

Though devastated in 1995 to see his old friend Rabin assassinated for making overtures toward peace, Biden worked closely with his successor, Benjamin Netanyahu, whose political lineage traced to the [militant, uncompromising strand of Zionism promoted by Zeev Jabotinsky](#), which believed that Israeli security could only be guaranteed through subjugation of the Palestinians.

Netanyahu counted Biden as a close personal friend since the 1980s, welcoming him to Israel as "part of our [mishpucha](#) [family]."





Biden and Netanyahu: Two old friends. [Source: [israelhayom.com](http://israelhayom.com)]

When a collection of Republicans sent letters to Clinton and other lawmakers denouncing the Clinton administration's efforts to revive peace talks that had lain dormant following Rabin's assassination, Biden and other liberals sent a gentler letter also discouraging the idea.<sup>[8]</sup>

In the early 2000s, when the second Palestinian uprising, or intifada, erupted after Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon set foot on the Temple Mount, the third holiest site in Islam which Israel was trying to retain under its sovereignty, Biden introduced a Senate resolution expressing [solidarity with Israel](#).

Biden further [teamed up](#) with Mitch McConnell (R-KY) to introduce and pass the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act, [described by](#) the *Jerusalem Post* as "one of the harshest bills ever drafted" against Palestinian terrorism and a rising Hamas, the Islamist militant organization that was elected to rule Gaza.

In April 2002, when the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) massacred civilians at the Jenin refugee camp and then bulldozed much of the camp, leaving some 4,000 people homeless, Senator Biden blamed the victims, [claiming that Palestinian terrorists had hidden among the civilians, making their killing justifiable](#).



Image of remains of part of Jenin refugee camp after it was bulldozed by the IDF. [Source: [hrw.org](http://hrw.org)]

When Israel subsequently started carrying out its policy of assassinations, or so-called "targeted killings," Biden insisted the [extra-judicial killings were legal](#) and even criticized the Bush administration for condemning them.

This latter stance signaled Biden's transformation from the somewhat earnest young Senator who suggested to Golda Meir that Israel should withdraw from non-strategic territory that it



occupied into a seasoned pol who understood the power of the Israeli lobby and was trying to gain political advantage from the Islamophobic political climate after 9/11 and fear about terrorism.

### ***Eulogy of Ariel Sharon***

Following Ariel Sharon's death in 2014, Biden gave a stirring eulogy in which he characterized the former Israeli Prime Minister (2001-2006) as a "[great man](#)" whose "defining attributes—passion for the Jewish people, physical and political courage, and love of this land—all played out on the canvas of the State of Israel's historic trajectory."



Biden and Ariel Sharon in 2002. [Source: [politico.com](#)]

As an example of Sharon's political courage, Biden cited Sharon's push for the removal of Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip following the second Intifada.

Biden left out that the settlers had to be removed [because much of Gaza had been devastated by IDF forces in a siege Sharon had ordered](#), and were transferred to Israeli-occupied territory in the West Bank and Golan Heights as part of a settlement expansion plan there.<sup>[9]</sup>

Biden's eulogy never mentioned the Palestinians, who considered Sharon a war criminal—starting with the [Qibya massacre of 1953](#) when forces under his command killed at least 69 Palestinians in a West Bank village.<sup>[10]</sup>

The 1983 Kahan Commission found Sharon to be "[personally responsible](#)" for "[ignoring the danger of bloodshed and revenge](#)" that culminated in the Sabra and Shatila massacre in Lebanon.

Sharon also oversaw the suppression of the second Intifada (2002-2005) when the IDF had evolved into a "killing machine whose efficiency is awe-inspiring, yet shocking," according to the Israeli daily *Haaretz*.<sup>[11]</sup>



Sharon was a hated figure among Palestinians. [Source: [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)]

PLO official Dr. Mustafa Barghouti told the BBC that the Palestinians had no positive memories of Sharon.

**Nobody should celebrate any death. But unfortunately, I have to say that Mr. Sharon left no good memories with Palestinians. Unfortunately, he had a [path of war and aggression and a great failure in making peace with the Palestinian people](#).**

PLO negotiator and Columbia University professor Rashid Khalidi added to me, it's horrific to watch the [hagiographies that are being produced by people like Vice President Biden...about a man who really should have ended his days at The Hague before the International Criminal Court](#).<sup>[12]</sup>



Vice President Joe Biden posed for pictures yesterday near Tel Aviv with his wife, Jill, members of a U.S. aviation regiment, Israeli soldiers, and the nation's defense minister, Ehud Barak. [Source: [archive.boston.com](http://archive.boston.com)]

### **Veep**

Biden was considered “the best friend of Israel in the [Obama] administration,” [according to Chuck Schumer \(D-NY\)](#), helping to secure what Netanyahu termed “unprecedented security assistance.”

Michael Oren wrote that Biden embraced the perspective of Malcolm Hoenlein, the executive vice-chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, that there should be “[no daylight](#)” between the U.S. and Israeli governments—when Obama himself had stated that during George W. Bush’s administration there had been “[no daylight and no progress \[on the peace process\]](#).”

In a March 2013 speech before AIPAC, Biden boasted that he did not know of any time “when there has [sic] been as many meetings, as much coordination, between our intelligence services and our military. Matter of fact, they’re [getting tired of traveling back across the ocean, I think](#).”

Biden expressed further satisfaction that (1) America was the only country in the UN to vote against the establishment of a fact-finding mission on Israeli settlements; and (2) had invested [\\$275 million in the Iron Dome missile defense system](#), including \$70 million the president had directed last year on an “urgent basis,” and was working to “[deploy a powerful new radar, networked with American early warning satellites](#).”

Biden went on to (3) defend Israel’s upholding a blockade against Gaza which the UN deemed to be illegal, and (4) brag about helping Israel with damage control after it was condemned for staging a military raid in May 2010 on a flotilla carrying relief supplies into Gaza that resulted in the death of ten Turkish activists.

Overlooked was a UN investigation which concluded that six of the activists were killed on the flotilla in a [manner suggesting execution](#) and that Israel's actions betrayed an [“unacceptable level of brutality.”](#)



Activists hold banner of slain Turkish activists aboard Gaza Freedom Flotilla. [Source: [flotillayves1.weebly.com](http://flotillayves1.weebly.com)]

Besides with its assault on the flotilla, Biden said in his speech he was proud that the Obama administration had “stood strongly with Israel in its right to defend itself after the [Goldstone Report was issued in 2009.](#)”

The latter was a report issued by a UN fact-finding team headed by South African jurist Richard Goldstone, which called for further investigation into war crimes committed in Israel's 2009 Operation Cast Lead, which left 1,300 Gazans and 13 Israelis dead.

Biden said that, “while the rest of the world, including some of our good friend[s], was [sic] prepared to embrace the report, we came out straightforwardly, [expressed our concerns](#) and with recommendations.”

The U.S. by implication under Biden's leadership was trying to repudiate and block a legitimate investigation into war crimes sanctioned by the UN and a majority of world opinion.



Judge Richard Goldstone with his report detailing Israeli war crimes in Gaza. [Source: [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com)]

### ***Yesterday's Man Fights the Winds of Change***

President Biden is inheriting a different political landscape from his heyday in the Senate and even years as Vice-President, as public opinion on the Israel-Palestine conflict has begun to shift dramatically.



Norman Finkelstein's book, *Knowing Too Much: Why the American Jewish Romance with Israel Is Coming to an End*, documents how Jewish liberals—including especially those under forty—increasingly do not identify with Israel's right-wing, hyper-militaristic government and find Israel's disregard for Palestinian rights to be shameful.

During the 2020 primaries, Bernie Sanders gave expression to their views as the first viable presidential candidate in decades to raise concern about Israel's human rights record.

Others on the left wing of the Democratic Party are also taking up the question of Palestine [as an integral part of their message against racism and austerity](#).

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), for example, has pushed for legislation to defund Israel's ongoing annexation of Palestinian land, and now-Congresswoman Cori Bush (D-MO) released a statement days before her primary victory which read:

**Cori Bush stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people just as they have stood in solidarity with Black Americans fighting for their own lives.**



Pro-Palestine Democrats: Cori Bush, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar.  
[Source: [english.alarby.co.uk](http://english.alarby.co.uk)]

As yesterday's man, President-elect Biden has a clear task ahead of him in trying to restore the status quo and fight off the left flank of his party on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

When Sanders suggested during the primary that "we cannot give [aid] carte blanche to the Israeli government ... [We have the right to demand respect for human rights and democracy.](#)" Biden retorted that "the idea that I'd withdraw military aid, as others have suggested, from Israel, is [bizarre.](#)"

Bizarre to him, perhaps; But not so to younger generations of voters who do not see Israel in the same way as their elders.



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[1] Quoted in Paul Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby*, rev ed. (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1989), 96.

[2] See Noam Chomsky, *Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel, and the Palestinians*, rev ed. (Boston: South End Press, 1999), ch. 5.

[3] President Biden's appointment as Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken stated that the [Biden administration was going to keep the embassy in Jerusalem](#) where Donald Trump's administration had moved it.

[4] Daniel Kurtzer, Ambassador to Israel under President George Bush and Ambassador to Egypt under President Clinton, testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 2017 that the relocation of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem would not only [cross a red line](#) for



the Palestinians but also, “for many Arab and Muslim states, including those with whom we share friendship and regional security interests.”

[5] See Paul Chamberlain, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Chomsky, *Fateful Triangle*, 68; Noam Chomsky, *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and Assault on Democracy* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 177.

[6] Chomsky, *Fateful Triangle*, 39-80.

[7] Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out*, 33.

[8] U.S. President Bill Clinton consequently shelved his peace plan, which was revived fleetingly, at the end of his presidency.

[9] Chomsky, *Failed States*, 193.

[10] For an overview of Sharon’s career, see Baruch Kimmerling, *Politicide: The Real Legacy of Ariel Sharon* (London: Verso, 2006).

[11] Quoted in Stephen Walt and John J. Marsheimer, “The Israeli Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy,” *Harvard Kennedy School Faculty Working Papers*, March 2006, <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/israel-lobby-and-us-foreign-policy>. The IDF fired one million bullets in the first days of the uprising, which is far from a measured response. According to the Jewish Virtual Library, nearly 5,000 Palestinians were killed compared to around 1,000 Israelis.

[12] Noam Chomsky characterized Sharon upon his death as a “[brutal killer](#). He had one fixed idea in mind, which drove him all his life: a greater Israel, as powerful as possible, as few Palestinians as possible—they should somehow disappear—and an Israel which could be powerful enough to dominate the region. The Lebanon War then, which was his worst crime, also had a goal of imposing a client state in Lebanon, a Maronite client state. And these were the driving forces of his life.”

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