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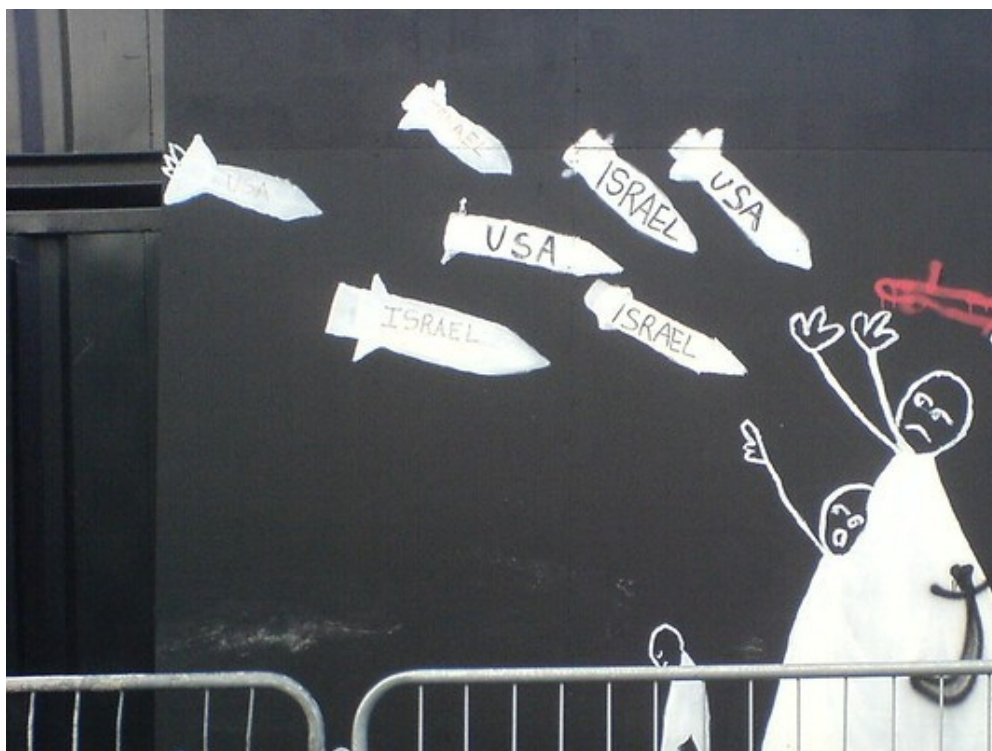
European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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## *It's Not American "Aid" to Israel. It's Tribute.*



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In the wake of the recent Human Rights Watch report on Israeli apartheid and persecution and the ongoing Israeli brutalities in Jerusalem, a slowly growing handful of brave American politicians is daring to defy President Biden's publicly proclaimed assertion that it would be "absolutely outrageous" to ever condition American "aid" to Israel on any Israeli behavior and to assert that such "aid" should indeed be conditioned, at least to some degree, on Israeli violations of human rights, international law and America's own laws with respect to the use of American-provided weapons.

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While this modest trend in principled support for human rights and international law by even a mere handful of American politicians must be viewed as encouraging, the tradition of characterizing the U.S. government's payments to Israel — currently a baseline minimum of \$3.8 Billion per year, negotiated and agreed by a departing President Obama for the next ten-year payment cycle, inevitably supplemented by numerous add-ons — as “aid” should also be questioned.

Israel is not a poor country. In the latest UN rankings, its annual per capita GDP of \$46,376 ranked it 19th among the UN's 193 member states, ahead of Germany (20th), the United Kingdom (24th), France (26th) and Saudi Arabia (41st).

The guaranteed payments which U.S. governments negotiate with Israeli governments and commit to pay to Israel are not negotiated and paid because Israel needs the money.

They are negotiated and paid as public manifestations of American submission and subservience.

The accurate and proper word for such payments is “tribute”, for which the dictionary definition is “a payment made periodically by one state or ruler to another, especially as a sign of dependence.”

Ever since Israel attacked the aptly named *USS Liberty* in 1967, killing 34 Americans, wounding another 171 and inflicting 821 rocket and machine-gun holes in the ship, and President Johnson ordered a cover-up which constituted a virtual surrender, the U.S. government has been taking orders from and paying tribute to Israel, with consequences for America's reputation and its role in the world vastly more costly than mere money.

Indeed, the American relationship with Israel deprives the United States of any credibility when it accuses countries that it dislikes for other reasons of violations of human rights or international law.

If popular perceptions and discourse in the United States could be transformed so as to recognize that the U.S. government's payment commitments to Israel constitute tribute to a dominant power rather than “aid” to a needy nation, there might be some hope for a long overdue American declaration of independence and a more constructive and honorable American role in the world.

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