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## *The Dangers of Biden's Legacy and Trump's Inheritance*



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A key measure of any U.S. president's success is the ability or good fortune to leave his successor with a better international situation than the one he inherited. Donald Trump inherited a relatively stable situation from Barack Obama, but his chaotic and unstable leadership did no favors for Joe Biden. Trump now inherits a broad pattern of disorder in Europe, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific, and has named a national security team that seems destined to make all of these issues worse.

Sadly, Joe Biden is leaving the presidency with no awareness of his shortcomings. He has charged Sudan with genocidal policies, but refuses to acknowledge his complicity with regard to Israeli genocidal policies. Recently, Biden announced an additional \$8 billion in fighter jets, attack helicopters, and artillery to an Israel that relies almost solely on

sophisticated U.S. weaponry inappropriate for the terrain and the targets that Israel is facing. Biden's national security team ignored Israel's right-wing attempts to undermine the rule of law, although the importance of the rule of law was Biden's major campaign volley against Trump.

The Israeli Defense Forces have been politicized and radicalized in their support for Benjamin Netanyahu's policies. The same can be said for the Israeli police on the West Bank, which are conducting their own war crimes in support of Netanyahu. Israel has made no attempt to examine the serious and profound allegations of the abuse and misconduct on the part of its military and police in Gaza and the West Bank. The U.S. threat to limit arms shipments to Israel if humanitarian aid wasn't increased was embarrassingly ignored by Israel. In fact, Israel tightened the borders and the deliveries, and not even the unconscionable deaths of Palestinian infants has made a difference.

Soon after the war began, Biden arrived in Israel and signaled that the United States would give "carte blanche" to Israel regarding weapons transfers and diplomatic support. Biden continually referred to his relationship with Prime Minister Golda Meir from the 1970s, and failed to realize that Meir's Israel no longer exists and that Netanyahu's Israel has become an imperial power in the Middle East. Secretary of State Antony Blinken did worse: he arrived in Israel before Biden and stated that "I come as a Jew." Thank you, Tony Blinken.

Biden came to the presidency in 2021 with more experience than any previous president in the field of foreign policy and national security. He said that "I know more about foreign policy than Henry Kissinger." In a recent interview, he told reporters that "I know more world leaders than any one of you have ever met in your whole goddamn life."

But unlike Kissinger, Biden had a weak national security team, conducted foreign policy on his own, and ignored the Cold War situation that he helped to create. Although the current Cold War promises to be more dangerous, more costly, and more implacable than its predecessor that dominated the 1950s and 1960s, Biden continued to paint Russia and China with the same brush. Unfortunately, he received support from the mainstream media and the foreign policy community. Kissinger had very different policies toward Moscow and Beijing, and improved bilateral relations with both of them.

We can't begin to tackle energy and environment problems without establishing a serious dialogue with China, but as recently as last week Biden, Blinken, and U.S. Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns were lecturing Beijing regarding China's relations with Russia and Iran. Biden appointed Ambassador Burns, a Sovietologist and not a Sinologist, in 2022; since then, both Biden and Burns have been lecturing Beijing about its policies toward

Russia, Iran, and North Korea. But China isn't about to change its relations with Russia, interrupt its huge purchases of oil from Iran, or alter its relations with North Korea. China has its own problems with North Korea, a nation on its border that has developed a close relationship with Russia, which worsens Beijing's national security situation. Thank you, Nick Burns.

More sadly, a Trump administration offers the promise of worsening these problems. Although Biden never fulfilled his commitment to create a "rules-based international order" and a "foreign policy for the Middle Classes," a second Trump administration is likely to worsen the chaos and instability that earmarked the first Trump administration. Trump's national security team, if it survives confirmation, will certainly repeat the "carte blanche" of Biden's four years. The "China hawks" at the White House (national security adviser Mike Waltz); the Department of State (Marco Rubio), and the intelligence tsar and the Central Intelligence Agency (Tulsi Gabbard and John Ratcliffe, respectively) hardly inspire confidence. Trump's self-proclaimed success was in the field of real estate development, but there were failures there as well.

There is no reason to believe that Trump can manage the array of challenges that confront the United States at this time. And unlike Trump's first term, there is no one in the second Trump administration that will be able to curb his worst impulses. The Founding Fathers believed that the Supreme Court and the mainstream media would be able to limit Trump's powers, but Trump has packed the Court in his favor and the Washington Post is leading the way in limiting the power and influence of the mainstream media. Thank you, Jeff Bezos.

On the eve of the presidential election in November, the Economist asked "What could possibly go wrong?" In view of President-elect Trump's incendiary comments on trade and tariffs, Gaza, Greenland, the Panama Canal, the Gulf of Mexico, and Canada, we're about to find out. Trump called "tariffs" his favorite word in the dictionary. It's very possible that our worst fears about a Trump presidency will come to pass. Thank you, American voters.

Finally, the leading columnists of the Washington Post and the New York Times are encouraging policies that will worsen both domestic and international challenges that confront the United States. Regarding Israel, the Times' David French praises Biden because he "stood behind" Israel in the Middle East, and Trump for the "hard line against Iran." Bret Stephens, the Times' shill for Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party, praises Trump for recognizing the "need to spend a whole lot more on defense," describing our nuclear weapons infrastructure as "decrepit." The Post's David Ignatius credits U.S. military power for backing Israel as "it remade the Middle East," and falsely credits Biden with seeking to

“manage competition” with China, which is exactly what the Biden national security team failed to do. Thank you, Mainstream Media.

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