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Intruder at Large: The United States in the Middle East



Photograph by Nathaniel St. Clair

After Iranian prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh (1951-53), was overthrown in a U.S.-British coup, he stated: “I am aware that my fate must serve as an example in the future throughout the Middle East in breaking the chains of slavery and servitude to colonial interests.”

Right now, his words have special meaning and importance.

Mossadegh understood that the United States could not dominate the Middle East on its own. It needed accomplices, meretricious regional proxies to sustain control. Washington has spent enormous sums, waged wars, forfeited American principles and aligned itself with authoritarian dictators to increase and deepen regional dependency.

Preserving ascendancy also answers the vexing question of why when faced with worldwide demonstrations, unprecedented criticism and internal dissent, President Joe Biden has not wavered in his support for Israel as it executes genocide in Gaza.

In addition to declaring himself a committed Zionist, Biden, like his predecessors, is being faithful to a Pax Americana foreign policy—a policy of absolute power that has been detrimental for the people of the Middle East as well as Americans.

American policymakers have regarded command of the Persian Gulf a foreign policy imperative since it emerged as the world's economic and military power following the Second World War. Because of its location and rich resources, it is, in the words of former [President Dwight D. Eisenhower](#) (1953-61), the “most strategically important area in the world.”

Both Cold War era presidents, Harry S. Truman and Eisenhower, issued doctrines aimed at securing American political, economic and military supremacy in the postwar world. While the [Eisenhower Doctrine](#), for example, pledged assistance to countries in the Middle East to fight communism, in private Eisenhower admitted that his [real policy goal](#) was to combat Arab nationalism, looked on as a challenge to American hegemony.

During its 75-year effort to contain the former Soviet Union and control the Middle East, the United States has amassed a tragic record of interventions and wars. It has destroyed lives and ecosystems in a region it knows only in terms of the energy resources it provides.

With the end of the Cold War in 1991 and diminished Soviet influence, the United States sought new “threats” to justify its overweening presence in the region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and Palestinian liberation movements were seized upon to fill the void.

The people of Iran, who liberated their country from 26 years of repressive U.S.-ordained monarchical rule and Palestinians seeking liberation from their brutal Israeli oppressors, were deliberately designated terrorists. The association of Iranians and Palestinians with terrorism has, until now, proven effective in fettering contradictory thought.

It is worth noting, that in its resolve to maintain America's global imperium, the Department of Defense, beginning in 1997, officially adopted a program titled [full spectrum dominance \(FSD\)](#)—total military control over land, sea, air, space and information worldwide to protect challenges to U.S. interests from state and non-state actors anywhere in the world.

Israel has been in the forefront of the Pentagon's full spectrum military dominance in the Middle East. The Biden administration, absorbed with weakening Russia and China, has fixed attention on deepening Israel's integration into the region and

grooming it to assume more of America's military role.

To further both objectives, the White House has worked to include Saudi Arabia in the September 2020 Abraham Accords—a set of diplomatic normalization agreements between Israel and Arab states; whose current signatories include the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan (status in limbo).

In addition to economic ties, the aim of the agreement is to integrate the military, intelligence and security systems of the Arab states with those of Israel—to essentially create a regional police force.

The U.S. Congress has also asserted itself into the Accords foray. House Bill 2748, [“Israel Relations Normalization Act of 2021,”](#) requires the Department of Defense to present plans for integrating Israeli and Arab defense systems and for the State Department to develop a strategy to strengthen and expand the Accords.

In December 2023, Congress passed and the president signed the [Special Envoy for the Abraham Accords](#) Act which was embedded in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2024, allocating \$886 billion in military spending. The law requires the State Department to establish an ambassadorial level Special Envoy to solidify the agreement.

The Accords were also meant to contain and confront Iran as well as other pro-Palestinian groups; the “axis of resistance”—the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syrian government, Palestinian Resistance in occupied Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Ansarallah (Houthis) in Yemen, and Islamic Resistance in Iraq.

When they agreed to the pact, the Arab states bypassed the rights of 6 million Palestinians living under violent Israeli occupation. They also set the stage for the October attack. Isolated, Palestinians were left with little choice—perpetual subjugation and humiliation or resistance.

Continued Arab fealty also tacitly signals support for Israel's ongoing crimes against humanity in Palestine, which [increased](#) dramatically in the occupied West Bank after the agreement was signed. Faced with that reality, and U.S. complicity, [Arab support](#) has begun to subside.

The Gazan prison break of October 7 and the “axis of resistance” have thrown a monkey wrench into Washington's full spectrum dominance and the grand plans of the Abraham Accords.

The Iranian Revolution and the Palestinian incursion have liberated the Middle East from U.S.-Israeli tyranny. Both have inspired hope among the oppressed across the globe and have opened the door for regional social, political and economic transformation.

The pillars of U.S. imperial power have weakened. One of the most consequential pillars fell in 1979 when Iranians rid themselves of the U.S.-backed Shah. To sustain power since then, the United States has leaned on the House of Saud and other Gulf autocrats, Egypt's military dictator, Jordan's vassal monarch and servile collaborators like the Palestinian Authority.

America's stranglehold over the Middle East is beginning to unravel. Israel has become a pariah state and Arab Gulf despots are looking eastward to China, increasingly seen as a more reliable partner than the United States.

In America's design for the region, Israel has to succeed no matter how many Palestinians are killed and wounded. They know that to lose their Israeli stronghold is to lose dominance over all of the Middle East.

Washington and Tel Aviv have resorted to the " Hamas must be destroyed " war cry to justify the continued genocide. What is really being said is that to maintain supremacy, they must break the back of the resistance in the entire region. It has succeeded in Libya, has been tried in Syria, is ongoing in Yemen and Lebanon, and has been unremitting in Iran since 1979.

Palestine has held a mirror to the world. It has shown the shameful lengths the United States has been willing to go to preserve its supremacy and that of its Israeli proxy.

Gaza has also revealed the strength and resolve of Palestinians and their allies to continue the resistance and to break the chains that have made the region weak and servile.

The U.S. doctrine of dominance that began in the 1940s and has kept the Middle East divided, chaotic and dependent must come to an end so that transformation can begin. Radical and profound change of the region's social, political and economic order can only come about if the United States departs, Zionism ends and Palestinians return to a free Palestine. Anything less will fail.

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