

ICC ARREST WARRANTS FOR NETANYAHU AND GALLANT

The West’s Pandora’s box is starting to crack



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After over a year of atrocities perpetrated on the people of Gaza and the West Bank, with the Israeli apartheid machine in full force, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu and his Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, whom he fired a fortnight before the arrest. Netanyahu, referred to as a “serial killer of peace” by a member of his own Knesset, is now a wanted man globally for committing crimes against humanity. Symbolically, from now on, Netanyahu and Gallant cannot set foot in 124 countries.

Israel’s angry response to the arrest warrant, and its predictable gaslighting by misusing the term “anti-Semitism,” was unsurprising. Netanyahu’s office called the warrants “an anti-Semitic decision...equivalent to the modern Dreyfus trial,” referring to the 1894 political scandal where a French artillery captain of Jewish descent was wrongfully convicted of treason. Netanyahu and his office are adept at citing historical and biblical references to dismiss valid rulings, even from the ICC. There is simply no parallel between Alfred Dreyfus and Benjamin Netanyahu, who has openly pursued policies that kill Palestinians and outlined plans to annex Palestine, effectively erasing it from the map and cutting off its people from the world.

The Israeli government, with the support of the US, has distorted the term “anti-Semitism” to the point where real anti-Semitism is almost indistinguishable. There are two kinds of anti-Semitism: actual hatred toward Jews or Israelis simply because they are Jewish, and harmful rhetoric used to justify the killing of innocent Palestinians, which in turn enables more instances of actual anti-Semitism worldwide.

But it’s not just rhetoric and mind games;

the Israeli government has employed every tool, from open killings to censorship, to evade accountability for mass murder. The international media reporting on the ICC arrest warrants marked a historic moment—they noted that this is the first time leaders in a “democracy” and a “Western-aligned” country have faced arrest. How long will the world continue calling Israel a democracy? What kind of democracy reacts with such fury to ICC arrest warrants? What kind of democracy mercilessly kills its neighbouring population?

Following the warrant, the Israeli government approved a resolution to ban government funding for advertisements in Haaretz, a renowned independent newspaper that has fairly criticised Netanyahu. Despite historic protests demanding his resignation, Netanyahu continues to wield his power to silence dissent. According to the government, the sanctions against Haaretz were due to “many articles that have hurt the legitimacy of the state of Israel and its right to self-defense,” particularly after Haaretz publisher Amos Schocken called for sanctioning the Israeli government in London.

It has long been evident that Israel is not a democracy. This sentiment is felt internally as Netanyahu’s power-hungry actions, from judicial overhauls to his refusal to reach a ceasefire, demonstrate his disregard for justice.

What is most shameful, however, is the unwavering support of the United States for an apartheid state led by a man who exhibits fascist tendencies daily. In March 2023, before Israel’s genocide in Gaza, the Biden administration welcomed the ICC’s decision to issue an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin for similar war crimes in Ukraine. It was the same prosecutor, Karim Khan, who issued warrants



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant attend a press conference in the Kirya military base in Tel Aviv on October 28, 2023.

PHOTO: AFP

confront its blatant double standards, as the same laws that apply to Russia do not seem to apply to Israel, simply because the latter is a US ally. This reaction erodes the US’s legitimacy to claim moral superiority over other nations.

Though hope remains slim for an immediate cessation of Israel’s violence, this decision symbolises a shift. For now, the US and Israel find themselves more isolated,

acknowledged that Italy would “have to arrest” Netanyahu and Gallant if required. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has emphasised that the ICC’s decision is binding for all state parties, including EU members. This puts Germany in a difficult position, as its historical guilt complicates its stance.

The US now finds itself increasingly isolated in its staunch support for Israel. More than 120

countries are obligated to act on the warrants, many of which maintain strong ties with the US. Yet, the US cannot indefinitely pressure its allies to unconditionally support Israel.

While the arrest warrants will not immediately alleviate the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, or southern Lebanon, they are a step toward accountability. As ceasefire negotiations unfold, the US continues to assure Israel of

Could Biden’s gambit lead to a larger catastrophe?



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A group of US Air Force personnel is busy at an ATACMS (Army Tactical Missile System) facility. They have just launched a strike targeting a weapons depot near the town of Karachev in Russia’s Bryansk region, about 70 miles from Ukraine. Crews perform around-the-clock alert duty in the launch control centre. A specially configured E-6B airborne aircraft with fully qualified missile combat crews hovers nearby, ready to assume control if the ground team is incapacitated. The missiles come from the US, paid for by its taxpayers, use American software and satnav guiding systems, and hit Russian targets. Located in Ukraine, this ATACMS facility can hit 225 Russian military installations within its 300 km range. The stakes are high as US President Joe Biden has authorised the use of ATACMS against Russia.



Ukraine fired long-range US missiles inside Russia for the first time despite Moscow’s threats of retaliation.

PHOTO: AFP

The ramifications of this policy shift could be disastrous for humanity, potentially leading to wider wars. How could a president who has already lost a public mandate against the president-elect promising to end the war make such a significant policy decision in his final months? This controversial move could alter the course of the war in Ukraine, with impacts extending far beyond Eastern Europe’s battlefields, and it raises complex questions.

A strategic legacy or a political statement?

Supporters may consider this an effort to leave a lasting foreign policy legacy. While his presidency is nearing its end, Biden may attempt to bolster Ukraine’s military strength before any likely policy shift by the incoming administration. However, this move could complicate Trump’s approach to Ukraine, as he often leaned toward reducing American involvement in the conflict. He could find himself in a position where reversing Biden’s policies becomes a politically fraught

endeavour. Though there is no clear indication that Biden is trying to undermine his successor, the timing and scale of this decision suggest a desire to lock in US support for Ukraine that could prove difficult to undo.

Could the defence contractors’ financial interests be at play? Lockheed Martin, which manufactures the ATACMS, stands to gain from the continued flow of military aid to Ukraine. The billions of dollars spent on military aid—much of it directed toward defence companies—raise legitimate concerns about their influence on the policies of both political parties.

Risks of escalation and Europe’s role

While Biden’s decision may appear to be a calculated effort to disrupt Russia’s military operations and bolster Ukraine’s position in future negotiations, the risks are enormous. Moscow has already signalled that it would consider such strikes an escalation, potentially opening the door to more aggressive Russian retaliation. This could lead to a broader conflict, one that could spill over into NATO countries or

Ukraine’s right to defend itself. On the other, many European leaders are wary of escalating the conflict further, fearing confrontation with Russia or destabilisation of the region. The war has strained Europe’s energy security, economic stability, and political cohesion. Energy prices have surged, inflation is hitting consumers hard, and the spectre of rising military tensions looms large. The recent uptick in hybrid warfare tactics, including cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns, only adds to the uncertainty. Future hybrid attacks could include expanding Moscow’s campaign of sabotage and assassinations in Europe or further arming US adversaries in the Middle East and Indo-Pacific regions. With suspected Russian support, two undersea fibre-optic communication cables in the Baltic Sea have already been sabotaged.

Is Biden desperate?

The legacy of his presidency—one marked by global challenges, economic turbulence, and the rise of authoritarianism—will, in part, be defined by how the war in Ukraine unfolds. It was Joe Biden who decided to hurriedly withdraw

from Afghanistan, leaving it to the Taliban in August 2021 after two decades of futile attempts and the loss of many American lives and money to stamp them out. That was when the Ukraine crisis was about to surface, probably timed to salvage American credibility lost in Afghanistan. Biden wouldn’t want to leave a similar legacy in Ukraine.

The future of US support for Ukraine

With ATACMS in hand, Ukraine now has a tool to strike at Russia’s military infrastructure, disrupting supply lines and potentially shifting the balance of power. However, that doesn’t mean Kyiv can use them at will. The facilities are controlled, managed, and operated by US personnel, who have the final say on when and how the missiles are used. This means that the US has a significant degree of control over the situation and can potentially prevent Ukraine from using the missiles in ways that could escalate the conflict. However, the presence of the missiles also increases the possibility of more destructive Russian attacks, as they may see the US as directly involved in the conflict.

For Russia, the situation is fraught with danger. The Kremlin’s response could involve a ramping up of military operations—with the ever-present threat of cyber warfare and the use of unconventional weapons.

As President Trump prepares to take office, the question remains: Will he seek to reverse Biden’s policy or adopt a different strategy? Trump’s previous comments suggest he may push for a swift end to the conflict, potentially at the expense of Ukrainian territorial integrity. If he succeeds in scaling back US military aid, Ukraine could be at a disadvantage, with a weakened negotiating position against a more aggressive Russia.

The world will be watching closely in the months ahead. Biden’s decision may reshape the course of the war, the future of US-Russian relations, the stability of Europe, and the global balance of power.

Russia launched a barrage of hypersonic missiles at Ukraine in retaliation within days after Ukraine’s strike (after notifying Washington 30 minutes prior). The world holds its breath, hoping the risks don’t spiral into something far worse.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**

1 Ticked off

5 Fancy ties

11 Motor sound

12 Singer Twain

13 “Bus Stop” playwright

14 Galileo’s crime

15 Night light

17 Singer Reed

18 Museum piece

22 Ship staffs

24 Sleep sound

25 Poker prize

26 Solo in space

27 “luck!”

30 Fragrance

32 Toasting word

33 Coffee dispenser
- 34 Gambling spot

38 Ness nemesis

41 Jason’s ship

42 Like some clocks

43 Even

44 Most original

45 Concludes
- DOWN**

1 Do some laps

2 “Dear me!”

3 Verdi opera

4 Before, poetically

5 Tennis great Arthur

6 Clipping need

7 Bizet opera

8 Early hour

9 Frank McCourt book
- 10 Utter

16 Tour carrier

19 Wagner opera

20 Persia, today

21 Minimal change

22 NCOs with two stripes

23 Corner piece

28 Strauss opera

29 Singer Morisette

30 Minivan alternative

31 Dream up

35 Splinter group

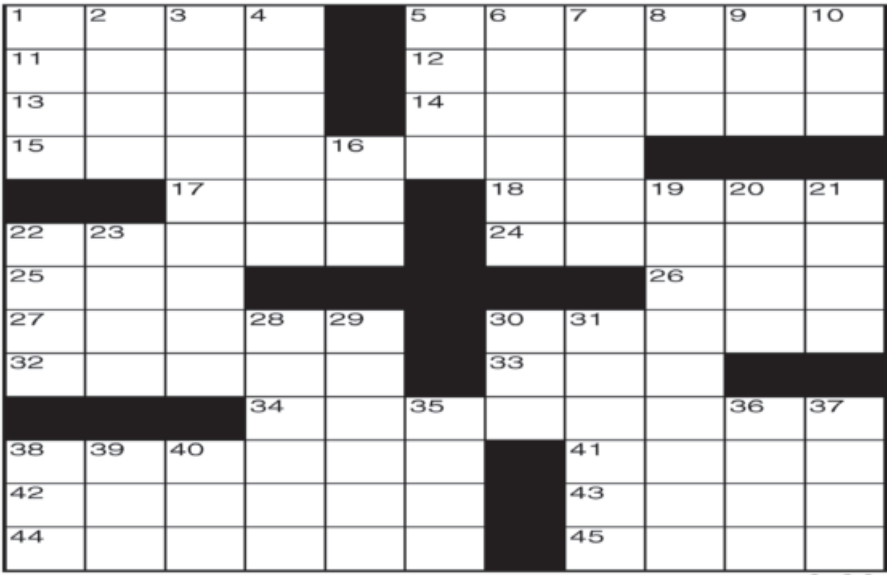
36 Mature

37 Supplies with turf

38 Fire

39 Eroded

40 Punch sound



SATURDAY’S ANSWERS

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