

# The Weapons Connection



In Nov., protestors block an entrance to the offices of a Lockheed Martin subsidiary which won \$1 million in state funding to expand its St. Paul, MN operations.

By Lindsay Potter

As we go to print, it has been eight weeks since the beginning of the bombardment of Gaza, with over 17,000 civilians killed, the number growing daily and nearly half of them children. The living are mostly without water, electricity, food, fuel, and medicine, entry or exit, and the Israeli government continues to use criminal tactics to carry out genocide — documented and named by the Center for Constitutional Rights, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International.

Within a week after the start of Israel's war, weapons manufacturer Lockheed Martin's stock surged 11%, following a 36% increase in Spring 2023 as a result of the war in Ukraine. In September, Lockheed reported a total annual revenue of over \$67 billion. Lockheed's weapons have been documented in use in Israeli war crimes against Palestinians and Lockheed's Hellfire missiles are currently among the demands from Israel. But this is only business as they have conducted it for decades. Lockheed's profits soared 41% in 2004 as a result of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Under President Bush, a Lockheed Martin lobbyist was appointed General Consul for the Department of Homeland Security. The company spends millions of dollars in lobbying and campaign contributions and currently their CEO is on the board of the Council on Foreign Relations. Over the last twenty years, Lockheed has been involved in billion dollar contracts to manage Sandia Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Nevada Test Site — federally owned sites for the research, development, and testing of nuclear and non-nuclear weapons technology.

Despite legislation alerting Congress to the giant waste of the nearly \$2 trillion renovation of U.S. ICBMs and despite arguments by former Secretaries of Defense that land-based missiles are too expensive, too risky, and redundant, Lockheed has \$3.7 billion in current contracts for the Minuteman III and its replacements meant to carry the arsenal through 2075. The U.S. Navy plans to use Lockheed Martin Hercules aircraft for nuclear command and communications. Lockheed has a current \$6.3 billion contract for work on the Trident II nuclear submarine missiles for the U.K. and U.S. So far, the U.S. has sent over \$46 billion in weapons to Ukraine, including Javelin anti-tank missiles, M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System launchers, and Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems, all made by Lockheed Martin.

## U.S.-Israeli Exceptionalism & the New Arms Race

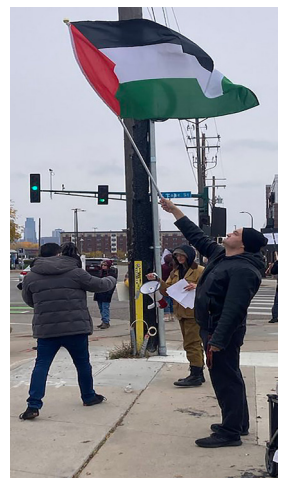
Lockheed profits from U.S. violation of international law and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, with \$50 billion in sales of its F-35 war plane to seven different countries, many with the possible purpose of hauling the U.S.'s own B61 bomb. Israel was the first to receive the new Lockheed Martin F-35, and it has been used in bombing sorties over Gaza. In addition to the U.S. exceptionalism enshrined in the NPT, the U.S. boldly violates the treaty with nuclear sharing. Much was made of Russia sending nuclear missiles to Belarus, and when Russia tried this once before during the Cuban Missile Crisis. However, little is said of the U.S. forward-deployed nukes in five NATO countries.

If North Korea tests a warhead, the U.S. responds with joint military drills in the North Pacific and threats of economic and military retaliation. Iran, though it signed the NPT and agreed to inspections, though it followed the letter of the Iran Nuclear Deal until Trump unilaterally withdrew, though it has suffered U.S. sanctions for decades, is still

demonized as a potential nuclear threat. Yet, Israel has never signed the NPT and does not acknowledge its arsenal of anywhere from 80 to as many as 600 nuclear warheads, according to Seymour Hersch. Israel's real nuclear capabilities and complete exemption from inspections, accountability, and standards of international law are encouraged by Western Europe and are a feather in the U.S. cap, a base of operations for U.S. hegemony.

Lockheed Martin has an office and show room in Tel Aviv. Israeli contractor Rafael is partnering with Lockheed, and an Israeli company won the lucrative contract to make the outer wing box for the new F-35s. Now Israel, as an arm of the U.S. empire, not only wields Lockheed's weapons to kill civilians, it will grow its economy by the same manufacture of death. Demand is so high Lockheed Martin is currently taking up to four years to fill orders, for example for war planes for Poland. Because of the global demand for weapons, with the market for nuclear weapons projected to double from 2020 to 2030, Lockheed and other manufacturers are coordinating efforts to increase production infrastructure.

Though Russia put forward a UN security council resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, the U.S. vetoed. Brazil put forward a resolution for a humanitarian pause for aid to be let through and still the U.S. vetoed. The U.S. chooses the profits of Lockheed and the imperial ambitions of the U.S., Israel, and allies, over the lives of civilians. The same is true of the U.S. and U.K. dismantling the proposal for peace in Ukraine presented by China. Lockheed Martin is in the business of killing people and the U.S. government acts as if it leads its international PR and market development — rolling over entire populations in order to ensure the demand for weapons only increases.



Nukewatch's Lindsay Potter (center) spoke Oct. 28 at a protest against weapons giant Lockheed Martin in St. Paul, Minnesota.

## Biden Returns from Israel Empty-Handed

By Ralph Nader

If President Joe Biden were a pony, instead of a perennial warhorse (e.g., gung-ho for Bush/Cheney's criminal destruction of Iraq), he would have his tail between his legs on his return from a one-day trip to Israel. He failed to achieve any immediate, critical objectives while the ongoing destruction of Gaza and the defenseless Palestinians continues.

Did Biden get Israel and Egypt to allow the exit of hundreds of American citizens fleeing the Gazan firestorm? No!

Did Biden open up corridors for humanitarian aid to the babies, children, women, elderly, and other civilians in Gaza who had nothing to do with the October 7th Hamas homicide/suicide attack on Israelis? No!

To the contrary, earlier in the week he cruelly ordered his UN Ambassador to veto a widely supported resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire.

Did he forcefully double down on his earlier counsel to the Israeli government to obey the laws of war, then and now, being openly violated? No! He continued his silence after the Israeli Defense Minister ordered his soldiers with the genocidal command, "No electricity, no food, no fuel, no water..." That death sentence includes patients in hospitals who must endure the carpet bombing of this long-time blockaded tiny strip of desert holding 2.3 million people. (See, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide).

Did Biden press for the exchange of Hamas' hostages for the release of Palestinian prisoners, including young Palestinians, who have been in Israeli jails for years without due process or charges? No! Worse,

Biden failed to object to the Israeli military stating that the release of over 200 Israeli hostages is a "secondary priority" to smashing Hamas and Gaza "into the Stone Age." This policy flouts the moral codes of many venerable Judaic sages described in an October 19, 2023, *New York Times* column by Mikahel Manekin titled "The Safety of the Hostages Must Come First." Israel conducted two prisoners-for-hostages exchanges, one in 2004 and one in 2011.

Did Biden, in strong terms, tell the Israeli politicians that they have already exacted revenge many times over on the stateless people of Gaza — in civilian lives lost, injuries, related spread of disease, destitution, and destruction? Did he say it is inhumane and counterproductive to bomb hospitals, clinics, schools, mosques, churches, apartment buildings, water mains, electric networks, and ambulances, all of which is in violation of civilized norms and rules of war? Of course not. He greenlighted Israel's genocidal warfare from the beginning of the Israeli assault and sent U.S. weaponry. He is enabling other actions of "co-belligerency" against the defenseless Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Did he even get the 20 trucks of humanitarian aid waiting at the Rafah crossing — also bombed by the Israelis — from Egypt into Gaza before he left? No!

Biden did come back with a bill for the American taxpayers — who for decades have been forced to pay for these Israeli wars. Now Biden wants Congress to approve \$14 billion for Israel to address the colossal failure of Netanyahu's extremist coalition to protect its own citizens on the border. (Adding only \$100 million for Palestinian relief).

That sum of money, to be authorized without any Congressional hearings or Congressional oversight,

is greater than the combined annual budgets of the FDA, OSHA, NHTSA, and the section of HHS, whose missions are to reduce the loss of hundreds of thousands of preventable U.S. fatalities in the workplace, on the highways, and in the marketplace and the hospitals. (See, the 2016 peer-reviewed study from the John Hopkins University of Medicine).

Lastly, still not calling a ceasefire, Biden is disregarding his own military's private advice against an Israeli ground invasion of Gaza as raising the risk of a larger war in the Middle East that would clearly be against the national interests of the American people and U.S. security.

He could have done what President Eisenhower did in 1956, when he demanded that the Israeli, British, and French attack on Egypt stop immediately.

And stop, they did!

After all, the U.S. has some influence over Israel, to put it mildly. The U.S. endorses all Israeli aggressions (including Israel's admission to bombing hundreds of sites in Syria, mired in its civil war and no threat, in addition to striking Damascus International Airport). All with U.S. advanced weapons, and billions of dollars in annual aid to Israel, a prosperous military, technological, and economic superpower. In fact, Israel's social safety net is better than that of the U.S.!

Biden provides total diplomatic cover in the U.S. with Washington's automatic UN vetoes, and pressures allies to follow the party line.

Moreover, Biden seems unwilling to recognize the historical origins of this conflict that now has mighty Israel occupying, colonizing, brutalizing and stealing land and water from the twenty-two percent

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