

Home > Features > Can Genocide Joe Stop the MAGA Threat



Can Genocide Joe Stop the MAGA Threat

written by Joe Allen | February 6, 2024

As the US presidential election begins to gather steam, Joe Allen looks at the far right threat and the dangerous game being played by the Democrats. Allen asks if Genocide Joe has the support to win or whether a new left alternative should take their place instead.

During the first month of 2024 the U.S. has seen the continued growth of antiwar activism, but at the same time has also felt the chill of a growing authoritarianism.



Again”) Republicans. Speaking at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, Biden spoke in near apocalyptic terms about the coming November election:

Today, we're here to answer the most important of questions. Is democracy still America's sacred cause? I mean it. This is not rhetorical, academic, or hypothetical. Whether democracy is still America's sacred cause is the most urgent question of our time, and it's what the 2024 election is all about.

The speech was familiar territory for Biden staged near Valley Forge, the iconic winter encampment of the Continental Army during the American Revolution, with a supportive audience. It was a speech laden with Revolutionary War era imagery and American nostalgia. Biden tried to pose as the greater patriot compared to Trump, “You can't be pro-insurrectionist and pro-American.”

Biden drew a stark contrast also between the corrupt and dangerous Trump with the God-like George Washington, commander of the Continental Army and the United States' first president. Following the British defeat at Yorktown, according to Biden:

George Washington was at the height of his power. Having just defeated the most powerful empire on Earth, could have held onto the power as long as he wanted. He could have made himself not a future president but a future monarch, in effect.

While conceding that U.S. history is not a “fairy tale,” Biden's overwrought appeal fell flat on the ears of Trump supporters, while a young generation of activists roll their eyes, who see the aristocratic, plantation-owner Washington as the country's first [slave-owning president](#), not a heroic figure to emulate.

Biden's [speech](#) was similar to one he gave on the eve of the 2022 elections with decidedly mixed results. The Democrats lost control of the House of Representatives but retained control of the Senate. In the strange way that political victories or losses are calculated, 2022 was seen as a [victory](#) by the Democrats because they weren't wiped out. The losses were mitigated by the Democrats' support for abortion rights across the country, small legislative victories, and growing fear of authoritarianism.

The Democrats, however, played a [dangerous game](#) that year. The *Washington Post's* veteran political reporter Annie Linskey [wrote](#) at the time:

Democrats have spent nearly \$19 million across eight states [if you include Illinois the number rises to \$54 million] in primaries this year amplifying far-right Republican candidates who have questioned or denied the validity of the 2020 election, according to a Washington Post analysis, interfering in GOP contests to elevate rivals they see as easier to defeat in November, even as those candidates have promoted false or baseless claims [about the 2020 presidential election].

Let's be clear: these were the same right-wing crackpots, the very MAGA types that the Democrats were warning the American public were a threat to democracy.

This year, however, [Adam Schiff](#), longtime Democratic congressman and the prosecutor in Trump's first impeachment trial, has deployed the same strategy in the current California Senate race. Schiff has been spending money elevating the campaign of Republican Steve Garvey, a popular former baseball player, hoping to push aside his Democratic rivals, including Barbara Lee, the only Congressperson to [vote against](#) the authorization of military force following 9-11.



and Ted Cruz. Wikileaks **revealed** the Clinton campaign's strategy:

"We don't want to marginalize the more extreme candidates, but make them more 'Pied Piper' candidates who actually represent the mainstream of the Republican Party [...] We need to be elevating the Pied Piper candidates so that they are leaders of the pack and tell the press to [take] them seriously."

We all know how this worked out.

Now that former President Donald Trump triumphed in the Iowa caucus and the New Hampshire Republican primary there is little doubt he will be the Republican nominee. Will the Democrats deploy the same strategy across the board this year? At its root, it tells us how little the Democrats offer, especially to working class voters. The 2022 elections took place in an atmosphere described in a poll conducted by the Boston Globe and Suffolk University as a **"suffocating sense of unease."**

If anything the unease is greater among broad swaths of the population this year, despite the historically low levels of unemployment and the staving off a long predicted recession, even though **mass layoffs** have begun to hint at possible economic downturn. This has created an opening for Trump along with Biden's personal unpopularity. The threat of Trump and a more authoritarian America is a real one.

Trump promises an even more explicit xenophobic campaign than he ran in 2016 and 2020. He has threatened to be a **"dictator"** and build **concentration camps**. Trump is very open about his second term priorities in Project 2025. He sees it largely as an opportunity to take **revenge** on his rivals and enemies among the people of the United States. Yet, the Democrats offer little more than weak promises on abortion rights, diversity, and a more civil public dialogue in this face of this monster.

However, **Israel's** U.S.-backed genocidal war in Gaza, along with the beginning of a wider war in the Middle East with the U.S. bombings in Yemen, Syrian, and Iraq, has produced the first sustained antiwar campaigning since the election of Barack Obama in 2008 that continues to upset U.S. politics, and is creating a new generation of radical activists.

The New Anti-Imperialist Movement

On January 13, 2024, for example, nearly 400,000 people demonstrated in the March on Washington for Gaza sponsored by American Muslim Task Force for Palestine, Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), and an array of smaller organizations. Overwhelming, but not exclusively Arab and Palestinian, it drew people from across the country. But, it was largely ignored or **diminished** in numbers by the mainstream media.

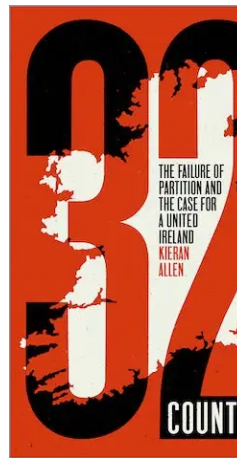
It was part of a global day of protest held on the 100th day of **Israel's** attack on Gaza. Washington's streets were filled with thousands of Palestinian flags, and signs that **proclaimed**, "No votes for Genocide Joe," "Biden has blood on his hands" and "Let Gaza live." Its number exceeded the **300,000** that marched for Palestine in November. Both are by far the largest pro-Palestinian and largest Arab-American demonstrations in U.S. history, and the biggest antiwar demonstrations in nearly two decades.

The protests were reminiscent of the 2006-7 Mega-marches, which brought out millions of immigrants, drawn heavily from Mexican and other Latin American communities, and flooded the streets of major cities across the country. The Gaza protests and the Mega-marches demonstrate that something has been building beneath the surface of U.S. society for a long time. Soon after the highpoint of the Mega-marches, the

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The current pro-Palestine campaigning has also faced a new McCarthyism, especially on college campuses, that has successfully forced the removal of two university presidents at [Harvard](#) and the [University of Pennsylvania](#). Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who is still a member of Congress, has threatened to escalate the attacks on pro-Palestinian activists. Pelosi said during an interview on CNN's "State of the Union":

"For them to call for a ceasefire is Mr. Putin's message. Make no mistake, this is directly connected to what he would like to see. Same thing with Ukraine. It's about Putin's message. I think some of these protesters are spontaneous and organic and sincere. Some, I think, are connected to Russia."

This kind of third-rate McCarthyism hasn't deterred the movement, so far. Just this past week, the Chicago City council voted narrowly to pass a [Ceasefire](#) resolution, making it the largest city in the country to do so. A Reuters news service analysis [revealed](#):

"Some 70 U.S. cities, including Chicago and Seattle, have passed resolutions on the [Israel](#)-Gaza war with most calling for a ceasefire placing more pressure on President Joe Biden ahead of a November general election to help end the fighting. At least 48 cities have passed symbolic resolutions calling for a halt to [Israel's](#) Gaza bombardment, with six others passing resolutions advocating more broadly for peace. At least 20 have passed resolutions condemning Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on [Israel](#)."

While these resolutions are almost entirely non-binding and largely symbolic, they represent the growing opposition to Biden's support for [Israel's](#) war in Gaza, especially among Democratic voters. Support for Biden among young voters has crashed, and more than 1,000 Black pastors, a key Biden constituency, have [called](#) for a ceasefire. A new poll by the Associated Press and NORC Center for Public Affairs Research [revealed](#) that half of U.S. adults believe that [Israel](#) "has gone too far" in its war in Gaza.

Meanwhile, labor campaigning for Palestine has continued to move forward largely driven by rank and file activists. The Service Employees International Union ([SEIU](#)), the second largest union in the U.S. has called for a ceasefire. The [American Federation of Teachers](#) (AFT), a union once an uncritical supporter of [Israel](#), has also called for a ceasefire. On the Chicago's far southside, UAW Local 551 that represent workers at Ford's giant assembly plant, [endorsed](#) the call by a coalition of Palestinian trade unions to:

- 1) Refuse to build weapons destined for [Israel](#).
- 2) Refuse to transport weapons to [Israel](#).
- 3) Pass motions in their trade union to this effect.
- 4) Take action against complicit companies involved in implementing [Israel's](#) brutal and illegal siege, especially if they have contracts with your institution.
- 5) Pressure governments to stop military trade with [Israel](#), and in the case of the U.S., funding it.

Few, if any, other local unions have so explicitly endorsed the Palestinian trade union call as Local 551 has done here. Unfortunately, UAW President Shawn Fain, which was the first major union to call for a ceasefire,

Spiritualising Vic Destruction of th Masjid Mosque

2

Paddy-Washing Genocide? The case for boycotting the White House

4

Rising Up! – A Strategy for Palestine Solidarity

6

What we're getting wrong – and right – in the fight against the far right

8

A Silver Bullet for the Housing Crisis

10



For many rank-and-file members, Fain's surprise decision, which promised the UAW's considerable electoral might to a politician being **tried** for genocide, signaled a complete betrayal of the union's own ceasefire call. Indeed, members affiliated with the rank-and-file formation **UAW Labor for Palestine** (of which I am a member) responded to Fain's endorsement by disrupting the Biden ensuing speech with chants of "ceasefire now!"; three workers were subsequently **dragged** out of the venue by the Secret Service.

Few would have predicted such tenacity over Palestine in the UAW a few years ago. Yet, as the presidential election campaign looms over us, the stakes for the working class and oppressed peoples are a dire one. Relying on the discredited President Joe Biden and the Democratic Party, that is complicit with genocide in Gaza and threats of repression at home, will not defeat the MAGA threat. Saqib Hatti captured the anger and frustration with Biden, in an **essay** in *In These Times* last October:

"The man who offered his "rock solid and unwavering" support to **Israel's** genocide of two million Palestinians in Gaza will not get my vote.

The man whose administration circulated memos prohibiting staffers around the world from calling for de-escalation or restraint in the face of ethnic cleansing cannot remain president.

The man who is spending billions of our taxpayer dollars to fund an **Israeli** war machine that considers Palestinians "human animals" and denies drinking water and food to a million Palestinian children belongs at The Hague, not the White House."

The U.S. Left has to build a political alternative to the Democrats.

- DEMOCRATS
- DONALD TRUMP
- IMPERIALISM
- JOE BIDEN
- PALESTINE
- POLITICS
- REPUBLICANS
- TRADE UNIONS
- UNITED STATES

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Standards

12

Climate Apartheid and Palestine

14

Israeli Terror May Weaken Imperialism

16

Ecosocialism & Just Transition

18

Universal Basic Income or Universal Basic Services?

20

Disability & the Right to Choose

