

# [***BROOKE ROLLINS: A Tale of Two Presidents***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C1C-4GT1-JBFB-H00S-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

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The English author L.P. Hartley's 1953 “[*The Go-Between*](https://www.amazon.com/Go-between-Penguin-Modern-Classics/dp/0141802065)” is little read among the general public, but if they know it at all, it is for its opening line: “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.”

It comes to mind now upon the news of President Joe Biden's withholding of congressionally appropriated arms to Israel. Everyone understands why it was done and, as usual with late-stage regimes, there is an extrinsic and intrinsic reason for it. The extrinsic reason is the president's professed concern for the Israeli conduct of the war. He has been critical of it for several months now, and he does not wish for Israel to enter the settlement of Rafah, into which much of Hamas' surviving manpower has retreated. [***(RELATED: MORGAN MURPHY: Double America's Navy)***](https://dailycaller.com/2024/05/12/morgan-murphy-double-americas-navy/)

As with all things extrinsic, this does not really speak to the nature of the issue at hand, which is evident upon examination of its discrete parts and contentions. Among them are the enduring truths that a fast end to a war is more humane than a slow one; and that forcing the Israelis to use less-precise munitions rather than American-supplied precision weaponry will result in more civilian casualties, not fewer.

There is also the reality that this is not a war of choice for the Israelis, but an existential fight forced upon them. America need not be bound by that, but that goes two ways: Neither can we expect our allies to conform to our imperatives.

The intrinsic reason, of course, is the real one: The president is [*increasingly nervous*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/27/team-biden-reportedly-freaking-out-arab-voters-michigan-2024/) about his prospects for reelection.

His coalition has no assurance of a majority and is therefore hostage to elements that might once have been described as extremist - but are now distressingly normalized on his watch. A second Biden term is plausibly contingent upon the approval of a grotesque admixture of Islamists, Palestinian nationalists, anti-Semites, anti-Americans, anti-capitalists and left-wing activists who can tip the electoral balance in states like Michigan, Minnesota and Georgia.

These are all must-win for the president, and he knows it.

One might hope that the leader of a major American political party would expel those hideous elements from within its ranks, but this is too much sacrifice and morality to ask of a lifetime power-seeker. So, he tries to have it both ways: withholding weapons from Israel at war, while delivering pious rhetoric on the evils of anti-Semitism. His invocations of history fail on their own terms: You don't have to be a Zionist to grasp that the reason there is an Israel is because it is arms, not sentiments, that secure a nation under threat.

“The past is a different country” because we have seen a president accused of withholding arms from a foreign recipient of congressionally appropriated American aid before. President Donald J. Trump was impeached in 2019 on precisely these grounds, back in the mists of time-all of five years ago-when the American left professed to care about that propriety.

Of course there are some key differences. One is that President Trump did not actually withhold arms from Ukraine - as Biden demonstrably has from Israel - which meant those same arms were indispensable to Ukraine's fight for survival in early 2022. (Contrast with Israel's fight for survival in 2024, disarmed to this degree.)

The other difference is that President Trump turned out to be correct in his motivations and stewardship-we know now that there actually were corrupt connections between the Biden family and Ukrainian interests, of compelling interest to American governance - whereas the Biden motivations are simple election ***politics***.

This naturally raises a couple of questions. One is whether the House can expunge a fraudulent impeachment from its records, just in the interest of correcting an injustice done. Another is whether a new impeachment, of the current president, ought to happen on the same grounds, with vastly more condemnatory evidence at hand. These are matters for House leadership to ponder.

There is more bad news than good here. The former is that the president of the United States is willing to side with bloodthirsty terror organizations, and undermine American allies at war, in the pursuit of his own narrow self-interest. This is neither stewardship nor leadership: It is simply the use of power for selfish ends, and if it goes without consequences, it will be a disastrous passage in the history of the United States. Our allies abroad - upon our alliances with whom the peace of the world depends - will draw the rational conclusions.

After abandoning Afghanistan, after erratic and aimless engagement with Ukraine, and after hobbling Israel, what country will count upon the Americans for the next generation? All this is the Biden record, and the tragedy is that the bill may come due in American lives.

The good news, such as it is, is that we see evermore clearly who this president is-and we know we do not have to keep him. If “[t]he past is a different country” in the English author's telling, then we also have the American writer's riposte. “The past is never dead,” [*wrote Faulkner*](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/10279648-the-past-is-never-dead-it-s-not-even-past-all#:~:text=Sign%20Up%20Now-,The%20past%20is%20never%20dead.,consequence%2C%20of%20history%20and%20eternity.), “It's not even past.” The progressives would have us careen from event to event, unrooted and subjected to standards that change as they do.

That president was impeached for contemplating a thing, yet this President should not be impeached having done that thing. We do not have to acquiesce. “The past is never dead,” and in 2024, the past and the present ought to have consequences in full.

Brooke Leslie Rollins is the President & CEO of the America First Policy Institute, and former Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council.

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**Graphic**

U.S. President Joe Biden departs the White House for travel to Wisconsin accompanied by Deputy Chief of Staff Bruce Reed at the White House in Washington, D.C., U.S., May 8, 2024. REUTERS/Evelyn Hockstein

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