

# [***Biden's Criticism of Israel Ignites Backlash From Republicans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BS4-RXM1-JBR6-9002-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** The president offered one of his strongest rebukes of Israel's war in Gaza during an interview on Tuesday.

**Body**

A handful of [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) lawmakers have denounced President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) for criticizing Israel's handling of the war in Gaza, as some [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) continue pressing him to shift his own approach to the six-month conflict.

The White House has become increasingly critical of Israeli Prime Minister [*Benjamin Netanyahu*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/benjamin-netanyahu?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s military response in the Gaza Strip, erupting after the Palestinian militia [*Hamas*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/hamas?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) led a surprise attack of Israel on October 7. Over 1,200 people were killed and another 253 taken hostage in the assault, while Gaza health officials say that Israel's actions have caused the deaths of more than 33,000 Palestinians, as cited by the Associated Press.

During an interview with Univision that aired on Tuesday night, Biden leveled one of his strongest criticisms of Israel since the conflict began, saying that he believed what Netanyahu was doing in Gaza "is a mistake," adding, "I don't agree with his approach." Israel has also [*faced pressure*](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-pressed-killing-world-central-kitchen-convoy-1886264?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) from the international community after its military killed seven World Central Kitchen aid workers in an airstrike last week. Netanyahu has called the strike a "tragic event."

But while several lawmakers in the [*Democratic Party*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democratic-party?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) have urged Biden to push for a cease-fire and [*withhold additional security assistance*](https://www.newsweek.com/democrats-issue-warning-joe-biden-1882756?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) for Israel in response to the "catastrophic" humanitarian threat in Gaza, [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) have come out against the White House for criticizing Netanyahu.

"Israel was the victim of an unprovoked vicious attack on October 7," Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton said during a hearing for the [*Senate*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Armed Services Committee on Tuesday, where Defense Secretary [*Lloyd Austin*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/lloyd-austin?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) fielded questions regarding the war in Gaza.

"Why should they provide aid to ... the aggressors on October 7?" Cotton posed to the Biden official. "We didn't provide aid to Germany and Japan during World War II."

Missouri Congressman Mark Alford on Tuesday morning also ripped Biden during an appearance on far-right news outlet Real America's Voice, saying that the president "is not winning the pressure campaign because Benjamin Netanyahu and the State of Israel has the resolve of a steel spine like I have never seen before, something I wish we had in the United States of America."

Alford, who serves on the House Armed Services Committee, also urged Washington to "cut the funding" to [*United Nations*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/united-nations?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees "and these other programs that they insist on so called humanitarian aid," claiming that 90 percent of funding "ends up in the hands of Hamas."

Other Republicans have accused Biden of changing his policies towards Israel in response to pressure from parts of his Democratic electorate. Polling shows that U.S. voters [*largely disapprove*](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-joe-biden-gaza-polling-approval-rating-fall-1886966?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) of the president's handling of the war in Gaza, and Biden faced pressure during primary votes in key states like Michigan earlier this year, where over 100,000 registered Democrats cast an "uncommitted" ballot to protest the White House policies.

"He's been doing it from the beginning, saying one thing to maybe people in Detroit, Michigan, that are of an Arab background and then saying an entirely different thing to another group that he'd stand in front of the same day," Florida Representative [*Brian Mast*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/brian-mast?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) told [*Fox*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/fox?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Business on Tuesday.

Mast added in a post to X, formerly [*Twitter*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/twitter?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), that Biden was "ready to throw Israel overboard for a couple of 'uncommitted' votes in Dearborn, Michigan," adding, "we need a foreign policy that puts America's security over ballot box ***politics***."

*Newsweek* reached out to the White House press office via email for comment late Tuesday night.

Former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), Biden's presumptive challenger for reelection in November, has also said he is not sure that he is "loving the way" Israel has handled the war in Gaza, telling conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt last week that the country was "absolutely losing the PR war."

"Get it over with and let's get back to peace and stop killing people. And that's a very simple statement," Trump said. "They have to get it done. Get it over with and get it over with fast because we have to—you have to get back to normalcy and peace."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2375973/joe-biden-israel.jpg)

**Graphic**

Joe Biden on Israel

Paul Morigi/Getty

President Joe Biden at a rally in Union Station on April 09, 2024, in Washington, DC. In an interview that aired on Tuesday, the president criticized Israel.

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