

# *Unexpected dilemma*

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By Alfredo García Almeida\*

"Netanyahu is a ballast around Biden's neck," is the headline of an article in the British newspaper, *The Financial Times*, on November 1. However, the analysis written by Edward Luce, national editor and *Times* columnist in the United States, does not make it clear whether the intention is to condemn the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, or to favor the President, Joe Biden, in his electoral race.

What is certain is that the war between Israel and Hamas has become an unexpected dilemma for Biden's re-election to the presidency. If his "somersault without netting" supporting Netanyahu in his attack against the Gaza Strip was intended to guarantee the Jewish vote in the US, the unbridled and aggressive behavior demonstrated by the ultra-right-wing Israeli leader may bring him results contrary to what was expected.

The "hate and love" relationship between Biden and Netanyahu, dates back to the Barack Obama administration (2009-2017) when Biden served as vice president. The Israeli alliance with the Republican ultra-right humiliated Biden on several occasions, with its colonizing policy in the occupied Palestinian territories and sabotage against the nuclear program agreement with Iran.

Biden's first political stunt, was to support the "extermination" of Hamas, "urging" Netanyahu to follow the "rules of war." "Joe Biden, has tied his fortune to a man, Benjamin Netanyahu, who is co-creator of the frightening dilemma Israel now faces. The problem with Biden's bear hug strategy is that he has no veto over the actions of the Israeli prime minister. The tool Biden wields is leverage. Everything about Netanyahu suggests that behind-the-scenes persuasion is not a method that works," says Luce, when it is no secret that the historic US strategic alliance with Israel goes far beyond the threshold of "leverage".

However, Biden's trip to Israel to personally show support for Netanyahu and the Israeli prime minister's euphoric thanks, which made headlines around the world, has committed Biden to Netanyahu's humanitarian disaster in Gaza more than expected.

Biden's latest pirouette was to reiterate Israel's right to "self-defense" and to propose "humanitarian pauses" to protect "civilians" and the delivery of aid to the Palestinian territory. On his third trip to Tel-Aviv since the beginning of the war, the Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, referring to the subject during his interview with Netanyahu on November 3, proposed "humanitarian pauses", which was strongly rejected by the Israeli Prime Minister.

Notwithstanding Netanyahu's dismissal, Blinken traveled to Jordan and met last Saturday in Amman with the foreign ministers of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and a representative of the Palestinian Authority, where he repeated Biden's offer, receiving support from the Arab foreign ministers.

It is to be expected that Blinken's insistence on shielding Biden's electoral policy will revive the old alliance of the Israeli-Republican ultra-right against the US president, which will have repercussions on the US electoral process.

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