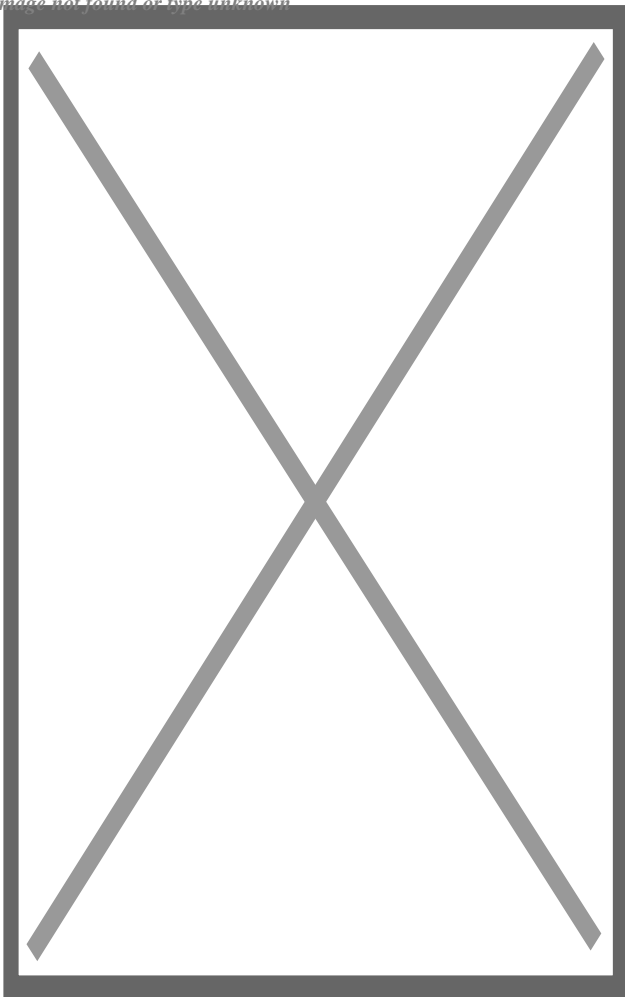


Donald Trump's Gaza comments highlight tough choice for peace-supporting U.S. voters

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Washington, March 6 (RHC)--Donald Trump has voiced explicit backing for Israel's war on Gaza, suggesting that he supports the goal expressed by the hardline government in Tel Aviv of continuing the assault until what he called "total victory."

Asked if he is “on board” with the way Israel was “taking the fight to Gaza”, the frontrunner for the Republican U.S. presidential nomination responded: “You’ve got to finish the problem”. With Trump set to race incumbent Joe Biden, his words suggest that voters opposed to United States support of Israel’s war will face a dilemma in November’s presidential election.

The interview with Fox News where Trump made the comments took place as his path to the presidential nomination was all but cleared on Super Tuesday. Shortly after being soundly beaten in most primaries across the country, his only serious challenger, Nikki Haley, is out of the race.

Trump’s statement also came as Biden’s support appears to be wobbling. While the president won almost all the Democratic nominating contests on Super Tuesday, a sizeable protest vote in Minnesota and six other states against his “rock solid” backing of Israel exposed vulnerabilities in his re-election campaign.

In Minnesota, a key swing state in the Midwest, early results showed that nearly 20 percent of Democrats marked their ballots “uncommitted” to show their anger at Washington’s continued backing for the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who insists that the onslaught on Gaza will persist until Hamas is destroyed.

But while the urge felt by some left-leaning and pro-Palestinian voters to punish Biden at the polls remains strong, they may find they have little choice but to vote for the Democrat in November’s poll if they wish to keep Trump from returning to the White House.

Biden has long touted his staunch support for Israel, even as its military offensive in the Palestinian enclave has elicited concerns about the risk of genocide and famine. More than 30,600 Palestinians have died in Israel’s military campaign so far, prompting international condemnation from governments around the world.

Some believe Vice President Kamala Harris’s call for a temporary ceasefire on Sunday, in which she spoke of a “humanitarian catastrophe” and called for more to be done to allow aid into Gaza, showed the administration, and particularly the vice president, were listening to the message sent by the “uncommitted” voters.

“I don’t think the vice president would have made such a sweeping statement if Super Tuesday wasn’t happening, and we have been seeing the same thing with President Biden,” said Asma Nizami, a “vote uncommitted” organizer in Minnesota.

“Because it’s going national and because there are other states that are part of this,” the administration can’t sweep it aside, she said.

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