

Refusers to Biden: For our future, make it stop

We have been sitting in military prison for months – Tal was sentenced to 150 days and Sofia to 85 days – for refusing to enlist in the Israeli army and take part in the war on Gaza. We are trying to use our imprisonment to affect the Israeli public, and to bring a better future for Israelis and Palestinians alike - to bring some hope for peace to this land.

Mr. Biden, we see that you signal that you are fed up with Israel's policies. You say that the destruction in Gaza has gone too far. But we want to tell you, Mr. Biden, that harsh words and condemnation will not make a change. The only way to make Netanyahu stop is to apply real pressure - and to stop arming Israel's war. You have the power to stop this war tomorrow. Use it.

We know there can be no winners in this war because there's no military solution to the conflict. No amount of destruction and killing in Gaza could bring back the lives lost on October 7th. Our government promised that military pressure could bring back the hostages, but in fact, hostages were released almost exclusively through negotiated deals. They say Hamas can be destroyed, but it is still in power, and its public support is high.

The only way out of this is to end the war and start a negotiated deal - for the release of hostages, the return of Palestinians to the northern Gaza strip, and also the return of Israelis who were displaced in October to the areas around the borders with Gaza and Lebanon. This must be the beginning of a broader diplomatic solution that will make sure we will not continue this cycle of violence.

You say you're a friend of Israel, but your policy is risking our future. It enables Netanyahu and his extremist allies to wage unprecedented carnage in Gaza, making the Israeli society complicit in unspeakable crimes. Your unconditional support for Netanyahu's policy of destruction, since the war began, has brought our society to the normalization of carnage and to the trivialization of human lives . It is American diplomatic and material support that prolonged this war for so long. You are responsible for this, alongside our leaders. But while they're interested in prolonging the war for political reasons, you have the power to make it stop.

Mr. Biden, we need your help. Not with weapons delivery but with the conditioning of aid. Not by giving the Israeli government diplomatic backing, but by turning a cold shoulder to its fanaticism. This might be seen as a harsh action against the Israeli government, but it would be a great service for us, the Israeli citizens, and for the future of all people living in this land.

At this very moment, we are serving time in military prison because we keep on objecting to this war, and from our cells, we will be watching the news to see which side you took. Our side is ceasefire. Our side is peace.

Tal Mitnick

Sofia Orr

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