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Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 A staggering cost

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 Washington's insistent fealty to Israel has absolutely no
3 benefit to the United States. On the contrary, it harms us.

####END SUBHED####

4 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

5 MAINSTREAM MEDIA coverage of the U.S.-Israeli attack on
6 Iran is couched in the language of self-defense and regime
7 change. It's ignoring the fact that Washington is acting as a proxy
8 for Israel's longstanding agenda targeting Iran.

9 Israel's foreign policy is not in America's national interest
10 — yet here we are again, spending billions on the forever wars
11 that President Donald Trump pledged to end, killing innocent

12 civilians, putting Americans at risk, and neglecting the needs of
13 the American people.

14 Israel, the only nuclear power in the Middle East, has
15 long advocated for military action against Tehran by raising the
16 specter of a nuclear-armed Iran. Those calls were parroted in U.S.
17 policy circles and shaped Washington's withdrawal from the Iran
18 nuclear deal under the first Trump administration.

19 Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has also
20 pressed hard for "crippling sanctions" that have devastated the
21 Iranian economy, contributed to hyperinflation, and left millions
22 of ordinary Iranians without basic necessities.

23 When Iranians predictably took to the streets in protest,
24 lethal crackdowns followed, providing Washington and Tel Aviv
25 more fodder for "regime change."

26 It's disingenuous to think those demonstrations were
27 "spontaneous" when U.S. and Israeli policy created the
28 conditions that fueled them.

29 * * *

30 NOW, ABRUPTLY abandoning diplomacy, the United States
31 has launched military strikes that are exactly what Israel has been
32 advocating for decades. Just as the U.S. has been an active
33 partner in Israel's genocide in Gaza, which has slaughtered well
34 over 70,000 people, just as we have supported Israeli land theft
35 and apartheid in the West Bank, now we are complicit in the
36 deaths of Iranian civilians.

37 And for what?

38 Washington's insistent fealty to Israel, its defense of
39 Israel's inhumanity, has absolutely no benefit to the United States.
40 On the contrary, it harms us.

41 The cost of this alignment is staggering. Every dollar
42 spent prosecuting endless wars in the Middle East is a dollar not
43 spent helping Americans afford a home, access health care, or
44 put food on the table.

45 Since Oct. 7, 2023, the U.S. government has spent
46 approximately \$30 billion on military aid to Israel, and Israel and

47 the U.S. are currently negotiating a new two-decade agreement
48 that would commit the U.S. to at least \$76 billion in weapons
49 aid.

50 If you think this somehow supports the U.S. economy,
51 you're mistaken. According to a Brown University study, [military](#)
52 [spending](#) produces an average of five jobs per \$1 million. The
53 same \$1 million investment in education would create nearly 13
54 jobs, nine in health care, and seven or eight in infrastructure and
55 clean energy.

56 Meanwhile, the U.S. infrastructure is crumbling, students
57 are crippled with debt, hospitals are closing for lack of funds, and
58 nearly [75% of Americans](#) can't afford a median-priced home in
59 their own community.

60 Israel's agenda is not in the strategic, economic, or moral
61 interests of the United States. We're locked into this cockeyed
62 relationship thanks to the political influence of Israel and the
63 arms industry, both of which contribute hundreds of millions to
64 the campaign coffers of the politicians responsible for keeping
65 this imbalance going.

66 This has real consequences for communities across the
67 United States, including here in Vermont. The Vermont National
68 Guard has reportedly been deployed to the Middle East once
69 again, requiring Vermonters to participate in the deaths of Iranian
70 civilians and putting them in harm's way.

71 The U.S-Israel relationship benefits Israel alone at the
72 expense of American lives and livelihoods. America's attacks on
73 Iran and Yemen, our takeover of Venezuelan oil to ensure
74 continued supply if Iran's oil goes offline, our funding and
75 support for genocide and apartheid, is serving no one but Israel.

76 Real security comes from robust diplomacy, respect for
77 sovereignty, and a willingness to address the root causes of
78 conflict rather than fueling them. Our toxic relationship with
79 Israel is taking us in the wrong direction. It's time to end it.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

80 **KATE CASA**, a former journalist and an editor of this
81 newspaper in its earliest years, has worked for years in higher
82 education, development, and communications. She has lived in
83 and reported from the Middle East.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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