

Biden Appoints Another Israel-Hater: Uzra Zeya

by Hugh Fitzgerald



Uzra Zeya

First, there was Maher Bitar, a Palestinian-American and anti-Israel BDS activist, whom Biden has appointed to be the senior director of intelligence programs at the National Security Council. In this key intelligence role, Maher Bitar will be ideally situated to learn, for example, about American collaboration with Israel on moves to stop Iran's nuclear program. Why should we assume Bitar would not try to limit that collaboration, or to alert others about these moves, or to try to influence policy by focusing on international criticism of Israel's "settlement building," in an attempt to manufacture an unnecessary crisis between the allies, and to fan its flames thereby turning that crisis into a reason for

America to threaten to cut back on military aid to Israel unless it stops enlarging existing, or building new, settlements? Even without knowing Maher Bitar, a Palestinian and a Muslim, shouldn't we assume from his lengthy BDS activism that he still harbors a deep anti-Israel animus, and while his outward demeanor may suggest a lack of bias and *parti-pris*, he may merely be a dab hand at assuming a sober mien of objectivity, while being a master of deception? "War is deceit," said Muhammad. About Bitar, see [here](#) and [here](#):

President Joe Biden's nominee for a top State Department position played a key role in assembling a book on the nefarious influence of the "Israel lobby" while working for an organization that promoted claims about Jewish media control and dual loyalty to Israel.

As a staffer at the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, Uzra Zeya compiled research for a book that argues that "the Israel lobby has subverted the American political process to take control of U.S. Middle East policy" by establishing a secret network of "dirty money" PACs that bribe and extort congressional candidates into taking pro-Israel positions. Zeya, a former U.S. diplomat who was nominated for undersecretary for civilian security, democracy, and human rights, worked for the Washington Report and its publishing group, the American Educational Trust, in 1989 and 1990. The news outlet is staunchly anti-Israel and has published articles questioning the national loyalty of American Jews and opposing taxpayer funding to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The Washington Report, for which Uzra Zeya worked for two years, is not merely anti-Israel. To oppose funding of the Holocaust Memorial Museum is antisemitic. To publish articles claiming that the Mossad was behind both the killing of JFK and of the 9/11 attacks is antisemitic.

Zeya's work for the Washington Report and American Educational Trust raises questions about her views on Israel and could become an obstacle during her confirmation hearings. Biden's recent hiring moves on foreign policy and conflicting statements from staffers have made it unclear how his administration plans to approach Israel policy issues. White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki recently declined to denounce the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, contradicting statements condemning the movement from Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Biden's nominee for U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, the Washington Free Beacon recently reported. Biden also tapped anti-Israel activist Maher Bitar for a top intelligence post and is reportedly considering Matt Duss, an outspoken critic of Israel, for a State Department position.

Sean Durns, a research analyst at the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, called the Washington Report a "fringe organization" that has "published content with anti-Semitic themes," including claims that the Mossad was behind the JFK assassination and the Sept. 11 attacks.

Organizations like the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs have a history of propagating fringe and sometimes anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and I think it's absolutely fair for questions to be raised in any sort of potential hearings," said Durns.

When it comes time for Uzra Zeya's confirmation hearings, I assume, optimistically, that she will be asked about her work on the Washington Report. Isn't it true, she should be asked, that she compile research for a book that argues that "the Israel lobby has subverted the American political process to take control of U.S. Middle East policy" by establishing a secret network of "dirty money" PACs that bribe and extort congressional candidates into taking pro-Israel positions? Presumably she agreed with the book's thesis at the time. How

did she feel about its accusations now? Did she agree that the “Israel lobby” has “subverted the American political process”? Did she continue to work for the Washington Report even after it had blamed Mossad for the assassination of JFK and the 9/11 attacks? If she had left the magazine before those articles were published, did she ever express her disagreement with their content? Does she still read the Washington Report?

What does Uzra Zeya think her task should be in defending human rights? Does she have any particular concerns about human rights – especially the rights of women, and Christians – in the Palestinian territories? Or in Muslim-majority lands, more generally? Does she think that changing one’s religion should be a basic human right? Does she think that American foreign aid should be withheld from despotic and corrupt regimes, including that of Hamas in Gaza? What about the PA in the West Bank, where Mahmoud Abbas has accumulated a fortune of \$400 million? How does she view Israel? Does Ms. Zeya agree with the vast majority of Americans, who see the Jewish state as a firm ally, that shares our values – democracy and respect for human rights – or does she have another view?

That’s a starter kit of questions. Let’s hope at least some of them are asked, so that Uzra Zeya doesn’t have the smooth sailing she’s no doubt expecting. Make her confirmation hearings a memorable moment.

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