

From Guernica to Gaza: The History of Terror Bombing Victims

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History's terror bombings. This article reviews some of the most infamous:

- Guernica - 1937;
- the London Blitz - 1940 - 41;
- Dresden - 1945;
- Tokyo - 1945;
- Hiroshima and Nagasaki - 1945;
- North Korea - 1950 - 53;
- Southeast Asia - 1964 - 73;
- Iraq - 1991 to the present;
- Serbia/Kosovo - 1999;
- Afghanistan - 2001 to the present;
- Lebanon - 1982 and 2006; and
- Gaza - 2008 - 09.

Strategic bombing involves destroying an adversary's economic and military ability to wage war. It targets its war making capacity and related infrastructure. Terror bombing is another matter. It's against civilians to break their morale, cause panic, weaken an enemy's will to fight, and inflict mass casualties and punishment.

Geneva and other international laws forbid the targeting of civilians. The Laws of War: Laws and Customs of War on Land (1907 Hague IV Convention) states:

- Article 25: "The attack or bombardment, by whatever means, of towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings which are undefended is prohibited."
- Article 26: "The officer in command of an attacking force must, before commencing a bombardment, except in cases of assault, do all in his power to warn the authorities."

Article 27: "In sieges and bombardments, all necessary steps must be taken to spare, as far as possible, buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals, and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not being used at the time for military purposes." The besieged should visibly indicate these buildings or places and notify an adversary beforehand.

The Fourth Geneva Convention protects civilians in time of war. It prohibits violence of any type against them and requires treatment for the sick and wounded. In September 1938, a League of Nations unanimous resolution prohibited the:

"bombardment of cities, towns, villages, dwellings or buildings not in the immediate neighborhood of the operations of land forces....In cases where (legitimate targets) are so situated, (aircraft) must abstain from bombardment" if this action indiscriminately affects civilians.

The 1945 Nuremberg Principles prohibit "crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity." These include "inhumane acts committed against any civilian populations, before or during the war," including indiscriminate killing and "wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity."

The 1968 General Assembly Resolution on Human Rights prohibits launching attacks against civilian populations. Israel and America do it repeatedly - by land, sea and terror bombings.

Below is some relevant history.

Guernica, Spain - 1937

On April 26, 1937, German and Italian aircraft fire-bombed the small Basque town at the request of their fascist ally General Francisco Franco. It destroyed the town, killed an estimated 1650 people, and injured hundreds more. An eyewitness account said:

"The only things left standing were a church, a sacred tree, the symbol of the Basque people....There hadn't been a single anti-aircraft gun in the town. It (was) mainly a fire raid....A sight that haunted me for weeks was the charred bodies of several women and children huddled together in what had been the cellar of a house." It was a drill for larger-scale bombings to come, and civilian sites were as fair game as military ones.

The scene was repeated throughout the town. Guernica was in flames. It wasn't the first instance of bombarding civilians. Germans did it in WW I. Britain did it against Iraq in the 1920s with poison gas. Secretary for Air and War Winston Churchill's secret poison gas memo recommended it. In a May 12, 1919 departmental minute he wrote: "I do not understand the squeamishness about the use of gas....I am strongly in favour of using poisoned gas against uncivilised tribes."

In 1937, Hitler used explosives, fragmentation bombs and incendiaries in the two and a half hour raid "with a brutality that had never been seen before," according to Basque Autonomous Republic president Jose Antonio de Aguirre. "They scorched the city and fired machine guns at the women and children who fled in panic, resulting in numerous deaths."

The London Blitz - 1940 - 41

Following a German-staged August 31, 1939 attack, Hitler invaded Poland on September 1.

Honoring their obligations to Poland, Britain and France demanded a withdrawal. None came, and on September 3, Prime Minister Chamberlain announced on-air that a state of war existed against Germany. WW II began.

On September 7, 1940, Hitler changed tactics. After initially targeting RAF airfields and radar stations in preparation for an invasion, he attacked London for 57 consecutive nights to demoralize the population and force Britain to come to terms. It began the “Blitz” against numerous UK cities. It lasted intensively until May 11. Hitler then focused on Russia, continued smaller-scale UK bombings, and by 1944 used pilotless V-1 flying (“Buzz) bombs and V-2 rockets.

Ernie Pyle was a noted war correspondent witness to the Battle of Britain and invasion of France. He described a 1940 London night raid as follows:

“It was a night when London was ringed and stabbed with fire. They came just after dark, and somehow you could sense from the quick, bitter firing of the guns that there was to be no monkey business this night.”

“Shortly after the sirens wailed you could hear the Germans grinding overhead. In my room....you could feel the shake from the guns. You could hear (explosions) tearing buildings apart....You have all seen big fires, but I doubt if you have ever seen the whole horizon of a city lined with great fires – scores of them, perhaps hundreds....Every two minutes, a new wave of planes would be over....”

“Later on, I went out among the fires....London stabbed with great fires, shaken by explosions....all of it roofed over with a ceiling of pink that held bursting shells, balloons, flares and the grind of vicious engines. (It was) the most hateful, most beautiful single scene I have ever known.”

London wasn't the only city attacked. In addition to military sites, so were Dublin, Manchester, Liverpool, Belfast, Birmingham, Sheffield, Plymouth, Nottingham, Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Clydebank, Coventry, Greencock, Swansea, and Hull.

Before it ended, around 43,000 died in London, thousands more in other cities, hundreds of thousands were injured, and more than a million London houses were destroyed – yet the British public was more than ever committed to defeating Nazism.

Dresden - 1945

As a German POW, author Kurt Vonnegut witnessed the effects of its fire-bombing and described the horror that Arthur (“Bomber) Harris inflicted:

“You guys burnt the place down, turned it into a single column of flame. More people died there in the firestorm, in that one big flame, than died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined.”

Well, not quite as explained below. Nonetheless, on the evening of February 13 and early 14th morning, 1945, the raid was horrific by any measure. It was an orgy of barbarism against a defenseless German city and one of Europe's great cultural centers.

In less than 14 hours, it was ruined and as many as 100,000 Germans died, although later accounts suggested lower totals. Dresden was also a hospital city for wounded soldiers. It

was of no military importance, and, by February, Germany was soundly defeated. Attacking was morally indefensible, and unleashing a firestorm and slaughter of tens of thousands was one of WW II's great war crimes.

More than 700,000 phosphorous bombs were dropped on 1.2 million people. The temperature in city center reached 1600 degrees centigrade. Bodies became molten flesh. The slaughter was horrific, so why was it ordered? The February 4 - 11 Yalta Conference was approaching at which the Big Three (Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin) would divide the spoils of war. Churchill and Roosevelt wanted an edge as well as a way to "impress" Stalin. It wasn't gotten as bad weather delayed the original raid, yet Churchill ordered it anyway and declared it successful when over.

Morality wasn't an issue for the man who felt no "squeamishness" over using poison gas against Iraqis in the 1920s and recommended it in his secret memo. Nor in firebombing Hamburg in July 1943 - causing widespread destruction, killing an estimated 50,000, injuring many more, mostly civilians, and leaving around one million Germans homeless.

Tokyo - 1945

US air forces bombed Tokyo several times before using incendiaries. On April 18, 1942, four months after Pearl Harbor, Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle led the raid MGM made famous in its 1944 film, "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo." It did little damage. All 16 US aircraft were lost, 11 crewmen were either killed or captured, but it achieved its aim. It sent a propaganda message and proved Tokyo was vulnerable to more attacks.

The B-29 Superfortress made the difference. Introduced in May 1944, it was a long-range heavy bomber used first in a single plane high altitude reconnaissance mission over Tokyo in November. The first firebombing raid came on February 24, 1945 when 174 planes destroyed one square mile of the city. The major attack came days later on March 9 when 279 Superforts demolished 16 square city miles, killed an estimated 100,000 in the firestorm, injured many more, and left over one million homeless. Around five dozen other Japanese cities were also firebombed at a time most structures in the country were wooden and easily consumed. And for what?

Early in 1945, Japan sent America peace feelers, and, two days before the February Yalta Conference, Douglas MacArthur sent Roosevelt a 40-page summary of its terms. They were near-unconditional. The Japanese would accept an occupation, would cease hostilities, surrender its arms, remove all troops from occupied territories, submit to criminal war trials, and allow its industries to be regulated. In return, they asked only that their Emperor be retained in an honorable capacity.

Roosevelt spurned the offer. So did Truman. In March, Tokyo was firebombed, then in August atomic bombs were used for the first (and so far only) time against Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki - 1945

The week of August 6, 1945 was the worst in Japanese history. On August 8, Soviet Russia declared war, invaded Manchuria, and occupied it and the Sakhalin and Kuril Islands.

On August 6 and 9, president Truman authorized Hiroshima and Nagasaki to be attacked

with atomic weapons. Records at the time estimated that by December the (mostly civilian) Hiroshima death toll was about 140,000. In Nagasaki, it was somewhat lower at 74,000, but those numbers rose in succeeding months and years. Radiation poisoning is permanent and enough of it kills or causes grievous illnesses, disfiguration, and birth defects to offspring. Decades later, they're still being felt.

The joint US, UK, Canada (1939 - 1946) Manhattan Project developed nuclear weapons with the first bomb test-detonated three weeks before August 6. Hiroshima was the initial target, a medium-sized city of industrial and military importance although that late in the war Japan was largely destroyed and in a state of collapse.

Nagasaki was a large southern Japanese sea port. Kokura was the primary target, but poor visibility on August 9 diverted the mission to the alternate choice. Howard Zinn recounted what happened in his August 2000 "Bombs of August" article.

Their principle justification was to save "lives because otherwise a planned US invasion of Japan would have been necessary, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands. Truman at one point (said) 'a half million lives,' and Churchill 'a million lives,' but these figures" had no basis in fact. "Even official projections" were at most around 46,000.

"In fact, the bombs that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki did not forestall an invasion of Japan because (none) was necessary" or even likely. Japan was "on the verge of surrender" and top US military and government officials knew it so "dropping the bomb(s) were) completely unnecessary."

Afterward, Joint Chiefs Chairman, William Leahy, called the atomic bomb "a barbarous weapon" and admitted that using them against Japan was unnecessary. After the US May 1945 Okinawa victory, Japan had enough of war. By June, six of its Supreme War Council members authorized Foreign Minister Togo to ask the Soviets to mediate its end. Hitler and Mussolini were dead. Germany surrendered in early May, and Japan offered near-unconditionally provided its Emperor was retained.

Truman spurned the offer to ensure the atomic bombings. "It seems that the United States government was determined to drop those bombs," according to Zinn. Why so?

He cites Gar Alperovitz "whose research on that question is unmatched." Based on Truman's papers, "the bomb was seen as a diplomatic weapon against the Soviet Union" - to let us dictate war-ending terms and as the "first major operation of the cold diplomatic" one that followed.

Horrifying as it was, incinerating hundreds of thousands late in the war was judged good politics plus a message to Soviet Russia and other potential adversaries that we were the toughest adversary around - and for doubters, visit the remains of Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Other aims as well lay behind the attacks then and later on - "There was tin, rubber, oil, corporate profit (and) imperial arrogance." Human rights and lives relate to none of these.

North Korea - 1950-53

East Asia and Korean expert Bruce Cumings wrote this about the Korean War:

“What was indelible about it was the extraordinary destructiveness of the United States air campaigns against North Korea, from the widespread and continuous use of firebombing (mainly with napalm), to threats to use nuclear and chemical weapons, and the destruction of huge North Korean dams in the final stages of war.”

Post-WW II, neither North Korea, China or any other country threatened America. Creating adversaries was entirely bogus to advance our imperial agenda, and slaughtering millions of North Koreans was perfectly acceptable. Later millions of Southeast Asians. More on that below.

On June 25, 1950, after months of US-influenced Republic of Korea (ROK) provocations, North Korean forces invaded the South. James Petras wrote about “Provocation and Pretext for the US War Against Korea” and referred to America’s “incomplete conquest of Asia” following WW II.

Revolutionary upheavals followed in China, Southeast Asia and Korea. “President Truman faced a profound dilemma – how to consolidate US imperial supremacy in the Pacific” when the public and “war wearied soldiers....demand(ed) demobilization and a return” to normalcy. Like Roosevelt in 1941, he chose the usual course, provoked a confrontation, and intervened in Korea’s civil war.

In the run-up to the US invasion, “Truman, the US Congress, and mass media engaged in a massive propaganda campaign (like today to sell foreign wars) and purge of peace and anti-militarist organizations throughout US civil society. Tens of thousands” were affected but not like what we did to Koreans.

Until the 1953 armistice, North Korea was literally bombed to rubble with principle targets hit around Pyongyang (the capital), Chongyin, Wonsan, Hungnam and Rashin. Three to four million deaths resulted and unimaginable additional casualties, mostly innocent civilians.

Again Cumings:

“Korea (was) assumed to have been a limited war,” but it bore strong resemblance to the air war against Japan in WW II, and it was directed by some of the same military leaders. The use of napalm against populated areas was horrific as one survivor described:

“It fell right on people. Men all around me burned. They lay rolling in the snow. Men I knew....begged me to shoot them...It was terrible. When the napalm had burned the skin to a crisp, it would be peeled back from the face, arms, legs....like fried potato chips.”

Orders were given to burn towns and villages and create oceans of fires. General Matthew Ridgway ordered the air force to burn the capital, Pyongyang, to the ground. Other areas also in a scorched earth campaign few in America knew about, then or now.

MacArthur asked for commander’s discretion to use nuclear weapons, lots of them, and if Truman hadn’t intervened he would have. In posthumously published interviews, he said he had a plan to win the war in 10 days: “I would have dropped 30 or so atomic bombs strung across the neck of Manchuria,” spread a radioactive cobalt belt from the Sea of Japan to the Yellow Sea, and deterred any invasion from the North. “My plan was a cinch,” he claimed, and the Russians would have done nothing about it.

Cummings continues:

Even without nuclear weapons, “the air war leveled North Korea and killed millions of civilians. North Koreans tell you that for three years they faced a daily threat of being burned (alive) with napalm.” There was no escape, and by “1952 just about everything in northern and central Korea had been completely leveled. What was left of the population survived in caves.”

Bomb damage assessment showed that 18 of 22 major cities were half or more obliterated. The big industrial ones were from 75 - 100% destroyed. Villages were described as “low, wide mounds of violent ashes.” This was Korea, “the limited war.” Southeast Asia was next.

Southeast Asia - Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos - 1964 - 1973

Gabriel Kolko wrote the definitive history of the Vietnam war in his 1985 book: “Anatomy of a War: Vietnam, the United States, and the Modern Historical Experience.” He saw America’s invention as a predictable consequence of its ambition, strengths, weaknesses, and quest for world dominance.

Nonetheless, it miscalculated. Vietnamese tired of colonial rule so the communists in the North gained control. They won peasant loyalty by promising more equal land distribution. In addition, their top leaders were intellectuals. They planned well and were patient. The contrast in the South was stark. America installed the authoritarian Ngo Dinh Diem regime to build a strong army, crush opposition, and serve as a reliable ally.

From the 1950s, the US supplied military advisors, slowly escalated under Kennedy, and much more when Lyndon Johnson became president. After the bogus August 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, war began to establish client regimes and military bases across East and South Asia, encircle China, and crush nationalist anti-imperial movements.

Operation Rolling Thunder began in February 1965 and lasted through October 1968. For 44 months, over one millions tons of ordnance were used in targeted and indiscriminate bombings. It aimed to destroy North Vietnam’s economy and curtail help reaching National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) resistance in the South. Over the course of the war, eight million tons of bombs were dropped from 1965 - 73, threefold the tonnage in WW II and amounting to 300 tons for every Vietnamese man, woman, and child.

As in Korea, napalm was also used along with other incendiary devices. In addition, terror weapons like anti-personnel cluster bombs spewing thousands of metal pellets hitting everything in their path plus the indiscriminate planting of land mines that to this day take lives.

From 1961 to 1971, the dioxin-containing defoliant Agent Orange was used as well, mainly in the South, Cambodia and Laos. Millions of gallons were sprayed with devastating human consequences. It’s one of the most toxic of known substances, a potent carcinogenic human immune system suppressant. It accumulates in adipose tissue and the liver, can alter living cell genetic structures, cause congenital disorders and birth defects, and contribute to diseases like cancer and type two diabetes.

These consequences were never considered nor the effects of expanded spraying to destroy vital food crops like rice. Also in 1970, US forces conducted Operation Tailwind using sarin nerve gas in Laos causing many deaths, including civilians. Admiral Thomas Moorer, former

Joint Chiefs Chairman, confirmed the use on CNN in 1998. Then under Pentagon pressure, CNN retracted the report, fired its award-winning journalist Peter Arnett and co-producers April Oliver and Jack Smith because they refused to disavow it.

The Indochinese war engulfed Cambodia and Laos as well. From March 1969 through May 1970, Nixon ordered Cambodia secretly bombed (without consulting Congress) to destroy North Vietnam and Viet Cong sanctuaries. Around 3500 sorties caused 600,000 deaths, mostly civilians, and helped the marginal Khmer Rouge rise to power in 1975. Neutral Cambodia was bombed with over 500,000 tons of ordnance until August 1973. Over 25,000 US ground forces also invaded. They destroyed dozens of towns, villages and hamlets, and killed many thousands more, mostly peasants guilty of living in the wrong country at the wrong time.

A second 1962 Geneva Accord recognized Laos as a neutral country and banned the presence of foreign military personnel. The reality on the ground was quite different. From 1964 - 1973, America dropped over two million tons of ordnance during 580,000 bombing sorties - the equivalent of a planeload of bombs every eight minutes, round-the-clock for nine years. The aim was to destroy North Vietnamese supply lines along the Ho Chi Minh Trail and target the Pathet Lao government and North Vietnamese Army in control of the country's eastern provinces.

Secret bombings were again the strategy. Terror weapons were used, including napalm, white phosphorous and cluster bombs - leaving millions of unexploded bomblets buried in fields, roads, forests, villages, and rivers. Laos had a population of about 6.5 million. About one-third of it was either killed, injured, or displaced. Overall, Southeast Asia's wars killed about three to four million, inflicted vast amounts of destruction, and caused incalculable human suffering felt to this day.

Iraq - Since 1991

Four days after Saddam entered Kuwait (on August 2, 1990), Operation Desert Shield was launched. US-demanded UN sanctions were imposed. A large American troop deployment began along with a Kuwait-funded PR campaign to win public support for Operation Desert Storm. It began on January 17, 1991.

By any standard, it was horrendous and criminal. Before it ended six weeks later (on February 28), US forces committed grievous war crime violations of the Hague and Geneva Conventions, UN Charter, Nuremberg Principles, and US Army Field Manual 27-10. Among them were gratuitous mass slaughter and destruction of essential to life facilities, including:

- power plants;
- dams;
- water purification facilities;
- sewage treatment and disposal systems;
- telephone and other communications;
- hospitals;

- mosques;
- up to 20,000 homes, apartments and other dwellings;
- irrigation sites;
- food processing, storage and distribution facilities;
- hotels and retail establishments;
- transportation infrastructure;
- oil wells, pipelines, refineries and storage tanks;
- chemical plants;
- factories and other commercial operations;
- government buildings;
- schools;
- historical sites; and
- civilian shelters in a willful targeting of innocent men, women and children.

Virtually everything needed for normal functioning was destroyed or heavily damaged - and more. Tens of thousands were gratuitously killed, as many as 200,000 or more by independent estimates.

Twelve years of genocidal sanctions followed that killed as many as 1.7 million, two-thirds of them children under age five. From the 2003 “shock and awe” blitzkrieg through 2007, as many as 1.5 - 2.0 million more lives were lost, most of them young children. By any standard since 1991, Washington conducted a 17-year campaign of genocide to slaughter innocent Iraqis, erase the “cradle of civilization,” turn the country into a free market paradise, and make serfs of its people - as part of a greater aim for regional and global dominance and control of world resources and markets.

Human rights and lives are non-starters. So is the rule of law. War continues to rage. Permanent occupation is planned. The human tragedy continues with no foreseeable end.

Serbia-Kosovo - 1999

In June 1999, playwright Harold Pinter told a UK anti-war demonstration that NATO’s Yugoslavia bombing made him ashamed to be British:

“Little did we think two years ago that we had elected a government which would take a leading role in what is essentially a criminal act, showing total contempt for the United Nations and international law.” He called cutting children to pieces from 15,000 feet “barbaric” and despicably hypocritical.

“Let us face the truth - neither Clinton nor Blair gives a damn about the Kosovar Albanians. This action has been yet another blatant and brutal assertion of US power using NATO as its

missile. It set out to consolidate one thing – American domination of Europe. This must be recognised and it must be resisted.” This barbarism mustn’t be allowed to stand.

Diana Johnstone explained the conflict in her superb 2002 book, “Fools’ Crusade.” Edward Herman reviewed it and wrote this:

“Military interventions on supposedly humanitarian grounds have become an established feature of the post-Cold War global order. Since September 11, this form of militarism has taken on new and unpredictable proportions.” Diana Johnstone did an admirable job analyzing NATO’s intervention. Muslims were portrayed as “defenseless victims,” Serbs as “genocidal monsters” to prepare the ground for America and NATO to dominate the Balkans.

Herman: Johnstone explained “that the ‘Kosovo war’ was in reality the model for future destruction of countries seen as potential threats to the hegemony of an ‘international community’ currently being redefined to exclude or marginalize all but those who conform to the interests of the United States.”

Throughout the 1990s, conflict and civil wars divided Yugoslavia into separate states culminating with the US-NATO 1999 bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – Serbia-Kosovo. From March 24 – June 10, around 600 aircraft flew about 3000 sorties dropping thousands of tons of ordnance plus hundreds of ground-launched cruise missiles. To that time, the ferocity of the attack was unprecedented given the destructiveness of modern weapons and technology.

Nearly everything was struck causing massive destruction and disruption: known or suspected military sites and targets; power plants; factories; transportation; telecommunications facilities; vital infrastructure including roads, bridges and rail lines; fuel depots; schools; a TV station; the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade; hospitals; government offices; churches; historical landmarks; and more in cities and villages throughout the country.

An estimated \$100 billion in damage was inflicted. A humanitarian disaster resulted. Environmental contamination was extensive. Large numbers were killed, injured or displaced. Two million people lost their livelihoods. Many their homes and communities and for most their futures from what America planned and implemented jointly with NATO.

Michel Chossudovsky explained earlier in a February 2008 article that:

“The Balkans constitute the gateway to Eurasia. The 1999 invasion establishes a permanent US Military presence (at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo) in Southern Europe, which serves the broader US led war. Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq: these three war theaters were waged on humanitarian grounds. (In each case, utterly bogus.) Without exception, in all three countries, US military bases were established” as part of America’s global imperial agenda.

The US, NATO and international community support the organized crime-connected KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) government and its leader Hashim Thaci. Kosovo as it was no longer exists. Afghanistan and Iraq were next.

Afghanistan - 2001

The 9/11 attack was the pretext for bombing, invading and occupying Afghanistan, an operation planned months in advance the way Michel Chossudovsky explained in his superb

book, "America's War on Terrorism." Most people don't "realize that a large scale theater war is never planned and executed in a matter of weeks."

The Taliban and bin Laden became fictitious "outside enem(ies)" without which no "war on terrorism" could exist or imperial wars fought. Afghanistan was the first target. It began on October 7, 2001, four weeks after 9/11, and ended five weeks later on November 12. Once again, conflict ravaged Afghanistan, a country more abused, long-suffering, and less helped than most any in living memory, according to John Pilger. Today it's occupied under a US-installed puppet. Its suffering continues unabated and may intensify under Obama if he follows through on his promise to add more troops for a larger combat role.

Chossudovsky again:

US imperialism aims to "recoloniz(e)...a vast region extending from the Balkans into Central Asia" - the "center of world power," according to Zbigniew Brzezinski extending from German, Poland and the Balkans in the East through Russia and China in the Pacific, including the Middle East and Indian subcontinent. It's an area with 75% of the world's population, most of its resources and physical wealth, three-fourths of its oil and gas, and the grandest of grand prizes for whoever controls it.

Chossudovsky:

..."America's war machine purports to enlarge America's economic sphere of influence" - through its newly established military bases "in Iraq, Afghanistan (and) in several of the former Soviet republics on China's Western frontier." The South China Sea as well.

"War and Globalization go hand in hand. Militarization supports the conquest of new economic frontiers and the worldwide imposition of free-market" capitalism. Afghanistan became its victim. Thousands were killed and as many as six million displaced. Most now have returned but to what - deplorable conditions of no future, despair, no shelter, work, schools, medical care, clean water, security, and for many hunger, disease and early deaths.

Like Serbia-Kosovo and Iraq, Afghanistan is another country terror-bombed to oblivion to impose free-market capitalism everywhere. Conflicts will continue. World peace is an illusion, nowhere more than in the Middle East.

Lebanon - 1982 and 2006

Israel and Lebanon have had a troubled history through no fault of the Lebanese. In 1968, the IDF conducted cross-border terror raids, including attacking the Beirut airport and destroying 13 commercial planes, claiming it was in retaliation for an attack by Lebanese-trained Palestinians targeting an Israeli airliner in Athens.

Further IDF incursions continued in the 1970s against the PLO, including the "Litani River Operation." It was launched in March 1978 to establish a southern occupation zone with Christian South Lebanon Army (SLA) soldiers in place to secure it once Israeli forces withdrew weeks later.

In June 1982, "Operation Peace of the Galilee" (called the First Lebanon War) was launched against the Palestinian leadership. The IDF invaded after claiming PLO involvement in an assassination attempt on its UK ambassador. The charge was bogus, yet Israel exploited it to attack and remain in the country until it withdrew in May 2000.

In the interim, Israeli forces occupied southern Lebanon, attacked the PLO, drove out the leadership to Tunis, slaughtered around 18,000 mostly non-combatant Lebanese and Palestinians, and authorized a Phalange militia force to massacre about 3000 men, women and children in southern Beirut Sabra and Shitila camps.

In June 2006, Palestinians responded to continued Israeli provocations by striking an IDF military post, killing two soldiers, injuring several others and capturing a third. Events escalated when Hezbollah resistance fighters captured two IDF soldiers who illegally crossed the UN-monitored “blue line” - a near-daily Israeli routine since it withdrew from South Lebanon in May 2000.

Israel responded with overwhelming force by launching “Operation Summer Rain” against Gaza and invading South Lebanon in what became known as the Second Lebanon War. It lasted 33 days against Hezbollah, the Lebanese people, and the entire country, including northern Christian areas.

It was long-planned terror against civilian, commercial, and infrastructure targets - bridges; roads; power plants; the three largest cities of Beirut, Tyre and Sidon; Beirut airport; factories; warehouses; civil defense centers; schools; radio and TV stations; mosques; churches; hospitals; ambulances; and anything else in the path of a scorched-earth blitzkrieg killing over 1300, injuring many more, displacing one million people (or one-fourth of the population), and causing billions of dollars in damage.

Both assaults were planned months in advance and closely coordinated with Washington like always. Terror weapons were also used, including blanketing entire towns with cluster bombs. Others reported were:

- depleted uranium (DU) munitions spreading toxic radiation;
- banned white phosphorous bombs and shells (known as Willy Pete) that burn flesh to the bone and can't be extinguished by water; and
- reportedly a thermobaric bomb able to penetrate buildings, underground shelters and tunnels, and able to create blast pressure enough to suck all oxygen from spaces and human lungs in the vicinity.

Hezbollah prevailed, nonetheless. A post-conflict analysis showed its commanders were well prepared, and successfully penetrated Israel's strategic and tactical decision-making cycle, including its intelligence, military and political operations. As a result, their fighters held their own, killed over 100 IDF soldiers, retained their military capability, and effectively embarrassed the Israeli government - at a very stiff cost to Lebanon and a million or more of its people.

Gaza - 2008 - 09

For Israel, attacking Palestinians is a long-standing practice, beginning with its 1948 “War of Independence.” It involved:

- the wholesale massacre and displacement of 800,000 Palestinians;
- destroying their homes, 531 villages and crops, and their futures;

- 11 urban neighborhoods in Tel-Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem and elsewhere;
- mass incidents of rape and other atrocities; and
- the myth that Palestinians left voluntarily to avoid being harmed by invading Arab armies.

The State of Israel was created on 78% of historic Palestine. Palestinians retained the remainder in Gaza and the West Bank. On June 5, 1967, Israel launched its so-called “Six Day War” against Egypt, Jordan and Syria – a long-planned preemptive act masquerading as self-defense. When it ended, Israel controlled the remainder of Palestine.

It’s now occupied the Territories militarily for over 41 years – the longest continuous illegal occupation anywhere under which Palestinians lost all freedom; are collectively punished; are losing their land; are being cantonized in the West Bank; and since December, assaulted by Israel’s most savage aggression since the “Six Day War.”

“Operation Cast Lead” terror bombings began on December 27 and have continued daily round the clock. The death and injury toll exceeds 5000 as of January 12, the great majority of whom are civilian men, women and children. Portions of Gaza have been reoccupied. Israel is pursuing genocide. Gaza is completely sealed off. It’s now a free-fire zone on the ground and from repeated air attacks. Tanks, missiles, bombs, terror weapons, and the latest technology is matched against crude rockets, home-made mortars, hand-held automatic weapons, and the redoubtable spirit of brave Gazan freedom fighters unjustly called “terrorists.” Civilians, including women and children, are being willfully slaughtered and comprise the vast majority of killed and wounded.

On January 6, IDF tank shelling killed 42 Palestinians and wounded dozens more taking shelter in an UNRWA school. False reports claimed “militants” were inside and fired first. UN officials denied it and provided Israeli authorities with GPS coordinates (in advance) and left no doubt this was a school used as temporary shelter for civilians fleeing the fighting. There were no fighters inside.

On January 9, a disturbing UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) report read as follows:

“From 3 to 7 January, the IDF prevented medical teams from entering the area to evacuate the wounded. In one of the gravest incidents....on 4 January Israeli foot-soldiers (herded about) 110 Palestinian (civilians) into a single-residence house in Zaytoun (half of whom were children), warning them to stay indoors.”

“Twenty-four hours later, Israeli forces shelled the home repeatedly, killing approximately thirty. Those who survived and were able, walked two kilometers to Salah Din road before being transported to the hospital in civilian vehicles.”

On January 9, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) suspended its relief operations after Israel attacked its convoys and installations. Its statement read:

“On numerous occasions in recent days, humanitarian convoys have come under Israeli fire even though their safe passage through clearly designated routes at specifically agreed times, had been confirmed by the Israeli liaison office....the nature, severity and frequency of these incidents” necessitated the suspension of operations.

The International Committee of the Red Cross faces similar problems. ICRC's Geneva-based operations director, Pierre Kraehenbuehl, said: "There is no doubt in my mind that we are dealing with a full-blown and major crisis in humanitarian terms."

UNWRA's Gaza head, John Ging, expressed similar sentiments and added: "There is nowhere safe in Gaza. Everyone here is terrorized and traumatized." Israel and the world community are dismissive, unresponsive, and arrogant. Mass slaughter and destruction are green-lighted to continue - international human rights laws be damned.

These and other incidents are grievous war crimes. Everything and everyone is attacked as the IDF connects the entire population to Hamas - long targeted since democratically winning a decisive January 2006 PLC majority. It's been severely punished ever since. Gaza was politically separated from the West Bank, and since June 2007 isolated under a medieval siege. It's now intensified as the Territory is engulfed in war, in a state of collapse, and a grave humanitarian crisis approaches a calamity of biblical proportions.

On January 8, the Security Council passed a toothless resolution. SC Res. 1860:

— "stresses the urgency of and calls for an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire, leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza;"

— other provisions call for humanitarian assistance; "initiatives aimed at creating and opening humanitarian corridors;" international efforts to alleviate the situation and "prevent illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition; intra-Palestinian reconciliation;" support for Egypt's mediation efforts; the Quartet's "consideration;" and

— the SC condemns "all violence and hostilities directed against civilians and all acts of terrorism."

No Israeli condemnation was included; its wanton targeted slaughter; its international law violations; its blitzkrieg against men, women and children; its military juggernaut against vulnerable civilians; the thousands of killed and wounded; Gazans for 18 months under siege; the calamitous humanitarian crisis; no firm timelines for attacks to halt; the siege to end; action threats if they don't; no ordering of immediate border openings and emergency airdrops until they do; no teeth in a worthless resolution to let mass slaughter continue with impunity.

No respect either for the UN Charter's mandate "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which (dozens of times) in our lifetime (have) brought untold sorrow to mankind; to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights;" respect for justice and international law; "to promote social progress; practice tolerance; maintain international peace and security;" and advance the rights of all peoples everywhere.

Fourteen nations voted aye. One abstained, America.

Israel ignored it and maintained round-the-clock terror raids. Prime Minister Olmert called it "unworkable" and his office said that Israel "has never agreed to let an external body decide its right to protect the security of its citizens."

Israel disdains the rule of law, has a long history of ignoring UN resolutions, and believes it can do anything it pleases, law or no law.

World and Arab leaders don't object and remain largely dismissive as casualties keep mounting. Israel is strangling Gaza. Foreign journalists can't enter in violation of an Israeli Supreme Court ruling.

On January 6, editor Ramzy Baroud reported that his PalestineChronicle.com site was "hacked today by an Israeli group (called) "Blue Dolphin." It's because of his important work providing vital information about the conflict and Occupied Palestine. Israel and Washington ruthlessly suppress truths. After a heroic effort, Baroud was again operating in less than 24 hours.

Gazan Sameh Habeeb is a heroic blogger despite threats on his life. On January 8 he wrote:

"I got three calls from anonymous persons (saying) stop blogging or I would be killed. Yet I would keep on this track. Some of you do wonder how I send news in such conditions. I really suffer a lot to send you this update due to a lack of power (with) shells rain(ing) down and drones hover(ing) over me. I will keep this up."

Not if Washington can help it. By supplying Israel with weapons, munitions and defense technology, it violates the 1976 Arms Export Control Act. It requires recipient governments to restrict their use to legitimate defense. Israel uses them for aggressive wars and its illegal occupation. Exports are prohibited to countries that "contribute to an arms race, aid in the development of weapons of mass destruction, support international terrorism, increase the possibility of outbreak or escalation of conflict, or prejudice the development of bilateral or multilateral arms control or nonproliferation agreements or other arrangements."

The 1994 Human Rights and Security Assistance Act affirms "human rights as principal goal of foreign policy." It also states that "no security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." Israel has been a serial violator for six decades, yet receives more aid than all other countries combined and uses it for aggressive wars, military oppression, colonial expansion, and grievous human rights violations.

On January 6 (in complicity with Israel and Washington), Haaretz reported that Egypt is barring doctors (except for two Norwegians) from entering through Sinai to provide help. Mubarak's "closure (is) seen by some as abetting Israel's siege" and partnering in its war crimes. Obstetrician Jemilah Mahmood expressed her frustration: "Can you imagine how many women are hurt and how few doctors there are? All of us are sitting at the border" and can't get in to help.

Reports are that Gaza hospitals are in chaos - with little power, few supplies, a patient overload, and air and ground assaults all around. Nonetheless, doctors work day and night to save lives, yet often they fail. Hundreds of patients are clinically dead with no hope of saving them. The toll keeps mounting. The frustration is unbearable, and at Shifa Hospital 90% of the patients are civilians, many with the ghastliest of wounds.

Disturbing reports claim Israeli use of terror weapons. Tehran Press TV said medics found DU traces in wounded Gazans following the ground invasion. The TimesOnline.UK headlined: "Israel rains fire on Gaza with phosphorous shells" - a weapon that causes horrific burns on human skin and is illegal except for smokescreens. "Tell-tale shells could be seen spreading tentacles of thick white smoke to cover the troops' advance. (They) blind the enemy (but) anyone caught beneath them" gets severely burned. Using this type weapon in tightly

concentrated Gaza assures some or perhaps many are vulnerable.

Former British major and military expert calls white phosphorous a terror weapon and if “deliberately fired at a crowd of people (should) end (someone) up in the Hague.”

Norwegian Dr. Mads Gilbert is a member of its Gaza triage medical team. He told Press TV about “clear evidence that the Israelis are using new type very high explosive weapons called Dense Inert Metal Explosive (DIME) that are made out of a tungsten alloy.”

They have enormous explosive power, and “humans who are hit by (them are) cut to pieces. (They were) first used in Lebanon (and Gaza) in 2006....On the long term, these weapons will have a cancer effect on those who survive....So they kill and those who survive risk having cancer.”

Gilbert accused Israel of violating international law. His account was horrifying;

— a “ten-year old boy (with) his whole chest filled with (bomb) fragments;

— on his lap was another person’s leg that had been cut off;

— we resuscitated him and did everything we could do to save his life but he died between our hands.” The “common people” of Palestine “are paying the price for the Israeli bombardments....”

The humanitarian crisis is horrific; 80% or more of Gazans are impoverished; half of them are under 15; “now they don’t have food....electricity; it’s cold, they don’t have warmth and in addition...they are killed; this must be stopped.”

“Almost all of the patients we have received have these severe amputations.” Terror weapons caused them – burns, fragment injuries and most with their limbs cut off.

These are horrific crimes of war and against humanity against 1.5 million Gazans. Global mass outrage keeps protesting. World leaders are dismissive and unconcerned. Washington spurns efforts to stop the carnage. Israel is free to continue terror bombing from the air and use ground assaults against innocent civilians called “terrorists.”

Israeli Radio reported Monday morning (January 12) that the IDF intensified its operation to a “third stage” and pushed deeper into more Gaza areas. More reserve units have been activated. Heavy bombing and shelling continues. White phosphorous incendiaries are being used on civilian neighborhoods and the Jebaliya refugee camp. White smoke and fires are seen. Severe burns are being reported.

One leader expressed outrage against Israel’s “holocaust. Genocidal” he called it. On January 7, the BBC reported that “Venezuela ordered the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador (Shlomo Cohen) to Caracas (and a number of diplomatic staff with him) in protest at Israel’s offensive in” Gaza.

Chavez strongly condemned Israel and called the IDF “cowardly” (for) attacking worn-out, innocent people, while they claim that they are defending their people....I call on the world to stop this madness....The president of Israel....should be taken to the International Criminal Court together with the president of the United States.” Venezuela’s foreign ministry said Israel’s campaign constituted “flagrant violations of international law (and amounted to) state terrorism.” Ecuador’s Raphael Correa and Cuba’s government sent

similar messages. Other world leaders stay silent. World outrage keeps raging in spite of them.

Remember Gaza – immortalized as one of history’s terror-bombing victims. World outrage demands an end to this and the prosecution of its perpetrators. We stand together in solidarity. Today we’re all Gazans. We’re all Palestinians.

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