

Genocide Unfolding in Palestine: Craig Murray

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Tonight has been the most violent bombardment of Gaza so far, notably concentrated on precisely the areas into which Israel ordered the population to evacuate. I find it almost impossible to believe that this genocide is under way with the active support of almost all western governments.

I want to look at two questions - what will happen internationally, and what is happening in western societies.

Israel plainly is on the course of further escalation and intends to kill many thousands more Palestinians. More than 2,000 Palestinian children alone have now been killed by Israeli aerial attack in the last fortnight.

Gaza has no defence from bombs and missiles, and there is no military reason why Israel cannot keep this up for months and simply rely upon aerial massacre. We are perhaps within a week of thirst, starvation and disease killing even more people per day than bombardment.

The population of Gaza are simply defenceless. Only international intervention can stop Israel from doing whatever it wishes, and those countries which have influence with Israel are actively abetting and encouraging the genocide.

The question is, what is Israel's aim? Do they intend to reduce the Gaza Strip still further, annexing half or more of it? Will starvation and horror enable the international community to force Egypt to accept the expulsion of the population of Gaza into the Sinai Desert as a "humanitarian" move?

That appears to be the end game: expulsion of population and territorial expansion into Gaza. That would require a ground invasion, but probably not until after even more intense aerial bombardment to eliminate all resistance. This territorial ambition of course accords with the violent expansion of illegal settlement in the West Bank which is currently under

way, with the world paying almost no attention. It is very hard indeed to comprehend the passivity of Fatah and Mahmoud Abbas at the moment.

Netanyahu's political stock within Israel is so low, that the only way he can recover is by making a major step towards the complete genocide of the Palestinian people and the achievement of Greater Israel. Netanyahu now knows that there is no violence against Palestinians so extreme that the western political elite will not support it under the mantra of "Israel's right to self-defence".

I do not see any salvation for Gaza coming from Hezbollah. If Hezbollah were to employ their vaunted missile strike capabilities, the moment to do it would be now when the Israeli armour is drawn up in massive parks outside Gaza, a perfect target even for longer range missiles of limited accuracy. Once dispersed into Gaza the armour would be far harder for Hezbollah to hit at range.

Hezbollah is even better equipped now to fight a defensive war in Lebanon than it was when it [defeated the Israeli](#) advance in 2006. But it is not configured or equipped to fight an aggressive ground war into Israel, which would be a disaster. It also has to worry about hostile militias in its rear. If Hezbollah can provoke an Israeli incursion into Southern Lebanon, that would enable it to inflict substantial casualties, but Israel is not going to do that in a way that detracts from its capabilities in Gaza.

Iran has greatly improved its diplomatic position in the last year. The Chinese-brokered lessening of hostility with Saudi Arabia has potential to revolutionise Middle Eastern politics, and the benefits of this will not lightly be laid aside by Tehran. Iran had also made real progress with the Biden administration in overcoming the blind hostility of the Trump years.

Iran has no desire to throw away these gains. That is why it seems to me extremely improbable that Iran had endorsed the 7 October attacks by Hamas. Iran is now restraining Hezbollah. But there are limits to the patience of Iran. The extraordinary truth is that Iran is probably the only state under discussion here with a genuine humanitarian concern for the lives of Palestinians. If the genocide unfolds as horribly as I anticipate, Iran can be pushed too far.

That said, I offer just a cautionary footnote that Saudi Arabia is not, under MBS, quite the reliable US/Israeli puppet it has historically been. I do not have much time for MBS, as you know, but his high opinion of the importance of the Al Saud and their leadership role among Arabs, makes him a different proposition to his predecessor.

Saudi Arabia has leverage. The Biden administration has gone all in on regional domination, sending two aircraft carrier groups into a situation which should it escalate, could send oil prices to highest-ever levels, with Russia blocked from the market. Biden is risking a huge gas price hike in an election year.

Biden's calculation, or that of his security services, is that nobody can or will intervene to save the Palestinians. They judge the genocide as containable. That is an extraordinary gamble.

There has been an extraordinary amount of vitriol aimed at Qatar by pro-Israel commentators, for hosting the Hamas office and leadership. This is extraordinarily ignorant.

Qatar hosts Hamas, just as Qatar hosted the Taliban Information Office, at the direct request of the United States. It provides a means of dialogue between the United States and Hamas (exactly as it did with the Taliban) both at deniable level, and through third parties, including of course the government of Qatar. Thus when Blinken arrived in Qatar one day and the Iranian foreign minister the next, these were in fact “proximity talks” involving Hamas.

How do I know? Well, at Julian’s request, I visited Qatar about five years ago to discuss whether Julian, and Wikileaks, might potentially relocate to Qatar, which Julian had described as “the new Switzerland” in terms of being a neutral diplomatic venue.

It was explained to me by the Qataris, at a very senior level, that Qatar hosted the Taliban Information Office and Hamas because the United States government had asked them to do so. Qatar hosted a major US military base and depended on US support against a Saudi takeover. If I could generate a request from then President Trump for Qatar to host Wikileaks, then they would do so. Otherwise, no.

So I know what I am talking about.

One tiny but good result of this brokering in Qatar was the release of two American national hostages. British diplomats have told me that discussions in Qatar have so far held back the Israeli ground offensive, but I am not convinced that Israel really wished to do this yet. They are having sadistic fun shooting children in a barrel.

Qatar has also been the origin of deals allowing in a tiny amount of aid to Gaza, but this is so small as to be almost irrelevant. It is performative humanitarianism by the West.

I have frequently praised China for the fact that their economic dominance has been unaccompanied by any aggressive desire for world hegemony, but this also has its downside. China sees no benefit in assisting the Palestinians in practice. Hopeful reports of China sending warships refer simply to pre-planned exercises, largely in the Gulf. That China is carrying out such joint exercises with Gulf states is indeed part of a long term increasing of influence, but is not relevant to the immediate reality.

Russia of course has its hands full in Ukraine. It is allowing its Syrian bases to be used as a conduit following increased Israeli bombing of Syrian airports, but there is not a great deal more that it can do. Erdoğan is genuinely furious at what is happening in Gaza, but Turkey is struggling to find any way to apply pressure, barring linkage to Ukraine shipping issues (which Erdoğan is considering).

That is a very rough and ready tour d’horizon, but the net effect is that I see no current hope for averting the atrocity which is unfolding before our horrified eyes.

Most of our eyes are indeed horrified. The gap between the western political and media elites and their people on this issue is simply enormous. Western leaders have not only failed to restrain Israel, they have almost unanimously egged Netanyahu on, with the continued repetition of the phrase “Israel’s right to self-defence” as justification for the mass bombing, removal and starvation of an entire civilian population.



The western leadership glee in vetoing every attempt at a ceasefire resolution at the UN is astonishing.

Massive demonstrations have been taking place across Europe against this unspeakable massacre, and the knee-jerk reaction of politicians at their isolation from public opinion has been to try to make such shows of dissent illegal. In the UK people have been arrested for displaying Palestinian flags. In Germany pro-Palestinian demonstrations have been entirely banned. Something similar has been attempted in France, with predictable failure.



I have myself attended pro-Palestinian demonstrations in three different countries, and the most striking thing on each occasion was the strong support of passers-by, and the number of people spontaneously coming out to join the demo as it passed.

A wave of racism has been unleashed in the UK and elsewhere. I am astonished by the Islamophobia and racial hatred released online, with no apparent comeback. UK Ministers claim to be alarmed at the “terrorist sympathies” of pro-Palestinian demonstrators, yet it is perfectly legal to call for Palestinians to be exterminated, to compare them to different types of animal and vermin, and suggest they should be driven into the sea. That does not horrify ministers at all.

I am personally now subject to a police investigation for “terrorism” merely for suggesting that the Palestinians too have a right to self-defence and may offer armed resistance to genocide – a right they enjoy beyond doubt in international law. Remember, Israel has formally declared war. Is it the position in British law that the only belief it is legal to hold and express, is that in this war the Palestinians must simply line up quietly to be killed?

The step change in western authoritarianism is likely to be met by blowback.

After 20 years, we had finally come through the vicious cycle of the “War on Terror”, where terrorism, repression and institutionalised Islamophobia all boosted each other across the western world. Outrage at the appalling genocide in Gaza is very likely to result in isolated incidences of, also appalling, Islamist-inspired violence in Western countries, including the UK, particularly because of the UK’s military support of Israel.

That consequential terrorism in itself will be cited by the political elite as justifying their stance. And so the vicious cycle will restart. This will of course be welcome to the agents of the security state, whose power, budgets and prestige will be boosted. Once again we have to be on the lookout for radicalisation and real terrorism, but also for agent-provocateur-led terrorism and for false flag terrorism.

If we descend back into that nightmare again, the direct cause will be elite support for the genocide of the Palestinian people and the Islamophobic narrative. The major cause of terrorism here is Israel, the terrorist apartheid state.

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