

Israel Is Ethnically Cleansing Gaza

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This started becoming clear on May 12th, and has become increasingly confirmed by events since then.

On May 12th, [Al-Arabia](#), [CBS News](#), and other media, reported Israel’s Defense Minister Benny Gantz as promising that “The army will continue to attack to bring a total, long-term quiet.” And, “Only when we reach that goal will we be able to speak about a truce.” Britain’s [Guardian](#) reported his speech as having said that “Israel vows not to stop Gaza attacks until there is complete quiet.” Britain’s [The Express](#) reported him as saying that “There is no end date and we will not receive moral sermons from any organization on our right to protect the citizens of Israel. Only when we reach that goal will we be able to speak about a truce.”

In other words, Israel is promising that until Gazans are totally conquered, there will be no “truce”: Israel will continue this until total victory is achieved — conquest, surrender by *all* Gazans.

Throughout the conflict, U.S. President Joe Biden has said that America’s policy is to request that there be a truce. However, ever since at least May 12th, Israel has made clear that a “truce” will occur only when the Gazans are totally defeated, so that there is, in Gaza, “a total, long-term quiet.” Does that differ from Israel’s announcing that they are ethnically cleansing Gazans from Gaza?

The difference would be equivalent to the difference between offering Gazans a choice ultimately between remaining quiet in the world’s largest-ever open-air prison, versus becoming totally exterminated by their enemy. What type of choice is that, actually?

On 15 April 2018, Elliott Gabriel [reported from Gaza City](#), that

Palestinians confined to Gaza have faced several devastating onslaughts by the Israelis, as well as a crippling blockade by Tel Aviv and Cairo that has resulted in the collapse of the coastal strip’s economy. Monitors and advocates across the world have decried the grave humanitarian crisis prevailing in Gaza that has resulted directly from its being deprived of needed goods including construction material, electricity, food, water and medicine.

In a report on Gaza last November, local human rights monitor B'Tselem noted:

“Israel used its control over the crossings to put Gaza under a blockade, turning almost two million people into prisoners inside the Gaza Strip, effecting an economic collapse and propelling Gaza residents into dependency on international aid.”

On 15 May 2019, the Guardian bannered [“One million face hunger in Gaza after US cut to Palestine aid”](#), and noted that,

The UNRWA, created in 1949 to provide short-term relief for Palestinian refugees after the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, runs schools, hospitals and social services in five areas including the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

It is largely propping up Gaza, subject to a total blockade by air, land and sea since 2007. Political stalemate, conflict with Israel and divisions among Palestinian factions have left the territory an economic ruin, without health and social services and with almost no access to clean water and only four or five hours of electricity a day.

With no peace in sight, a generation is growing up in Gaza who have only known the fenced-in territory and never met an Israeli.

So, if that is the reality there, then how is this ‘choice’ anything other than an ethnic cleansing of Gaza, turning it into a prison that’s designed for its inhabitants to be “quietly” exterminated until Israelis can then ultimately take over that land and make it a new land for settlement by Israelis?

On 14 May 2021, U.S. Professor Juan Cole, an internationally recognized expert on the Middle East, headlined [“Shooting Fish in a Barrel: Israel bombs Palestinian Refugees from Israel in Gaza, 50% of them Children”](#), and he wrote:

At one point in the zeros the Israeli military [made a plan to only allow enough food into Gaza](#) to keep the population from becoming malnourished, but nothing more. No chocolate for the children. It was one of the creepiest moments in the history of colonialism.

The unemployment rate in Gaza is 50%, the highest in the world. Half the population depends on food aid. The aquifer is polluted and increasingly salty from rising seas owing to climate change, so truly clean water is available to only about 5 percent of the population. Israel has several water purification plants. The Palestinians of Gaza do not.

There is no equivalence between Israel and Gaza. Israel has the best-equipped military in the Middle East and has several hundred nuclear bombs, Its [gross domestic product](#) (nominal) per capita is on the order of \$42,000 per year.

The nominal GDP per capita in Palestine is \$3000, and those who live in Gaza earn less yet.

On 19 May 2021, U.S. President Joe Biden’s Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin who was selected because he is both a Black and a neoconservative, headlined at the ‘Defense’ department, [“Readout of Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III’s Phone Call With Israeli Minister of Defense Benjamin ‘Benny’ Gantz”](#), and here is the entirety of that news-report:

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III spoke today with Israeli Minister of Defense Benjamin “Benny” Gantz. Secretary Austin underscored his continued support for Israel’s right to defend itself, reviewed assessments of Israel’s military campaign in Gaza, and urged de-escalation of the conflict.

The United States Government has ‘urged de-escalation’ but “underscored [its] continued support for Israel’s right to defend itself,” while exterminating Gazans.

Also on May 19th, the White House issued a statement about the phone conversation that day between Biden and Netanyahu, [“The president conveyed to the Prime Minister that he expected a significant de-escalation today on the path to a cease-fire.”](#)

However, on the morning of Thursday, May 20th, CNBC reported that, [“Israel launched a fresh wave of airstrikes over the Gaza strip early Thursday in what it says are continued operations to take out Hamas targets.”](#) That action by Netanyahu — a flagrant disregard for what U.S. President Biden had publicly instructed him to do (and the United States Government donates annually \$3.8 billion to Israel for purchase of U.S.-made weapons) — was very embarrassing for Biden. However, Biden had not publicly threatened Netanyahu, but had only instructed him. Therefore, the question, at this point, was whether Netanyahu’s disobedience would be publicly punished (such as by means of applying U.S. sanctions against Israel and against Netanyahu personally). Which was the master, and which was the slave, in the U.S.-Israel relationship? Absent a public punishment of Israel for its disobedience, Israel would appear to be the master, and the U.S. its slave.

Also on May 20th, Al Jazeera, a news-operation that represents the royal family of Qatar, headlined [“Death, destruction in Gaza as Israel defies truce call: Live”](#), and reported that, “Israeli fighter jets continued to pound the Gaza Strip on Thursday, ... as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu defied calls for a de-escalation.” This was specific public recognition that Israel was defying the publicly announced policy of the U.S. Government.

It’s good to know what America stands for, and has been standing for, at least after the Presidency of Jimmy Carter, if not ever since Harry S. Truman became America’s President in 1945. The United States has certainly been like this, continually, for a very long time.

[So has Israel.](#)

It is now out in the open. If Biden will retaliate strongly against Israel, he will change U.S. foreign policy since 1945. If he fails to retaliate at all, he will be profoundly embarrassed. If he continues to try to walk the fence on this matter, then, since it’s all out in the open now, the United States itself will be profoundly embarrassed. No matter what he does, the future will not be like the past. This juncture is a historical turning-point, whichever way he might turn.

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Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They’re Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST’S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

Featured image: Lamyā al-Atar and her three children were killed in an Israeli air strike on their home in Gaza on 14 May 2021 ©Private

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