

Israel, Ukraine, and U.S. Crack Downs Against the Press

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In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#), [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

On Wednesday, May 16th, Russian Television reported recent crackdowns against the press, on the part of both Ukraine's Government and Israel's Government. One headline story, ["9 journalists injured by Israeli gunfire in Gaza 'massacre', total now over 20"](#), reported that Israel had shot dead two journalists:

"Yaser Murtaja, 31, a cameraman for Palestinian Ain Media agency, died on April 7 after he was shot by Israeli forces the previous day while covering a protest south of the Gaza Strip. He wore a blue protective vest marked 'PRESS'."

And:

"Ahmad Abu Hussein, 24, was shot by Israeli forces during a protest in the Gaza strip on April 13. He died from his injuries on April 25. He was also wearing a protective vest marked 'PRESS' at the time."

The other 18 instances were only injuries, not murders, but Israel has now made clear that **any journalist who reports from the Palestinian side is fair game for Israel's army snipers** — that when Palestinians demonstrate against their being [blockaded into the vast Gaza prison](#), and journalists then report from amongst the demonstrators instead of from the side of the snipers, those journalists are fair game by the snipers, along with those demonstrators.

Some of the surviving 18 journalists are still in critical condition and could die from Israel's bullets, so the deaths to journalists might be higher than just those two.

Later in the day, RT bannered ["Fist-size gunshot wounds, pulverized bones, inadmissible use of force by Israel in Gaza - HRW to RT"](#) and presented a damning interview with the Israel & Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch.

The other crackdown has been by Ukraine. After the U.S. Obama Administration [perpetrated a very bloody coup in Ukraine during February of 2014](#), that country has plunged by every numerical measure, and has carried out [raids](#) against newsmedia that have reported unfavorably on the installed regime. The latest such incident was reported on May 16th by Russian Television, under the headline, ["US endorses Kiev's raid on Russian news agency](#)

[amid international condemnation](#)". An official of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) stated there:

"I reiterate my call on the authorities to refrain from imposing unnecessary limitations on the work of foreign journalists, which affects the free flow of information and freedom of the media."

An official of the CPJ (Committee to Protect Journalists) stated:

"We call on Ukrainian authorities to disclose the charges and evidence they have against Vyshinsky or release him without delay. ... We also call on Ukrainian authorities to stop harassing and obstructing Russian media operating in Ukraine. The criminalization of alternative news and views has no place in a democratic Ukraine."

However, as reported by RT, Ukraine's Prosecutor-General called the editorial policy of the anti-regime RIA Ukraine "anti-Ukrainian" in nature, amounting to "state treason." So, the prosecutor is threatening to categorize and prosecute critical press under Ukraine's treason law.

The U.S. [regime](#) is not condemning either of its client-regimes for their crackdowns. (It cites [Ukraine's supposed victimhood from "Russian propaganda"](#) as having caused Ukraine's action, and justifies Israel's gunning-down of demonstrators and of journalists as having been necessary for Israel's self-defense against terrorism.) In neither instance is the U.S. [dictatorship](#) saying that this is unacceptable behavior for a government that receives large U.S. taxpayers funds. Of course, in the U.S., the mainstream press aren't allowed to report that either Israel or today's Ukraine is a dictatorship, so they don't report this, though Israel clearly is an apartheid racist-fascist (or ideologically nazi, but in *their* case *not* against Jews) regime, and Ukraine is clearly also a [racist-fascist, or nazi, regime](#), which engages in [ethnic cleansing to get rid of voters for the previous — the pre-coup — Ukrainian government](#). People who are selected individually by the installed regime, get [driven to a big ditch, shot, with the corpses piling up there, and then the whole thing gets covered over](#). This is America's client-'democracy' in [Ukraine](#), not its client-'democracy' in Israel.

May 16th also was the day when the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee [voted 10 to 5 to approve](#) as the next CIA Director, **Gina Haspel**, [the person who had headed torture at the CIA's black site in Thailand where Abu Zubaydah was waterboarded 83 times and blinded in one eye](#) in order [to get him to say that Saddam Hussein was behind the 9/11 attacks](#); and, since then, Zubaydah, who has never been in court, has been held incommunicado at Guantanamo, so that he can't testify in court or communicate with the press in any way. ["The U.S. Government has never charged Zubaydah with any crime."](#) And the person who had ordered and overseen his torture will soon head the agency for which she worked, the CIA.

Whether the U.S. regime will soon start similarly to treat its own critical press as "traitors" isn't clear, except that ever since at least the Obama Administration, and continuing now under Trump, the U.S. Government has made clear that it wants to seize and prosecute both **Edward Snowden** and **Julian Assange** for their journalistic whistleblowing, violations of "state secrets," those being anything that the regime wants to hide from the public — including things that are simply extremely embarrassing for the existing rulers. Therefore,

the journalistic-lockdown step, from either Israel, or Ukraine, to U.S., would be small, for the United States itself to take, if it hasn't yet already been taken in perhaps secret ways. But at least, the Senate Intelligence Committee is strongly supportive of what the U.S. Government has been doing, and wants more of it to be done.

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