

Paradox of Atoning for Holocaust by Facilitating Genocide

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Germany is a country from which several supporters of peace, human rights, democracy and environment protection have high hopes. However these hopes have been hurt in recent times, and remedial actions are urgently needed.

The greatest concerns relate to the stand that the government of Germany has taken in the context of Israel's genocidal actions in Gaza during the last 11 months or so. Several top experts have described Israel's highly disproportionate response to the completely wrong October 7, 2023 Hamas attack as genocide while the International Court of Justice has said that Israel's excessive aggression can plausibly be described as genocide.

The fact that over 50,000 Palestinians have been killed directly in violence (including those buried in rubble), nearly double this number have been injured and disabled, the overwhelming majority of those living in Gaza have been displaced more than once speaks for itself. If the assumption of at least three times this number dying indirectly due to denial of basic needs including food and medical care as well as due to conflict related spread of disease (compared to the number dying directly in violence) is accepted (this is an assumption made in several credible estimates of costs of wars) then over 200,000 persons in Gaza have died as a result of Israel's assault (50,000 plus 150,000), about 10% of the total population, in a period of just 11 months, while the majority have also suffered in many other ways, including extreme distress at the death of near and dear ones in very painful conditions. In addition the Palestinians in the West Bank region have also faced several cruel assaults and there are fears of these worsening further.

Now it is very difficult for several well-wishers of Germany to accept Germany's support for all this. Germany has been a leading and number two supplier of the highly destructive weapons with which this genocide has been carried out. The supply of weapons by Germany to Israel was already at a high level in 2022 but this was increased ten-fold in 2023, according to published reports, with much of the increase taking place after October 7. This has also raised troubling questions like how such a high increase could take place within such a short time, and whether there was some earlier understanding regarding this, and if so, on what basis.

Apart from being a major supplier of weapons and ammunition for the genocide, Germany has also provided strong diplomatic support to Israel at a time when most international experts and organizations known for their commitment to peace and justice have been extremely critical of Israel's genocidal actions.

What is no less shocking for many well-wishers of Germany is that there have been efforts within Germany to clamp down on the supporters of the Palestinian cause within Germany,

while those forces which try to spread disinformation regarding Muslims have been becoming stronger.

The strong support for Israel is sought to be justified on the basis that Germany, accepting responsibility for the holocaust, has a moral obligation to protect and support the Jewish state.

However the correct way for atoning for the holocaust would be to oppose wherever innocent people are killed, particularly on the basis of their identity based on faith, race, color etc. Whenever certain people are wrongly categorized as inherently evil or are even dehumanized by comparing them to various aggressive animals and pests, and then targeted and killed relentlessly on the basis of such wrong identification (as happened during the holocaust and while preparing for this), then this must be opposed very strongly. However what the Israeli regime and powerful persons linked closely to it have done in recent times is very similar to the policies of the Nazi regime towards Jews- dehumanizing the identity of the Palestinian people, comparing them to animals and pests, on this basis preparing soldiers and other aggressive elements to attack and kill them on a large scale, adopting policy based on ethnic cleansing towards them. Germany has been supporting all this, diplomatically and with weapons supply. So instead of atoning for the holocaust in a proper way by coming to the rescue of innocent endangered people all over the world, Germany has become complicit in a genocide.

Clearly Germany should urgently reconsider its support for Israel's genocidal actions. Germany should firmly oppose such actions and stop weapons supply to Israel. In fact no country should supply any weapons to Israel as long as its genocidal actions against Palestinians continue. Germany can also contribute by strengthening the forces of peace within Israel as much as it can within the various constraints.

In some other contexts also policy change should be considered by Germany. After the coup in Ukraine in 2014 planned and assisted by the USA in particular, from day one anti-Russia policy for Ukraine was emphasized but this coup and this policy did not have the support of most people of Ukraine. Hence to impose this policy on Ukraine the most aggressive anti-Russian forces had to be identified, supported, armed and prepared for a stronger military role. These forces happened to be the extreme right and neo-Nazi forces. Hence the entire US-inspired policy for Ukraine based on opposing Russia has been necessarily based on strengthening and further militarizing of neo-Nazi forces. This may be OK for the USA neo-cons but would Germany like to be complicit in strengthening and militarizing neo-Nazi forces in any part of Europe, or anywhere else?

Then there is the question of economic and energy interests of Germany being harmed by the sabotaging of Nord Stream. Germany has not been able to even name the most likely culprits behind this sabotage of its very important energy infra-structure, not to speak of taking any suitable action. This raises questions regarding the exercise of its sovereignty by Germany for protecting its own economic interests, particularly in the context of such important matters as securing energy imports from most cost-effective sources and managing trade relations with important countries like China and Russia.

With the unfortunate history of a central role in two world wars and all the massive distress caused by this, Germany has every reason to seek a very different present and a very different future as a strong voice for peace. Unfortunately increasingly it appears that it is

willing to be a junior partner of the most powerful country (USA) which is set firmly on a quest for world dominance. If it persists in such a role then Germany will again be used in large-scale violence against others, and in addition its people will also be exposed as targets of large-scale attacks by others (nuclear weapon attacks cannot be ruled out, the way things are escalating in some ongoing wars).

Hence at this critical juncture of its history, there should be a lot of re-thinking in Germany regarding how it can move to a different and safer path where it can better protect its economic and security interests and at the same time can become a sincere voice for peace, justice and environment protection at world level.

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