

What the Mass Media Needs to Cover on Israel/Gaza Conflict. Ralph Nader

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Last October 27, I suggested subjects the mainstream media needed to cover relating to the saturation bombing of Gaza and its defenseless civilian families and infrastructure. Looking at these topics now, four months later, despite massive reporting, the attention to these subjects is still thin and more deserving of reporting than ever.

1. How did Hamas, with tiny Gaza surrounded by a 17-year Israeli blockade, subjected to unparalleled electronic surveillance, with spies and informants, and augmented by an overwhelming air, sea and land military presence, manage to get the weapons and associated technology for their October 7th surprise raid? **Readers still do not know how and from where these weapons entered Gaza year after year.**

2. What is the connection between the stunning failure of the Israeli government to protect its people on the border and the policy of P.M. Netanyahu? Recall the *New York Times* (October 22, 2023) article by prominent journalist, Roger Cohen, to wit: "All means were good to undo the notion of Palestinian statehood. In 2019, Mr. Netanyahu told a meeting of his center-right Likud party: 'Those who want to thwart the possibility of a Palestinian state should support the strengthening of Hamas and the transfer of money to Hamas. This is part of our strategy.'" (Note: Israel and the U.S. fostered the rise of Islamic Hamas in 1987 to counter the secular Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)). **Readers still need more information about the context of Netanyahu's declared support for Hamas over the years and his connection to the buildup of Hamas funding and weaponry.**

3. Why is Congress preparing to appropriate over \$14 billion to Israel in military and other aid without any public hearings and without any demonstrated fiscal need by Israel, a prosperous economic, technological and military superpower with a social safety net superior to that of the U.S.? USDA just reported over 44 million Americans struggled with hunger in 2022. This, in the midst of a childcare crisis. Should U.S. taxpayers be expected to pay for Netanyahu's colossal intelligence/military collapse? **As an elderly Holocaust survivor told the *New York Times* "It should never have happened" in the first place.**

4. Why hasn't the media reported on President Biden's statement that the Gaza Health Ministry's body count (now over 7000 fatalities) is exaggerated? Indications, however, are that it is a large undercount by Hamas to minimize its inability to protect its people. Israel has fired over 8,000 powerful precision munitions and bombs into Gaza so far. These have struck many thousands of inhabited buildings - homes, apartments buildings, over 120 health facilities, ambulances, crowded markets, fleeing refugees, schools, water and sewage systems, and electric networks - implementing Israeli military orders to cut off all food, water, fuel, medicine and electricity to this already impoverished densely packed area the size of Philadelphia. For those not directly slain, the deadly harm caused by no food, water, medicine, medical facilities and fuel will lead to even more deaths and serious injuries.

Note that over three-quarters of Gaza's population consists of children and women. Soon there will be thousands of babies born to die in the rubble. Other Palestinians will perish from untreated diseases, injuries, dehydration, and from drinking contaminated water. With crumbled sanitation facilities, physicians are fearing a deadly cholera epidemic.

Israel bombed the Rafah crossing on the Gaza-Egypt border. Only a tiny trickle of trucks are now allowed there by Israel to carry food and water. Fuel for hospital generators still remains blocked.

The undercount of fatalities/injuries is far greater now. The official figure is about 30,000 lives lost, with hundreds dying every day under the rubble. There is too little media interest in more realistic estimates. Undercounting lessens the pressure on Washington officials' co-belligerents in the White House to call for a permanent ceasefire.

5. Why can't Biden even persuade Israel to let 600 desperate Americans out of the Gaza firestorm?

6. Why isn't the mass media making a bigger issue out of Israel's long-time practice of blocking journalists from entering Gaza, including European, American and Israeli journalists? The only television crews left are Gazan-residing Al Jazeera reporters. Israeli bombs have already killed 26 journalists in the Gaza Strip since October 7th. Is Israel targeting journalists' families? The Gaza bureau chief of Al Jazeera, Wael Al-Dahdouh's family was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Wednesday. **Israeli commanders now have killed over 100 journalists in addition in some cases to their entire families and continue to block foreign journalists except for a few brief "guided tours" in**

Israeli armored vehicles.

7. Why isn't the mainstream U.S. media giving adequate space and voice to groups advocating a ceasefire and humanitarian aid? The message of Israeli peace groups' peaceful solutions are drowned out by the media's addiction to interviews with military tacticians. Much time and space are being given to hawks pushing for a war that could flash outside of Gaza big time. Shouldn't groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace, the Arab-American Institute, Veterans for Peace and associations of clergy have their views and activities reported? **Still being underreported are the activities all over the country of the Veterans for Peace and large labor unions demanding a permanent ceasefire and humanitarian aid.**

8. Why is the coverage of the war overlooking the Geneva Conventions, the United Nations Charter and the many provisions of international law that all the parties, including the U.S., have been violating? (See the October 24, 2023 [letter](#) to President Biden). Under international law, Biden has made the U.S. an active "co-belligerent," of the Israeli government's vocal demolition of the 2.3 million inhabitants in Gaza, who are mostly descendants of Palestinian refugees driven from their homes in 1948. (See, [Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#)). **Coverage has expanded to include the U.S. vetoes on the Security Council and to global reporting on the International Court of Justice proceedings on South Africa's calling for the Court to address Israel's genocide of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.**

9. What about revealing human-interest stories? For example: How do Israeli F-16 pilots feel about their daily bombing of the completely defenseless Gazan civilian population and its life-sustaining infrastructures? **The reporting on the military orders given to Israeli soldiers in Gaza who are slaying indiscriminately thousands of innocents of all ages and snipers attacking people and children in hospitals is inadequate. Why are no Hamas fighters taken as prisoners of war? Is there an order of "take no prisoners" even after capture?** What are the courageous Israeli human rights and refuseniks thinking and doing in a climate of serious repression of their views as a result of Netanyahu's defense collapse on October 7th? **The open letter to President Biden on December 13, 2023, by 16 Israeli human rights groups appeared as a paid notice in the *New York Times* but received very little notice to its clarion call to stop the catastrophe in Gaza. (See the letter [here](#)).**

10. Where is the media attention on the statements from Israeli military commentators, who, for years have declared high-tech US-backed, nuclear-armed Israel to be more secure than at any time in its history? Israel is reasserting its overwhelming military domination of the Middle East region, fully backed by U.S. militarism. **The Israeli government is putting ads in U.S. newspapers wildly exaggerating long-subdued Hamas as an "existential" threat. Without Netanyahu strangely failing to keep the border guarded on October 7, 2023, what followed would not have happened!**

Historians remind us that in a grid-locked conflict over time, it is the most powerful party's responsibility to lead the way to peace.

Establishing a two-state solution has been supported by many Palestinians. All the Arab nations, starting with the Arab League peace proposal in 2002, support this solution as well. It is up to Israel and the U.S., assuming annexation of what is left of Palestine is not Israel's objective. (See, the March 29, 2002 *New York Times* article: [Mideast Turmoil; Text of the Peace Proposals Backed by the Arab League](#)).

More media attention on this subject matter is much needed.

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