

# Gaza: The Cruel Aftermath. The Mourning Hasn't Begun

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*Israel's military operation against Gaza, "Protective Edge", has brought a terrible awareness to the world. With a long-term truce declared August 27th, the horrifying effects of a war on their right to exist will remain indelible in the minds of Gazans. These operations against Gaza are periodic. The normalcy of destruction and Israel's insistence on the right to oppress are not tolerable yet the people of Gaza endure the bombing of their homes and deaths in their families. Gazans are refusing extinction. However badly Hamas resistance is damaged, it continues. Israel's right to exist is endangered by refusing that right to Palestinians. The lasting result of operation "Protective Edge" is that Israel's policy toward Gaza and Palestine is becoming widely recognized as a genocide.*



The destruction of Gaza is slow to be processed as 'genocide' by most North American university programs or concerned NGO's, who along with government policies are legally bound to the prevention of genocide. The destruction of Palestinian people continues to be ignored as it becomes more clear through these sixty years. Despite the policy implicit in Israel's current operations, it's difficult or

impossible to find any mention of Israel or Palestine on the web pages of United to End Genocide, Canada's All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Genocide Watch, The Sentinel Project, the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, among other government allied or corporate organizations citizens with conscience might turn to.

The State of Palestine Ministry of Health reported Aug. 17th that since July 6, 2014 there have been at least 2016 martyrs and 19101 injured in Gaza. In an interview with Pernille Ironside of UNICEF's Gaza field office, Democracy Now! reveals that of the 1.8 million residents of Gaza a million are children under 18, and these are permanently traumatized by Israeli actions. By Aug. 21, 2014 at least 467 children were killed, 3000 wounded, 1500 orphaned, and 25 schools destroyed. The United Nations Human Rights Council has opened an independent inquiry. Council President Baudelaire Ndong Ella of Gabon has appointed a panel of Canadian Professor William Shabas, Senegalese lawyer Doudou Diene, and Mary McGowan Davis, a New York judge, to investigate this recent round of war crimes.

There's no public enthusiasm for this massacre from any quarter of the world. Operation "Protective Edge" was recognized as genocide by the President of Palestine. The Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif found the atrocities genocide. Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Cuba's Fidel Castro, Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro, Bolivia's Evo Morales, Ecuador's President Rafael Correa, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, and the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, publicly faulted Israel for genocide. Nicaragua's Ortega noted to Globovision "El primer ministro Netanyahu parece que tiene el demonio adentro."

Very few mainstream North American journalists and editors are finding their voices. Actress Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem signed an open letter by over a hundred notables in the Spanish film industry, to the European Union, finding the actions of Israel 'genocide'. She's threatened with not working again as Hollywood bitingly rushes to Israel's defence. In an open letter printed in Haaretz, Archbishop Desmond Tutu addressed Israel's civil society with the need for non-violence and the "boycott, sanctions and divestment," used in South Africa's rejection of apartheid.

Within Israel a group of Israeli citizens, Boycott from within! sent a letter to the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, demanding the office take action to stop the genocide destroying the Palestinian people. It joins a Palestinian call for boycott.

On August 2, Dr Joanne Maria McNally wrote a letter to the International Criminal Court notifying it of its obligations to prevent genocide of the Palestinian people.

In an advertisement in The New York Times over three hundred Holocaust survivors and their and victims' descendants accused Israel of genocide and call for a full economic, academic and cultural boycott.

The Canadian Peace Movement and some socially conscious Americans openly refer to the Israeli actions as genocide. Chris Hedges ended his address to a NYC rally this way: "God weeps because the failure to condemn Israeli war crimes by our political establishment and our compliant media betrays the memory of those killed in other genocides, from the Holocaust to Cambodia to Rwanda to Bosnia. God weeps because we have failed to learn

the fundamental lesson of the Holocaust, which is not that Jews are unique or eternal victims, but that when you have the capacity to stop genocide, and you do not, you are culpable.”

Andrew Abbass of Corner Brook Newfoundland filed a complaint with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary in his town, charging Canadian Prime Minister Harper and Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird with genocide. A local RCMP officer explained to him that the Ottawa RCMP had refused to pursue what was considered a complaint against a ‘policy directive.’ According to a report by Newfoundland’s The Telegram, the allegation addressed alleged hate propaganda and promotion of genocide in “Through Fire and Water,” a Conservative Party video which promotes Harper and Baird’s reasons for supporting Israel.

Canada’s New Democratic Party is losing support due to its ambivalence about the Israeli invasion. Ottawa NDP Minister Paul Dewar’s constituency office was occupied by protesters. A Montreal NDP Minister quit the Party.

Whatever North America’s well funded University ‘genocide’ programs and NGO’s are free to say, Israel is on a different footing now. It may be the murder of so many children. There’s a global shift to recognizing Israel’s unacceptable brutality as a policy for “final solution”. Hamas supports Palestine joining the International Criminal Court. Over the years the documentation of military actions reveals a pattern of annihilation. Of people. Documentation of statements of hatred by Israeli politicians, some rabbis and settlers, which have become more and more frequent, also may be subject to eventual prosecution under the Convention. The attack on Gaza is said to have support of Israel’s population as its peace community is being silenced.

Interviewed by Gidi Weitz for Haaretz (Aug.13, 2014), Prof. Zeev Sternhell who has written extensively about fascism, said “What we’ve seen here in the past few weeks is absolute conformism on the part of most of Israel’s intellectuals. They’ve just followed the herd. By intellectuals I mean professors and journalists. The intellectual bankruptcy of the mass media in this war is total.” Sternhell is an Israeli Prize laureate and in 2008 was wounded by a Shin Beth informant in a targeted bomb attack.

B’Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories has for weeks carried the names of the victim children at the top of its website.

Despite human moments of leaders and people saying no ! and despite the truce which leaves an imprisoned people amid ruins, it’s numbing to consider a tragedy where arrogance and impunity are so comfortable with the deaths of so many civilians. A culture which has often awakened the rights and value of humanity, has let a terrible crime occur, which will eventually be brought to justice by courts, or a consensus of humanity which is less restrained. For most North Americans this ongoing news story about death is at the mercy of madness, and the real mourning hasn’t begun.

Partial online sources:

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