

Israel—“Nation of Murderers and Murder Victims”.

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I don’t see them much anymore—I mean the “Israeli public.” In the first few weeks after al-Aqsa Flood, their images and voices were all over the live coverage on Al Jazeera Arabic and al-Mayadeen.

The hope was that the pressure the families of the hostages was exerting on the Israeli government would succeed in making their release a priority for the Israeli cabinet over the impulse of vengeance. That obviously did not happen and most of them continue to be solidly behind the strategic aims of their blood-thirsty government, if not its tactics.

Our right to defend ourselves from extermination does not give us the right to oppress others

**Occupation entails Foreign Rule
Foreign Rule entails Resistance
Resistance entails Repression
Repression entails Terror and Counter-Terror**

The victims of terror are mostly innocent people

Holding on to the occupied territories will turn us into a nation of murderers and murder victims

Let us get out of the Occupied Territories immediately

"Holding on to the occupied territories will turn us into a nation of murderers and murder victims."
Declaration published in Haaretz in 1967 signed by a minority of Israelis who were against Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories after the 1967 war.

Since the news stream kept flipping back and forth between images and voices from Israel and those from Gaza, the contrast in what the cameras were capturing was arresting and telling. On the one hand, there were images of orderly, rallying Israeli crowds in spacious squares with music emanating from the speakers' platform; on the other were images of apocalyptic chaos, raw grief and screams of despair, arms flung up to heaven. On the one hand was the image of a little Palestinian girl, bandaged and traumatized and barely able to move, who, upon noticing the camera pointed at her, made a slow and laborious victory sign with her injured hand, her face still blank. On the other was the image of an Israeli teenager marching and giggling with her friends in a youth rally for the hostages stopping to pose sexily for the camera and raise a victory sign.

I used to think that much of the Israeli public isn't actually aware of the horrendous human consequences of what their military was doing in Gaza, hence their apathy toward its crimes against humanity. Now, however, I am convinced that the degree of denial of the occupation, dehumanization of Palestinians and sense of entitlement is not merely a disconnectedness from reality. Rather, it is a determination not to know and not to hear, a reflection of the Israeli psyche. Because Israel's national security strategy is apparently driven by a deep-seated fear of annihilation, the Israeli national psyche can be characterized by a sense of insecurity that no degree of military might can fully alleviate.

Israel has always exploited the Holocaust both at home and internationally to bolster its claim to Palestine, molding its identity as a victim entitled to defend itself from the people it oppresses. Israel's psyche has led it straight to the dock, where it is now defending itself against accusations of genocide against Palestinians at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague

A few early Israelis were strong and smart enough to escape the pull of their national psyche even as it was being forged. They were prescient enough to predict exactly where such a psyche would lead. Such were the Machovers. In an [interview](#) by Owen Jones (This Lawyer Reveals Why Israel's Gaza Onslaught Could Be Stopped By Genocide Case), Daniel Machover, a UK civil litigation lawyer, explains how his parents who "were born in Palestine as it then was" became very concerned about what was happening in Israel in the 1950s.

Following the 1967 war, Machover's parents were among a very small number of Israelis (including a Palestinian citizen of Israel) who immediately opposed the fact of the occupation and signed a declaration that was published by Haaretz on the 22nd of September 1967. It said:

Our right to defend ourselves from extermination does not give us the right to oppress others. Occupation entails foreign rule; foreign rule entails resistance; resistance entails repression; repression entails terror and counter-terror. The victims of terror are mostly innocent people; holding on to the occupied territories will turn us into a nation of murderers and murder victims. Let us get out of the occupied territories immediately.

The biggest irony of all is that Israel is not "defending itself from extermination," no matter what its fancy lawyers are saying in The Hague. Israel's bogus argument that Hamas is out to exterminate all Jews is a legitimization for its mass killing of Palestinian civilians and their ethnic cleansing in Gaza and the West Bank. In both places, Israel is making the conditions of life unbearable to drive Palestinians out and "settle" Jews in their place.

We must radicalize the Israeli public.

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This article was originally published on the author's [blogsite](#).

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