Israel's Psych-War Is Relentless, Vicious and Deliberate

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One part of Israel's military operation in Gaza that's been largely ignored by the mainstream media is **the extremely sophisticated psychological war that's being waged on the Palestinian people.** *If we look carefully at some of the more unusual elements in Israel's strategy, we see the outline of plan that is clearly* **aimed at inflicting maximum psychological damage on its victims.**

Take, for example, Israel's repeated demand that civilians leave a particular city at a designated time. Every time this demand has been made it was followed shortly after by airstrikes on the fleeing civilians. We could easily dismiss this unfortunate action as an operational snafu attributable to human error, but that does not appear to be the case. After all, these airstrikes have not happened just once or twice, but over and over again. This suggests that it is official policy.

The same is true of the seemingly random killing of civilians by Israeli snipers, (some of them waving white flags) or the so-called "indiscriminate bombing" of homes, hospitals and refugee camps, or the hyper-belligerent pronouncements by political leaders, or the massive slaughter of civilians peacefully gathering food at humanitarian aid trucks.

What we're saying is that none of these things have any apparent tactical value, rather their efficacy can only be measured in terms of how they help Israel achieve its overall strategic objective which is the expulsion of the entire Arab population. In that regard, the strategy appears to be working quite well because the majority of **the population is now convinced that "nowhere is safe". This, in fact, is the cornerstone upon which Israel has developed its psychological battleplan, to eradicate any sense of personal security prompting feelings of anxiety, confusion and hopelessness.** Keep in mind, this mindset did not appear out of thin air. This mindset is the product of a

meticulously-plotted and thoroughly-sinister plan to inflict maximum psychological damage on 2 million people so they will be easier to expel from their historic homeland. That is the underlying goal of Israel's operation, ethnic cleansing. And the psychological aspect of the campaign may be more critical to its success than the relentless airstrikes or nascent ground war. This is from an article at *Save The Children*:

> "In times of war, people usually seek refuge in safe places. **There are no safe places in Gaza right now, and there is no way of reaching safety outside.** With a sense of safety, the constant reassuring presence of family, some kind of a routine and appropriate treatment, children can recover. But so many children have already lost family members, some have lost all, and the violence and displacement are relentless," Jason Lee, Save the Children's Country Director for the occupied Palestinian territory. [Children's Mental health Pushed Beyond the Breaking Point,](#) *Save The Children*

While Lee recognizes the importance of "safe places", he fails to connect the dots. He seems to think the present situation is an accident of war, but it's not an accident of war. **Israeli leaders have undoubtedly worked hand-in-glove with groups of behavior psychologists to settle on a plan that would achieve their political goals while minimizing casualties.** (Mass casualties lead to fierce political opposition which Israel wanted to avoid.) The current psyops achieves both which is why we should assume that it is not 'accidental'. In short, **Israel's bombing campaign is more focused on terrorizing and traumatizing than it is on killing.** Can you see that?

Once we realize that there's a rational motive for Israel's seemingly random violence, we begin to see it everywhere. Every day there are new airstrikes on tent cities and refugee camps that have no strategic value at all. Why? Have Israeli leaders lost their minds?

No, they haven't lost their minds. They are deliberately terrorizing the Palestinians so they will eagerly stampede into Egypt as soon as the wall is breached. This is the real purpose of Israel's psychological war.

So, what are the consequences of Israel's psych-war on the Palestinians?

Well, if we review the data from the past, we see that Israel's frequent incursions have been nothing short of catastrophic. Check out this excerpt from a report by a group of scholars from the University of Washington in 2009:

> **"A recent report found that 91.4 percent of children in the Gaza Strip suffer moderate to severe symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder."...**
>
> The most recent studies indicate that the vast majority of Gaza's children exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)..... Of a representative sample of children in Gaza, more than 95 percent experienced artillery shelling in their area or sonic booms of low-flying jets. Moreover, 94 percent recalled seeing mutilated corpses on TV and 93 percent witnessed the effects of aerial bombardments on the ground. [Vast majority of Gaza children suffer PTSD symptoms,](#) *Electronic Intifada*

Repeat: "91.4 percent of children in the Gaza Strip" already have "moderate to severe symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder."

So, even back in 2009, Palestinians were experiencing a "staggering level of psychological

trauma." Imagine how many more people will be severely impacted by today's bloody rampage. It's worth noting, that the psychological damage from the current conflict will not vanish when the hostilities end. Many of these people will spend the rest of their lives wrestling with their own demons in a hell that is entirely of Israel's making. Here's more from a 4-month-old article at the *Guardian*:

> Children in Gaza are developing severe trauma symptoms alongside the risk of death and injury, according to a Palestinian psychiatrist....
>
> The psychological impact of the war on children was showing, said Fadel Abu Heen, a psychiatrist in Gaza. Children had **"started to develop serious trauma symptoms such as convulsions, bed-wetting, fear, aggressive behaviour, nervousness, and not leaving their parents' sides."**
>
> The **"lack of any safe place has created a general sense of fear and horror among the entire population** and children are most impacted," he said....
>
> Studies conducted after earlier conflicts have shown a majority of children in Gaza exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
>
> Among Unicef's other findings were: 91% of children reported sleeping disturbances during the conflict; 94% said they slept with their parents; 85% reported appetite changes; 82% felt angry; 97% felt insecure; 38% felt guilty; 47% were biting their nails; 76% reported itching or feeling ill....
>
> A report last year by Save the Children on the impact of 15 years of blockade and repeated conflicts on the mental health of children in Gaza found **their psycho-social wellbeing had "declined dramatically to alarming levels"**.
>
> **Children that the aid agency interviewed "spoke of fear, nervousness, anxiety, stress and anger, and listed family problems, violence, death, nightmares, poverty, war and the occupation, including the blockade, as the things they liked least in their lives".**
>
> The report quoted António Guterres, the secretary general of the UN, describing the lives of children in Gaza as "hell on earth". [Children in Gaza 'developing severe trauma' after 16 days of bombing](#), *The Guardian*

We tend to think of the survivors (of war) as the "lucky ones", but that is not always the case. When you strip a child of all sense of personal security and cast him into a world of uncertainty, violence and death, his ability to feel joy or love or self-fulfillment are greatly impaired. We think Israeli war planners deliberately created the conditions required for inflicting maximum psychological damage on the Palestinians living in Gaza. **We don't think there is anything 'accidental' about what we are seeing. We think this is the only rational explanation for an erratic battle plan that focuses less on beating the enemy than it does on terrorizing the population.** For Israel, driving the Palestinians out of Gaza is simply not enough. They want to ensure that their victims face years of agonizing psychological pain until the day they die.

While we do not yet have sufficient data to accurately assess the magnitude of the damage, we can safely say that the ongoing massacre vastly exceeds any in the past. For all practical purposes, Israel has destroyed the lives of every man, woman and child in Gaza. But when

we see video of the wasteland Israel has created – with the rubble extending in all directions– we should remember that the psychological damage they have inflicted is far greater. These are the invisible wounds that will never heal and will thrust an entire population into a world of chronic anxiety, depression and despair.

Israel alone is responsible for their suffering.

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