

Israeli Official Admits Not Even Trying to Get American Hostages Released

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The Israeli state and Hamas appear to have reached a tentative hostage exchange deal.

Via [NBC News](#):

"Israel and Hamas have agreed to a breakthrough deal to release 50 women and children who were kidnapped and held in Gaza, a potential landmark deal that will also involve a four-day pause in fighting, the delivery of hundreds of aid trucks, and the release of 150 Palestinian women and children* held in Israeli jails."

*Note that when Israeli civilians are held in Gaza, they were "kidnapped" and are termed "hostages," but when Israeli jails Palestinian *women and children* with no charges or judicial process of any kind, they do not receive the benefit of the same designation in Western corporate state media. That's how subtle propaganda can get, and it's easy to miss it if you're not attuned to the pettiness with which these organizations play semantical games.

Curiously, though, Israel is not making any effort to get non-Israeli hostages released — only Israeli.

Via [NBC News](#):

"Israel will not exchange Palestinian prisoners in exchange for non-Israeli hostages, a senior Israeli official who gave NBC News details on a tentative agreement with Hamas that is awaiting a vote from Israel's government

According to the official, Israel is currently only negotiating for its citizens and that other countries will have to negotiate for their own terms with Hamas. Dual nationals, those who hold Israel citizenship along with another country, are included in Israel's deals, the official said."

So, the U.S. government hands Israel no-strings-attached billions of dollars every single year, to the tune of hundreds of billions in the aggregate, in exchange for zero effort to get American hostages freed when they're captured within the territorial bounds of the Israeli state. When it is *finally* presented with one opportunity to repay in infinitesimally small part all of that generosity, it offers only its middle finger to its American patrons.

Not that anyone who understands the nature of the Israeli state would expect otherwise. Its no-American-hostage-rescue policy is even more understandable in the context of its current geopolitical position.

Israel's strategic play here is obvious to anyone not blinded by its powerful propaganda network that extends, unfortunately, deep into American corporate state media.

In the immediate term, the continued captivity of hostages of all nationalities by Hamas serves Israel's interests more than their release would. It serves as a valuable propaganda tool to gin up anger and provides an ongoing pretext to do whatever Israel likes in Gaza with impunity under the guise of pursuing the release of hostages. All international criticism is deflected with the call on Hamas to "release the hostages." Were they released, justifying the Israeli government's activities there (carpet-bombing) would become much more diplomatically tenuous.

(Of course, it's unclear exactly how carpet-bombing Gaza could ever achieve the stated objective of returning the Israeli hostages unless they intend them to come back as corpses with limbs blown apart. Nonetheless, the Israeli propagandists have been beaver away trying to square that circle for many weeks now.)

Furthermore, the continued captivity of *American* hostages, in particular, serves to maintain (nearly unconditional) American government support for its Gaza campaign — a weighty, some might say Herculean, diplomatic feat, given that virtually the entire rest of the world has condemned Israel for what it's done. And that Herculean effort is costing the U.S. government big time in terms of its global cache.

At this moment, the United States is Israel's only geopolitical ally left that's fully on board with the program.

Another reason Israel would like to draw out the military operation in Gaza as long as possible using whatever pretext it can is that it's stalling for time to figure out what to do with all of the Gazans it would like to displace. A [leaked "concept paper" from the Intelligence Ministry](#) proposed expelling the Gazans into the Sinai Peninsula to live in tent cities, which did not go over well diplomatically, to say the least. More recently, it's been pressuring America and Western Europe to take the Gazans off of their hands. So it needs some wriggle room to devise alternative solutions.

However, at the same time, the state is under immense, unprecedented internal pressure to be seen to be doing *something* concrete to secure the Israeli hostages aside from posturing in the media. Netanyahu and his allies were already in existential political trouble before October 7th, and the threats to his and his ideologically expansionist base's grip on power have only multiplied following the government's clear de-prioritization of hostage release below annihilating Gaza, not to mention the "intelligence failure" of that day itself.

It turns out that waging war can be just as difficult politically on the international stage as it can on the domestic front, even in a country as usually united in its militarism as Israel.

So the Israeli state has been walking a political tightrope between maintaining its justification for its assault on Gaza while doing its best to appease the growing dissident faction within the state itself. This is why, I speculate, Israel is only doing a deal for 50 of its hostages; it buys them some political cover at home while maintaining the existence of many more hostages in Gaza and thus the theoretical justification for what it's doing there, in addition to "eliminating Hamas" (a pipe dream impossible to achieve because Hamas is scattered across borders and because its bombing campaign is only generating more, and more hardened, recruits.

Thus the war must go on. And on. And on.

(Note: In the original version of this article, I stated that Israel jails Palestinian women and children on "no charges," when, in fact, it jails Palestinian women on [intentionally vague charges like "having contacts with hostile organisations"](#) and then holds them and the babies they have while incarcerated indefinitely in pre-trial detention with no due process. I apologize for the error.)

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