

## A Genocide Foretold

The genocide in Gaza is the final stage of a process begun by Israel decades ago. Anyone who did not see this coming blinded themselves to the character and ultimate goals of the apartheid state.



CHRIS HEDGES  
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A Genocide Foretold - by Mr. Fish

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There are no surprises in Gaza. Every horrifying act of Israel's genocide has been telegraphed in advance. It has been for decades. The dispossession of Palestinians of their land is the beating heart of Israel's settler colonial project. This dispossession has had dramatic historical moments — 1948 and 1967 — when huge parts of historic Palestine were seized and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were ethnically cleansed. Dispossession has also occurred in increments — the slow-motion theft of land and steady ethnic cleansing in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

The incursion on Oct. 7 into Israel by Hamas and other resistance groups, which left 1,154 Israelis, tourists and migrant workers dead and saw about 240 people taken hostage, gave Israel the pretext for what it has long craved — the total erasure of Palestinians.

Israel has razed 77 percent of healthcare facilities in Gaza, 68 percent of telecommunication infrastructure, nearly all municipal and governmental buildings, commercial, industrial and agricultural centers, almost half of all roads, over 60 percent of Gaza's 439,000 homes, 68 percent of residential buildings — the bombing of the Al-Taj tower in Gaza City on Oct. 25, killed 101 people, including 44 children and 37 women, and injured hundreds — and obliterated refugee camps. The attack on the Jabalia refugee camp on Oct. 25 killed at least 126 civilians, including 69 children, and injured 280. Israel has damaged or destroyed Gaza's universities, all of which are now closed, and 60 percent of other educational facilities, including 13 libraries. It has also destroyed at least 195 heritage sites, including 208 mosques, churches, and Gaza's Central Archives that held 150 years of historical records and documents. Israel's warplanes, missiles, drones, tanks, artillery shells and naval guns daily pulverize Gaza — which is only 20 miles long and five miles wide — in a scorched earth campaign unlike anything seen since the war in Vietnam. It has dropped 25,000 tons of explosives — equivalent to *two* nuclear bombs — on Gaza, many targets selected by Artificial Intelligence. It drops unguided munitions (“dumb bombs”) and 2000-pound “bunker buster” bombs on refugee camps and densely packed urban centers as well as the so-called “safe zones” — 42 percent of Palestinians killed have been in these “safe zones” where they were instructed by Israel to flee. Over 1.7 million Palestinians have been displaced from their homes, forced to find refuge in overcrowded UNRWA shelters, hospital corridors and courtyards, schools, tents or the open air in south Gaza, often living next to fetid pools of raw sewage.

Israel has killed at least 32,705 Palestinians in Gaza, including 13,000 children and 9,000 women. This means Israel is slaughtering as many as 187 people a day including 75 children. It has killed 136 journalists, many, if not most of them deliberately targeted. It has killed 340 doctors, nurses and other health workers — four percent of Gaza’s healthcare personnel. These numbers do not begin to reflect the actual death toll since only those dead registered in morgues and hospitals, most of which no longer function, are counted. The death toll, when those who are missing are counted, is well over 40,000.

Doctors are forced to amputate limbs without anesthetic. Those with severe medical conditions — cancer, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease — have died from lack of treatment or will die soon. Over a hundred women give birth every day, with little to no medical care. Miscarriages are up by 300 percent. Over 90 percent of the Palestinians in Gaza suffer from severe food insecurity with people eating animal feed and grass. Children are dying of starvation. Palestinian writers, academics, scientists and their family members have been tracked and assassinated. Over 75,000 Palestinians have been wounded, many of whom will be crippled for life.

“Seventy percent of recorded deaths have consistently been women and children,” writes Francesca Albanese, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, in her report issued on March 25. “Israel failed to prove that the remaining 30 percent, i.e. adult males, were active Hamas combatants — a necessary condition for them to be lawfully targeted. By early-December, Israel’s security advisors claimed the killing of ‘7,000 terrorists’ in a stage of the campaign when less than 5,000 adult males in total had been identified among the casualties, thus implying that all adult males killed were ‘terrorists.’”

Israel plays linguistic tricks to deny anyone in Gaza the status of civilians and any building - including mosques, hospitals and schools - protected status. Palestinians are all branded as responsible for the attack on Oct. 7 or written off as human shields for Hamas. All structures are considered legitimate targets by Israel because they are allegedly Hamas command centers or said to harbor Hamas fighters.

These accusations, Albanese writes, are a “pretext” used to justify “the killing of civilians under a cloak of purported legality, whose all-enveloping pervasiveness admits only of genocidal intent.”

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In scale we have not seen assault on the Palestinians of this magnitude, but all these measures – the killing of civilians, dispossession of land, arbitrary detention, torture, disappearances, closures imposed on Palestinians towns and villages, house demolitions, revoking residence permits, deportation, destruction of the infrastructure that maintains civil society, military occupation, dehumanizing language, theft of natural resources, especially aquifers — have long defined Israel’s campaign to eradicate Palestinians.

The occupation and genocide would not be possible without the U.S. which gives Israel \$3.8 billion in annual military assistance and is now sending another \$2.5 billion in bombs, including 1,800 MK84 2,000-pound bombs, 500 MK82 500-pound bombs and fighter jets to Israel. This, too, is our genocide.

The genocide in Gaza is the culmination of a process. It is not an act. The genocide is the predictable denouement of Israel’s settler colonial project. It is coded within the DNA of the Israeli apartheid state. It is where Israel had to end up.

Zionist leaders are open about their goals.

Israeli Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant, after Oct. 7, announced that Gaza would receive “no electricity, no food, no water, no fuel.” Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Israel Katz said: “Humanitarian aid to Gaza? No electrical switch will be turned on, no water hydrant will be opened.” Avi Dichter, the Minister of Agriculture, referred to Israel’s military assault as “the Gaza Nakba,” referencing the Nakba, or “catastrophe”, which between 1947 and 1949, drove 750,000 Palestinians from their land and saw thousands massacred by Zionist militias. Likud member of the Israeli Knesset Revital Gottlieb posted on her social media account: “Bring down buildings!! Bomb without distinction!!...Flatten Gaza. Without mercy! This time, there is no room for mercy!” Not to be outdone, Minister of Heritage Amichai Eliyahu supported using nuclear weapons on Gaza as “one of the possibilities.”

The message from the Israeli leadership is unequivocal. Annihilate the Palestinians the same way we annihilated Native Americans, the Australians annihilated the First Nations peoples, the Germans annihilated the Herero in Namibia, the Turks annihilated Armenians and the Nazis annihilated the Jews.

The specifics are different. The process is the same.

We cannot plead ignorance. We know what happened to the Palestinians. We know what is happening to the Palestinians. We know what will happen to the Palestinians.

But it is easier to pretend. Pretend Israel will allow in humanitarian aid. Pretend there will be a ceasefire. Pretend Palestinians will return to their destroyed homes in Gaza. Pretend Gaza will be rebuilt. Pretend the Palestinian Authority will administer Gaza. Pretend there will be a two-state solution. Pretend there is no genocide.

The genocide, which the U.S. is funding and sustaining with weapons shipments, says something not only about Israel, but about us, about Western civilization, about who we are as a people, where we came from and what defines us. It says that all our vaunted morality and respect for human rights is a lie. It says that people of color, especially when they are poor and vulnerable, do not count. It says their hopes, dreams, dignity and aspirations for freedom are worthless. It says we will ensure global domination through racialized violence.

This lie — that Western civilization is predicated on “values” such as respect for human rights and the rule of law — is one the Palestinians, and all those in the Global South, as well as Native Americans and Black and Brown Americans have known for centuries. But, with the Gaza genocide live streamed, this lie is impossible to sustain.

We do not halt Israel’s genocide because *we* are Israel, infected with white supremacy and intoxicated by our domination of the globe’s wealth and the power to obliterate others with our industrial weapons. Remember The New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman telling Charlie Rose on the eve of the war in Iraq that American soldiers should go house to house from Basra to Baghdad and say to Iraqis “suck on this?” That is the real credo of the U.S. empire.

The world outside of the industrialized fortresses in the Global North is acutely aware that the fate of the Palestinians is their fate. As climate change imperils survival, as resources become scarce, as migration becomes an imperative for millions, as agricultural yields decline, as coastal areas are flooded, as droughts and wild fires proliferate, as states fail, as armed resistance movements rise to battle their oppressors along with their proxies, genocide will not be an anomaly. It will be the norm. The earth’s vulnerable and poor, those Frantz Fanon called “the wretched of the earth,” will be the next Palestinians.