**[‘Ana Dammi Filasteeni’](https://www.dawn.com/news/1782289/ana-dammi-filasteeni)**

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*Palestinians breed and bleed and advertise their misery — Ruth Wisse, Harvard Professor*

SUPPOSE an enemy country were, God forbid, to besiege Lahore, mercilessly bombard its trapped civilians, kill hundreds of thousands of them including women and children, expel the surviving population, and explain to the rest of the world that Lahoris are not quite human and, accordingly, human pity and concern should not be wasted on them.

Suppose a superpower sheds crocodile tears for the devastated population while increasing its military assistance to the enemy country for it to defend itself against the survivors who might think of returning to their beloved city thereby posing a threat to their killers who are “the most moral army in the history of mankind” as well as an eternal ally of the superpower that is “a shining City on a Hill.”

Suppose elites far and near, battening on their respective populations, and beholden to the superpower for security against any serious uprising of their exploited, were to dutifully mimic the fake sympathy of their benefactor and maintain a ‘balanced view of the situation’ regretting ‘unacceptable behaviour’ by Hamas as they plan to embrace Israel as soon as feasible in the pursuit of peace and stability.

A nightmare fantasy from horrorland? Only up to a point. I mention Lahore because I am addressing fellow Pakistanis and Lahore is our cultural heart: Lahore is Lahore! You aren’t born unless you have been to Lahore! So is Gaza City for the Palestinians of Gaza.

The torturer truly hates his victims because they demonstrate his base inhumanity.

And what has been happening to the people of Gaza, their compatriots in the West Bank, and Al Aqsa Mosque since 1996 when Netanyahu became prime minister of Israel? Since 1967 when the Israelis occupied Gaza and the West Bank? Since 1948 after World War II when Israel came into existence on the back of the Holocaust, Western guilt and the forcible displacement of an ancient people from their homeland?

Since World War I when Britain and France divided up the Arab world in the Sykes-Picot agreement and the Balfour Declaration promised a homeland to Jewish immigrants on Palestinian land? Since more than a century of deceit, defeat, death, desecration, destruction, displacement, deprivation, denial, disinformation, demonisation and desolation? What has happened is ‘incremental genocide’ no less evil than the mercifully imaginary fantasy depicted with regard to Lahore.

None of the above excuses the deliberate killing of unarmed civilians by either side. Nor does it excuse a false equivalence between a criminal terrorist state and an innocent traumatised people. Israel has again implemented the shocking commandment of the Old Testament (Psalm 137:8-9) to “dash babies against the rocks.”

Those who perpetrated this outrage and those who provide [‘iron-clad’ support](https://www.dawn.com/news/1617785) to such an Israel are truly beneath contempt. Western racism is more blatant and obscene than ever.

Unfortunately, Pakistan has rendered itself without options and, accordingly, without a foreign policy. Accordingly, it takes a ‘balanced view of the situation’ in Palestine, as it does with occupied Kashmir, ie, blowing hot in public and blowing cool in private, especially in deniable communications with protectors of its insecure ruling elites.

Apparently, we have to be sensible about such matters. The weighing of options is serious business — especially for a country without any. After all, Alice in Wonderland was written by a mathematician and mathematics is the pinnacle of logic and consistency. Accordingly, the architects of our foreign and national policies have made a Wonderland of Pakistan.

This is happening when climate burning and its innumerable lethal offshoots, the prospect of nuclear war, the challenges of artificial intelligence, the start of a new Cold War that could easily heat up, unprecedented inequalities, corporate capitalist morality that sanctifies 0.01 per cent governance, war as peacebuilding, and inevitable movement towards downsizing the world population to manageable proportions through mega-genocide are irreversibly sending the Doomsday Clock towards midnight.

Nevertheless, the world’s greatest, most influential and ‘indispensable’ country knowingly signs the death warrant of human civilisation despite an overwhelming scientific consensus on what to do and what not to do.

Humans were supposed to be “*ashraf-ul-makhluqaat*” (the noblest of creations). They are being transformed by minuscule ruling elites serving a monster global hegemon into ‘*ashar-ul-makhluqaat*’ (the most evil of creations.) Gaza and Kashmir have become small-scale models of a hellish world in the making for our children and grandchildren.

There are five great powers in the world today. The Western two — the US and Europe — are currently write-offs despite or rather because of the history of their ‘advanced’ civilisation. The tragedy of Gaza is a product of such history.

The eastern three — China, Russia and, yes, India — have an opportunity, indeed a survival imperative, to provide cooperative global ‘facilitation’, not ‘leadership’, for a safer world, which, of course, would require them to peacefully resolve problems in their own backyards that hamper their potential in this regard. Kashmir is one such problem. Many Indians may hate the mention of Kashmir in this context but given the gravity of the global situation they do themselves no favour by self-serving short-sightedness.

Similarly, Israel recently sought to remove a Palestinian song that won the Arab Idol contest from digital platforms because it expressed the hopes, yearnings, and determination of the Palestinian people to fight and sacrifice for their survival. This was seen as a terrorist threat.

The torturer truly hates his victims because they demonstrate his base inhumanity — and his vulnerability. Yasser Arafat was willing to accept an unacceptable peace with Yitzhak Rabin (the 1993 Oslo Accords) but Netanyahu preferred Palestinian land to peace with Palestine.

The song is *Ana Dammi Filasteeni*, ie, ‘My blood is Palestinian’ (flowing through my veins, on the ground, and under the rubble.) After 9/11, the French newspaper *Le Monde* headlined ‘We are all Americans!’ So today we are all Palestinians, as indeed we are all Kashmiris, and all who suffer oppression and the deliberate denial of any hope of redress.

Accordingly, we should raise our voice in solidarity with our Palestinian brethren to say: *Alyom Nahnu Kulluna Dammuna Filasteeni*, ie, ‘Today the blood of all of us is Palestinian’.

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