**[Jabalia](https://www.dawn.com/news/1786319/jabalia)**

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*Who is Hamas? Any child who hasn’t run away*

THE [Jabalia Camp massacre](https://www.dawn.com/news/1785302) changes everything. We are dealing with a criminally insane entity called Israel backed by a criminally hypocritical superpower. Some people ask whether the genocide in Gaza is unique and unprecedented or par for the course of human history. Others feel the question diminishes the evil perpetrated against the Palestinians which we witness unbearably and helplessly every day.

What will we do? That is the question we must insistently ask as we look at ourselves and at each other. There are always things that can be done. So, can we live in self-contempt by accepting we can do nothing? We may be poor and weak, and we have to survive. But we are answerable to Allah. Otherwise, we are less than human.

‘Chutzpah’ is a Yiddish word meaning audacity or unmitigated nerve like when a man murders his own parents and asks the court to have mercy on an orphan! The most evil version is when victims resisting systematic genocide, planned over a century, and implemented over half a century, are themselves accused of genocide, and mercilessly subjected to it.

This is a product of settler colonialism. In the case of the US and Israel, it has involved the effective elimination of the native population, the enslavement of kidnapped and transported populations, perpetual war at home and abroad, the establishment of a garrison state on faraway land stolen from its inhabitants in pursuit of global hegemony, the construction of national narratives inventing and inverting history, and elevating predator corporate capitalism into a national and civilisational ideology that has taken organised human existence to the brink of extinction, ie, mega-genocide.

Outrage alone delivers nothing except further frustration.

Noam Chomsky says in 1948 the “Jewish State of Israel” was founded excluding more than half its original population, who were Palestinians, from citizenship in a state forcibly established on their homeland. Regarding the Law of Return of Israel, he sarcastically observes that he can claim Israel as his state although he is a citizen of the US, not Israel. Israel defines itself as a racist state.

The Israeli scholar, Ilan Pappe, notes that ever since 1967 the Palestinians of Gaza have faced “occupation, colonisation, ethnic cleansing, imprisonment in a concentration camp, ghettoisation”, and the Israeli contrived ideology of “revenge as a strategy” which is “solidarity translated into genocide” that Western countries accept and support, while pretending not to.

The Palestinians of the West Bank suffered a ‘Nakba’ (catastrophe) in 1948 in which, according to Pappe, half the Palestinian population were expelled in 25 military operations of ‘Plan Dalet’ by Hagganah, the Zionist terrorist organisation which was the forerunner of today’s Israeli military, well before the 1948 war began. Within six months, 531 Palestinian villages and 11 Palestinian urban neighbourhoods were destroyed — an outright crime against humanity.

Israeli policy has graduated to incremental and now accelerated genocide. Ever since Hamas won the elections in Gaza in 2006, Israel fully supported by the US, has implemented a ‘leave or die’ policy through regular murderous invasions, daily assaults, and a near starvation siege. It is now implementing an even greater Nakba on the Palestinians of Gaza. Distinguishing between Hamas and the Gazans under siege is as false as it is futile.

Norman Finkelstein compares the Hamas attack with the US slave revolts of the 18th and 19th centuries and, accordingly, refuses to condemn the actions of a people deliberately “driven mad” by never-ending and indescribable suffering, trauma and hopelessness.

In 1970, Bertrand Russell spoke about Israel in words that apply to Gaza today: “The latest phase of the undeclared war in the Middle East is based upon a profound miscalculation. The bombing raids deep into Egyptian territory [the Gaza Strip] will not persuade the civilian population to surrender, but will stiffen their resolve to resist.

The Vietnamese who have endured years of heavy American bombing have responded not by capitulation but by shooting down more enemy aircraft.

In 1940 my own fellow countrymen resisted Hitler’s bombing raids with unprecedented unity and determination. For this reason, the present Israeli raids will fail in their essential purpose, but at the same time they must be condemned vigorously throughout the world.“

No wonder, the UN secretary general, observed “the Hamas attacks did not happen in a vacuum”. Israel called for his resignation. The US cynically understands and sympathises with Israel’s demand. It equates protests against Israeli acts of genocide with anti-Semitism! To his credit, Guterres reiterated his remarks. He will have to do more — much more — to set an example for the world. A senior lawyer of the UN Human Rights Commission resigned describing Israel’s actions as a “text-book case of genocide”. And now Israel is “wiping out” Jabalia! Why not? The US veto ensures it against any accountability.

After the Suez war of 1967 (the Arab ‘Naqsa’, ie, ‘setback’) the US integrated Israel into its strategy for global hegemony. In 1956, president Eisenhower peremptorily ordered Israel out of the Sinai and it meekly complied. Today, it has become America’s military outpost to bring the Arab world to heel. Arab rulers have, by and large, become willing accomplices in order to buy insurance against their people who are outraged by the genocide against their Palestinian brethren.

But outrage alone delivers nothing except further frustration. Many scholars and experts have articulated the prerequisites for outrage to be translated into empowering policies and successful outcomes. However, ruling elites fear and oppose such empowerment and outcomes.

Pakistan and the world are at a critical crossroads. The great powers are involved in a global zero-sum game instead of coming together to save human civilisation from imminent extinction, possibly within the current century. Countries like Pakistan have to make a choice. Michael Kugelman, a sympathetic American scholar, warns Pakistan that on Gaza it “risks upsetting” the US at a time of vulnerability. Indeed, Pakistan has to make a critical choice. But never in favour of indefensible US policy.

Unfortunately, Pakistan’s ‘responsible classes’ find it smarter to be comfortably irresponsible. They are willing to do the right thing provided it costs them nothing. Such ‘chutzpah’ will cost us everything.

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