**Covering ‘the other’**

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Throughout history, military empires have reduced their victims, their subjugated, and their abducted to a state of ‘The Others’. The political and mass media institutions usually follow suit by supporting their empire’s predatory policies with slanted coverage.

Such is the case with the US global and the Israeli regional empires. The US federal government and the mainstream media often move in lockstep.

For example, take the word ‘terrorism’. The New York Times regularly refers the Hamas regime as ‘terrorists’, while describing the far more extensive Israeli acts of state terrorism as ‘military operations’. Since October 7th, the Israeli military superpower has killed over 500 times more children than Hamas killed in their raid through a still uninvestigated collapse of Israel’s vaunted multi-tiered border security.

Apart from a massively greater overall civilian toll inflicted on Palestinians in Gaza – the vast undercount stands at 34,000 Palestinian deaths compared to the deaths of 1,139 Israeli civilians, soldiers, and foreign workers. This staggering ratio – over 14,000 Palestinian children (with many thousands under the rubble) compared to 30 Israeli children – escapes proper reporting. ‘The Others’ don’t get accurate coverage as was also the case with huge Iraqi losses during the Bush/Cheney criminal war.

Take the use of the term ‘hostage’. Hamas seized over 240 Israelis hostages on October 7th. Since then, the Israeli army has seized about 9000 Palestinians, including women and children, and taken them without charges, along with many more thousands languishing in these prison camps also without charges for years (it’s called Israel’s ‘administrative detention’). Many of the imprisoned Palestinians are being tortured. Who has gotten the far greater attention? Aren’t these Palestinian hostages also? Again ‘The Others’.

How about the application of the right to self-defense? Every state has the right to self-defense. Count the many times you have heard, “Israel has a right to defend itself” compared to “Palestine has a right to defend itself.” Members of Congress who bellow the former declaration daily can not get themselves to say the latter. It is a forbidden phrase. Yet, who is the violently occupying, colonizing, land, and water-stealing party? Israel. For over fifty years, more than 400 times more innocent Palestinians have been killed and injured compared to innocent Israeli civilians. Where is the detailed coverage of the loss of life from enforced destitution and denial of life-saving medicines, equipment, and emergency transport to health facilities? Again, it is ‘The Others’.

‘The Others’ are always described with less charitable words. In a meticulous content analysis by The Intercept of the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, and the Washington Post between October 7 and November 24, the use of the words “slaughtered,” “horrific” and “massacre” in relation to Israeli and Palestinians killed was 218 to 9!

The Intercept said Israel’s war on Gaza is “perhaps the deadliest war for children – almost entirely Palestinian – in modern history.” There is scant mention of the word “children” and related terms in the headlines of articles in that span of time.

(Note, reporters from these papers are like the rest of the mainstream Western media reports, including Israeli journalists, who have been long banned by the Israeli government from freely reporting from inside Gaza, but have managed to write some exceptionally graphic stories from a distance.)

Palestinian Arabs are denied the description of armed-force anti-semitism by the Israeli war machine. Arabs are Semites and have long been the victims of violent racist, hate-filled anti-semitism by brutal Israeli leaders.

The Intercept reported that the three newspapers mentioned anti-semitism against Jews in the US 549 times compared to 79 mentions of Islamophobia, notwithstanding, far more frequent, and violent assaults on Muslims and Arabs.

Western medical doctors spending a few weeks in bombed Gaza hospitals are personal witnesses of scenes beyond any level of deliberate slaughter they have ever experienced in their courageous service in troubled areas around the world. Ambulances, hospitals, and thousands of families – adults, children, women, and babies alike – huddling in areas outside these facilities are routinely bombed, and shelled by Israeli planes and tanks, and targeted by Israeli snipers. Courageous Israeli human rights groups and refuseniks will detail more of the mayhem over time.

Biden’s chosen humanitarian aid emissary David Satterfield did not mince words in his remarks during a virtual event hosted by the American Jewish Committee, “there is an imminent risk of famine for the majority, if not all, the 2.2 million population of Gaza.” According to Satterfield, “This is not a point in debate. It is an established fact, which the United States, its experts, the international community, its experts assess and believe is real…”

Still, the duplicitous Netanyahu twirling the hapless Joe Biden around his bloody fingers continues to obstruct the entry of hundreds of trucks with critical food, water, and medicine, sometimes paid for by US taxpayers that are lined up daily at the borders of Gaza. Netanyahu continues to enforce, whenever he can, the genocidal orders by his barbaric ministers on October 8 – “No electricity, no food, no fuel, no water. …We are fighting animals and will act accordingly.”

To the White House and the Netanyahu-dominated US Congress, violating numerous federal laws, the response is to make the American taxpayers continue to pay billions of dollars to unconditionally weaponize further the Israeli death machine in Gaza, right down to 2000-pound bombs that destroy entire civilian neighborhoods. After all, Gazans are ‘The Others’.

Excerpted: ‘Palestinians as ‘The Others’’. Courtesy: Counterpunch.org