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COMMENT

Israel is not committing genocide in Gaza

The vile allegations made by Hamas and its useful idiots bear no relation to the facts on the ground

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After the atrocities of last October, Israel had a right to defend itself. So much we may concede. But the killing rage it visited upon the innocents of Gaza was indefensible.

It has bombed the Al-Ahli hospital, killed 37,000 people, 70 per cent of whom were women and

children, and set dogs on Gazan detainees.

It has starved Gaza, a charge for which Benjamin Netanyahu may face an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court.

So runs the folk story of Jewish genocide. It has been related by international bodies, politicians and the broadcast media, which pumps pictures of civilian suffering – and only civilian suffering – into our homes. The problem is that it is untrue.

Every aspect has been either disproven or cast into irretrievable doubt. The Al-Ahli hospital was bombed not by Israel but Islamic Jihad. The 37,000 casualty figure is not reliable – the combatant-to-civilian casualty ratio now likely stands at about 1:1, a historically low figure – and the number of women and children has been downgraded even by the UN.

There is no case for “genocide” (the International Criminal Court president clarified that Palestinians had a “plausible right to be protected from genocide”, not that “the claim of genocide was plausible”). To this we can now add a further development: the claim of mass starvation in Gaza has been thrown out.

Reader, there is no famine. The UN began such talk in February (“catastrophic levels of deprivation and starvation”). Biden officials added their voices in March (“food shortage crisis”) Save the Children joined in (“starvation is already happening”), and in May, the World Food Programme went full tonto (“full-blown famine”).

Now, however, a UN body catchily named the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification’s Famine Review Committee has debunked the allegation.

It “does not find the [famine prediction] analysis plausible given the uncertainty and lack of convergence of the supporting evidence,” it drily admitted. Officials, it turned out, had ignored the private food lorries that had been sent into Gaza, as well as deliveries to bakeries by the World Food Programme.

Nobody would argue that war isn’t war. In Tel Aviv last week, I drank with a paratrooper officer who had been fighting in Gaza the previous day. His soldiers had been exposed to asbestos in the rubble and several had become infested with lice.

Palestinians had surrendered while strapped with explosives, he said, and children had fired on his men. In almost every abandoned house he had found an Arabic copy of Mein Kampf, common as dictionaries.

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Such is the nature of this conflict. It is impossible to fight such an enemy without bringing some catastrophe upon the heads of civilians. But what alternative did Israel have?

Propaganda is hardly new. Looking back on the Spanish Civil War, George Orwell recalled: “I saw newspaper reports which did not bear any relation to the facts... Eager intellectuals building emotional superstructures over events that had never happened.”

And antisemitism has always been based on falsehoods. Just as Hitler wanted to eliminate a supposedly malevolent race for the good of the world, modern Islamists and progressives wish to eliminate a supposedly malevolent country for the sake of regional peace. Which brings us back to the UN.

The mobilisation of the West in favour of Hamas is as mendacious as it is shameful. It exposes the progressive elites as guilty of the very racism they decry. Howard Jacobson parodied them best: “I have nothing against Jews individually, I only hate them by the country.”

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