

Modern-Day Scandal: Accusing Israel of Genocide

You may believe that Israel's response to Oct. 7 is disproportionate. You may even believe that, on some level, the Israel Defense Forces is guilty of war crimes. But to accuse Israel of committing genocide is as preposterous as it is scandalous. Yet the word "genocide" is virtually ubiquitous these days, the most common description of Israel's allegedly abdominal acts.

According to the Britannica website, genocide is "the deliberate and systematic destruction of a group of people because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion or race."

The worst genocide in history was the Holocaust, where Hitler slaughtered 6 million out of 9 million European Jews in his attempt to wipe them off the map. This included the extermination of 3 million out of 3.3 million Polish Jews—more than 9 out of every 10.

In Cambodia, Pol Pot exterminated almost a quarter of his country, targeting specific parts of the population deemed unworthy to live.

How, then, can Israel be charged with practicing genocide against the Palestinians, specifically against the Palestinians of Gaza?

The population of Gaza is roughly 2.1 million, and if the figures released by Hamas are to be taken at face value, then roughly 17,000 Gazans have been killed by the IDF since Israel began its military operations in the aftermath of the Oct. 7 massacre. That amounts to *less than 1%* of the total population.

Even if all those killed were civilians and none of them

combatants, that would not constitute anything remotely near to “genocide.” Not in the slightest. To the contrary, these numbers would be typical of civilian casualties in war—tragic, agonizing, heartbreaking—but nothing comparable to genocide in the slightest.

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To be sure, these are human lives, each of inestimable value, and we should mourn the loss of every one of them. I am not minimizing these deaths in the slightest, especially those of women and children. But to call such losses “genocide” is to mock the very meaning of the word and the suffering it represents.

When you add in the fact that the IDF goes to unusual lengths to *avoid* civilian casualties, including dropping hundreds of thousands of leaflets warning civilians to flee, along with tens of thousands of automated texts and calls, the cry of “genocide” becomes all the more preposterous.

The reality is that, if the IDF wanted to slaughter most of the population of Gaza, it could do so in a matter of days, if not hours, with virtually no Israeli losses. This alone should serve as a stark rebuke to those who dare use the “genocide” word.

As for the broader charge of Israel’s alleged genocide (or ethnic cleansing) of the Palestinians, consider the numerical growth of the Arab (Palestinian) population within Israel proper, along with in the West Bank and Gaza.

The number of Arabs who remained in Israel after the War of Independence has grown from 200,000 in 1948 to more than 2 million today, representing an *increase* of more than 1,000%. This is genocide? Seriously?

You might say, "We're not talking about all Palestinians. We're talking about the Palestinians living in Gaza and the West Bank. That's where the genocide is taking place."

Let's look at those numbers too.

Using the most common estimates, the Palestinian population of the West Bank in 1967, when Israel occupied it after the Six-Day War, was slightly under 600,000. Today, the Palestinian population of the West Bank is roughly 2.5 million, representing an *increase* of better than 400%.

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As for Gaza, the Palestinian population when Israel unilaterally withdrew from the region in 2005 was roughly 1.3 million. Today, as noted earlier, it has grown to 2.1 million, representing an *increase* of a little about 60% in less than 20 years.

So, the Arab (Palestinian) Israeli population has grown by more than 1,000% since 1948, the Palestinian population of the West Bank has grown by more than more than 400% since 1967 and the Palestinian population of Gaza has grown by better than 60% since 2005.

This is supposed to be "genocide"? This is what "ethnic cleansing" looks like? The dramatic *growth* of a people equals their "genocide"?

In a previous article, I mentioned the interaction between a mother and her 15-year-old daughter after her daughter said that they should not eat at McDonald's because of the company's alleged support of Israel.

The mother said, "Tell me what Israel is doing wrong without using the word 'genocide.'"

"But it is genocide," her daughter replied.

The same charge was raised when I recently interacted with university students from Gaza while in India. And that same charge is repeated day and night, unthinkingly and incessantly, raised against the very people who suffered the worst genocide in human history, while university presidents cannot state that the call for the genocide of the Jews constitutes bullying and harassment.

This is a scandal.

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