

The Ethical, Essential and Imperative yet Mythical Blockade of Gaza

Days after more than 1,300 people in Israel were slaughtered in the most vulgar way—men, women, elderly, entire families, children and babies raped, burned alive, brutally tortured, beheaded and impaled—the world has started to complain about Israel's "siege" and "blockade" on Gaza, the territory ruled by the evil Iranian-backed Islamist terror organization, Hamas, which perpetrated these attacks.

Let's get some things straight. Israel has not just the right but the need and obligation to defend itself and its citizens. Israel has unleashed its air force to begin the destruction of Hamas. By the time you read this, a ground invasion may have begun as well. Considering that Israel was attacked by land, sea and air on Oct. 7, militarily it is necessary to prevent anything getting into Gaza that will enable them to continue to threaten Israel. And it's critical that nothing will get out that might do so either, as Hamas continues to fire thousands of rockets at Israeli communities.

During war, Israel's first, second and third priority must be the well-being of its citizens, especially in the wake of the massacre that took place on 10/7. Proportionally in the US, this is equivalent to more than 25,000 people killed on 9/11.

Militarily, this is not just a solid and legitimate tactic, but it is also ethical and essential. This week I hosted a webinar "Fighting an Ethical War Against an Unethical Enemy." Both our expert on military tactics and on military ethics concurred.

Above the essential and imperative military response, there are many other facts that need to be understood to debunk the

myth of an illegal Israeli blockade, as if Israel has a moral, ethical or legal responsibility to Gazan Palestinian Arabs.

While Israel has closed its border crossings, Gaza shares a border with Egypt. Transport of medical needs, fuel, food and civilians can take place via Egypt as well as through the terror tunnels Hamas controls under that same border.

Israel has no obligation to provide water, electricity, fuel or anything else to a neighboring state, much less an enemy entity that has its sworn goal the destruction of Israel. It's a policy that should have been reevaluated long ago, but for now, Israel has shut it down.

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Had Hamas truly cared about its own people, the organization would have used its pristine coastal real estate to create a Middle Eastern Singapore. Had Hamas truly cared about its own people, it would have invested in sewage treatment plants along with recycled and desalinated water. It would have set up solar energy fields to power it all. Rather, Hamas has stockpiled weapons, mastered smuggling and built a vast terror infrastructure. These terrorists have absconded with billions of international funds intended to help the people whose lives they trample upon.

Hamas built the equivalent of a city under the homes of millions of Gazan Palestinian Arabs, a network of terror tunnels and bunkers to smuggle weapons, terrorists, and even human trafficking for the well-being of the terrorists. It's designed so Hamas can command it and as a launching pad for terrorist attacks like what they did on 10/7.

Hamas leaders could have stockpiled thousands of tons of food, medical equipment and water, just as they were planning this attack for months. But they didn't. If there are any such

stockpiles, they are only for the Hamas terrorist leaders, not the average Gazan Palestinian.

One can feel bad for Gazan Palestinian Arabs. Indeed, they were hijacked in a bloody coup against the PLO, a competing terror organization, and have lived under the heel of this evil Islamic group since 2007. Indeed, we all pray that they will be freed from the occupation of millions in Gaza—the occupation by Hamas.

If the Islamist terrorists of Hamas really cared about building a country rather than destroying ours, they would not use their own people as human shields. That's why Israel warned hundreds of thousands of Gazan Palestinian Arabs to evacuate. Israel needs to take care of business and destroy Hamas' infrastructure and leaders. Israel does so morally, not targeting civilians or wanting them injured by accident. While contrary to any possibility of a surprise attack, and giving terrorists the opportunity to flee along with civilians, Israel has dropped flyers and broadcast in Arabic telling Gazans to evacuate and what the safe evacuation routes are. Yet today, Hamas is physically blocking Gazan Palestinian Arabs from fleeing from areas that Israel has warned them to leave, doubling down on the war crime these terrorists have been committing for years. Why is nobody protesting this blockade?

But as bad as one may feel for the average Gazan Palestinian Arab, they are also complacent if not complicit as well. At any time since 2007, Gazan Palestinian Arabs could have ousted Hamas and taken control of their society. They could have risen up and expelled Hamas and Islamic Jihad, creating a society and culture to be proud of, not one of extremist Islamic hate, evil personified. It would have been bloody, but they haven't, and they are culpable. Their blood is on their own hands.

However, it's not clear that most Gazan Palestinian Arabs want

change or think that Hamas is bad for them, much less for Israel. It must be emphasized that recent polls by respected Arab pollsters show 57% of Gazan Palestinians supporting Hamas. As much as that is a strong majority, it should be noted that those which receive even higher levels of popular support are even more extremist in nature.

Blaming Israel for all the woes of Gazan Palestinian Arabs might feel good to Israel haters looking for any opportunity to criticize and blame Israel for any problem, real or fabricated. Yet it's false and dishonest. It does not place sole responsibility for the well-being of Gazan Palestinians where it belongs: Hamas.

It brings to mind an adaptation of a phrase that "people who live in terrorist houses should not throw grenades"; fire rockets; or slaughter, rape, burn alive, behead, or kidnap and hold hostage innocent civilians from babies to elderly women.

As the world will begin to condemn Israel for an unjust blockade, even if it's fictitious, who in their right mind would expect a country under attack to give up anything for a terrorist entity that is doing the attacking or to divert any effort that takes away from Israel's responsibility to protect its citizens, destroy Hamas and restore deterrence so nobody will ever think of doing anything like this again? With most international airlines not flying to Israel and shipping companies skittish about unloading their ships in Israeli ports, meaning cargo and supplies from overseas are limited, and with hundreds of thousands engaged solely in the war effort and not at work in critical infrastructure positions, how and why is it even reasonable to expect Israel to do anything different?

The brazen and disgusting notion that Israel should allow any shipments of anything to enable a terrorist entity when Israel is fighting a war against an enemy that is so inhuman is an absurdity of biblical proportions. {eo}

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