

## **Stop the genocide in Gaza!**

**Genocide** – The deliberate and systematic destruction of a group of people because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, or race.

Let me state in the beginning that I am not antisemitic, and believe that Israel has a right to exist as a nation. I also believe that Hamas is a terrorist organization and what they did on Oct. 7 was a terrorist act. I also believe that the only long-term peaceful solution is to recognize a Palestinian state. In my view the United States, through the current Trump administration and previous administrations, is complicit in allowing the Netanyahu government to commit atrocities and genocide in the Gaza strip. It is estimated that since Oct. 7, 60,000 Palestinian men, women, and children have been killed in the Gaza strip.

For too many years several American administrations, including both Democrat and Republican, have given Israel a blank check when it comes to support of their governments at all costs, particularly that of Benjamin Netanyahu. The United States has turned a blind eye as Israel continued to allow Jewish settlements on the West Bank, further inflaming discord between Jews and Palestinians. I believe that President Biden could have done more to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinians, but now we have President Trump who has called for Gazans to be relocated to make way for a “Riviera in the Middle East.”

In a recent opinion piece by Daniel W. Drezner, in The Atlantic Magazine, he stated the following, which rings so true: “Regardless of who is responsible for the start of this conflict, the Israeli government is culpable for its own actions in Gaza right now. Furthermore, Israel’s right-wing government is now openly talking about displacing Gaza’s entire population to make way for Jewish settlements — the very epitome of settler colonialism.”

To give you a sense of how some former Israelis officials view the ongoing carnage in Gaza, in an article by Itay Stern in NPR he reported on a leaked audio recording of remarks by Israel’s former chief of military intelligence Maj. General Aharon Haliva about the price he believed Palestinians should pay for Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, attack. He stated: “The fact that there are already 50,000 dead in Gaza is necessary and required for future generations.” He went further, saying: “that for every Israeli killed on Oct. 7, 50 Palestinians should die. It doesn’t matter if they’re children. I’m not speaking out of revenge. I’m talking about a message for future generations.”

The American public needs to have a clear understanding of the amount of material and monetary support given to Israel on a yearly basis. Since 1959 the United States has supplied \$251 billion in inflation adjusted dollars to the country of Israel, and since the attack by Hamas on Oct. 7, 2023 the United States has supplied \$17.9 billion in military aid to Israel. In 2022 alone \$3.3 billion was supplied to Israel with \$8.8 million going to help their economy, with the remainder going to the Israeli military.

You might ask who likes this type of arrangement? Why certainly Israel and the US military industrial

complex. Most of these weapons systems are purchased through Foreign Military Financing (FMF) which are either nonrepayable grants or loan guarantees. In simple terms, the United States has for many years bankrolled Israel's security and we are now supplying weapons to Israel for them to implement this ongoing carnage in Gaza.

We can no longer deny the fact that the United States has blood on its hands with its continued support of Israel; stains that I am not sure can ever be removed. As an American citizen and taxpayer, I am outraged that our government continues to support an Israeli government, under the leadership of Benjamin Netanyahu, that is continuing to commit atrocities and genocide against innocent men, women, and children in Gaza. Our complacency has only emboldened Netanyahu and his government.

There is simply no justification for it in human or biblical terms. One would think with the near extermination of the Jews during World War II, the government of Israel would have a clear understanding of ethnic cleansing, and a self-awareness of the suffering of innocent people. But even within Israel there is opposition to the human tragedy in Gaza. In a recent opinion piece in USA Today by Yair Dvir, spokesperson for the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem, he stated the following: "This is not about random acts of cruelty. This is genocide, in the full sense of the word: a coordinated attack on all aspects of the lives of a group of people, aimed at erasing the foundations of their existence."

It has come to the point that the government of Israel has a stigma about it and the United States is going along for the ride, with the same stain.

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