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Palestine:

Descent Into Butchery: Israel's Latest Assault on Gaza

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There should never have been any doubt that another Israeli assault on Gaza would occur, with the inevitable accompanying mass atrocities. That's not necessarily because it serves anyone's strategic interests"but simply because Israel's brutalities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the strangulation of Gaza by Israel, the new military-dominated regime in Egypt, and the latest collapse of the absurd "peace process" exercise would inevitably produce a triggering event one way or another.

As it happened, the kidnap-murder of three Israeli settler teenagers was the trigger. But even for those of us who find almost nothing too shocking anymore, the Israeli government's behavior touched new depths of cynicism. The entire three-week "search" for the missing kids was fraudulent: the government knew right away that they'd been killed. It pretended to be searching for them as a pretext to smash up Hamas in the West Bank, re-arrest former prisoners released in the exchange for Gilad Shalit, and cripple the new Palestinian unity government.

The story is reported by J.J. Goldberg in the US Jewish newspaper Forward [\[2\]](#)— a significant event in itself, since this paper was once essentially a neoconservative house organ, where now increasingly open criticism of Israel appears. The piece is important reading both in its own right and for the vitriolic racism of many reader comments that follow it.

The political advantage that the Netanyahu regime gained from the murders of the Israeli teenagers"as horrible as it is to put it in such terms"was negated by the torture-murder of the young Palestinian Mohammed Abu Kheidr in Jerusalem by a gang of six Israelis, and the video of the savage police beating of his American cousin Tareq who was visiting at the time.

The former Israeli intelligence chief Yuval Diskin described the context of the unfolding disaster in a lengthy Facebook post, quoted by J.J. Goldberg:

"The deterioration is first and foremost a result of the illusion that the government's inaction on every front can actually freeze the situation in place, the illusion that "price tag" [a reference to marauding Israeli settler gangs –DF] is simply a few slogans on the wall and not pure racism, the illusion that everything can be solved with a little more force, the illusion that the Palestinians will accept everything that's done in the West Bank and won't respond despite the rage and frustration and the worsening economic situation, the illusion that the international community won't impose sanctions on us, that the Arab citizens of Israel won't take to the streets at the end of the day because of the lack of care for their problems, and that the Israeli public will continue submissively to accept the government's helplessness in dealing with the social gaps that its policies have created and are worsening, while corruption continues to poison everything good, and so on and so on." [\[3\]](#)

In the guise of suppressing rocket fire from Hamas, which so far has not killed a single Israeli citizen and is not likely to do so "and perhaps responding to a growing sector of the Israeli public which is showing openly genocidal attitudes [\[4\]](#)"Netanyahu has ordered an air offensive that's claiming civilian lives, entirely predictably, on a daily basis. [\[5\]](#) Should that prove insufficiently bloody, a ground offensive is pending [\[6\]](#).

The Obama administration, which understands perfectly well that the last pathetic negotiations collapsed over Israel's settlement expansion and Netanyahu's demand that Israel be "recognized as the state of the Jewish people," now blathers about Israel's right to defend itself [\[7\]](#). About Palestine's right of self-defense, silence.

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Given that the current descent into butchery is neither the first time nor the last, what's essential now is to tell the truth about the Israeli assault and to raise its political costs, especially through the powerful grassroots global BDS (Boycott/Divestment/Sanctions) movement [8].

10 July 2014

[Against the Current](#)

[1] See photographs from the bombing on the Guardian website <http://www.theguardian.com/world/ga...>

[2] <http://forward.com/articles/201764/...>

[3] <http://blogs.forward.com/ij-golbber...>

[4] <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs...>

[5] For a typical example, read about this incident <http://www.dci-palestine.org/docume...>

[6] <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/07/09/w...>

[7] <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/10/w...>

[8] ESSF <http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spi...>