



## Gaza Is Burning

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**Glenn Greenwald (GG):** It's always very difficult to try and say that one particular war is the most horrific to have to watch. It's impossible for, first of all, to pay attention to all wars, to really understand them in a way that will allow you to put them on a scale or a spectrum like that. And for another, on some level, all wars are just intrinsically horrifying. They, on purpose, stimulate the worst impulses of human beings. They cause human beings to dehumanise others, to have their tribal instincts at their highest point. They necessarily require a complete cutting off of empathy and compassion, because if you allow yourself to feel that, it will be very hard to support your government while they kill and bomb huge numbers of the enemy population, including children and innocent people of all kinds.

And having said that, I do have to say that it may be just a by-product of my own limited experience in terms of the wars I pay attention to as an American, as a Western journalist, but there haven't been many things, if there have been any, more depressing and more traumatising and just more difficult to have to witness than this war that's currently taking place in Gaza. And it began, of course, with extremely horrifying imagery that came first out of Israel, of Hamas' attacks on Israeli civilians, of the way in which they were massacred, often in the cruellest way possible. They were abducted and kidnapped; a lot of the hostages are still in Gaza. And then there's been three weeks, almost three weeks to the day tomorrow of just the most relentless bombing. At the same time that food and water and medication and fuel are blockaded and cut off and prevented from entering Gaza. We just had a few trucks enter through the Egyptian border with Gaza a few days ago, but it's a tiny drop in the bucket in terms of what Gaza needs. The hospitals are on the brink of collapse. There are stories of people, including children, having to have limbs amputated because the dirty drinking water is causing infection. They don't have antibiotics in order to stop the infections. The only solution is to amputate the limbs or they're isolated and they have to use surgical instruments while not administering any anaesthesia or even painkillers because they don't have medication coming into that country. And at the same time, the scenes of death and mutilation and bombing and destruction in Gaza are absolutely sickening to look at and to watch and to hear about. And we are only at the beginning of this. We're nowhere near the

end. We're far closer to the beginning than the end. By all accounts, there's going to be an Israeli ground invasion that is almost certain to last weeks, if not months. And that's going to entail immense amounts of violence and suffering for the people of Gaza, for the Israeli soldiers entering as well. And there's just no end in sight and there's not going to be any on sight because the United States government is filled with people, with a couple of exceptions – literally just a few – who either believe in the necessity of killing what will probably be certainly be tens of thousands of Gazans by the time this is done, without any limitations being placed on the Israelis and or people who are too politically cowardly to stand up in public and have it known that they are trying to impose restraints on the Israelis.

And the pro-Israel sentiment in Washington has been steadfast and bipartisan for decades, and it's never been at a higher point than it is now. We had Lee Fang on our show last night who talked about the role that certain evangelical dogma plays, the belief that Israel has to be strong for Jesus to return, which if you're an evangelical, you will do anything to facilitate; that is the kind of end point, the nirvana of your religion. And you, of course, have a very significant pro-Israel lobby composed of American Jews and Israeli Jews as well. And then you just have national security state hawks. And the combination of all of those makes it almost impossible to expect anything from Washington other than what Joe Biden has promised, which is an endless array of bombs and money going from Washington to Tel Aviv and at the same time not having any sort of imposition of constraints, humanitarian or otherwise, placed on the Israelis, even though American citizens, the people the United States government is supposed to care the most about are now themselves at risk in terms of their security. Not by Hamas. No one thinks Hamas is the danger of the United States. They have never attacked the United States, that can't attack the United States. No one would credibly argue that with a straight face. The danger has come from American support for Israel, something that generals have warned about for decades, that it makes Americans more vulnerable to attack and anti-American sentiment. And now the State Department is, as I said, issuing warnings to American citizens that travelling is more dangerous than ever because of the perception, the obviously accurate perception, that the bombs that are dropping in Gaza and causing so much humanitarian suffering come directly from Washington.

Just to give you a little bit of sense of why we think it's so vital to preserve open and free debate and not allow these calls for censorship to take root of the premises on which they're based. Here from NBC News today is an article: Death and trauma stalk Palestinian children. "The staggering rate of deaths and injuries of children in Gaza, quote, 'is a growing stain on our collective conscience', UNICEF said". And by the way, I know that any source that criticises Israel, the World Health Organisation, the UN, countries in the region, journalists in Gaza, you're automatically told they're biased, they hate Israel. You shouldn't listen to them. But especially with all communication now cut off from Gaza, no more journalists can tell us what's going on there. The Gazans themselves can't show us what's going on. You have to listen to somebody. And it doesn't take a genius to understand that if you drop this amount of bombs on a tiny little strip of land filled with civilians and children, you're going to kill

enormous numbers of people. Quote, "Children make up about half of Gaza's nearly 2.3 million people – many of whom were born during Israel's strict 16-year blockade of Gaza and are now watching bombs destroy their neighbourhoods. In 2022, 4 out of 5 children in Gaza were already living with depression, fear and grief, according to a report by Save the Children. More than half said they have contemplated suicide. The war has only made it worse. At least 2,704 children have been killed, according to Palestinian health officials, since Israel began its bombardment on Gaza in retaliation for Hamas' terror attacks in Israel on Oct. 7 that killed more than 1,400 people in Israel and saw more than 220 taken hostage".

Now, Joe Biden called into question the authenticity and reliability of these statistics about how many people have died, saying they come from Hamas. And as I said, you don't have to trust Hamas, you don't have to trust anyone to understand that there's a mass death taking place in Gaza way more than the number of Israelis who have died, many of whom were members of the military or the police. We never really see those numbers about how many of those 1400 people killed in Israel were actually civilians. A strange omission, I think. But again, if you don't think it's this amount, it's an amount close to it. Quote, "Another 830 children are estimated to still be trapped in rubble in Gaza". Those are some of the worst videos I've seen; of families, of women, of children buried underneath rubble from the buildings Israel bombed. And they're alive. You can see their hands sticking out. But the Gazans can't rescue them, can't move the rubble because they don't have fuel or equipment, because Gaza has been blockaded for so long and is particularly blockaded now. So these people are dying under the rubble, even though they're alive for a long time because they can't be pulled out. "According to the Gaza Health Ministry, 12 hospitals have been shut down due to damage, or lack of supplies and food fuel, along with another 32 primary health care centres, shifting the burden to facilities that remain open, but are overwhelmed and struggling to function. With death looming seemingly indiscriminately, parents have begun writing the names of the children on their legs, so they can be identified if they're taken to hospitals or morgues. At al-Shifa, Abutaha said medical staff have also begun writing names on the hands and legs of the children. Now, some of the worst videos are the ones from hospitals because you have doctors talking about how they cannot conduct surgery on patients with anaesthesia because the anaesthesia and other medications to block pain have run out in Gaza. And there's nowhere safe in Gaza. So you have families who are just sitting there with bombs all around them.

Just imagine one bomb going off near your house, let alone a continuous, relentless stream, seeing buildings destroyed all over, hearing of entire families wiped out. And you're just sitting there in Gaza, there's no safe place. The Israelis told half the population to evacuate to the south. Where there's no shelter, no infrastructure. And even when they started going to the south, Israel then bombed the south of Gaza as well. There's no safe place in Gaza. And all you can do is just sit around and wait, hope that next bomb doesn't fall on the building that you're in and you go to sleep at night having no idea what they're going to wake up in the morning. I guess theoretically that's true for everybody, but there's levels of risk and the risk

for people in Gaza not to wake up every day to go to sleep is extremely high. There's no recovering from that. Even if you survive. Obviously, children are going to be psychologically destroyed forever being in the middle of these relentless bombing. Campaigns every day, fires... And here, let me show you, from the Times of Gaza. Here's a photo of the Gaza Strip. They said the Gaza Strip is being annihilated. There you see it; literally on fire. Here is a video, also from the Times of Gaza.

You know, like I said, I mean, on some level, if you're in the middle of that, death may be more merciful than going through this day after day with your children, with your family. Here is the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Jordan, Ayman Safadi, who is a close U.S. ally, Jordan is, and this is what he tweeted earlier today, quote: "Israel just launched a ground war on Gaza. Outcome will be a humanitarian catastrophe of epic proportions for years to come. Voting against Arab UNGA resolution means approving this senseless war, this senseless killing. Millions will be watching every vote. History will judge". He's talking there about what seems not to be a full scale ground invasion, but another incursion preparing for the ground invasion, while the bombing campaign has escalated to an all record high because they're preparing the ground to soften it up for the invasion.

Here's Time Magazine on October 20th talking about the psychological state of what it's like to be in Gaza. And I would love to turn away from this as much as you would. I promise you. I've been going to the chat, trying to go into the chat as much as I can, the live chat of our show, certainly before we begin, and it's hard to do it when I'm on the air, although we are going to start having segments where we do that as well. I've been saying that for a while, so I've been going to the chat as kind of a preparation to customise myself to the chat and the Wild West culture that you all created there. And sometimes I go in and people say, Oh wow, you're doing another show on the war. I wish we could talk about something else. And I understand. I wish I could too. We have talked about other things. We've talked about the speakership, the new speakership of Mike Johnson, and we'll talk tonight about Matt Taibbi, about several unrelated censorship programs. But if you're an American citizen, this war is your war. Not in the sense that Nikki Haley said, that we have been attacked, because we weren't attacked. Israel was attacked and it is still a foreign country. It's our war in the sense that we're providing the bombs and the money and the weapons and other logistical support and diplomatic cover for this war to continue. And so if you're an American citizen, you have a duty to pay attention, to understand what is being done in your name and by your government, and to engage in a debate about whether this is something that you want. And I had a comment yesterday from a viewer in our live aftershow, and next week we're going to make that available for everybody or play it, because I thought it was an important episode of our live aftershow because we specifically went out of our way to address criticism and critiques. And it was from a viewer who said, Look, I'm a supporter of Israel, but I'm not somebody who craves any of this; who wants this to happen or who supports it. I haven't lost my empathy for the Palestinian people, and I do absolutely agree and believe that there are many Israel supporters who believe that Israel has a right to defend itself, that has the right to

exist and to react to the Hamas attack, including with violence, but doesn't necessarily sanction the full unleashing of a humanitarian crisis on the people of Gaza. So I think it is important not to generalise and to remember that inside Israel there's a lot of criticism of the Israeli government. In fact, we put on a member of the Knesset, who is a full scale critique of the war. But there are also people who are kind of in the middle; who are Israeli or identify with Israel, support Israel and the West, but who don't sanction all of this. But this is the war, not some make believe war where things are a little more restrained. This is the only war that's happening. So it's either this war that you support or you oppose.

Now, here is from Time Magazine, the headline is: 'Our Death is Pending.' Stories of Loss and Grief from Gaza. And this is the sense I get; I follow a lot of Palestinians, a lot of people who live in Gaza on social media, I always have. I've been paying more attention to Israelis and to Gazans and what they're saying about their experiences, because ultimately that is one of the most trustworthy ways to just get a sense for what's taking place. And every time I hear somebody from Gaza speaking, the sense that you get from them is basically, just kind of fate, resigned to the fate that they have, which is there's nothing going to stop these bombs from coming in. All you can do is just sort of hope that the next one doesn't kill you and your children. But you can't really do anything about it because you're trapped there. Quote, "but for all the attention being paid to Gaza in the last two weeks, it remains difficult to hear the voices of Palestinians living there. Israeli authorities have cut off fuel and electricity to the enclave, making it difficult for residents to keep their devices charged, let alone reach the outside world. While many international journalists are based in Israel, there's a very limited foreign media presence in Gaza. The picture is a grim one. To live in Gaza today means not only facing airstrikes, thousands of which have been carried out on Gaza over the past 13 days, but also the threat of malnutrition and inability to access medical care, as Gaza hospitals reach a breaking point. Quote, 'The health system had 2,500 beds when the war started and now it has 12,500 wounded', says Ghassan Abu-Sittah, a British Palestinian doctor currently working in Gaza. He notes that the health system was already, quote, 'on its knees' as a result of a 16-year blockade, enforced by Israel and Egypt, that has severely curtailed the movement of goods and people in and out of the Strip, half of whose 2 million residents are children". So there was already very limited news coming out of Gaza. No media outlets can function there safely. In fact, the correspondent from Al Jazeera, who is based in Gaza, he was working, he wasn't at home, he was covering the war for Al Jazeera and then a bomb came on his house or where his family was and killed his wife and his children and his sister and her husband. He lost six or seven members of his immediate family at once, extinguished, including his wife and children. And that's not even uncommon. But now even the little information that we were getting from people like him, from people who had Internet connection, all of that gone.

From NBC News today: Near-total Internet and cellular blackout hits Gaza as Israel ramps up strikes. Quote, "the largest telecommunications provider in Gaza that was still largely operational, Paltel, said Friday it had suffered a complete disruption of all services. A

near-total blackout of the Internet and cell phone services has taken hold across much of the Gaza Strip, according to witnesses there and companies that monitor global connectivity. The largest telecommunications provider in Gaza that was still largely operational, Paltel, said Friday it had suffered a complete disruption of services after heavy Israeli bombing earlier in the day destroyed its last remaining infrastructure connecting it to the global internet". I don't know why they can't have Starlink, the kind of Internet service of Elon Musk's company that kept Ukraine connected to the Internet even while Russia bombed it. We'll see if that happens. But right now, there's going to be tons of Israeli bombing of Gaza and we're going to hear very little about it by design. That's not a coincidence, that right as Israel is massively bombing more than ever in preparation of its ground offensive, its invasion into Gaza, suddenly, we cannot hear anymore from Gazans about what they're suffering. We can't see any more of the videos that we just showed you of what's happening. So, we're going to be supporting a war and having almost a complete blackout on what's going on.

**GG:** Thanks for watching this clip from System Update, our live show that airs every Monday through Friday at 7 p.m. Eastern, exclusively on Rumble. You can catch the full nightly shows live or view the backlog of episodes for free on our Rumble page. You can also find full episodes the morning after they air across all major podcasting platforms, including Spotify and Apple. All the information you need is linked below. We hope to see you there.

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