



Israeli Officials *Admit* Ethnic Cleansing Is the Goal

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): I know that a lot of people got convinced by the horrors of October 7th and the emotional reaction that it provoked, and I talked about this the first and second week of that October 7th attack, about how horrific it was, how I watch people who I have in my life and who I've had in my life for many years, who have often been apolitical or indifferent to Israel, even critical of it, overnight, become highly radicalised by that attack. And they became convinced that the Israeli war was noble, because the purpose that the Israelis claim they were pursuing with this war was, quote, "to destroy Hamas", the group that perpetrated that attack that so many people found morally reprehensible, including myself. The problem is that, like so often happens, claims about the objective of a war either morph into something much greater as the war goes on and hatred levels increase, or the objective of the war was simply different from the objective that was presented to the public to make the war more palatable. And what we have seen over the past month or six weeks, and I believe the reason for this is that the Biden administration has continued to say that while they're willing to express some concerns about the amount of civilian destruction in Gaza that they believe, the Biden administration does, that the fault for this lies with Hamas and that there is no circumstance, there's nothing the Israelis can do that will cause Joe Biden even to consider cutting off US money and US weapons that are flowing to Israel. And obviously, and we've seen this before in so many other contexts, if you tell somebody that you're going to continue to support them, no matter what they do, unconditionally, then obviously they're not going to listen to any grievances that you have because you've already said, even if they ignore your grievances, the aid that they want is going to continue to flow.

This has been the major mistake of the American left. The American left has all sorts of grievances it claims against the Democratic Party and yet the American left, most of it simultaneously says at the end of the day, we so fear the Republican Party, we so fear Donald Trump and his movement that no matter what you do, the Democratic Party, we're always going to consider you better than the alternative and we're always going to continue to vote for you no matter what you do. And the Democrats hear that and they say, well, the left is on lockdown. The left is under control. We don't need to listen to the left. They can whine and

complain all they want. They've already told us that we can ignore all their grievances. They're going to vote for us anyway. So let's instead pay attention to the concerns and grievances of centrist Democrats or independents who may or may not vote for us. Those are the people whose grievances we have to care about. They may actually withhold their support. The American left already said they would never will. They're foot soldiers for the Democratic Party. And then they wonder why they have no power. That's just basic negotiating. Prior to my career as a journalist, I was a lawyer and I did litigation. And as part of litigation, you, of course, are trying to negotiate settlement of a lot of lawsuits. And the first and most basic principle of negotiations is that if you go into a negotiation and you know, the other side is unwilling to walk away, that they are desperate for a deal or they're not willing to walk away no matter what, you have all the power and the leverage. Because as long as they're not willing to walk away, they just are desperate for a deal. You can lowball them. You don't have to give them anything. And so when the Biden administration and Biden officials say, Yeah, sometimes we're pretending to be concerned about some of what you're doing, some of the excesses, like destroying 80% of residential infrastructure and the sewage and the electricity and the hospital system in Gaza that make it uninhabitable, we have to say we're concerned about that because our voters want to hear that. But don't worry, we're always going to continue to give you all the money and all the weapons you want. Obviously, these concerns are going to be ignored, and it has emboldened the Israelis to become much more honest publicly about what their real intention is with this war.

So often governments or factions have a certain goal that they cannot achieve because they don't have the necessary pretext, the necessary trigger, to make it happen. All kinds of neocons wanted to invade Iraq and overthrow Saddam Hussein in the late 1990s, but they couldn't find a sufficient justification to do it. 9/11 came along, they immediately saw the potential to exploit 9/11 in order to make that happen. And lo and behold, they got their invasion of Iraq, which they justified through 9/11. This is exactly what has been happening in American domestic politics as well, where the Democratic Party and Biden allies before January 6th wanted to find ways to criminalise the Trump movement, to criminalise what they called right wing extremist groups. They couldn't do it. There was no triggering event. January 6th happened, they immediately saw the potential. They exaggerated what it was. They called it an insurrection. And then they got to criminalise the movement of Donald Trump's supporters. That's how censorship works. Every time there's a crisis, they exploit it to censor more and more of something they want to do prior to the crisis. And before October 7th, the much more extremist coalition that Benjamin Netanyahu relies upon to govern Israel, was very clear that they don't care about a two state solution anymore. They don't believe in a two state solution. They were actually eager to annex Gaza and annex the West Bank and make clear that those lands belong to Israel and not to the Palestinians, as the entire world sees it. But they had to be kind of coy about that, because the entire rest of the world opposed it. October 7th happened, and they realised they now had the justification for bombing Gaza into oblivion. And at first they said, Oh, don't worry, the goal here is just to destroy Hamas. But as the war went on, it became clearer and clearer that the bombs were not reserved for Hamas, but were intended to destroy civilian life in Gaza. And Israelis are becoming increasingly explicit and honest about the real goal of this war, which is to render Gaza so

uninhabitable for civilian life, that Gazans are forced to leave that land; to go to the Sinai in Egypt, to get other countries to accept them on humanitarian grounds. We're now facing the possibility that 500,000 more Gazans can die of treatable diseases, or even starvation – that is 25% of the population. And that's going to start to place pressure on other governments to say, Well, we need to take these people in so they don't all perish. And the Israelis are saying, That's what we want. We want them gone so we can take that land. There's so many examples we've been showing you over the last several weeks.

Here today is the Israeli minister of communications, he is speaking in Hebrew, but there is an English translation, the accuracy of which we confirmed with a fluent Hebrew speaker. And so I'm just going to show you what – again, this is not some backbencher in the Israeli parliament. None of these statements come from those. They come from the most influential members of the Netanyahu government. Here's the Israeli minister of communications saying on January 9th what the Israeli goal is in Gaza. Quote, "We certainly need to encourage emigration so that there is as little pressure as possible inside the Gaza Strip from people. We need to encourage immigration, so there's as little pressure as possible from people inside the Gaza Strip. They're uninvolved, but they're not exactly lovers of Israel, and they educate their children to embrace terror. And we'd like to see and we talked about this in government, there aren't any countries that want to take them in. No one wants them, even if we pay a lot of money. Voluntary emigration is important. It doesn't in any way harm human rights. And this war needs to continue. And when it continues..." And then the interviewer asked, "So despite what we're hearing here from Blinken", and remember, the U.S. government said we are vehemently opposed to the goal of ethnically cleansing Gaza of Palestinians and trying to, quote, "encourage them to voluntarily emigrate", the interviewer asked him, and this is on Israeli television, and so "what we're hearing here from Blinken, you're saying we should encourage voluntary migration, that's the solution?!" and then he says, "We should encourage voluntary migration, and we should compel them until they say they want it".

Now, what Israeli officials have been promoting is a proverb that they say exist in Israel, which is you tell someone to do something and they say no, and then you keep punishing them and punishing them and punishing them until they finally say that they want it. And then you call it voluntarily, even though all they're doing is complying with the orders that they were given in the first place. None of the Palestinians want to leave Gaza. That's their homeland. They're fighting for the right to self-governance there. What the Israelis are saying is we want to force them into, quote unquote, "voluntary migration" by making it impossible for them to stay, because we're killing so many of their children, they face mass starvation and death by mass treatable disease, including infections with no antibiotics or operations with no anaesthesia. And here he is admitting that that is the goal. And the interviewer says, "How is that supposed to happen?" And then he says, "The war does what it does". And then the interviewer said, "meaning continue to pressure them using force, starvation, difficult conditions?" and he says, "pressuring Hamas, not difficult conditions. We do provide humanitarian aid to uninvolved people." But then the interviewer says, "but the conditions are difficult there". And he says, "yes, difficult conditions. And they'll continue to be difficult for as long as we don't bring back the hostages and for as long as we haven't defeated Hamas".

So that is the real Israeli goal. It has nothing to do with destroying Hamas. It's about driving the civilian population, first killing them, and then driving the rest of them out of Hamas [Gaza] so that the Israelis can control that territory. Now, remember, we showed you this last night or the night before, the month before the October 7th attack, in Israel by Hamas, the former head of the Mossad, who was chosen to lead the Mossad by Benjamin Netanyahu in 2015, said that Israel is now becoming an apartheid state. The fear of the Israelis is that at some point, very shortly, the Arab population, "between the river and the sea", that the Israelis control, they occupy the West Bank, they blockade Gaza, and then they have Arabs inside Israel, that the number of Israelis will outnumber the number of Jews in that region that Israel controls, and then that will be, by definition, apartheid, that a minority will govern and dominate a majority by denying them basic rights, the right to vote, the right to basic liberties. And one of the ways to avoid that, becoming an apartheid state by definition, is to drive enough Arabs outside of that land so that they never become the majority. That is absolutely part of what the Israeli government is saying it wants to do.

Now, when the U.S. government hearing all these statements – I just read one of that, there are countless of them, and again, they predate October 7th – when the American government started hearing, Oh, actually, the real purpose of this war is to ethnically cleanse Gaza, the US government said, Well, we don't support that. We don't want any part of that. But again, knowing that Joe Biden has said we're not going to cut off aid no matter what you do, even if your goal is to ethnic cleanse, we may say we're opposed to it, but we're never going to cut off the weapons and money that we're giving you to make it happen. The Israeli finance minister, Smotrich, said on November 9th: "American Secretary of State Blinken, welcome to Israel. We greatly appreciate the US's support for Israel. But as far as the existence in our country is concerned, we will always act according to the Israeli interest, and so we will continue to fight with all our might to destroy Hamas, and we will not transfer a shekel to the Palestinian Authority that will go to the families of the Nazis in Gaza. And we will work to enable the opening of Gaza's gates for the voluntary immigration of refugees, as the international community did toward the refugees from Syria and Ukraine". How many times now are the Israelis standing up and saying, we know that you, the Americans, are giving us the money for this war, and we know you're giving us the weapons for this war, and we thank you for that, but we're going to do whatever we want, even if you tell us it harms American National Security.

Why would any American citizen, let alone an American citizen that has claimed that their ideology and foreign policy in about the world is putting America first, be comfortable accepting that kind of exploitative relationship with a foreign government that says, you're going to pay for wars, you're going to arm our wars, and we're going to do things even if you tell us we shouldn't because it harms you and your national security. Only Israel could possibly do that and maintain the support of the majority of Americans. It is the Israel exception to every principle. Now, again, just to give you the sense of how common this is, here was the Israeli newspaper Haaretz on November 5th, 2023 with the headline: *The Israel's Gov't Tender Souls Who Call for an Ethnic Cleansing of Gaza*. Do you remember at the start of October 7th, in the first couple of weeks of October 7th, the American media

made a gigantic deal out of some comments by some random street protesters at some pro-Palestinian rally or some statement signed by obscure college students. They had to turn to these obscure and powerless people to try and claim that the pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli position was so offensive and extreme. You don't have to go to obscure street protesters marching in defence of Israel or college students who are supportive of Israel, though you can certainly find these sentiments there, you go to the top levels of the Israeli government. That's where you find calls for ethnic cleansing and admissions that that's the real support of the war.

Here's what Haaretz said, quote, "The post by Eliyahu, the minister of heritage of absolutely nothing, began with the pastoral line, quote, 'The northern Strip, more beautiful than ever, bombing and flattening everything,' received much media attention; the editor in chief of The Economist even mentioned it." Yes, because a high Israeli government official said the purpose of the war in Gaza was not to destroy Hamas, but was to flatten Gaza. Quote, "The responses were unequivocal, and rightly so: An Israeli cabinet minister called openly for ethnic cleansing in Gaza. The proposal, in short, is to carry out a transfer of all Gaza residents to Sinai." That is the war that the United States is paying for. That is the war the United States is arming. That is not the war that the American citizen was told that it was supporting. But the Israelis have become more and more emboldened by the obvious refusal of the Biden administration to challenge or confront the Israelis in any way. And not only are we willing to tie ourselves as the hips to the Israelis when it comes to this conflict that the world is increasingly turning against and even now, countries are joining South Africa in the formal complaint before the International Court of Justice, that what the Israelis are doing is war crimes and ethnic cleansing and genocide in Gaza, not only are we dealing with all that and incurring all this cost, but we are now facing the likelihood of multiple other Middle East wars, the exact kind that we all agreed, basically, we had to stop fighting to focus on China to turn to the Asia Pacific, not to fall further into debt. Remember when we finally left Afghanistan after 20 years and the Taliban marched right back into power as though nothing had happened? The Chinese produced a video saying, while you were spending \$2 trillion on this war in Afghanistan, that accomplished nothing, we spent \$800 billion to build this incredibly efficient and impressive high speed rail, highly modern, that connected all of our cities and enables a level of commerce that is unthinkable for the United States with its collapsing infrastructure.

These are the choices the United States has been making as compared to China, which you may notice is not funding other countries' wars, isn't invading other countries, isn't occupying other countries, isn't bombing other countries. They're doing things like forging peace deals between Iran and Saudi Arabia and building hospitals and infrastructure in Africa in order to get the world on its side and its global commercial competition. And no matter how many times Americans say we're tired of all these wars in abstract, it is incredibly easy, evidently, for the U.S. government and its media allies, to convince huge numbers of Americans to support every new war that is presented to them. They had no trouble getting Americans to support the financing in the war in Ukraine, and they had even less trouble getting Americans to support all of this.

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