



## Israel BREAKS CEASEFIRE, Bombs Gaza Again

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**Glenn Greenwald (GG):** Donald Trump for essentially 10 years now has been denouncing and criticizing the endless wars, unnecessary wars that the United States fights in general. We showed you the video last night where he was running and said he intends to be the peacemaker. He was very proud of the fact that he didn't involve the US in any new wars in his first term, which is true, I've noted that many times. And, in particular, the Middle East – his view is that we have fought constant wars unnecessarily in Iraq, in Syria, in Libya, and these are the kinds of wars that Trump and his supporters vowed that they didn't want any more of. And yet, as we reported last night at length, Trump took Biden's bombing campaign in Yemen and restarted it, massively escalated it, even though Trump criticized Biden for bombing Yemen at a time when Yemen and the Houthis were actually attacking American ships, at least Biden had that pretext. The Houthis position now is that they stopped attacking ships once there was a ceasefire in Gaza, and they only restarted once the Israelis violated that ceasefire by refusing to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza and said we intend to attack only Israel-flagged ships, not even American ships. And yet, Trump is doing exactly what he criticized Biden for doing without even the pretext of protecting American ships because the only ships that the Houthis are attacking and that they intend to attack, according to them, are Israeli ships.

So you have that outbreak of war in the Middle East. And now you have a ceasefire that Donald Trump, by all accounts, was instrumental in fostering, to his credit – one that took place right before he was inaugurated. He sent his very aggressive Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, who pushed around the Israelis in a way that no American has done in quite some time to get this deal done. And the deal was in stages. The first stage of the ceasefire involved the exchange of hundreds of Palestinians kept in dungeons with no trial inside Israel that get released, and then Hamas releases what are called hostages, even though a lot of those people who were in active military duty are typically called prisoners of war. But because it's Israel and Hamas, we call them hostages. They have civilians as well. And then they would move to a second stage. And in this first stage, the Israelis would withdraw from all of Gaza. They would allow humanitarian aid to enter. And they would negotiate for that second ceasefire.

Almost immediately, Israel began violating this deal. They withdrew from much of Gaza, but not all of it. They started occasionally bombing and then frequently bombing Gaza, which obviously is not consistent with the ceasefire. And they also – basically Netanyahu came out when that deal was signed and there were a lot of people to his right, the right wing parties in his government, who were vehemently opposed to the deal and he essentially told them and said in public: don't worry, this is not a permanent ceasefire, Trump has told us we are free to start bombing them again and that's exactly what we intend to do once we get our hostages back. And now that is exactly what is happening. The Israelis, yesterday, unleashed a massive bombing campaign on Gaza unlike anything that has been seen since before the ceasefire ended. They killed at least three hundred people. As usual, families were wiped out, many women and children killed. There's barely anything left in Gaza, 92% of Gaza has been destroyed, and yet the Israelis are still finding things to bomb and people to kill, even though there was supposedly a ceasefire agreement in place.

Here from NBC News, the headline is: *Israel Breaks Ceasefire Deal with New Deadly Strikes*. "Video captured by NBC News' crew on the ground shows frantic scenes at Khan Younis' hospital in southern Gaza with children among the killed." Same thing we saw for 15 months. Quote: "The health ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, whose figures the World Health Organization has previously said it considers to be reliable, said hospitals across the enclave have received the bodies of at least 404 people killed with more than 560 injured." That's almost 1,000 people killed or injured in one day. "It added that people were still buried under rubble with recovery efforts underway. Dr. Muneer Al-Bursh, the ministry's director-general, said, quote, 'most of the victims' were women and children as he called on Gaza's residents to donate blood."

Here is the office of Prime Minister Netanyahu posting an announcement yesterday, quote: "The IDF is, at this time, attacking targets of the Hamas terrorist organization throughout the Gaza Strip in order to achieve the objectives of the war as they have been determined by the political echelon, including the release of all of our hostages, the living and the deceased." That wasn't the ceasefire deal. The ceasefire deal was they would release hostages in stages while the Israelis released the detainees, Palestinian detainees, inside Israeli detention camps, which are among the most brutal places in the world. That's where videos showed that IDF soldiers were raping. There was a protest, including by people in the Knesset, in defense of those soldiers, saying, under Jewish law, under our national interests, we have the right to rape Palestinians. They actually had protests along those lines, arguments on their shows that rape is a legitimate weapon of war. And these are Palestinians who were detained some prior to October 7th, but virtually none of them with any due process at all. So the idea was they would be released in conjunction with hostages being released from Gaza in accordance with a schedule. And all of a sudden the Israelis said, and Trump said, either you release all of those hostages immediately, or we're going to rain down hell on you.

Here is Abubaker Abed, the journalist in Gaza, whom we interviewed, who posted a video online of some of the bombs going off in Gaza. That was not a very impressive video. I'm sure there are better videos because there were bombs all over. You can sort of hear the

bombs in the background, is what the point was, that you could hear things blowing up in the background. I don't know if you were able to hear that. But in any event, there's no question that Israel engaged in mass destruction. There's tons of videos online of families wiped out, of buildings destroyed, whatever remaining buildings were left.

Here from The Wall Street Journal confirming that Trump gave the green light to all this. "An Israeli official said that President Trump gave Israel the green light to restart attacks on Hamas after the US-designated terrorist group failed to give up hostages. Israel then gave the US a heads-up before starting the operation, the official said. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed on Fox News that Israel had given advance notice of the attacks. She warned Hamas and other regional enemies of Israel, and the US will, quote, 'see a price to pay.' Quote, 'All hell will break loose', she said, repeating a threat often made by Trump." For those keeping a score at home, a combination of Israel and the United States – remember the United States is providing the arms for these Israel bombing campaigns, is paying for it as they did under Biden, as they're doing under Trump – so the combination of Israel and the US, right now in the Middle East, are bombing Yemen, Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon and Syria, while they explicitly threaten Iran with massive bombing campaigns as well. That's six [five] different countries in the Middle East that the United States and the Israelis are now jointly and actively bombing – from a president who vowed that he would be the peacemaker, that we had to stop the posture of endless war. Here was Trump on Air Force One in February, essentially describing what he told Netanyahu.

**Donald Trump:** I told Bibi: you do whatever you want because, you know, my statement was they got to come back. Now, the reason I made that statement was because they said they were not going to deliver the people that they said they were going to deliver, that they agreed to deliver. And they did agree to do that, but they broke that agreement. When I made the statement, they delivered everybody plus an American. Now, the good news is they look like they're in pretty good shape, because the people from the week before didn't look like they were in good shape. They looked like Holocaust survivors, frankly. Horrible. Whatever happened to them was horrible. But that'll be up to Israel what the next step is, in consultation with –

**GG:** Now, if you compare, supposedly Trump was affected by the condition of some of the hostages that were released. They were gaunt and thin. I don't know why that's surprising. The Israelis announced at the start of the war that they would prevent all food from getting into Gaza. They have made good on that in many ways, blocking humanitarian trucks the entire time. But the vast majority of the hostages who were released from Gaza and returned to Israel looked quite healthy, looked infinitely better, in fact, than the way the Palestinians who are released from these Israeli dungeons look. They look completely broken physically and mentally. And many of the hostages who came back gave interviews in Israel saying "we were treated well, when our captors ate, we also ate, we shared food. Sometimes there were food shortages." But you can just compare how they look, the Palestinians who were released to how the Israelis who were released. They were looking for a pretext from the beginning in order to restart the war. Here's Netanyahu himself on January 18th, so basically the day that

the ceasefire was signed, and you see what Netanyahu is saying about it and what Trump, according to him, told him as well.

**Benjamin Netanjahu:** Since he was elected, Trump was completely committed to the release of the hostages. We spoke on Wednesday, he congratulated me on the agreement and he emphasized, and rightly so, that the first stage is a temporary ceasefire. This is what he said, a temporary ceasefire. Towards the next stages of the agreement, we are holding on to some significant assets so that we can bring back all of the hostages. And in order to accomplish all the goals of the war, both President Trump and President Biden have provided full backing to Israel's right to resume fighting, to resume combat, if Israel reaches the conclusion that the negotiations offer. The second stage is pointless. I truly appreciate that. I also appreciate the decision of President Trump to lift all the remaining restrictions on providing the essential munitions and weapons to the State of Israel. If we need to resume combat, we will do so in new ways and we will do so with tremendous force.

**GG:** Now, before this war, it's worth remembering, there was extreme civil strife in Israel. There were huge battles, in particular, over the question of the independence of the judiciary. The judiciary has always had the right of judicial review over the Knesset in laws that they passed. They were trying to eliminate that. People were out in the streets every day saying: our democracy is being destroyed. On top of that, Netanyahu had all kinds of legal and criminal charges including for corruption and bribery, and it was only October 7th – and there's still the question of how could October 7th possibly have happened given Israel's supreme status as the surveillance capital and the fact that they have Gaza completely under surveillance and an attack of that magnitude happened – but it was only once October 7th happened, did the country unite behind Netanyahu, did all those problems go away. And now that the ceasefire was in place, these scandals started to return. Netanyahu was forced to go to criminal court and testify, others were as well. He just fired the director of the Shin Bet, the Israeli Intelligence Service, because he was threatening Netanyahu that he would make public lots of wrongdoing that Netanyahu was engaged in.

Netanyahu is basically using this war to ward off the end of his stay in power and potentially the end of his freedom. And that's what makes what they're doing in Gaza particularly repulsive, particularly inhumane, particularly criminal – that they have destroyed essentially all of Gaza, left basically the whole population of 2 million people, however many people are left without homes, without any civil society. They block food and electricity, meaning they have no food or water getting into the Gaza Strip. The war itself, the conduct in which it was carried out was found to be war crimes by the International Criminal Court. And the United States, out of loyalty to Israel, immediately sanctioned the ICC, punished them, threatened them, but that was the finding. And the fact that Netanyahu himself, and this is what many, many Israelis believe and Israeli newspapers say all the time, is motivated by lots of things – one of the primary motives that he has is protecting himself and shielding himself from accountability for a lot of the corruption and criminal cases that he faces. And here we have Trump brought in to end wars who now has the United States involved in five or six different bombing campaigns in the Middle East alone.

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