

# Fascism--Yesterday And Today

**Ghali Hassan**

Most people associate German Fascism with crimes against Jews and powerful German army. What they forget are the death of millions of non-Jews, the repression of minorities, and the premeditated wars of aggression and occupation of sovereign nations. All of it seems reminiscent today.

Common in today's parlance is that Fascism ended with the end of World War II (WW II). The reality is that Fascism did not end, but it was replaced by another variant of Fascism; one that is much more powerful and violent. Fascist violence and racial philosophy remain unaffected and were put into practice elsewhere against different nations.

Today, the US and its allies control an array of world organisations, including the UN, and army of NGOs, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). These organisations are used as political tools to intimidate smaller and defenceless nations, and to legitimise war of aggression and in the process advance Western interests.

The recent shameful and racist UN Resolution—drafted by the US, Israel and France—to justify Israel's aggression and war crimes against Lebanon is just a case in point. In fact history shows that the UN either sided with the aggressor or outright ignored the aggressor's violations of international law and UN's own resolutions, including Resolution 242 calling on Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab land.

In addition, although German Fascism was known for its war propaganda and war rhetoric, it was nothing when it is compared with the today's manipulative propaganda machines of Fox News, CNN, the BBC and other Western corporate media. Today's Western propaganda is a formidable force minus the weapons. It spreads disinformation and distorts facts in order to manipulate public opinion and promote war and hatred.

If comparison is made today between the war rhetoric of the Nazis and those leaders who are perpetuating the current war of aggression, the commonalities are staggering. Today Western leaders speak in ordinary language—often deliberately mumbling—in order to manipulate and deceive the public. They pretend to strive for “peace” and “human rights”, and the spread of “democracy” and “liberty”—a collection of euphemisms for imposing Western ideology and domination. However, what they pretend to do have no resemblance to their ideology and real goal.

In order to mask their ideology and demonise their victims, leaders and advocates of today's Fascism argued with audacity that the enemies are “Jihadists”, “insurgents” and “Islamic fascists”. Extremists such as Bin-Laden and al-Zarqawi (‘al-Qaeda’)—wearing traditional dress and sporting beards—, were created and financed by the US and its agents and used as label to distort the images of Islam and Muslims. The root causes of violence today are not “Islamofascism”, but Israel—US Fascism that intended on world-domination.

Pretexts such as the non-existence of “threat” of acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and “terrorism” are instantly created to justify violence and distort the images of people resisting violence. Today Israel and the US pose serious threat to

world peace. Indeed, the governments of the US and Israel hold a virtual monopoly on violence and terrorism to enforce their ideology. As Philip Cannistraro, a professor of History at Florida State University rightly wrote; "Violence as a creative force is an important aspect of Fascism philosophy" and political ideology.

The so-called "War on Terror" is just a smokescreen to instil fear and justify violence and repression. It is fueling anti-Muslim hatred and spreading Islamophobia throughout the World, particularly in the West. As it was during Fascism, fear is used to scare the public and justify new repressive "anti-terror" laws, specifically targeting Muslims. As a result, harassment of Muslims has increased dramatically and racism has reached an appalling scale. In addition, the "War on Terror" and its ongoing seasonal "terror alerts" are used to obfuscate and distract public attention from the atrocities committed against innocent civilians in Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Afghanistan.

Before the rise of Fascism, Germany and Italy were liberal democracies preaching "tolerance" and "free speech". However, once the promotion of false patriotism, negative nationalism and blind submission to authority were promoted, things started to change and rapid descent into Fascism took place. Hatred for Arabs and Muslims is quickly replacing Hitler's hatred for communists and Jews.

The war on Muslim nations and the ongoing threat directed against Syria and Iran is part of an Israeli-US war. Israel, supported by US Zionist ideologues (the "Neo-cons"), has embarked on a permanent war of domination in the Middle East. Although the US shares Israel's Zionist ideology and provides Israel with weapons, money and political support, Israel must be held responsible for violating international law and perpetuating war crimes.

It is counterproductive branding any criticism of Israel's terror as "anti-Semitism" and trying to shield Israel and deflect the main responsibility of Israel's war crimes on the US. If Israel is just a US proxy force, as most US intellectuals and pundits allege, why are Turkey and Egypt not playing this lucrative role? Israel can choose to renounce violence and pursue its own peaceful coexistence.

It all started in 1947-1948, when some 400 Palestinian villages were destroyed, thousands of Palestinians were murdered and more than 750,000 Palestinians were forced to flee their homes to neighbouring countries. This well-orchestrated ethnic cleansing often referred to by Jewish Zionists and their Western supporters as the "war for independence". In reality, it was not a war, but one defenceless nation was wiped off the map, and a Zionist entity of European Jews was established on its foundation. "Israel would not exist today had it not been for its systematic massacres of the Palestinian population in 1948", writes Azmi Bishara, the Palestinian author and member of the Israeli Knesset.

In the first-half of 1948, terrorist organisations like the "Haganah committed 24 massacres, in some cases four or five people were executed, in others the numbers were 70, 80, and 100... There are cases such as the village of Dawayima [in the Hebron region], in which a column entered the village with all guns blazing and killed anything that moved", said Benny Morris, Israeli revisionist historian. "The worst cases were Saliha (70-80 killed), Deir Yassin (100-110), Lod (250), Dawayima (hundreds) and perhaps Abu Shusha (70). There is no unequivocal proof of a large-scale massacre at Tantura, but war crimes were perpetrated there. At Jaffa there was a massacre about

which nothing had been known until now. The same [happened] at Arab al Muwassi, in the north. About half of the acts of massacre were part of *Operation Hiram* [in the north, in October 1948]: at Safsaf, Saliha, Jish, Eilaboun, Arab al Muwasi, Deir al Asad, Majdal Krum, Sasa. In *Operation Hiram* there was a[n] unusually high concentration of executions of people against a wall or next to a well in an orderly fashion”, added Benny Morris (Ha’aretz, January 09, 2004). The Palestinians were considered “Barbarians” and they were targeted for extermination.

In 1948, Israel Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion said: “We must use terror, assassination, intimidation, land confiscation, and the cutting of all social services to rid the Galilee of its Arab population”. Nothing has changed; Ben-Gurion’s terror and ethnic cleansing have been used all over Palestine.

In 1967, Israel expelled more than 500,000 Palestinians. The same racist ideology is currently used to de-Arabise entire Palestine, masquerading as the “demographic threat”, and accompanied by ongoing massacres of innocent Palestinian civilians not because Palestinians are powerful and threatening the lives of Jews, but because what Jews called the “demographic threat”. In other words, to maintain Israel’s Jewish character, Palestinians must be reduced to a small number by extermination and explosion. Since 1948, Israel has been implementing Fascist ideology in Palestine, with great accuracy and with tacit support of major Western powers.

Now, six decades after the end of WW-II, one can see the results. Israel continues to expand, annexing Palestinian agricultural land and water sources. What remains of Palestine today is under Fascist occupation. The Palestinian people were ethnically cleansed and those who remained under Israel’s military occupation are confined into large concentration camps. Their movement is controlled by military checkpoints, identity cards and the Apartheid wall. They are subjected to a Nazi-like racism, their houses are continuously demolished and their land is confiscated and they are enduring a slow genocide.

Gaza, the largest concentration camp in history, is under permanent siege and constantly bombed by Israeli forces. For the last six months, Gaza’s 1.5 million Palestinians are forced to endure starvation and chronic diseases as a result of Israel’s blockade only because the people chose to elect their own representatives. Comparing Israelis living in secure anti-bomb shelters in Haifa after the Lebanese Resistance Movement (Hizbullah) fired few rockets on the town, the Israeli journalist Amira Hass writes; “Take what the northern residents have been going through for a month, multiply it by 1,000, [and] add an economic blockade, power and water cuts, and no wages. This is how the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have been ‘living’ for the past six years”.

In June 2006, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) invaded and occupied Gaza after they bombed and destroyed Gaza’s civilian infrastructure, including Gaza’s main power station, leaving households, and hospitals across the camp without electricity and water, while sanitation systems have collapsed. Since then, the IOF have killed at least 200 Palestinians, including 56 children, leaving over 800 injured, including 300 children. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society reports at least 210 Palestinians were killed by the IOF in Gaza and the West Bank between 01 July and 07 August 2006. The Israeli human rights group *B’Tselem* reveals at least 163 Palestinians were killed in July in Gaza alone.

It is also reported that 'Israel is using a new kind of weaponry that burns the bodies, cuts like a knife. It enters the body and rips organs apart', Samir Judah, an emergency room manager in An-Najar Hospital in Rafah refugee camp told the Egyptian weekly, *Al-Ahram*. "One might think they were burnt, but their colour is dark, they're inflated, and they have a terrible smell. All this, and the hair is not burnt nor do the bodies bleed", said Dr Bashir Sham, a member of the French Association of Cardiovascular Surgeons.

On 20 May 2004, Yosef Lapid, an Israeli cabinet minister and a holocaust survivor, said the demolition of Palestinian homes in the Rafah Refugee Camp reminded him of his grandmother in the holocaust, adding that there "is no forgiveness for people who treat an old woman this way", referring to a grandmother who lost her family home to Israeli bulldozers. The most effective tool of Israel's terror is that the crimes of the Nazis are often invoked to justify Israel's crimes against Palestinians.

Today, Israel constitutes the most militarised, extremist and racist society on the planet. Violence against defenceless women and children has become part of the "Jewish State" shared values. As the Israeli poet Ilan Shenfeld summed it up: "March on Lebanon and also on Gaza with ploughs and salt. Destroy them to the last inhabitant... Save your people and make bombs, and rain them on villages and towns and houses till they collapse. Kill them, shed their blood, terrify their lives, lest they try again to destroy us, until we hear from tops of exploding mountains, Ridden down by your heels, sounds of supplication and lamentation. And your pits will cover them. Whoever scorns a day of bloodshed, He should be scorned. Save your people, and make war". (Ynet, 30 July 2006). And this is the Israeli "Left" attitude, those who pray for "peace".

Although Israel's terror is the most brutal and the longest in history, other nations who oppose today's Fascism are enduring similar violence. Iraq and Lebanon have been defenceless targets for years, with horrendous magnitude of destruction and civilian deaths.

Iraq has been systematically destroyed and its people humiliated in the same way many European nations were destroyed by Fascism. After more than a decade of genocidal economic sanctions, Iraq was illegally invaded and occupied. Baghdad and many other Iraqi cities— from Fallujah and Ramadi to al-Qaim and Haditha—were indiscriminately and deliberately bombed and destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians have been killed and many more have been wounded. The entire country was taken hostage and the civilian population are subjected to daily grisly massacres, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment, sadistic torture and rape by occupying US forces and mercenaries. Large US corporations are looting Iraq's wealth and national resources while the living conditions for Iraqis continue to deteriorate.

Like Iraq, Lebanon has been systematically and indiscriminately destroyed. Over many years, Israel routinely bombed and invaded Lebanon. Israeli Mossad agents and assassins carried out countless acts of terrorism on Lebanon territory assassinating, and kidnapping Lebanese and Palestinian citizens. In 1978-1982 Israeli forces invaded Lebanon and occupied the country for two decades. At least 20,000 Lebanese civilians have been murdered by Israeli forces. Another 2000 Palestinian women and children refugees in Sabra and Chatila refugee camps were massacred by the criminal Ariel Sharon and his proxy thugs. Lebanon was completely destroyed before the Israelis were defeated and forced to leave by the heroic Lebanese Resistance.

Today Israel is avenging its defeat and using its war crimes in Lebanon to coerce the Lebanese people against their popular Resistance, blackmail other nations and use the crimes as a rehearsal for an Israeli-US wider war in the region. The Israeli-US violence failed to achieve its goal as much as the Nazis failed to coerce the Russian people during Fascist attacks on Russia.

Since the Israeli premeditated aggression against Lebanon and the indiscriminate and systematic destruction of the country, more than 1200 innocent civilians have been killed in a cowardly and Nazi-like fashion, a third of the dead were children under the age of 12-year-old. At least 5000 civilians have been wounded, and more than a million Lebanese are homeless, displaced from their towns and villages. It is estimated that some 100,000 Lebanese—out of an original population of 913,000—are still in southern villages—no one knows their fate—, cut off from the rest of the country and subjected to daily Israeli artillery shelling and aerial bombing. Israel is intended to ethnically cleanse the population from the area south of the Litani River and annexe their land.

With the blessing of the UN, the US and its allies, Israel is not only allowed to drop tonnage of banned cluster bombs and white phosphorous bombs—conducted with US weapons and paid for by billions of dollars of American taxpayers—on densely populated areas killing hundreds of innocent civilians and destroying their homes but also Israel is allowed to get away with horrendous war crimes. Furthermore, Israel is using the already biased and anti-Muslim corporate media to distort reality and plays victim.

As in Iraq, Lebanon's entire civilian infrastructure is deliberately destroyed; a flagrant violation of international law and war crimes by any standard. Knowing that the US is on his side, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said openly that; "We are destroying Lebanon and forcing the civilian population to turn against Hizbullah". With deafening silence to mass atrocities, the persistence of Fascism seemed to have been accepted by most Western citizens.

Rejecting the world's call for an immediate cease-fire to halt the massacres of innocent Lebanese civilians by Israeli forces, the US showed its full complicity in the violence. Just few days into the mass atrocity, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, said: "They've [Lebanese] been through a very difficult war". The aim was to give Israel more time to destroy Lebanon and kill more innocent civilians. Note also the moral bankruptcy and the "difficult war" that Israel and the US have orchestrated and perpetuated for more than three decades against virtually a defenceless nation. Since the 1970s, Israel-US policy has been to coerce Lebanon and the civilian population to surrender to Israeli-US dictate.

It is important not to forget that in April 2002 during the Israeli aggression on the West Bank city of Jenin, the US refused to call for an immediate cease-fire and encouraged the massacre of innocent Palestinian civilians. Israeli forces indiscriminately attacked the Jenin Refugee Camp, with bulldozers levelling Palestinian homes and US-supplied Apache and Cobra helicopter gunships and tanks bombed the 15,000 besieged civilian population. The US-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that Israeli occupation forces on the ground used Palestinians as human shields to conduct their terror. The entire community was destroyed in a Nazi-like fashion. But the UN produced a seriously flawed report to shield Israel from war crimes responsibility.

Sadly, with deafening silence of Western citizens, the persistence of Fascism continues today. The differences today are in the desire of today's Fascism to conduct war of aggression against defenceless populations, and in the deliberate destruction of the social and economic structure to sustain and to provide the majority of the civilian population with their means of livelihood.

The systematic and random mass bombing of civilian population in the cities of Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Afghanistan, indiscriminately killing and wounding innocent civilians and destroying homes, cultural heritages, health care services and educational system, including libraries, universities, schools and archives will not coerce the people to surrender.

Finally, the premeditated and illegal wars of aggression against Muslim nations are what the Nuremberg Tribunal called 'Supreme International Crime'. The Tribunal tried Nazi leaders and most of them were found guilty and were hanged for their crimes. Thus, in a "civilised" world and under the same Nuremberg Charter, Western and Israeli leaders, and their accomplices have committed war crimes.

From time immemorial, wars of aggression and occupation nurture legitimate resistance. Therefore, the only way to defeat Fascism, old and new, is continuing mass resistance to its repression, wars of aggression, and occupation. ~~del del del~~