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Policy paper: How did Western media distort the truth during the Gaza War

THE WEST'S BIASED COVERAGE FOR THE CURRENT WAR
CRIMES AND ETHNIC CLEANSING IN GAZA

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Abstract

Israel is responsible for systematically killing Palestinians, yet the media coverage has been calling the Palestinian resistance and what has been happening in Gaza the “Israel-Hamas war,” insinuating that Israel has only been targeting Hamas when the past few days have been proving countless times that Israel is actively targeting innocent civilians and has been doing so for years now. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) are known to be one of the strongest armies with the help of the United States and various other nations and have been using their relations to help spread misinformation and purposely hide the truth on multiple occasions in hopes of making the world support their crimes and turn a blind eye to the suffering and oppression of Palestinians that has been going on for years, reflecting the hypocrisy and double standards of the west over and over (AJLabs, 2023)

Keywords: Palestine – Israel - Propaganda – media - war crimes -genocide

Introduction

For people living under cruel domination, resistance becomes necessary when it becomes evident to them that there is no law to protect them from oppression.

The Gaza Strip has been under blockade for 16 years, meaning that Israel has been controlling the airspace, water, land, and even who gets to enter or leave Gaza, so Palestinians have to ask permission from Israel to either leave or enter the premises. Gaza has been experiencing bombardments for many years. Israel has been violently pummeling Gaza with thousands of high-explosive bombs, and its leaders are referring to the people of Gaza as “human animals”, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant vowed to “eliminate everything”. An Israeli military official explained that the “emphasis is on damage, not accuracy”. Another said Gaza would be reduced to “a city of tents. There will be no buildings.” It clearly shows their intentions (Kusovac, 2023).

A clear violation of human rights

Millions of Palestinians live under a brutal occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Many are stripped of their nationality and property rights, while others suffer daily violations of their civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights.

Streets were empty and residential buildings were left in ruins following Israel’s continuous bombing of Palestine’s Gaza. Palestinians were living in refugee camps without access to clean water, electricity, or housing. Endless killings of unarmed medics, journalists, men, women, and children; unjustified bombings of hospitals, schools, shelters, homes, and places of worship

Israel bombed the Nuseirat Mosque in Gaza, killing displaced people seeking shelter. Israel bombed the Greek Orthodox Gaza church sheltering displaced people.

The Saint Porphyrius Church, the 3rd oldest church in the world and the oldest Christian church in Palestine, was also affected by the bombings done by Israeli forces and various other places of worship. According to Article 8 of the Geneva Convention, direct attacks against buildings of worship are a war crime.

Israel bombed the Baptist Hospital and AL-Ahli Hospital in Gaza. Patients, doctors, and children, and many innocent lives were wasted. The Ministry of Health in Gaza announced that the health system in hospitals in the Gaza Strip has collapsed completely. Children in Gaza experience tremendous horrors amidst the infinite atrocities.

The death toll in Gaza has risen to over 8,000. Over 2,600 of those murdered are children, and more than 15,000 people have been injured. This includes the following war crimes: collective punishment (blocking all water, food, power, and humanitarian aid), use of white phosphorus bombs (re: Human Rights Watch), multiple journalists killed, and multiple hospitals bombed. Giving permission to Palestinians to evacuate, then bombing the evacuees, ambulances, hospitals, places of worship, and any other place that people could take shelter in. In the last two days, Israel has been depriving more than two million Gaza Strip citizens of food, water, and power, leading to the collapse of many systems. They also proceeded to completely cut off all means of communication, intensify their bombings, and expand their ground operations, isolating Palestinians from the whole world and hiding their heinous crimes from the eyes of the people.

Claiming this is a war when Palestinians are merely trying to protect what's left of their land and bloodlines and need to be buried in mass graves due to the huge death toll while the Israelis fled to the West or are still roaming the streets of Palestine that Palestinians are paying for with their lives. Palestine has no army, no

food, no water, no electricity, no basic human needs and necessities, and they are demanding their rights. On the other hand, the Israelis took the Palestinians homes, land, and even lives and then claimed they were the victims. If Israel is merely protecting itself, then why bomb the West Bank, Syria, and Lebanon?

Sabotaging the truth

Journalists have a responsibility to report facts without bias. Journalism is about people: their stories, their history, and their reality. This includes the Palestinian people. Factual reporting must include seeking Palestinian voices and investigating claims by government officials before reporting them as truth. Shame on media outlets for repeating Israel's lies to divert the blame from Israel's continuous war crimes and trying to come up with excuses for this genocide under the excuse of trying to protect themselves when the footage of dead Palestinians is all over the news but there is no actual footage of Israeli victims that they claim.

The US opposing a humanitarian pause on the bombing of Gaza speaks to how President Biden's stance on the situation, who has expressed his unwavering support for Israel, even going so far as to lie about seeing Israeli children beheaded by Hamas, only for an official spokesperson to say that this was based on the claims of Israeli officials (Jazeera, 2023).

Western media lied on various occasions about supposed Israeli victims, from beheaded babies to fake AI-generated images shared on official social media accounts of the Israeli government. What do they have to say about the murder of more than 2,000 innocent children by Israeli forces? They also lied about who bombed Al-Ahli Hospital, claiming that it was done by Hamas, only to be exposed

later on by many different sources for their lies. Even going so far as to put ads on baby videos on YouTube to spread their propaganda.

By neglecting to contextualize Israeli state violence, the media has given the Israeli government the cover it needs to continue ethnically cleansing the Palestinian people with impunity. It is time for outlets to address the harm they have done. They should make an effort to hire Palestinian journalists and center Palestinian voices instead of consistently erasing them from their own stories. The endless footage of documented violence against Palestinians should not remain confined to social media feeds, which face a different form of censorship.

Western media coverage routinely labels this situation as “complicated,” portraying this state violence as “clashes” and “tensions” between two sides. Headlines in many famous Western outlets use language that fails to recognize the power imbalance between the Israeli military apparatus and the native Palestinian people. This is a pattern we have continuously witnessed in media coverage of Palestine. Media descriptions regularly imply a false symmetry between occupier and occupier, propping up anti-Palestinian and Islamophobic narratives that blame the Palestinian people for Israeli aggression. (Albast & Knarr, 2022)

The Israeli government went so far as to call out famous actors, athletes, and influencers for their support for Palestine and even threaten them in various ways. Many professors, journalists, and office workers got fired for speaking up about this injustice.

Hypocrisy in the media

The media plays a key role in shaping why some parties are considered terrorists or evil, while others are victims. There is no better example of this double standard

than the coverage of current developments in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Instead of conveying incomplete narratives that give reign to Israeli aggression, the media must start telling the full story.

This contrasts with the coverage of the war in Ukraine, in which the Western media makes it very clear that Russia is the aggressor and the Ukrainian people are resisting, as any person would if their home were to be invaded. From calling for sanctions on Moscow to praising the use of Molotov cocktails against Russian soldiers in Kyiv, major Western outlets have supported the Ukrainian population's attempts to defend themselves. Yet, when it comes to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, these same outlets often fail to name the aggressor at all. This marks a stark, racist difference in coverage (Albast & Knarr, 2022).

Claiming that the Palestinian resistance is a religious movement is clearly misleading when the Israeli forces are bombing both mosques and churches. This is a clear threat to the lives of Palestinians, specifically.

How outraged the media was about the fake news of Israeli kids getting killed when, in fact, Palestinian kids have been getting murdered for years, and in the past few days alone, around two thousand kids have been brutally murdered.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health announced that 45 bloodlines have been entirely wiped out of the Gaza civil registry, which points to the clear ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

Conclusion

Palestinians are not just fighting for their land; they're fighting for their lives every day. Each minute passes is critical for their presence. The assault on Gaza is not only aimed at Hamas. Israel has said as much. It is aimed at every Palestinian

living, breathing. That's how you end up with 1,000 massacred, and 5,000 of them are children. It's mass bombing with one intention: to obliterate everything. Due to the lack of impartiality, lack of objectivity, lying, and constant falsification of facts in Western media work, it has led to the loss of huge numbers of innocent lives.

Many people have lost their confidence in Western media, and there is continuing doubt about the extent of its impartiality and credibility, and many people are reluctant to follow it. It is certain that the ongoing fire and bombing in Gaza must be stopped and the United Nations project must be responded to, in addition to the many countries demanding a ceasefire.

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