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By Amy Goodman - Denis Moynihan

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As Israel Rampages Gaza

U.S. Media Stokes the Fire



Sources: Democracy Now!

"There are U.S. weapons being used today, right now, in Gaza, to kill innocent civilians, in violation of U.S. law," notes Palestinian-American scholar Khalidi.

As Israel intensifies its brutal response to Hamas' brutal attack on October 7, it is important to hear the voices of those on the front lines on both sides of the conflict. The U.S. mainstream media constantly offers us the voices of Israelis who have suffered from Hamas' acts of violence. I wish the media would also cover the pain suffered by the civilian population of Palestine in this way, as we rarely hear their voice. Listening to the victims' stories in their own voice is the first step in breaking down barriers and cultivating an understanding that can pave the way to a just peace.

Shortly after the Hamas attack, Israel began a new and intense bombardment of the Gaza Strip. Those bearing the brunt of that retaliation are the 2.4 million Palestinians trapped in Gaza by Israel, nearly half of whom are children. The Gaza Strip — an enclave between 6 and 12 kilometers wide and 40 kilometers long — is one of the most densely populated

places on the planet and has been described as the largest open-air prison in the world. Under so-called "normal" conditions, Gazans live under severe military occupation. No one enters or leaves without Israel's permission. Israel controls Gaza's water, food and fuel supplies. Now, in the aftermath of the Hamas attack, the Israeli blockade and bombardment in/on Gaza have taken on a catastrophic character.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant announced: "We have imposed a total blockade on Gaza. There will be no food, water or fuel; Everything will be closed. We're fighting human animals."

At the time of writing, 1,300 Israelis have been confirmed dead, thousands injured, and an estimated 150 people have been kidnapped. Meanwhile, more than 1,350 Palestinians have been killed and approximately 6,000 injured in Israel's devastating attacks on Gaza, a measure of collective punishment in violation of international law.

Raji Sourani is director of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights in Gaza and recipient of the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award. Speaking to Democracy Now!, he said, "There is not a single place that can be considered a safe haven in Gaza; There are fighter jets or drones soaring across the sky. [Bombs] can fall on a building with hundreds of apartments, on a house, on a hospital, on a school or on a shelter used by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees." As he spoke, Souani's house shook from an explosion, but he continued: "Netanyahu says Gazans must leave Gaza. To go where? We don't have a safe broker. [...] It's clearly genocidal."

For his part, Ofer Cassif, an Israeli Jew who sits in Israel's parliament, told Democracy Now!:

"I received a WhatsApp message from a very close friend who was hiding with her husband on the kibbutz. He told me that he was very scared and that he could hear Hamas fighters outside. Unfortunately, those were probably the last words she wrote, because she was murdered along with her husband right after she sent me that message. She was a very good friend of mine, a voter of our party, who was also against the occupation. [...] Innocent civilians on both sides, both Israeli and Palestinian, are paying the price for an arrogant and criminal occupation that Israel refuses to end."

U.S. television networks have sent correspondents to Israel to cover the violence, but they rarely interview Palestinians, Israeli peace activists or journalists who oppose the occupation. Reports of Hamas' alleged beheading of babies have been widely reported on major news channels, a fact that was also mentioned by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu and U.S. President Joe Biden. When questioned, the White House rectified Biden's claim, noting that they have not "been able to confirm" these reports.

The actual acts of violence are horrific enough: 260 young people were massacred at a music festival dedicated to "unity and love." A kibbutz inhabited by Israelis described by one resident as "pacifists" was destroyed. More than 100 of them were killed and several were kidnapped by Hamas. Meanwhile, in Gaza, Israeli bombs are annihilating families and entire neighborhoods. Hospitals and ambulances are under attack. At least six journalists have been killed in Gaza while trying to report on Israeli attacks, which are expected to become increasingly intense.

"The idea that you can lock up five million people, put them behind walls, tighten the siege on them, allow only some food, some water and a little electricity to trickle in, that idea has exploded as a result of the terrible events [that happened recently]. This can't go on like this," [he told Democracy Now! Rashid Khalidi](#), renowned Palestinian-American scholar and Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University. Khalidi continued: "The U.S. should try to defuse the situation. [...] We fund this occupation. We finance this violence. There are U.S. weapons being used today, right now, in Gaza, to kill innocent civilians, in violation of U.S. law."

The U.S. has the ability to exert pressure on Israel to end its occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. As a first step, the media must allow American society to hear the voices of victims from all parties involved in this conflict.

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