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Trump's Exemplary Gaza Plan

Donald Trump has presented the world with a spectacular plan to help/save the people of Gaza. He will take control of the strip and move all the residents of the demolished, unlivable territory to nice safe homes in other countries.

Now, many people, including myself, correctly denounce this plan as outright, egregious, ethnic cleansing, a crime against humanity. Not to mention unhinged. And so it is.



Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump

The Gaza Strip would be turned over to the United States by Israel at the conclusion of fighting. The Palestinians, people like Chuck Schumer, would have already been resettled in far safer and more beautiful communities, with new and modern homes, in the region. They would actually have a chance to be happy, safe, and free. The U.S., working with great development teams from all over the World, would slowly and carefully begin the construction of what would become one of the greatest and most spectacular developments of its kind on Earth. No soldiers by the U.S. would be needed! Stability for the region would reign!!!

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And what is their plan instead?

Unfortunately, most of the people now denouncing this plan have been part of that very plan, helping to carry it out all along. What were Israel and US government under the Biden administration doing by providing all the bombs and weapons that destroyed Gaza and killed many tens of thousands of Gazans over the past 15 months? What were the US and western media doing when they repeated the fake Israeli narrative and supported that killing and demolition in a myriad of explicit and implicit ways? What were all the U.S. and European politicians doing who welcomed Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders and praised the Zionist project that was carrying out that killing and demolition for the past 15 months? What plan did they think Israel and the U.S. were executing?

Now here comes Donald Trump, being crudely blatant, forgoing all the complex “peace process,” “two-state” mumbo-jumbo, under which sanctimonious Western liberals pretend that they don’t know, and are not supporting, the criminal ethnic-cleansing project that Zionism is in Gaza. Trump is telling us that the U.S., now speaking in the same voice as Israel has been using 77 years, is a full-on, leading partner in the Zionist project of erasing the Palestinian people. It’s an exemplary case of stripping the supercilious, hypocritical lipstick from the U.S./Zionist pig. His discourse, in other words, undermines the soft-power face of U.S. imperialism in favor of identification with the utterly-indifferent-to-“soft power” Zionist project.

Gaza, Trump says, is “right now a demolition site,...a hellhole...the people...have been absolutely destroyed...they are living in hell.” True, as he should know, since every U.S. government, including his, has participated in making it so—as *he himself admits*: “It’s just terrible. And that includes on the American side, by the way. We should have never gone in there a long time ago, spent trillions of dollars and created so much death. So it includes Americans.”

So, then, why not “give people a chance at life...a beautiful area with homes and safety and they can live out their lives in peace and harmony”? Let’s have Jordan and Egypt “open their hearts and...give us the kind of land that we need to get this done.” Because there is no other way: “they’ve tried the other...for decades and decades and decades. It’s not going to work. It didn’t work. It will never work. And you have to learn from history...you just can’t let it keep repeating itself.”

Trump is here acknowledging the purpose and *unity* of the US-Israel Zionist project. He is saying, in effect: *Gaza has been destroyed and made unlivable, by us along with the Israelis, and the necessary, as well as most humanitarian, result is to expel the Gazan people, whose*

homeland aspirations, we all assume, are irrelevant to all the important people. We'll take that project over and finish it for the Israelis.

As I've said for over a year, the Israel plan in Gaza has always been to kill or expel the Palestinians—preferably “all of them,” as Trump said, but a great majority will do, for a start. For more than a year. Israel has been saying to the world quite clearly: “See us. We’re killing them all. We don’t care whether you call it ‘genocide’ or not. We have impunity from the U.S. If you’re so concerned for them and want us to stop killing them, and you’re not going to make us stop, take them away. Otherwise, bleat your outrage and watch us keep killing them.” The Biden administration quietly helped the plan, trying to get Egypt to accept Gazan “refugees” in exchange for debt relief.

Everybody saw that and knew depopulation was Israel’s essential plan for Gaza. Western politicians and media pretended they didn’t, thereby enabling it. Donald Trump has made that pretense impossible anymore. He has now explicitly embraced that plan as President of the United States, adding the twist that the U.S. will “take over” the Gaza Strip and take charge of implementing the plan.

So now various Western politicians and media must express outrage. A “violation of international law,” “a straightforward crime against humanity,” cry Western ethicists. Yup, as was the establishment of Israel via the Nakba of 1948, the Israeli war of territorial conquest of 1967, the killings and maimings of Great March of Return protestors in 2018, the repeated previous Israeli demolition bombing campaigns of Gaza, et. al.

It’s easy to denounce Trump’s plan. But what are those outraged Western politicians and media going to do about it that’s different from what they did about the same plan they’ve been accepting for 15 months? What plan do they have that will *put an end* to the present and future “straightforward crimes against humanity” visited upon the Palestinians of Gaza, and make the Strip decently livable for them?

Is their plan to restore some adjusted version of the *status quo ante* October 7, 2023? To spend 10-15 years pouring money and resources into rebuilding” Gaza—80% of the homes, all the schools, hospitals, and civic institutions (Forget about restoring the murdered parents and amputated limbs of tens of thousands of children)? Do they have a plan to do all that *and* ensure Gaza doesn’t just return to the blockade conditions of the world’s largest concentration camp, vulnerable to being demolished again at Israel’s will? Do they have a plan that will make Israel abandon *its* plan for depopulating and seizing Gaza? Do they have a plan for preventing Israel from blocking the reconstruction or from blowing it all up again? Do they have a plan for stopping the U.S. from supporting Israel in destroying Gaza at will?

Do they have a plan to do anything besides garner outraged statements by countries or international institutions or small groups of “progressive” American or European politicians? If that’s their plan, they do not understand, or don’t want to admit they understand, that Trump is right: “It’s not going to work. It didn’t work. It will never work. And you have to learn from history...you just can’t let it keep repeating itself”? Does anybody not understand that the unified force of USrael will not abide it and, in fact, *nobody* wants it?

Or do they have *the only kind of plan* that will allow Gaza to be rebuilt *for Gazans*, the only kind of plan that will end the straightforward crime against humanity being committed and offer Gazans the possibility of a decent life in Gaza—a plan to *end* the Israeli presence in and control of Gaza, a plan that will have to be effected *by force*?

Since nobody wants the *status quo ante*, unless outraged Western liberals have a plan like this, that will achieve the *defeat of the US/Zionist project in Gaza*, they don’t have a better, or more plausible, plan than Trump’s, which is Israel’s, which is the only plan unfolding. If anyone thinks otherwise, please share it.

Trump’s plan, that is, is an exemplary moment in the utter failure of the Western world to imagine, let alone plan, any future for the Palestinians, or the world, free of submission to Zionism.

Is the only extant “plan” in operation—the always-intended plan for the depopulation of Gaza—possible, with or without the U.S. “taking it over”? There is no question that almost every country in the world and, crucially, all Arab states in the region, will adamantly and vociferously, oppose it. Regarding Egypt and Jordan, the named intended recipients of Gaza’s population, Trump says, with his trademark arrogance: “I know ...they say they’re not going to accept. I say they will.”

Here, again, Trump’s plan exemplifies his new attitude of dropping soft-power games and explicitly embracing the imperialism of the bully. In doing so, he is reminding us, in a way the liberal imperialists hate to have seen, that behind the soft power of liberal or humanitarian appeals there always was implicitly the hard fist of the bully. He is reminding the world who’s the boss and who are the client states. Trump feels confident he can get Egypt and Jordan to do what he wants because *they always do* what the U.S. wants, if the U.S. insists. Trump knows they have for a long time been economically bought off and/or politically subservient to the core demands of the U.S. *and*, therefore, Israel. That’s also the case with most other Arab states that have somewhat more independence, including Saudi Arabia. At least that *has been* the case. Arab regimes have betrayed the Palestinians repeatedly for their

own advantage within the U.S. imperium. It's also the case that Trump is counting on real but fading power of that imperium, as we'll discuss below.

Moving Example

Is his, or any other, expulsion plan possible? Let's take a figure of two million Gazans. Can he bribe or threaten or cajole Egypt and Jordan to take—if not two million, 250,000 between them? Per the NYT: “the president may have ways of bending them to his will.” That's a quarter of the population, gone. Can he not get other Arab states, from Morocco to the Gulf, to take another 500 thousand? Don't forget newly ~~captured~~ liberated Syria! Another 500 thousand to “humanitarian,” immigrant-friendly, and Zionist European client states? At that point, the deed is done, no matter what happens to the rest.

Of course, the U.S. does not just need to “persuade” countries to take in Gazans, it must also get the Gazans to leave. To achieve that, there is nothing but coercion. But, as Trump says, enormous coercive force is already being applied. Gaza *has been* made unlivable. The US now offers a way out of a situation *it* has made unlivable, masking the coda of that coercion as concern. “*Stay in the miserable concentration camp we've created for you or leave*“ is a coercive command, not a gesture of concern.

Here's the hackneyed phrase that's never been more appropriate: Trump does not think the Gazan people have any agency. He does not think about the Gazan people, period. Trump sees no building left standing; he does not see that there are ~2,000,000 people standing strong. In his ignorant, narcissistic, American-exceptionalist world, they are dispensable pawns of no importance, who can be easily moved around or, at worst, bought off. That's why he does not even consider letting them back into Gaza after he turns it into a beautiful, Arab-free gated community.

Those with any historical consciousness, or with eyes to see, know that there are no braver or more steadfast people than Gazans, who will fiercely resist displacement, as Mohammed Fares, a 24-year-old resident of Gaza City, says: “I need to stay in my land — my life, my family and my memories are here, I have something in Gaza I can't get anywhere else. I'll stay, even through hell.”

But we must resist triumphalizing the condition of a battered population. Whatever contempt we have for Trump's dismissive arrogance, it would be foolish to deny the new, hellish reality that has been created, that he recognizes, and that makes it not as impossible as we'd like to think that many Gazans will take a ticket out. Before the present slaughter, 32% of Gazans expressed a desire to emigrate. Now, Gaza *is* an unlivable hell, and unless that changes, quickly, for many families with children, a better life, a minimally decent life, will

be hard to reject *on principle*, as 33-year-old Mukhlis al-Masri of Beit Hanoun admits: “It’s unacceptable to expel people from their homes. But I never thought I would get to this place, where everything is a struggle. Do I want to live through a tragedy for another 20 or 30 years? Do I want to continue to live through hell? I can’t.” Per the NYT: “If he were able to move outside Gaza, Mr. al-Masri said, he would.”

If ten thousand or so Gazans leave, the snowball will be rolling. Who will then stop more families leaving? Any attempt by Hamas or other resistance groups to prevent people from leaving would be a political disaster.

Kid ourselves not: Given the desperate conditions of life in Gaza, it would be a mistake to think a coercive, “concerned” emigration plan is impossible. *They’ve done it before*, and Nakba 2 is well underway.

But it’s also a very big mistake for Trump to ignore, as he does, the “agency” of a re-armed and enlarged (15,000 new fighters!) Hamas and its allied resistance fighters. They’re going to be a little harder to coerce, even with concern. Trump seems to think he can have a plan for moving almost two million people without a plan for defeating the tens of thousands of resistance fighters who are going to resist him, and whom the US and Israel have not been able to defeat over the last 15 months. If the U.S. now “owns” Gaza, doesn’t that mean the U.S. army will have to go there and fight them? Or does he think they’ll slink away in the face of his swelled chest? Or maybe that he can buy them off? This is where Trump’s twist takes a turn to incomprehensible cluelessness. Does he not see this is the surest way to destroy whatever political movement he has built in the U.S. and elsewhere?

Trump’s Gaza plan is an exemplary case of his bully imperialism, which he is enacting everywhere—certainly in Latin America and even in Europe—and it will run into serious problems. Trump is doing more to undermine U.S. hegemony in the world than anybody on the left has done in the last twenty years. He either really doesn’t understand the value of soft power, or he’s convinced the U.S. is losing so much soft and hard power so fast that he has to move aggressively to re-establish dominance. I don’t think he realizes the U.S. has *already* lost too much power relative to new economic and military kids on the block, to whom even the smaller kids can turn for help, for the U.S. to play the bully anymore. Like every bully, he will only learn when he gets slapped down, which will happen the more he threatens, even if the other players know that may make him more immediately dangerous.

Of course, in the case of Gaza and Palestine, the US-Israel bully pair has gone beyond bluff and is threatening to build on the enormous damage it has already wrought. Who is going to slap down those conjoined bullies, each of which can and will destroy you even as they’re

falling to the ground? They may commit political suicide, but they can bring Gaza down with them. Hamas and allied groups can put up a helluva fight in Gaza, but can they stop the slaughter or the depopulation? Will any other military/political actor step in to help them? In time for the people of Gaza to have a decent life in their homeland? In time to stop the explicitly threatened Gazafication of the West Bank and Lebanon? There are countries and groups of countries that *could*, but they would have to take an existential risk *for the Palestinians*. That no one has done that through the vicious straightforward crime against humanity that we've been watching for over a year makes me doubt that anyone will now.

Irony is dead

Ironically, I think Netanyahu must be uneasy about Trump's too-blatant embrace of the ethnic-cleansing plan. First, it brings too much attention to the plan too soon. What was being prepared largely behind the scenes, on Israel's schedule, with governments and media able to ignore it, has now been embraced and announced in the most blatant ethno-supremacist terms by the President of the United States. Every government and media outlet must take a position on it—a negative position—and ask a hundred questions about it. Even Republican politicians are scrambling to try to walk it back. This is not the kind of attention that will make fulfilling the plan easier.

Second, the U.S. is going to “own” Gaza? Gaza will be “turned over to the United States” so Trump can turn it into the “The Riviera of the Middle East”? Trump is clearly more interested in a real-estate grift than the Zionist fundamentals of the “Greater Israel” master plan. Sure, they can be mutually reinforcing, but it doesn't sound like Netanyahu's daddy's settler enterprise. It sounds more like a ball of Zio-realtor confusion that's going to be played out on the world social-media stage.

There are a lot of questions to work out—starting with: Who controls this territory over the *10-15-year* “rebuilding” period? As President of the U.S., is Donald really going to build his Mar-a-Largo on the Mediterranean as an exclusionary Jewish-supremacist colony to be turned over to Israel, which is the whole point for Israel?

Third, and most unsettling [pun accepted] for Netanyahu, is that Trump's announced plan will likely catalyze a renewed, urgent push for the two-state solution, as well as for maintaining the ceasefire.

Everyone's afraid of the virtually certain end of the ceasefire after the first phase, and the resumption of Israel's mass slaughter in Gaza under the continuing pretext of having to “eliminate” Hamas, which has demonstrated its persistent strength and control. In the confused and impossible logic of this situation, it is possible that Trump, in his narcissistic

delusion, may want to pressure the Israelis to keep to the ceasefire deal, while he pursues his/their depopulation *cum* real estate development plan without a background of ongoing carnage. (Or without having to fight Hamas? I said “delusion.”)

At the same time, it is virtually certain that the Arab and European states, who want to avoid having their reputations ruined or their polities rent by political upheaval, *will* press for continuing the ceasefire and will definitely rally international powers to press for the two-state solution immediately, as the only way to avoid both the resumption of the Israeli carnage and the advancement of Trump’s ethnic cleansing plan. Saudi Arabia’s statement, within minutes of Trump’s announcement, rejecting its entire premise and emphasizing that without a Palestinian state—which is “not the subject of negotiation or concessions”—they are out of the “normalization” game, which is so crucial to Israel, exemplifies the problem Trump has created.

The Israelis will only relent to any Trump pressure to maintain the ceasefire if they are convinced he *is* working with and for them on achieving the expulsion agenda, and only as long as they are convinced he is succeeding. They will ignore or sabotage any effort the Arab, European, or other countries make to advance the two-state solution.

The two-state solution is anathema to the Israelis, who will do *anything* to prevent it. Trump doesn’t give, and probably doesn’t understand, a whit about it:

Does that mean that you do not support the two-state solution?

Donald Trump: It doesn’t mean anything about a two-state or a one-state or any other state

If Trump’s plan provokes a renewed push for the two-state solution, Netanyahu will rue the day Trump opened his mouth.

Beyond Sherlock

Because of the fundamental, contradictory demands of the Zionist colonial project and the Palestinian national liberation project, none of which Donald Trump cares about or understands, neither achieving the two-state solution nor avoiding the depopulation of Gaza will be possible unless there is a *military defeat* and withdrawal of Israel. That would come as a result of the fierce resistance of Hamas and allied forces (local and international), backed by the solid support of the Gazan people, in combination with the overextension and exhaustion of the Israeli military and citizenry. The craziest, and most necessary, plan of all.

Trump’s plan is exemplary. It’s a fine example of the hypocrisy of the Western liberal countries and pundits complaining about it, of the erasure of Palestinian lives and concerns, of Zionism’s historical plans for the Palestinian Arabs, of the assumed, unified US/Israeli Zionist project, of the hidden tensions within that project, of Trump’s revanchist American

bully imperialism and the longstanding dominance over client states that underlies it, of the confusion, ignorance, and narcissism of Trump himself, and of the impossibility of all plans put forward under the assumption that USrael controls everything.

End of day, any plan that doesn't end with Israel defeated and driven out of Gaza will end up with the continued crushing subjugation of the Gazan people, whether in the Strip or in a diaspora, and will be no better or less ridiculous than Donald Trump's.

I have no idea how Gaza or the West Bank or the Zionist project is going to end up. We're beyond Sherlock—every possibility seems impossible, including the possibility that the carnage will go on forever, or as long as it has. I do fear that, if not Trump's, some Gaza emigration/expulsion plan is the most exemplary of Zionist history, and may turn out to be the least impossible of the impossible outcomes we can foresee.

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