

THE WAR ISSUE: STUDENTS DISCUSS ISRAEL & GAZA



THE DAY AFTER THE WAR

EITAN YUNGER

These past few months have been horrifying for us as Jews. We have witnessed the slaughter of more than 12,000 innocent civilians, along with the abduction of almost 250 others. But the most concerning threats against us, Canadian Jews, have been the lack of condemnation of these atrocities by the international community, the lack of support for Israel in these challenging times and, perhaps most concerning, the support of Hamas in this war. But, thank G-d, we are emerging from these trying times united as Jews and supporters of the Jewish state.

In the capital cities of Jerusalem and Washington, D.C., Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Joe Biden both stated that they have agreed upon a common goal for this war: the eradication of Hamas. At a first glance, dismantling a small terrorist group may seem like a simple task for two of the military giants of the world. But sadly, as many have already realized, Hamas has become more than a terrorist group, it has evolved into a mindset or a philosophy that calls for the extermination of Jews and the downfall of the State of Israel. That mindset, which has spread to the West, has led to people calling for a ceasefire, an Islamic State within Israel's territory and, most surprisingly, justifications for Osama bin Laden's 9/11 attacks. Because of the bloodshed that this philosophy has created and its justification for

attacks on not only Israel, but America too, Netanyahu and Biden, who are usually polar opposites politically, have agreed on this goal. Both Biden and Netanyahu know that the best way to counter this ideology is to root it out from the source, which is Hamas' dictatorship in Gaza.

What the two leaders disagree on though, is what to do after Hamas is out of the picture. Baruch Hashem, the IDF are making one astounding victory after another in the Gaza Strip and hopefully, Be'ezrat Hashem, the invasion will be completed soon. There are many options on the table for whoever will be present at the post-war negotiations. Most probably, the two most important figures will be representatives of the Biden administration and representatives from Netanyahu's administration. Both parties see the ideal Gazan future being vastly different, with both parties having different priorities in the region. Who will be in charge? The Americans? The Israelis? The Palestinian Authority (PA)? Maybe even the Saudis? These are extremely relevant questions to us as Jews in Canada who support the rebuilding of Southern Israel. Furthermore, rumours have been floating regarding the resettlement of Gush Katif as a result of this war. With my research and amateur opinions,

I hope to explore the different options and pick out the most likely outcome.

The first option—probably the most unlikely—is that Israel controls the Gaza Strip. However, this is extremely unlikely. For starters, Israel does not want to accept two million new citizens and it will not, because a portion of the people in Gaza want to destroy the State of Israel. If Israel were to govern the people of Gaza, they would be forced, under heavy international pressure, to give the two million people living in Gaza full citizenship, like any other Israeli. This could never happen because Israel could not accept two million new citizens who would be allowed freedom of movement all over Israel and the rest of the world. This could be a security threat for not only Israel, but any country that permits Israeli entry. Also, it would upset the delicate balance of power that is the Knesset, which currently has both Jewish and Arab politicians. Moreover, the Biden administration is unlikely to let this situation play out as it is a step backward from a two-state solution. The Israeli occupation of Gaza in any form, militarily and governmentally, is a step back from Biden's stated goal of creating a Palestinian state in the region. Therefore, a scenario where Israel

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

TERRORISM VS. FREEDOM FIGHTERS: THE HAMAS DILEMMA

SHMULIK KURGAUNKER

As tensions in the Middle East have risen, the term ‘freedom fighter’ has been utilized in many news articles describing what Hamas is doing. But are freedom fighters truly people that behead babies, rape women and laugh as they massacre families? A real freedom fighter is Mahatma Gandhi, a humble man who started a non-violent protest to free India from the British Empire, ultimately accomplishing his goal through much perseverance and struggle. Martin Luther King, another freedom fighter, was a peaceful activist for equal rights for black people in the early 1960s. Dr. King rallied 250,000 people in Washington, D.C. to fight for these rights where he gave his famous I have a dream speech, and ultimately, a change occurred in the fight for equality. He persistently preached a non-violent answer to the issue that was at hand, with one of his most famous quotations being, “In spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace.” In comparison, terrorism is “the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.” It is clear that the actions that Hamas are taking to get their “freedom” aligns directly with the definition of terrorism rather than freedom fighters.

Although Hamas aligns with the definition of terrorist, how can they still claim that they are fighting for freedom? Directly in Hamas’s charter it says:

The Day of Judgement will not come about until Moslems fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say O Moslems, O Abdulla, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him.

Hamas is clearly fighting for ethnic cleansing and eradication of all Jews, which goes directly against what a freedom fighter is. This statement in the charter acknowledges that the organization wants to kill Jews, which is terrorism, not fighting for freedom. If you would still like to argue that killing is okay to fight for the freedom of Palestine, then why brutalize the killing? To find an answer to this question, a look at article twenty of the Hamas charter is sufficient:

In their Nazi treatment, the Jews made no exception for women or children. Their policy of striking fear in the heart is meant for all. They attack people where their breadwinning is concerned, extorting their money and threatening their honor. They deal with people as if they were the worst war criminals. Deportation from the homeland is a kind of murder.

This statement is one that Hamas uses to justify the brutalization of Jews, by saying the “stolen” homeland is murder and feel that it was taken, when mandate Palestine (never under Palestinian rule) was given to the Jews for a Jewish state by the United Nations.

There is no justification for brutal murder, even if what you are fighting for is a “stolen” homeland. There is no rational system of justice with a proper moral compass that claims brutalization and torture of a people is the proper way about going to accomplish a goal, and these terrorists definitely cannot be referred to as freedom fighters. ■

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

governed Gaza would likely mean a loss of U.S support for Israel, which is a non-starter. As a result, I find this first option of an Israeli-controlled Gaza, unlikely.

Next, it has been discussed that Mahmoud Abbas, leader of the PA, could be given control of Gaza. I think this is unlikely because Netanyahu would be opposed to letting Abbas have more control, given his unpredictability. Giving power to Abbas is also a step closer to creating a Palestinian state, which Netanyahu strongly opposes. So, as with the first option, a scenario where the PA would control Gaza after this war is finished is also unlikely.

Lastly, it has been rumoured that the U.S. and Israel would surrender Gaza to either the Saudis or to the UAE. Personally, I find this most intriguing as it would be interesting bringing in a third-party country to help reboot the economy of Gaza, post-war. In fact, I first heard of the possibility of this happening from an expert in Middle East diplomacy, who formerly worked for the U.S. State Department in Middle East Foreign Policy. This could possibly happen because Saudi Arabia and the UAE are countries made up of Sunni Muslims, like the majority of Gazans, and it could be a historic compromise for Netanyahu and the Biden administration. Also, the Saudis and the UAE have the finances to invest into Gaza. Along with potential financial backing from the U.S., they would probably be willing to invest large amounts of money into Gazan infrastructure. It is also an interesting compromise between Netanyahu and Biden. For Netanyahu, this proposal doesn’t immediately set the stage for a Palestinian State, and it also provides a concession to Biden that could possibly save Netanyahu’s political career. Furthermore, Biden could be interested in the Saudi/UAE proposal as it involves Sunni Muslims rebuilding Gaza, as opposed to a foreign power, and it could possibly lead to a Palestinian state sometime in the future.

To conclude, whether Israel, the PA, the Saudis/UAE or another power controls Gaza post-war, each outcome has an extreme impact on what Israel would look like after this is all said and done. I hope this article provided some insight into some possible scenarios and Be’ezrat Hashem our homeland will be safe once again. ■

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

NOCHI WEINBERG

The ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict has gained the attention of the world once again, and the toll it is taking on individuals is heartbreaking. This ongoing conflict, with its very complex historical background, is resulting in tragic losses of both soldiers and innocent civilians who only want to live their lives. Israel’s military has implemented many warning systems to alert innocent civilians in targeted areas before launching military operations. Israel is determined to take every possible measure to keep these innocent civilians safe, no matter what it takes. Israel has used methods such as making phone calls, sending text messages, even dropping thousands of leaflets throughout the Gaza strip to warn residents to evacuate, all to save people who are not necessarily on their side to begin with. Although these warnings do not take away all the risks, they show that Israel is making an effort to eliminate the possibility of innocent lives being at risk. Hamas, on the other hand, uses the opposite approach. While Israel takes the initiative to warn everyone they can to evacuate specific locations within Gaza, Hamas uses their own civilian population as human shields.

Civilian casualties are a problem because they result in tragic loss of innocent lives. In any sort of conflict, the main goal should

ZIONISM

DOVI WEITZNER

When I hear the word 'Israel', I immediately think of my home. I have grown up loving where I live and being a proud Canadian. I am forever thankful for the opportunity to grow up in Toronto, Canada, but it is not my true, eternal home. What makes Israel so special to me? What ties me to Israel? The world is home to countless cultures and religions. Everyone has a story to tell and roots to a particular heritage. However, all Jews share one thing in common—we are all connected to Israel. God told Abraham to go to Israel and establish a Jewish nation there. Jews have been living in the land of Israel for thousands of years.

Following the destruction of the Second Temple, Jews were expelled from the land of Israel. After being expelled from Israel, Jews were scattered all across the globe and settled in many different places. However, Jews always remained connected to their eternal homeland, Israel, no matter where

they went. Both sides of my family went to Eastern Europe. Before the Holocaust, my dad's family was in Poland and later moved to Germany. My grandfather who was born in Germany after the Holocaust, moved to Israel in 1950. Prior to the Holocaust, my mom's family lived in Hungary. They immigrated to Israel in 1948 to live on a kibbutz. That was the kibbutz where my grandmother was born.

Aside from my eternal Jewish connection to the land of Israel, I am deeply connected to the state of Israel and am an Israeli myself. My mother was born in Jerusalem and was raised there until she was eight years old. I have an Israeli passport and have visited Israel several times. My actual experiences in Israel differ from how many people portray the land. When you arrive in Israel and the warm air hits you, you instantly fall in love. From Tel Aviv's beautiful buildings to the crystal clear water of Eilat, from the valleys of the Gush to

the beautiful hills of Jerusalem, Israel is stunning. The food, the culture, the sights and sounds of Israel are all phenomenal. You feel one with the country whether you are in religious areas, secular areas, Arab quarters, Jewish quarters, or Christian quarters. There is so much to do and see in Israel, and visiting Israel is the only way to fully appreciate its beauty.

Unfortunately, as we all know, a horrific attack on Israel occurred recently. Terrorists from Hamas crossed the Israeli-Gaza border on October 7, 2023, and murdered, raped, burned, defaced, tortured, and destroyed over 1200 people. Men, women, children, the elderly, Jews, and Arabs, alike. Hamas also took over 200 Israeli hostages back to Gaza. Israel has rightfully retaliated against Hamas-controlled Gaza while also doing everything possible to protect civilians. The Israeli army has been sending text messages, phone calls, emergency alerts, and dropping leaflets into Gaza to warn innocent civilians that they must evacuate areas for their own safety.

All this recent conflict has shown me is just how incredible Israel is and how twisted people can be in making Israel look bad. Israel has always made a concerted effort to protect innocent Palestinians. They deserve to be protected, and it must be stated unequivocally that not all Palestinians are evil. It is a harsh reality of war that innocent people are killed in wars and conflicts. Israel has continuously gone above and beyond to protect Palestinian citizens who are innocent, as best they can.

In the media, Israel is frequently portrayed as the bad guy. Israel is viewed as the big bad bully who came in and took Palestinian land. Prior to the state of Israel, Palestine was controlled by the British mandate and the Ottoman Empire. Since the expulsion of the Jews from the land, the Palestinian people have been under the control of external empires. After 6 million Jews were slaughtered in the Holocaust, the

Zionist movement finally persuaded the world and the United Nations to recognize Israel as a Jewish state in 1948. We did not steal the land; rather, it was returned to us. Even so, Israel continued to offer the Palestinians a two-state solution and wished to coexist peacefully with them. After rejecting a two-state solution, the Palestinians encouraged neighbouring countries to attack Israel. The media portrays Israel as the violent ones who start wars, when in fact Israel has been constantly attacked and attempted to be destroyed. We would have peace if Israel's enemies put down their weapons, but there would be no Israel if Israel put down its weapons.

The media and anyone who supports Palestine must recognize that Jews have nowhere else to go. Antisemitism follows Jews wherever they go. Being pro-Palestine has become synonymous with being anti-Semitic. Israel is the lone Jewish state. If you support Palestine and care about Palestinians, you must recognize that the only way for Palestinians to live peaceful and secure lives is under Israeli leadership. The Palestinians are being led to destruction by a Hamas-controlled Gaza. Hamas doesn't care if its own civilians die; all it cares about is that Israelis die and Jews are destroyed. Israel's stereotypes and misconceptions are untrue. Israel is far from perfect, but it does everything possible to be humane and ethical.

Israel is not a superpower that rules over Palestinians. It is a small country about the size of New Jersey. All of Israel's power has come from the hard work of Israelis with the goal of peace, not destruction. People get confused by how the media portrays Israel, in my opinion. I believe that every innocent civilian in the world has the right to exist. I care about Palestinian civilians, but Palestinians and the rest of the world need to understand that Israel is not the bad guy. Israel wants peace. ■

be to protect civilians, especially the people of your land, and to minimize harm to ones who are not directly involved in this conflict. Civilian casualties are overall a terrible tragedy, leading to death and suffering of people who have no direct role in the war.

What is being done to help those with no direct role in the war? Israel, despite being in a state of conflict, has taken many measures to provide medical care to Palestinians who were injured in the debris of the attacks, going so far as allowing them to receive treatment in Israeli hospitals. These actions show where Israel's state of mind is. Yes, they have a job to get done, but they are still taking into account the innocent lives of the civilians, not only in Israel but also in Gaza. On the other side of things, it is important to acknowledge the tactics that Hamas is pursuing, putting their own citizens at risk. Using densely populated areas as sites for launching rockets not only endangers Palestinian lives but also damages the homes and structures in Gaza, once again making it even harder for their civilians to live.

Although Israel has taken measures to limit civilian casualties, the same cannot be said of Hamas. Israel has executed several warning systems and made major efforts to protect these innocent civilians, while Hamas's tactics create potential risk to their own people, and continuing to do so, showing no care. ■

WILL WE BREAK?

ADAM SCHWARTZ

When you hear “Israel” what comes to mind? What do you believe is the perception of Israel by the rest of the world?

The Land of Milk and Honey never ceases to excite me. The cornucopia of olives, falafel, and hummus creates a haven for any individual. (Except for the hummus; I am allergic to sesame.) Israel represents the house of the Jewish nation. The mere 5.5 million acres of land, which is approximately the size of New Jersey, is the nationalistic symbol of Jewish hope.

Israel is a nation that provides kavana, hospitality, and demonstrates unity. This is done through acts of charity, granting work permits to Arabs in need, and acting as one united nation. For example, Israel provided medical and humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees in the Syrian civil war despite Israeli-Syrian turmoil.

Through the perilous times of the war in the Middle East, Israel has always been the focal point of conflict. A land surrounded by Arab countries, Israel geographically seems doomed beyond measure. However, Israel has prevailed even when all Arab countries attempted to defeat it, as seen in the Yom Kippur War, among many other wars. We are small in numbers and geographical presence; however, we are strong in spirit.

As Israel is going through the conflict with Hamas, Israel is more united than ever. As a nation, we are volunteering, donating, and helping in every way possible to protect our brothers and sisters, providing a glimpse into the unadulterated unity of our nation.

The conflict between Israel and Gaza has impacted how people around the world view Israel. This standing and deeply rooted dispute has caused a division of opinions globally. Many individuals have beliefs about this issue, and their stance on the Palestinian conflict dramatically affects their overall perception of Israel.

One significant factor shaping this perception is how the media covers the conflict. The various narratives presented in the media, which range from portrayals of suffering on multiple sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to narratives that emphasize Israel's security concerns, contribute to the wide range of global opinions about Israel. Concerns about rights have also contributed to a perception of Israel in certain circles. Criticisms regarding human rights violations in areas such as Gaza and the West Bank have painted Israel as an oppressor. This stems from the misconception that Israel is hostile in occupying these territories and treats Palestinians as second class. This is despite the fact that Israel provides food, water, and electricity to Palestinian citizens. On the other hand, supporters of Israel highlight the nation's need for security and its ongoing challenges from groups like Hamas. They argue that Israel's actions are necessary for self-defense; hence the Israel Defense Force.

Diplomatic relations and political alliances are instrumental in shaping public perceptions, as countries that either endorse or criticize Israeli policies can significantly impact the viewpoints of their citizens. Additionally, the historical and religious significance of Israel, rooted in its importance to Jews and Christians, further complicates the way the nation is perceived on the global stage. The enduring Palestinian-Israeli conflict, marked by a complex web of historical grievances and geopolitical complexities, plays a pivotal role in molding the intricate and multifaceted global perspectives of Israel.

The current Israeli-Palestinian conflict has once again created much social and political dispute, changing the public perception of Israel. At the beginning of the conflict, most stood with Israel and condemned

Hamas as their heinous crimes were highlighted as purely fueled by hate. However, now, individuals are starting to stand with Hamas as they see media propaganda. Individuals are easily swayed to align with the Palestinian side because Israel is seen as powerful, giving Palestine the “underdog” effect. For example, Hamas publicly stated that the IDF bombed a Palestinian hospital. However, IDF drone footage proves that Hamas bombed the hospital from their own missile misfire. Unfortunately, people do not desire the truth, they want to believe the IDF bombed the hospital, therefore this does not shape public opinion.

Before this conflict, I always thought the public perception of Israel was deficient, and everyone hated the state. But there has been evidence to suggest otherwise which

has changed my perception of how Israel is viewed. This is important because it raises global Israeli nationalism and gives a sense of hope on how Israel will be perceived in the future.

The world is easily swayed in universal beliefs through various factors like the media. Media is the source of misinformation and lack of context. Short video clips of graphic imagery and out of context pictures, due to modern times, are more prevalent now than ever. Many individuals are standing with Israel now, but many individuals did not stand with Israel in previous conflicts. This leads me to believe that the rest of the world has no defiant perception of Israel, as the public perception of the state fluctuates too much to have a conclusive answer. In a unique dichotomy of opinion, the world views Israel as positive and negative. ■

Name: _____

BAS Crossword - Teacher Edition!
Complete the crossword puzzle below (include titles, ex: Mrs, Mr, etc)

Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

2. Who is one with the coyotes?
5. Whose biggest flex is that their name is on the periodic table?
6. Who is the Ashki teacher who teaches the Sefardic Experience?
8. World famous singer of "I'm shomer don't touch me"?
9. Who holds more math extra helps than math classes per week?

Down

1. UO's favourite savta?
3. Who spends more time at YOC than YOC students and less time at UO than UO students?
4. Who owns the most extensive beret collection?
7. Who is probably part of the mossad?