

The background of the entire page is a dramatic, dark scene. In the center, a child is shown in silhouette, standing with their back to the viewer. They are looking towards a city that has been completely destroyed, with rubble and the remains of buildings scattered everywhere. In the distance, a massive, bright orange and yellow nuclear mushroom cloud rises into a dark, smoky sky, dominating the upper half of the image. The overall atmosphere is one of devastation and tragedy.

THE
**DOUBLE
DOUBLE**
STANDARD

MEDIA REACTIONS TO ZIONIST TERROR

Jody McIntyre & Mohammed Hijab

 SAPIENCE
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The Double Standard: Contents

Part 1: Introduction

| | |
|--|-------|
| The double standard | 6-8 |
| Defining terrorism | 8 |
| Zionist violence as a building block of the Israeli political entity | 8-11 |
| Terrorism as a tactic of the Israeli political entity | 11-16 |
| Partnering with apartheid | 16-17 |
| The unreliability of Israeli claims | 17-19 |

Part 2: Media responses to the 1946 King David Hotel Bombing

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Background | 20-23 |
| Responses of the British media | 23-28 |
| Responses of the Palestinian media | 29-32 |
| Responses of the Jewish media | 32-39 |

Part 3: Media responses to the Jabalia Refugee Camp bombing of October 31st 2023

| | |
|---|-------|
| Background | 40-41 |
| Responses of the British media | 41-49 |
| Responses of the Palestinian and Arab media | 49-53 |
| Responses of the Jewish media | 53-59 |

Part 4: Conclusion

| | |
|------------|-------|
| Conclusion | 61-64 |
|------------|-------|

The Double Standard

Media reactions to Zionist terror

The double standard

In this text, we will examine how the media's response to acts of terrorism carried out by Zionist organisations has evolved. We will analyse and compare two such incidents in detail. Firstly, the King David Hotel Bombing of 1946, where the Irgun, a pre-state predecessor to the IDF, blew up the headquarters of the British authorities in Palestine, killing 91 and injuring 46.¹ Secondly, an IDF air strike on the Jabalia refugee camp in Gaza on 31st October 2023, killing at least 126, including 69 children, and injuring 280.² In the British, Arab, and Jewish media, the former was described as a terrorist attack, whereas the latter was not. By analysing the press coverage of both atrocities, this text will question why this is the case.

The strike on the Jabalia refugee camp was one example of several such attacks, and therefore must be understood in context. At the time of writing, the Jabalia refugee camp has endured eleven major military attacks within two months. Such a sentence is difficult to even commit to paper. A refugee camp being bombed from the sky. Homes being levelled. Lives being snatched away. Furthermore, it is difficult, although imperative nonetheless, to maintain the gravity of each incident within the avalanche of the Israeli onslaught on Gaza. Again, this introduction can only provide figures available at the time of writing.

At least 15,000 lives taken. Many thousands still under the rubble. Over 6,000 innocent children murdered. More than 36,000 people injured. 26 out of 35 hospitals shut down.³ Al-Shifa Hospital under siege with Israeli tanks perched menacingly at the entrance and Israeli snipers shooting nurses through the windows. On November 11th, in one of the most prescient images of the current escalation and surely a damning indictment of humanity that will resound through the ages, 39 premature babies shared a single bed at al-Shifa after being removed from incubators which were unable to operate any longer for lack of fuel. By the time the hospital was forcibly evacuated by the Israeli military, eight had died, taking their final gasps before they ever had a chance to breathe.⁴

1 Green, D., (2021) 'This Day in Jewish History: Irgun Blows Up British HQ at Jerusalem's King David Hotel', *Ha'aretz*, 22 July. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-07-22/ty-article/this-day-in-jewish-history-irgun-blows-up-british-hq-at-jerusalems-king-david-hotel/0000017f-f5f9-d4de-abff-6fd85990000>.

2 Airwars (2023) *ISPT0783*. Available at: <https://airwars.org/civilian-casualties/ispt0783-october-31-2023/>.

3 *Al Jazeera* (2023) 'Israel-Gaza war in maps and charts: Live tracker', 9 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker>.

4 Rajyanshi, A., (2023) 'The Race to Save Premature Babies in Gaza', *Time*, 22 November. Available at: <https://time.com/6338832/gaza-al-shifa-hospital-rescue-mission-babies/>.

Inconceivably, all the above is justified by the Israeli government by Hamas' incursion into the Israeli political entity on October 7th and their subsequent military pursuit of the organisation. The Israeli narrative is allowed to run riot on Western screens. Here, the double standard is laid bare. Israeli claims, however absurd, are always afforded an air of respectability. So, when the Israeli President holds up one laminated card with "Al-Qaeda" written in English on the front and another with "instructions on how to make chemical weapons",⁵ or brandishes a fresh copy of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, translated into Arabic, with a Post-it note on the inside cover, and claims that they were found on the bodies of slain Hamas fighters in "children's living rooms",⁶ we are expected to listen. And, most pertinently in recent days, accusations that Hamas use the population of Gaza as a collective human shield are repeated ad infinitum without any evidence.⁷

Nevertheless, we must not allow the truth to perish under the pounding of Israeli bombs.

The recent, heart wrenching events in Palestine have refocused the world's attention on the brutality and lawlessness of the Israeli political and military apparatus. For Muslims and people of conscious around the world, the footage being broadcast from Gaza specifically has been unbearable to watch. We are living in a new age of media, where state-sponsored falsehoods, cover-ups, and acts of terrorism are exposed in real time.

However, as this text will examine, the terroristic and genocidal tendencies of the inappropriately named "Israeli Defence Forces" are not something new. The IDF were formed from the remnants of three terrorist organisations. These were terrorist organisations not only by the definition of the Palestinians or the Arab world, but by the definition of the British government too. The Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi (or "Stern Gang") are proudly held up as the direct predecessors to the IDF. Perhaps appropriately so, for all three have a violent past. As one example of the IDF's terrorist origins, Menachim Begin was a leader of the Irgun – a terrorist paramilitary group – and later the twice prime minister of Israel. He was also the founder of the Likud, the largest political party in Israel and home of the fascistic Benjamin Netanyahu, now in his sixth term as prime minister. The seventh prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir, was a leader of the breakaway Lehi faction after their founder, Avraham Stern, was shot and killed whilst being arrested by British police.

The question arises therefore: what has changed? By any fair assessment, the Israeli political

5 Bunkall, A., (2023) 'Hamas fighters were carrying instructions on how to make chemical weapons, Israeli president claims', *Sky News*, 23 October. Available at: <https://news.sky.com/story/hamas-terrorists-were-carrying-instructions-on-how-to-make-chemical-weapons-israeli-president-claims-12990547>.

6 *BBC News* (2023) 'Isaac Herzog challenged on air strikes and says Mein Kampf found on Hamas fighter', 12 November. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-67396773>.

7 Saad, H., (2021) 'Busting the myth of Palestinian "human shields" in Gaza', *TRT World*. Available at: <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/busting-the-myth-of-palestinian-human-shields-in-gaza-12766506>.

entity today would fall under the definition of a terrorist state. Is it the case that the colour of the victims' skin sets the definition? Or is judgement simply determined by whether the perpetrator supports Western interests or not? After all, as George Monbiot said, the West has never been morally consistent, but rather strategically consistent.⁸

Defining “terrorism”

Whenever “terrorism” is mentioned in this text, I am adhering to the following definition, as set by the United Nations:

“Any action... that is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.”⁹

Zionist violence as a building block of the Israeli political entity

Zionist paramilitary and military organisations have a documented history of violence and brutality against civilian populations, both before and after the establishment of the Israeli political entity. According to David A. Charters, in his article on “Jewish Terrorism and the Modern Middle East”:

“... it has been difficult for Israeli governments... and for Israeli society as a whole, to acknowledge that some of their founders used terrorism and regarded it as legitimate to do so.”¹⁰

This is an inconvenient truth wholly absent from the present debate. When political commentators suggest that the Israeli military are committing acts of terror in Palestine today, it is a claim with decades of precedent to back it up.

The Irgun

In October 1944, the US Office of Strategic Services characterised the Irgun, which had been founded in April 1931, as:

“... an underground, quasi-military organization with headquarters in Palestine... fanatical Zionists who wish to convert Palestine and

⁸ Monbiot, G., (2003) ‘The moral myth’, *The Guardian*, 25 November. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/nov/25/usa.iraq>.

⁹ United Nations (2004) *Security Council resolution 1566 (2004) on Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/security-council-resolution-1566-2004-on-threats-to-international-peace-and-security-caused-by-terrorist-acts/>.

¹⁰ Charters, D. A. (2007) ‘Jewish Terrorism and the Modern Middle East’, *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 27(2), p. 86. Available at: <https://journals.lib.unbc.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/10538>.

Trans-Jordan into an independent Jewish state...advocate the use of force both against the Arabs and the British to achieve this maximal political goal.”¹¹

The Irgun embarked on a campaign of terror, targeting both British colonial authorities and Palestinian residents. In one incident:

“Three Irgun-planted time bombs exploded in the Palestine broadcasting studios in Jerusalem during children’s hour on 2 August [1939]: two in the control room and a third in one of the studios. Of the four wounded in the blasts, Mrs May Weissenberg, a South African English-language announcer, and a Christian Arab employee died of their injuries the following day. Of particular concern to the authorities was that English children usually attended the broadcast in the studio, but on this day, none had arrived.”¹²

Irgun militants manufactured letter bombs that were mailed to Palestinian civilians in Yafa, and British police officers were targeted with landmines. An article published in the Birmingham Daily Post on October 12th 1944, headlined “Palestine Terrorists Warned”, references:

“... crimes of violence by Jewish terrorists acting with the deliberate intention of bringing about by force developments favourable to the realisation of political aims.”¹³

An Irgun communiqué of April 11th 1948, just over a month before the establishment of the Israeli political entity, warned that “Nazi-Britain will not rule in our country.”¹⁴

The Haganah

According to Charters:

“The Haganah used violence as a pressure tactic to persuade the British to change their policy on Jewish immigration into Palestine.”¹⁵

Despite mentioning the Palmach, the “striking arm” of the Haganah, and the Ta’as, its

11 van Tonder, G., (2019) *Irgun: Revisionist Zionism, 1931–1948*, p. 11. Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books Ltd.

12 *ibid.*, p. 61.

13 *ibid.*, p. 78.

14 *ibid.*, p. 81.

15 Charters, D. A. (2007) ‘Jewish Terrorism and the Modern Middle East’, *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 27(2), p. 82. Available at: <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/10538>.

“illegal arms industry”,¹⁶ J. L. Peeke claims that although the Haganah were not officially recognised by the British, they were “tolerated” as they were perceived to have defensive aims.¹⁷ Perhaps this reflects a British belief that Jewish immigrants had an inherent entitlement to the land of Palestine, as famously committed to history in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, a letter signed by British Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour and addressed to Lord Rothschild, expressing British support for “Jewish Zionist aspirations”. In a sentence often overlooked in this document, the indigenous Palestinian majority – indeed, the Muslim community had been the majority in Palestine since the seventh century¹⁸ – are relegated to “existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine”.¹⁹

The Palmach also took actions against the Irgun and Lehi, who they saw as potentially damaging to the Zionist cause. In February 1945, they kidnapped Yaakov Tavin, the Irgun’s Polish-born head of intelligence, before holding and torturing him at the Ein Harod kibbutz for six months.²⁰ This internecine strife could be seen through a political or practical lens, but van Tonder notes that many Jews saw their actions as a “vendetta against fellow countrymen”.²¹ He adds that, thanks to their collaboration with the British colonial forces:

“By the end of the British Mandate, some 440 terrorist suspects had been transported to internment camps in Eritrea, the Sudan, and Kenya.”²²

The Lehi

In 1944, Lord Moyne had been appointed by Prime Minister Winston Churchill as British Resident Minister of the Middle East. The Lehi was a splinter group of the Irgun and was headed at this point by Yatzhik Shamir, future Israeli Prime Minister. Shamir personally ordered the assassination of Lord Moyne. On November 6th 1944, two Lehi militants shot him as he arrived at his Cairo home, and he succumbed to his wounds the same evening. It is fascinating to contrast Churchill’s reaction to the death of his friend and political ally to the pronouncements of the British government today. As reported by the *Nottingham Evening Post*, and with an air of the “white man’s burden”, Churchill laments the possibility of:

“... our dreams for Zionism [ending] in the smoke of the assassin’s pis-

16 Peeke, J. L., (1977) *Jewish-Zionist Terrorism and the Establishment of Israel*, p. 24. MA Thesis. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California.

17 *ibid.*, p. 20.

18 DellaPergola, S. (2003). ‘Demographic Trends in Israel and Palestine: Prospects and Policy Implications’, *The American Jewish Year Book*, 103, pp. 3-68. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23605541>.

19 Nashashibi, S., (2014) ‘Balfour: Britain’s original sin’, *Al Jazeera*, 4 November. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/11/4/balfour-britains-original-sin>.

20 van Tonder, G., (2019) *Irgun: Revisionist Zionism, 1931–1948*, p. 83. Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books Ltd.

21 *ibid.*

22 *ibid.*

tol, and our labours for its future [producing] only a new set of gangsters worthy of Nazi Germany.”²³

To understand the sycophantic Western support for Israeli war crimes in recent times, it is significant to note that Zionism is presented not only as an aspiration of the Zionist movement, but as “our dream” too. However, when the victims of Zionist terrorism were British, even the imperialist Churchill, who famously likened the indigenous Palestinians’ claims to their own land as a dog briefly laying in a manger, was able to denounce them.

In light of Israel’s collective punishment of the Gaza Strip in recent years, purportedly in retaliation for the actions and/or principles of the elected Hamas government, it is prescient to observe the British colonial authorities’ reaction to Lehi operations towards the end of the Mandatory period. In April 1948, a Lehi militant cell launched an attack on the British 6th Airborne Division. As van Tonder describes, “The guard tent... was bombed, and any soldier that moved was fired at.”²⁴ Seven soldiers were killed, two of whom were asleep. In reaction, the British division’s commander announced that he would impose restrictions on the whole Jewish community.²⁵

Terrorism as a tactic of the Israeli political entity

Since the establishment of “Israel” in 1948, the Israeli occupation forces have a proven track record of using violence to achieve political goals. Every innocent life is sacred, but to provide an exhaustive list of such crimes would be impossible. Rather, we will attempt to highlight a few egregious examples that show a pattern and history of unlawful and immoral behaviour on the part of the Israeli military machine.

The Deir Yassin Massacre and Plan Dalet

In *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, Ilan Pappé gives a comprehensive account of the systematic expulsion of indigenous Palestinians from their land in the period leading up to and immediately after the establishment of the Israeli political entity. The apogee of this terror campaign was “Plan Dalet”, when Zionist forces received the following instructions:

“... the villages which you will capture, cleanse or destroy will be decided according to consultations with your advisors on Arab affairs and the intelligence officers.”²⁶

23 *ibid.*, p. 82.

24 *ibid.*, p. 90.

25 *ibid.*

26 Quoted from Sinai, Z. (ed.), *The Carmeli Brigade in the War of Independence*, p. 29, in Pappé, I., *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford, Oneworld

Although hundreds of Palestinian villages were cleansed between 1948-49, buried under the soil of Israeli cities and towns today, it is the village of Deir Yassin, invaded just over one month before the establishment of the Israeli entity, which is remembered above all. Deir Yassin had actually reached a non-aggression pact with the Haganah, but because they were in the area of land designated under “Plan Dalet” for clearing of Palestinians, its fate was sealed. The Haganah sent the Irgun and Lehi on their behalf. What ensued was a cold-blooded massacre. The witness testimony of Fahim Zaydan, who was twelve years old at the time and survived the attack, is painful to read:

“They then called my brother Mahmoud and shot him in our presence, and when my mother screamed and bent over my brother (she was carrying my little sister Khadra who was still being breastfed) they shot my mother too.”²⁷

The Irgun commander Ben Zion-Cohen gave a briefer account:

“We eliminated every Arab that came our way.”²⁸

Albert Einstein and a group of 27 Jewish individuals published a letter in *The New York Times* condemning the massacre, stating that:

“... terrorist bands attacked this peaceful village, which was not a military objective in the fighting, killed most of its inhabitants—240 men, women, and children—and kept a few of them alive to parade as captives through the streets of Jerusalem.”²⁹

The 240 figure is now seen as an exaggeration deliberately put out by Zionist forces to strike fear into the Palestinian civilian population, with approximately 93 villagers killed now seen as a more accurate estimate.³⁰ However, as Ilan Pappé points out, and with stark similarities to Israel’s current dehumanisation of the entire population of Gaza:

“... as the Jewish forces regarded any Palestinian village as an enemy military base, the distinction between massacring people and killing them “in battle” was slight.”³¹

Publications: 2006), p. 146.

27 McGowan, D. A. and Hogan, M. C., (1999) *The Saga of the Deir Yassin Massacre*. New York: Deir Yassin Remembered.

28 Heer, J., (2008) ‘Israel’s Original Sin’, *National Post*, 6 May. Available at: <https://nationalpost.com/news/israels-original-sin>.

29 Pappé, I., (2006) *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, pp. 394-395. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

30 *ibid.*, p. 150.

31 *ibid.*

Massacres like Deir Yassin laid the foundation for the Israeli state, but the supremacist ideology that motivated them continues until today.

The murder of Iman al-Hams

On 5th October 2004, 13 year-old Iman al-Hams was walking past an Israeli military outpost in Rafah, Gaza Strip, on her way to school when she was gunned down.³² A Palestinian eye-witness named Hisham Zoroub, aged 20, stated in an affidavit that:

“The girl was as close as 20 meters from the post and suddenly ran back towards us as Israeli soldiers started shooting extensively.”³³

In a pattern of behaviour that has been repeated many times before and since, the IDF gave an initial account that was later proven to be false. The occupation forces originally said:

“The soldiers fired warning shots into the air. The figure dropped the bag and fled. The soldiers had no way of knowing it was a girl. The soldiers then fired at and hit the figure. The outcome was grave and regrettable.”³⁴

This was a lie. The commander responsible for the murder initially claimed that he had been shot at by militants and had “fired into the ground to deter fire”. This was also a lie. First, Israeli media quoted Israeli soldiers from the scene who said that their commander had shot the girl at close range.³⁵ Then, Israeli television obtained the audio of the following chilling radio exchanges between the commander and his troops:

“Operations room: “Are we talking about a girl under the age of 10?”

Watchtower: “A girl about 10, she’s behind the embankment, scared to death.””³⁶

A few minutes later. Iman was shot. The audio continues:

“Commander: “I and another soldier... are going in a little nearer, forward, to confirm the kill.””³⁷

32 *Al Jazeera* (2004) ‘Israeli Troops Probed for Killing Child’, 11 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2004/10/11/israeli-troops-probed-for-killing-child>.

33 Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights (2004) *Testimony on the murder on 12-year-old girl in Rafah*. Available at: <https://mezan.org/en/post/34439>.

34 *Al Jazeera* (2004) ‘Israeli Troops Probed for Killing Child’, 11 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2004/10/11/israeli-troops-probed-for-killing-child>.

35 *ibid*.

36 McGreal, C., (2005) ‘Not guilty: The Israeli captain who emptied his rifle into a Palestinian schoolgirl’, *The Guardian*, 16 November. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/nov/16/israel2>.

37 *ibid*.

The commander then “confirmed the kill” by the entire magazine of his automatic rifle into Iman’s body as she lay on the ground.³⁸ He then said over the radio:

“Anything that’s mobile, that moves in the zone, even if it’s a three-year-old, needs to be killed. Over.”

Unusually, and perhaps due to the testimony given by the other soldiers at the scene, a criminal case was brought against the murderer in the Israeli courts but he was found not guilty. When the verdict was announced, he burst into tears, turned to onlookers, and said: “I told you I was innocent.” One report of Iman’s death, describing the many bullets that entered her body, stated that:

“... so much blood had soaked into her UNRWA school uniform and into the ground where she fell that her body was nearly bloodless when it finally reached the hospital.”³⁹

The assassination of Razan al-Najjar

The Great March of Return, a series of demonstrations in Gaza between 2018–2019 and a physical manifestation of Palestinian attempts to enact their right to return to their homeland, as enshrined in United Nations General Assembly resolution 3236, which:

“Reaffirms... the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and properties from which they have been displaced and uprooted.”⁴⁰

Despite the unarmed and legitimate nature of the demonstrations, the Israeli occupation forces responded with what Forensic Architecture described as an “unprecedented” use of live ammunition.⁴¹ A Commission of Inquiry ordered by the UN Human Rights Council noted:

“Lethal force was used by ISF (Israeli Security Forces) against children who posed no imminent threat to soldiers and in several instances it was likely that Israeli snipers shot at children intentionally.”

On 1st June 2018, at 6.31pm, 20-year-old paramedic Razan al-Najjar was attending one such

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ Omer, M., ‘The Schoolgirl who “Needed to be Killed”’, *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, January/February 2005, p. 9. Available at: <https://www.wrmea.org/2005-january-february/special-report-the-schoolgirl-who-needed-to-be-killed.html>.

⁴⁰ Institute for Palestine Studies (2021) *Resolution 3236 (1974)*. Available at: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1651948#:~:text=Event%20%7C%20On%20this%20day%20in,interference%2C%20the%20right%20to%20national.>

⁴¹ Forensic Architecture (2018) *The Killing of Rouzan al-Najjar*. Available at <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-killing-of-rouzan-al-najjar>.

demonstration, trying to help the injured protesters near the separation fence that encloses Gaza when she was shot by a single bullet. Razan was walking amongst a team of medics who were wearing white vests and had their hands in the air but she was assassinated on the spot.⁴²

What followed was a pathetic attempt by the Israeli military to demonise an innocent woman using amateurishly edited “video evidence” that has become a trademark of their narrative. Initially, the Israeli occupation forces stated that Razan had accidentally been shot and that their fire had been aimed at someone else.⁴³ Then, not satisfied with her actual assassination, they embarked on a character assassination of the martyred paramedic. A ten-second-long video clip was released. In the first few seconds, an unidentified female Palestinian medic throws an Israeli-fired tear gas grenade away from demonstrators. Senior Israeli government figures posted a truncated clip of an interview Razan had given to Al-Mayadeen, in which she said:

“I am medic Razan al-Najjar, I am here on the front lines and I act as a human shield...”⁴⁴

Suddenly, the clip is cut. This was the Israeli justification for murdering a young lady in cold blood. But conveniently, they had omitted the end of her sentence:

“...as a rescuer for the injured on the front lines.”⁴⁴

Again, in a pattern that is consistently repeated, the falsehoods propagated by the Israeli occupation forces were comprehensively debunked. In an investigation conducted by the Israeli human rights organisation B’tselem, Rami Abu Jazar, aged 29, who was another Palestinian medic who was with Razan when she was shot, gave the following testimony:

“We stood about 10 meters away from them, which was about 25 meters away from the fence. There were no protesters near us. At around 5:45pm, we saw two soldiers get out of a military jeep, kneel and aim their guns at us, taking up a sniper stance... Suddenly, they fired two live bullets at us. I looked at Razan and saw her point to her back and then fall down.”⁴⁵

42 Mackey, R., (2018) ‘Israel attempts to smear Razan al-Najjar, Palestinian medic it killed, calling her “no angel”’, *The Intercept*, 8 June. Available at: <https://theintercept.com/2018/06/08/israel-attempts-smear-razan-al-najjar-palestinian-medic-killed-calling-no-angel/>.

43 Kubovich, Y., (2018) ‘Gaza Medic Killed on Border Wasn’t Intentionally Shot by Israeli Soldiers, Military Finds’, *Ha’aretz*, 5 June. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2018-06-05/ty-article/gaza-medic-killed-on-border-wasnt-intentionally-shot-by-israeli-soldiers-army-finds/0000017f-e6ca-df5f-a17f-ffdedad20000>.

44 Gordon, N. and Perugini, N., (2018) ‘The fallacy of Israel’s human shields claims in Gaza’, *Al Jazeera*, 18 June. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2018/6/18/the-fallacy-of-israels-human-shields-claims-in-gaza>.

45 B’tselem (2018) *Israeli soldiers deliberately and fatally shot Palestinian paramedic Razan al-Najjar in the Gaza Strip*. Available at: <https://www.btselem.org/>

Furthermore, Forensic Architecture were commissioned by *The New York Times* to conduct a detailed, spatial analysis of the killing. They said:

“By digitally recreating the protest site from video evidence, we used the precise location... as a means to derive the trajectory of the bullet, and trace its “cone of fire” back to its origin, a sniper’s berm at the border fence.”⁴⁶

The incidents mentioned above are no more than a drop in the ocean. Nevertheless, this is a vital antidote to the mainstream media’s refusal to hold the Israeli occupation forces to account. The IDF have frequently targeted civilians and consistently lied about their actions. The present is tied to the past, and this is the context that must be highlighted when addressing the pain and suffering inflicted on the people of Palestine today.

Partnering with apartheid

Not only has the political entity of Israel shown a frequent propensity to engage in acts of terror, both before and after its establishment, but it has also exhibited a willingness to collaborate with fascistic and apartheid regimes. It is worrying that such relationships, although documented and recorded, are considered so taboo as an avenue of enquiry in certain political spheres.

The Israeli political entity’s ties with apartheid South Africa are both embarrassing and revealing, and for that reason they have often been brushed under the carpet. In *The Unspoken Alliance*, Sasha Polakow-Suransky provides an illuminating account of what he characterises as, “at its core... a marriage of interests and ideologies.”⁴⁷

Polakow-Suransky describes the visit of the apartheid South African prime minister Balthazar Vorster to Israel in 1976:

“as Vorster toured... the Israeli government was still scouring the globe for former Nazis – extraditing or even kidnapping them in order to try them in Israeli courts. Yet Vorster, a man who was once a self-proclaimed Nazi supporter and who remained wedded to a policy of racial superiority, found himself... receiving full red-carpet treatment.”⁴⁸

[gaza_strip/20180718_paramedic_rozan_a_najar_killed_by_deliberate_fire.](https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-killing-of-rouzan-al-najjar)

46 Forensic Architecture (2018) *The Killing of Rouzan al-Najjar*. Available at <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-killing-of-rouzan-al-najjar>.

47 Polakow-Suransky, S., (2011) *The Unspoken Alliance*. New York: Vintage Books, p. 6.

48 Polakow-Suransky, S., (2011) *The Unspoken Alliance*. New York: Vintage Books, p. 3.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ once said: “A man is upon the religion of his best friend, so let one of you look at whom he befriends.”⁴⁹ The political entity of Israel’s relationship with apartheid South Africa should not come as a surprise, for the Israeli entity practices apartheid itself. A case in point is the 1950 Law of Return, which allows any Jewish person in the world, or any person with at least one Jewish grandparent, to move to Palestine and automatically become an Israeli citizen. Palestinians, on the other hand, are afforded no such right, even if they were born there!⁵⁰

The Absentee Property Law, passed in the same year, declared land to be “abandoned” if the owner had been absent for even one day after November 1947.⁵¹ When combined with the mass expulsion of Palestinians that occurred in 1948,⁵² this amounts to a legalised mass theft of Palestinian land.

Furthermore, a dual legal system in the West Bank means that Israeli settlers are tried in civil courts whereas Palestinians, including children, are tried in military courts.⁵³ Indeed, Israel is the only state in the world to try minors in military courts.⁵⁴

Despite the overwhelming and incontrovertible evidence, supporters of Zionism often ridicule and denounce parallels between apartheid South Africa and the political entity of Israel. However, as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a black South African who had first-hand experience of apartheid during his lifetime, once remarked:

“Israel’s apartheid is even worse than South Africa’s. We never had F-16s bomb our Bantustans killing hundreds of children.”⁵⁵

On another occasion, in an interview with David Frost, Tutu suggested that European guilt for the atrocities of the Holocaust contributed to their unyielding support of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, suggesting that:

“If they (i.e. European states) are truly penitent, they ought to be the ones who pay the price of that penitence.”⁵⁶

49 *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, 2378.

50 Adalah, *Law of Return*. Available at: <https://www.adalah.org/en/law/view/537>.

51 White, B., (2014) *Israeli Apartheid: A Beginner’s Guide*. 2nd ed. London: Pluto Press, p. 48.

52 Pappé, I., (2006) *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

53 *AP* (2014) ‘A look at the dual justice system in the West Bank’, 20 April. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/d8794f383b4642a8a9c-548797c5a191a>.

54 Hearst, K., (2023) ‘Israel-Palestine war: The Palestinian children detained by Israel’, *Middle East Eye*, 21 November. Available at: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-war-children-detained-explained>.

55 Lee, K., (2022) ‘Remember the True Desmond Tutu’, *Foreign Affairs Review*, 17 February. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairsreview.com/home/remember-the-true-desmond-tutu>.

56 *Al Jazeera English* (2012) *The Frost Interview – Desmond Tutu: Not going quietly*. 17 November. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3yx-Fzs73Ss>.

The unreliability of Israeli claims

One feature of the media reports we will analyse in this text, particularly in the British and Jewish press, is an unquestioning acceptance of claims made by the Israeli military and government. However, by examining the case of Shireen Abu Akleh, where the unreliability of Israeli claims was gradually revealed over the course of a year, we can conclude that such an acceptance is fundamentally flawed.

Assassination of Shireen Abu Akleh

On May 11th 2022, *Al Jazeera* journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was reporting on an Israeli military raid on Jenin, a Palestinian city in the north of the occupied West Bank, when she was assassinated by an Israeli sniper. She was wearing a press vest at the time, standing amongst a group of reporters. Another *Al Jazeera* journalist, Ali al-Samoudi, was shot in the back and wounded. Al-Samoudi said that there was “no Palestinian military resistance at all at the scene” when the two journalists were shot.⁵⁷ A second eyewitness, journalist Shatha Hanaysha, who had been standing next to Abu Akleh when she was shot, confirmed that there had been no confrontations between Palestinian fighters and the Israeli military at that time and stated that the group of journalists had been directly targeted. Hanaysha said:

“The [Israeli] occupation army did not stop firing even after she collapsed. I couldn’t even extend my arm to pull her because of the shots being fired. The army was adamant on shooting to kill.”

This was powerful and significant testimony, for at this point, the Israeli military had denied any involvement in the murder. Yair Lapid, the Israeli foreign minister at the time, offered to conduct a “joint pathological investigation” with the Palestinian Authority into Abu Akleh’s death, but he was immediately rejected.⁵⁸ Without offering any evidence, the Israeli prime minister Naftali Bennett claimed that “according to the information we have gathered, it appears likely that armed Palestinians... were responsible for the unfortunate death of the journalist”, even tweeting out a video (which was swiftly debunked) to bolster his claims.⁵⁹

From there onwards, the Israeli’s government’s propaganda division engaged in a roller-coaster ride of untruths. On May 12th, they complained of “hasty” accusations of Israeli soldiers. On May 13th, they said the perpetrator could have been a soldier firing at a Palestinian fighter who had “fired multiple barrages of gunfire” and had been next to her. On May

57 al-Tahhan, Z., (2022) ‘Shireen Abu Akleh: *Al Jazeera* reporter killed by Israeli forces’, *Al Jazeera*, 11 May. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/11/shireen-abu-akleh-israeli-forces-kill-al-jazeera-journalist>.

58 *ibid*.

59 *Al Jazeera* (2022) ‘Israel’s shifting narratives on the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh’, 6 September. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/6/israels-shifting-narratives-on-the-killing-of-shireen-abu-akleh>.

19th, they announced the discovery of a soldier’s rifle that “may have killed” Abu Akleh. And on September 5th, after completing an investigation of itself, the Israeli military declared that there was a “high possibility” that Abu Akleh had been “accidentally hit” by their shooting.⁶⁰

It was not until the following May, exactly one year after her killing, that the IDF apologised for Abu Akleh’s death.⁶¹ This could not be excused as ignorance. On the same day as Lapid’s platitudes, the Palestinian Authority government spokesperson, Ibrahim Melhem, denounced the killing as “deliberate” and a “comprehensive crime committed against a well-known journalist”.⁶² A meticulous report published by Forensic Analysis on September 20th established a timeline of events and tracked the trajectory of the bullet, definitively concluding that it was shot from a hole in the side of an Israeli armoured vehicle.⁶³ The Israeli military had lied, and the eyewitnesses had been telling the truth.

Shireen Abu Akleh was one Palestinian, an individual amongst millions, but the Israeli reaction to her killing was a familiar story of diversion, delay, and obfuscation. Not only are Palestinians fighting for their lives in the face of a brutal occupation, but they are fighting to overcome a narrative of falsehood with testimony and truth. In the next two sections of this book, examining both the King David Hotel bombing of 1946 and the Jabalia refugee camp massacre of 31st October 2023, we will ask how and why the media’s reaction to Zionist aggression has changed.

60 *ibid.*

61 McSweeney, E., (2023) ‘Israel Defense Forces apologizes for death of *Al Jazeera’s* Shireen Abu Akleh for the first time’, CNN, 12 May. Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/05/11/middleeast/idf-apology-shireen-abu-akleh-intl/index.html>.

62 *Al Jazeera* (2022) ‘Israel’s shifting narratives on the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh’, 6 September. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/6/israels-shifting-narratives-on-the-killing-of-shireen-abu-akleh>.

63 Forensic Analysis (2022) ‘Shireen Abu Akleh: The Extrajudicial Killing of a Journalist’, 20 September. Available at: <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/shireen-abu-akleh-the-targeted-killing-of-a-journalist>.

Media responses to the 1946 King David Hotel bombing

Background

Tom Segev, one of the “Israeli New Historians” who challenged traditional Zionist accounts of the birth and foundation of the Israeli political entity, described the King David Hotel bombing as, “in its day, the equivalent of the Twin Towers”.⁶⁴ In 2006, on the sixtieth anniversary of the attack carried out by the militant Irgun group which took 91 lives – 28 Brits, 41 Arabs, 17 Jews, two Armenians, one Russian, one Greek, and one Egyptian – Benjamin Netanyahu personally unveiled a plaque to commemorate the incident in Jerusalem.⁶⁵ But, to the consternation of the British government, there was no condemnation of its perpetrators, and the plaque claimed that various warning calls had been made before the bombing. As Segev notes, the perpetrators must have been seeking “a terrorist attack without casualties”.⁶⁶ In an example of blame avoidance reminiscent of the discourse on Israeli terror attacks today, the plaque stated that “‘for some reason’ the British did not evacuate the building ‘and as a result’ 91 people were ‘regrettably’ killed.”⁶⁷ Speaking at a conference before the plaque was unveiled, Netanyahu made his own distinction between terrorists and legitimate fighters, stating that only the former deliberately target civilians. In his analysis, Segev states that by this theory, a Palestinian organisation kidnapping an Israeli soldier is perfectly legitimate and the (Israeli, for example) carpet bombing of a civilian area is a war crime, although, he recognises, “this is not what Netanyahu meant.”⁶⁸

Writing in *Ha'aretz*, journalist Bradley Burston commented that “Israel has a terrorism problem it’s unwilling to talk about.”⁶⁹ Although apparently targeted for housing the British colonial authorities’ headquarters in Palestine, most of the victims of the King David Hotel bombing were civilians and the attack “levelled six floors of a wing of the hotel with 350 kilograms of explosive.”⁷⁰ Several Zionist historians, however, have questioned the designation of the hotel as a civilian target. Bruce Hoffman, for example, contends that the King David was the “nerve centre of British rule”, where “fewer than a third of the grand hotel’s

64 Segev, T., (2006) ‘The Spirit of the King David Hotel’, *Ha'aretz*, 23 July. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/2006-07-23/ty-article/the-spirit-of-the-king-david-hotel/0000017f-dc4b-d3ff-a7ff-fdcb8ce0000>.

65 Burston, B., (2006) ‘Zionism’s Terrorist Heritage’, *Ha'aretz*, 26 June. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2018-06-26/ty-article-opinion/.premium/zionisms-terrorist-heritage/0000017f-dbd4-d3ff-a7ff-fbf40acc0000>.

66 Segev, T., (2006) ‘The Spirit of the King David Hotel’, *Ha'aretz*, 23 July. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/2006-07-23/ty-article/the-spirit-of-the-king-david-hotel/0000017f-dc4b-d3ff-a7ff-fdcb8ce0000>.

67 *ibid.*

68 *ibid.*

69 Burston, B., (2006) ‘Zionism’s Terrorist Heritage’, *Ha'aretz*, 26 June. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2018-06-26/ty-article-opinion/.premium/zionisms-terrorist-heritage/0000017f-dbd4-d3ff-a7ff-fbf40acc0000>.

70 *ibid.*

rooms remained for civilian guests”,⁷¹ that was an “irresistible target to the Irgun”.⁷²

Menachim Begin, who would later twice become Israeli prime minister, was leader of the Irgun at the time and therefore responsible for the bombing. In his memoirs, Begin describes the King David Hotel as a “veritable fortress in the heart of the city (i.e., Jerusalem).”⁷³ According to his account, not only did the Haganah give their blessing for the attack, but civilians were warned to evacuate the hotel several times before the bombing occurred. Begin, therefore, was not impressed at the “denunciations [that] burst forth” in the aftermath of the attack, particularly in the Jewish press, with *‘Al ha-mishmar* and *Ha’aretz* specifically decried as bearers of bad news.⁷⁴

Begin recalls the letter he received from Moshe Sneh, the Haganah’s head of staff, instructing the Irgun to:

“Carry out the operation at the ‘chick’ (code name for King David Hotel) and at the house of ‘your servant and Messiah’ (code name for the David Brothers building) inform me of the date. Preferably at the same time. Do not reveal the identity of the implementing body – either by announcing it explicitly or by hinting.”⁷⁵

The collaboration between the Irgun and the Haganah is a meaningful one as it had been relatively rare during their militant activities, and although the Haganah and the Jewish Agency communicated statements condemning the Irgun early on, evidence of their involvement quickly came to light.⁷⁶ As one commentator recently noted in *Ha’aretz*:

“The mainstream Jewish Agency and Haganah attempted to dissociate themselves from the operation – though it had in fact been carried out at their behest.”⁷⁷

On the morning of July 22nd 1946, Jewish militants disguised as Arab porters entered the King David Hotel. After overwhelming hotel staff, they made their way underground and placed bombs near the supporting pillars of the basement. When they had successfully

71 Hoffman, B., ‘The Bombing of the King David Hotel 1946’, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 31(3), p. 598. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.20.1726575>.

72 *ibid.*, p. 599.

73 Begin, M. (1972) *The Revolt*, Jerusalem: Steimatzky’s Agency Limited.

74 *ibid.*

75 *ibid.*

76 Bell, B., (1979) *Terror out of Zion*. Dublin: The Academy Press, p. 154.

77 Green, D., (2021) ‘This Day in Jewish History: Irgun Blows Up British HQ at Jerusalem’s King David Hotel’, *Ha’aretz*, 22 July. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-07-22/ty-article/this-day-in-jewish-history-irgun-blows-up-british-hq-at-jerusalem-king-david-hotel/0000017f-f5f9-ddde-abff-fdfd85990000>.

made their escape, the Irgun phoned the offices of *The Palestine Post* and conveyed the following message:

“I am speaking on behalf of the Hebrew Underground. We have placed an explosive device in the hotel. Evacuate it at once – you have been warned.”⁷⁸

There has been much debate regarding the efficacy of these warnings and whether civilians had sufficient time to evacuate, but what we may note is a pattern of justification for bombing campaigns, which in recent Israeli aggressions have overwhelmingly targeted civilian infrastructure – a pattern that has continued right up until the present day. The stories of “knocks on the roof” in Gaza and “humanitarian leaflets” dropped from the sky have a history that stretch back far longer than the current escalation of aggression.⁷⁹ In 1946, it was a hotel and the headquarters of the British colonial authorities in Palestine. Today, it is hospitals, schools, bakeries, UN facilities, and ambulances that make up the Israeli bank of targets.

In an Early Day Motion tabled shortly after the sixtieth anniversary of the King David Hotel, British MPs expressed their condemnation of the Israeli “celebration” of the “atrocious”, which they noted “remains the highest death toll for British subjects in a terrorist attack.”⁸⁰ Furthermore, they echoed the comments of the British ambassador to Israel at the time, who stated:

“We do not think that it is right for an act of terrorism, which led to the loss of many lives, to be commemorated.”⁸¹

But despite characterising the civilian casualties an “unfortunate mistake”, a 2016 *Ha’aretz* report on the King David Hotel bombing states the pertinent point:

“The act of terror shocked the British, and helped accelerate their decision to withdraw from Palestine two years later.”⁸²

The carpet bombing of the Gaza Strip and the rapid settlement expansion in Jerusalem and

78 Cashman, G. F., (2016) ‘The King David Hotel bombing: Letting the people judge the truth’, *The Jerusalem Post*, 23 July. Available at: <https://www.jpost.com/metro/letting-the-people-judge-the-truth-460924>.

79 AFP, “Roof knocking”: Israel warning system under scrutiny in Gaza conflict’, 20 May. Available at: <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210520-roof-knocking-israel-warning-system-under-scrutiny-in-gaza-conflict>.

80 *Sixtieth Anniversary of Bombing of King David Hotel EDM (Early Day Motion) 2624. Tabled on 24 July 2006*. Available at: <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/31213/sixtieth-anniversary-of-bombing-of-king-david-hotel>.

81 *ibid*.

82 Green, D., (2021) ‘This Day in Jewish History: Irgun Blows Up British HQ at Jerusalem’s King David Hotel’, *Ha’aretz*, 22 July. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-07-22/ty-article/this-day-in-jewish-history-irgun-blows-up-british-hq-at-jerusalem-king-david-hotel/0000017f-f5f9-ddde-abff-fd85990000>.

the West Bank we witness today is a modern example of creating “facts on the ground”. As Rashid Khalidi noted in 2010, this is “a tactic [which has been] used by the Zionist movement for over a century in order to obtain control over more and more of Palestine.”⁸³

As we will see in primary source evidence from the British, Palestinian, and Jewish media, the King David Hotel bombing was universally denounced as an act of terror in 1946. The question today, then, is: as Israeli acts of terror persist, why did the denunciations come to an end?

Responses of the British media

Analysis of *the Manchester Guardian*

The day after the King David Hotel Bombing, *the Manchester Guardian*⁸⁴ ran the headline: “Crisis in Palestine”.⁸⁵ Within the first paragraph, the attack is characterised as an example of “Jewish terrorism”.⁸⁶ However, the perpetrators are also described as the “Jewish resistance movement”,⁸⁷ with wholly different connotations. Remarkably, there is some attempt to convey the possible motivations of this movement, described as “those desperate and daring men who believe that only by such means can the British Government be forced to change its policy.”⁸⁸

To understand *The Guardian*’s stance, it is significant to note that C. P. Scott, the “ardently pro-Zionist” editor of the paper until his death in 1932, had played a major role in persuading the British government to issue their infamous Balfour Declaration, which declared their support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine at the expense of the Palestinians.⁸⁹ Here, *The Guardian* report devotes a sizeable chunk of its coverage to sympathising with the community that carried out the attack. Although recognising the bombing as a “brutal murder... [that] will only bring further repression upon the Jews”, the article notes that such repression will lead to a “vicious circle” and “only breed further terrorism”.⁹⁰ This stands in contrast to much of the reporting of Palestinian military attacks on Israeli targets in recent years, which are often, if not always, expected to be condemned universally and without qualification.

83 Khalidi, R. (2010) ‘Bad Faith in the Holy City’, *Foreign Affairs*, 15 April. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2010-04-15/bad-faith-holy-city>.

84 Known today as “*The Guardian*”.

85 *The Manchester Guardian* (1946) ‘Crisis in Palestine’, 23 July, p. 4.

86 *ibid.*

87 *ibid.*

88 *ibid.*

89 Shlaim, A. (2005) ‘The Balfour Declaration And its Consequences’, in Louis, W. R. (ed.) *Yet More Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain*. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 251-270.

90 *ibid.*

One could argue that the article underlines a subtext of Zionist terrorism being rewarded with material achievements, for the attack is directly linked with the necessity of a political solution, for which “the bombs which exploded so disastrously in the King David Hotel will stress the need for speed.”⁹¹ Again, the Palestinians are never afforded such platitudes in the modern context, with any acts of resistance often completely stripped of their political context.

Although, as we noted above, evidence suggests that the Irgun, widely viewed as extremists at the time, had collaborated with the supposedly “moderate” Haganah in planning the attack, much of the Western reaction to the atrocity attempted to make a distinction between the two. The *Guardian* article adopts a proclamatory tone, saying that, “to the British soldier in Palestine, yesterday’s outrage was unforgivable, to be answered by ruthless measures. But the Government must take a wider view.”⁹² Again, it is a political solution rather than extreme violence, or “self-defence”, that is proposed as a response. Incredibly, considering that such a devastating attack had occurred just twenty-four hours previously, there is a tacit acceptance of the Jewish community taking pleasure at the atrocity, with The *Guardian* arguing that Britain would be “deceiving ourselves if we did not realise that many humane and moderate Jews in Palestine will think first with pride of the men who struck this blow”, and stating that “what to us is a cruel and wanton murder is to them a brave and heroic action.”⁹³ Such language would never be countenanced in the context of a Palestinian operation against Israeli soldiers or military targets, but here we are exposed to an alternative perception of the pre-meditated bombing of a hotel: “a brave and heroic action.”⁹⁴

The *Guardian*’s second day of coverage was more emphatic in its language, describing the attack as “yesterday’s terrorist outrage” and “acts of terrorism”.⁹⁵ The focus here is on “Responsibility for the Outrage”. The statement of the Irgun, described in a sub-headline as the “Jewish Terrorists’ Claim”, is published in full, with the “British Blamed for Failing to Evacuate Hotel”.⁹⁶ We may recall the column space given to the Irgun – a proscribed terrorist organisation at the time – when we later analyse how little heed is given to the statements or claims of Palestinian factions in the British media today.

The *Guardian* characterises the Irgun as the “underground Jewish terrorists’ army”, and in a section entitled “Search for the Murderers”, explains that “the search continues in the Old

91 *ibid.*

92 *ibid.*

93 *ibid.*

94 *ibid.*

95 *The Manchester Guardian* (1946) ‘Responsibility for the Outrage’, 24 July, p. 5.

96 *ibid.*

City, where terrorists always go underground”.⁹⁷ The theme of “underground terrorists” will be very familiar to the modern reader. Unlike the previous day’s report, the onus is now placed on the Jewish community to objugate the extremists within their ranks:

“This is a time when the [Jewish] Agency and the community may prove that they mean what they say... that it has no interest, however slight, in these terrorists, and... expresses its deepest horror at yesterday’s murders.”⁹⁸

On July 25th, The *Guardian* continued with the theme of a Jewish threat in Palestine, running the headlines: “Strength of Palestine Terrorists... Greater Than Suspected”, “Irgun Getting Recruits from Illegal Immigrants”, and “Money and Arms Sent from Abroad”.⁹⁹ By now, the British government were suggesting a link between different Jewish organisations in planning the attack, and The *Guardian* reported on their “Evidence against Hagana and Jewish Agency”, now describing the bombing as a “Planned Sabotage”.¹⁰⁰ Regarding the Jewish groups directly responsible, The *Guardian* cites the British government’s White Paper, which describes the Stern Gang as “between 200 and 300 dangerous fanatics, fully co-operating with the Irgun Zvai Leumi, since both are equally committed to a policy of unrestrained extremism.”¹⁰¹ However, the Haganah are also implicated in the report:

“... the connection between Irgun and Haganah and the Stern Gang is equally difficult to write exactly. Three times since last October various outrages by the three organisations dovetailed in such quick succession that it was impossible not to suspect some collusion.”¹⁰²

The *Guardian* also presents reaction from the United States on the attack. In a section entitled “Mr. Truman on the Outrage”,¹⁰³ the US President is quoted as saying:

“Every responsible Jewish leader, I am sure, will join in condemning the wanton slaying of human beings.”¹⁰⁴

Again, there is a distinction made between “responsible” and terrorist elements of the Jewish community. More sensationally, a US Congressman, named as “Mr. Adolph Sabath”, is

97 *ibid.*

98 *ibid.*

99 *The Manchester Guardian* (1946) ‘Strength of Palestine Terrorists’, 25 July, p. 5.

100 *ibid.*

101 *ibid.*

102 *ibid.*

103 *ibid.*

104 *ibid.*

cited as claiming that Britain was “under a Fascist Government” and “might have planted the explosives in Jerusalem.”¹⁰⁵

Analysis of *the Daily Mail*

Under the headline, “Hotel GHQ Death-Roll may be over 90”, the *Daily Mail* was unequivocal in its portrayal of “the King David Hotel bomb outrage”.¹⁰⁶ Vivid imagery transports us to the scene of the crime, where “This morning, as cranes and bulldozers and hundreds of troops and Arab labourers still tear at the wreckage, it is feared that the death-roll... may exceed 90.”¹⁰⁷ The civilian toll of the atrocity is highlighted, as we learn that “The King David Hotel was crowded when the Jewish terrorists attacked”.¹⁰⁸ Neither is the identity of the perpetrators left to the imagination in the paper’s description of “The blowing up by Jewish terrorists of British Army G.H.Q.”¹⁰⁹

The next day, the main headline at the top of the front page read: “Terrorists admit killing 124 in bombed hotel HQ.”¹¹⁰ A second headline describes the attacks as a “Gang”.¹¹¹ As with *The Guardian*, the Irgun’s statement blaming the British occupation is cited, but quotation marks are used to disparage their claims to be a legitimate militant organisation:

“The warnings followed a confession by the Jewish terrorist ‘army’, Irgun Zvai Leumi, that its ‘soldiers’ were responsible for the blowing up... now feared to have cost 124 lives.”¹¹²

The *Daily Mail* goes further than *The Guardian* in presenting the Palestinian reaction to the attack, referring to a cable from the Palestine Arab Higher Committee to British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, which:

“... threatened that unless the British Government acts promptly to eradicate terrorism and destruction of lives and property, we shall find ourselves forced to call on the Arab people to protect the lives of its sons and their interests with all the strength at their disposal.”¹¹³

The Palestinian community here converge with the British in the characterisation of the

105 *ibid.*

106 Gordon, A., (1946) ‘Hotel GHQ Death-Roll may be over 90’, *Daily Mail*, 23 July, p. 1.

107 *ibid.*

108 *ibid.*

109 *ibid.*

110 O’Dowd Gallagher, E., (1946) ‘Dempsey plans new Palestine round-up’, *Daily Mail*, 24 July, p. 1.

111 *ibid.*

112 *ibid.*

113 *ibid.*

incident as “terrorism”. The next day, under the headline “Palestine Army to Crush Terrorists”¹¹⁴, the *Daily Mail* directly links the King David Hotel with Britain’s response, which is described as their “biggest military operation in the history of Britain’s 23-year-old Palestine Mandate... being planned tonight on the top floor of the bomb-blasted King David Hotel”, which aimed to “wipe out the Jewish terrorist organisation”.¹¹⁵ The *Daily Mail* consistently frames the aftermath of the attack as a battle between Britain and Jewish militant groups. From the July 24th headline, “Dempsey plans new Palestine round-up”,¹¹⁶ to the July 25th revelation that:

“It is now an open secret that the illegal arms found in ingenious caches at the Jewish settlement of Yesheq Magour were a small proportion of the arms illegally bought or stolen by various terrorist organisations. The most important British task in Palestine will be to unearth the remainder.”¹¹⁷

A colonial tone is also noticeable in the *Daily Mail*’s report, with Britain portrayed as the responsible party tasked with dealing with unruly elements. This includes the Haganah, who are described as an “illegal Jewish military organisation”.¹¹⁸ Britain is presented as the voice of calm, for “Despite the King David outrage... the order to our 50,000 troops is tolerance.”¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, the threat to those responsible for the attack is clear, with the *Daily Mail* stating that:

“The plan to root out terrorism in Palestine awaits only the signal from London – a Cabinet-level order ‘Go.’”¹²⁰

Analysis of the *Daily Mirror*

The evocation of British colonial supremacy is most prevalent in the *Daily Mirror*, with correspondent Barbara Board stating, in an eyewitness account:

“I owe my life, and the fact that I am able to write this story of the bloodiest terrorist outrage to the cool courage of the British military policeman.”¹²¹

114 O’Dowd Gallagher, E., (1946) ‘Palestine Army to Crush Terrorists’, *Daily Mail*, 25 July, p. 1.

115 *ibid.*

116 O’Dowd Gallagher, E., (1946) ‘Dempsey plans new Palestine round-up’, *Daily Mail*, 24 July, p. 1.

117 O’Dowd Gallagher, E., (1946) ‘Palestine Army to Crush Terrorists’, *Daily Mail*, 25 July, p. 1.

118 *ibid.*

119 *ibid.*

120 *ibid.*

121 Board, B., (1946) ‘Four-Minute Warning by Phone Saved Many’, *Daily Mirror*, 23 July, p. 1.

Board's personal account accentuates the horror of the atrocity. She writes of how a "black mushroom cloud of smoke and dust rolled away over our heads" and paints a graphic image of the survivors of the attack:

"... tumbling out of the building came a macabre, ghostly procession of British officers' wives and waitresses, streaming with blood, their hair and clothes covered in white dust."¹²²

Too often in the modern discourse, Palestinian victims of Israeli terrorist attacks are glossed over as numbers, victims of a blameless crime. By contrast, the *Mirror's* report of the King David Hotel bombing draws a stark contrast between brave survivors, "together breaking down a doorway in an effort to rescue trapped people"¹²³ and morally reprehensible attackers, "a jeep full of Jewish terrorists armed with tommy guns".¹²⁴

On July 24th, the *Mirror* directly refutes the assertions of the Irgun, with their correspondent Barbara Board, describing the "Claim that a telephone warning twenty-seven minutes before the King David Hotel explosion was ignored by the British, [which] was made last night by the Irgun Zvai Leumi, Jewish terrorist army" as "a gross untruth."¹²⁵ Furthermore, a statement from Clement Attlee in the House of Commons is referenced, in which he describes the atrocity as "this insane act of terrorism."

On its third day of coverage, under the headline "'Happy Event' Wire from London Began Jew Terror",¹²⁶ the *Mirror* describes the King David Hotel as the "first of the major Palestine acts of terrorism against Britain."¹²⁷ The tone is sensationalist, conjuring images of secretive, violent Jewish organisations in Palestine in communication with colleagues abroad. We are told that "The code message... told terrorists in Jerusalem"¹²⁸ details of the attack, and the White Paper is described as featuring information on "mystery men, codes, private armies fighting an underground war."¹²⁹

122 *ibid.*

123 *ibid.*

124 *ibid.*

125 *Daily Mirror* (1946) 'Jew terror army admits outrage as fresh bomb warning is sent by phone', 24 July, p. 1.

126 Greig, B., (1946) "'Happy Event' Wire from London Began Jew Terror', *Daily Mirror*, 25 July, p. 1.

127 *ibid.*

128 *ibid.*

129 *ibid.*

Responses of the Palestinian media

Analysis of *Filastin*

On its front page, under the headline, “Jewish terrorists commit a brutal crime that results in dozens of deaths”,¹³⁰ *Filastin* makes numerous references to the brutality of the incident. Within the sub-headline alone, it is characterised as “the heinous Jewish crime”, “Two horrific explosions”, and “vile Jewish criminality”.¹³¹ This tone continues in the main body of the article, which claims that the “brutal”, “heinous”, and “insane crime... will cost the Jews more than they think”. This approach, as we have seen with the *Daily Mirror*, highlights the ethnic and religious background of the perpetrators and sensationalises the “Jewish threat”.

Palestinian newspaper *al-Ittihad*, on the other hand, took a different approach, announcing in a headline on the front page of their July 23rd edition that “Zionist terror – cannot be disentangled from the [British] occupation in any shape or form”.¹³² Nowadays, as we will observe in our analysis of Arab media reports of the Jabalia refugee camp bombing of October 31st 2003, “the occupation” is a widely used term amongst Palestinians to refer to the Israeli presence in Palestine, and Israeli acts of terror are denounced as crimes of “the occupation” rather than examples of “Jewish criminality”. In their report on the King David Hotel bombing of 1947, *al-Ittihad* aims their ire at the British colonial authorities in Palestine, claiming that “the British government is not capable of controlling the repression of the Zionist terror.”¹³³

Filastin, on the other hand, attempts to forge alliances with a British audience, offering “Condolences to the victims of yesterday’s terrorist incident in Jerusalem”.¹³⁴ By highlighting the “barbaric” nature of the Jewish attacks and the problem with Jewish inhabitants of Palestine, *Filastin* attempts to make a distinction between the “civilised Palestinian” and the “Jewish terrorist”. Like the British press, the paper opens with a descriptive account of events and does not try to distort any of the essential facts, at least as it is compared with other newspaper sources. The paper does, however, emphasise statements emerging from Britain that appear to reflect an anti-Jewish line as a way of showing their own support for such statements. For example, they cite a *Daily Star* report that “the Jewish terrorist incident that occurred in Jerusalem will cost the Jews more than any previous insane act.”¹³⁵

130 *Filastin* (1946) ‘Jewish terrorists commit a brutal crime that results in dozens of deaths and injuries’, 23 July, p. 1.

131 *ibid.*

132 *Al-Ittihad* (1946) ‘Zionist terror – cannot be disentangled from the occupation in any shape or form’, 28 July, p. 1.

133 *ibid.*

134 *ibid.*

135 *Filastin* (1946) ‘Jewish terrorists commit a brutal crime that results in dozens of deaths and injuries’, 23 July, p. 1.

By July 24th, *Filastin* begins to take a more confrontational tone against Britain, and the Palestinian reaction to events are given more column space. The main headline states that “The High Commission denounces the despicable Jewish crime and requests that deterrent measures be taken”, and we learn of “expressions of denunciation and indignation” as “Arab Palestine responds harshly to the despicable crime of the Jews”.¹³⁶ Furthermore, the paper conveys the community’s “condemnation and protest against the government’s negligence”¹³⁷ in dealing with “the incidents of Jewish terrorism in Palestine”,¹³⁸ as “the victims of Jewish treachery cry”.¹³⁹

It could be that *Filastin* wished to afford Britain an opportunity to be tough with the perpetrators of the bombing but subsequently viewed the British response as inadequate. In an article entitled “Weak and servile politicians”,¹⁴⁰ aimed at the British, the criticism begins:

“The crimes are evidence of weakness [of the British powers] when it comes to dealing with criminals who have no regard for law or authority.”¹⁴¹

With these comments, the paper aims to delegitimise British authority in Palestine. *Filastin* continues with its reproval by saying:

“We are not British... [and so will not] get involved in the private matters of the British people, but Britain sent such messages from our country and not from their country.”¹⁴²

Here, the Palestinian nationalist spirit is exhibited, and a clear delineation is made between the Palestinians and the British colonial power. Next, international law is called upon as a frame of reference:

“Although we do not recognise the British protectorate, and we do not, it should be noted that Britain has the UN mandate to govern...”¹⁴³

Hereby lies an interesting paradox. Although *Filastin* does not accept the protectorate as legitimate, they nevertheless ask Britain to uphold its international responsibility and get a

136 *Filastin* (1946) ‘The High Commission denounces the despicable Jewish crime and requests that deterrent measures be taken’, 24 July, p. 1.

137 *ibid.*

138 *ibid.*

139 *ibid.*

140 *Filastin* (1946) ‘Weak and servile politicians’, 24 July, p. 1.

141 *ibid.*

142 *ibid.*

143 *ibid.*

better grip on the escalating violence in Palestine by exercising its colonial mandate. The paper also launches a stream of invective against the United States, which is also viewed as an enemy, stating that:

“Indeed, America, which Britain refers to on every major and minor issue concerning our case, is the country that supports the Jews and their followers in our country. Were it not for America’s support for those Jews, the ‘rats’ amongst the terrorists would not have had the audacity to commit what they did...”¹⁴⁴

The US and Britain’s bias, *Filastin* suggests, is another reason that the latter is unsuitable as a mandatory authority in Palestine, asking, “how can they be... responsible for security” in the country. In light of the many failed so-called “peace initiatives” over the last decades, it is important to note that from a Palestinian perspective, even from before the establishment of the Israeli political entity, the US was never seen as a fair broker.

Analysis of *al-Difa’*

Al-Difa’ was also both unequivocal in its condemnation of the “awful Jewish terrorist incident” at the King David Hotel and critical of Britain’s position.¹⁴⁵ In vivid, unsettling terms, we read that “Jewish terror removed its mask yesterday, revealing one of the most horrific images one could imagine.”¹⁴⁶ It is further noted that “until now, this terrorism has mostly targeted... infrastructure, but recent events show the development of targeting people.”¹⁴⁷

Al-Difa’ employed lengthy and detailed explanatory headlines, such as: “A group of British engineers search for remaining living victims from those buried under the rubble and the remains of the dead to extract their corpses.”¹⁴⁸ In contrast with the confrontational and even threatening stance that *Filastin* had adopted against Britain in their edition of the same day, *Al-Difa’* chose to highlight the partnership between Britain and the Palestinians, referring to the excavation of the dead as a joint enterprise between “British Engineers and Arab workers”.¹⁴⁹ The paper attempts to also conduct a “community service function” by listing all of the names of the dead, found and missing victims on the front page of the paper.¹⁵⁰ In its reference to the bombing, the paper seeks “assurances that the government... [will

144 *ibid.*

145 *Al-Difa’ (1946)* ‘40 dead, 53 wounded, and 52 missing...’, 23 July, p. 1.

146 *ibid.*

147 *ibid.*

148 *Al-Difa’ (1946)* ‘A group of British engineers search for remaining living victims from those buried under the rubble and the remains of the dead to extract their corpses’, 24 July, p. 1.

149 *ibid.*

150 *ibid.*

be] tough in taking all legal steps to prevent an incident like this from ever reoccurring.”¹⁵¹

Where the paper is forceful is in its references to the response of the wider Arab community. They print the Arab League’s condemnation of the atrocity and placement of responsibility on Britain for political leverage and to demonstrate the existence of a collective Arab entity that could create complications for Britain. Like *Filastin*, the paper expands on what these complications might entail. For example, Azzam Pasha, the head of the Arab League at the time, is quoted as saying that:

“... these actions (i.e., the bombing) could inspire a violent reaction from the Arabs which would ensure that the Palestinians get their rights.”¹⁵²

On July 25th, *Al-Difa’* ran the headline: “British White Paper blames the Jewish Agency and confirms with undisputable proofs its (i.e., the Jewish Agency’s) participation in the criminal acts”.¹⁵³ Highlighting the findings of the British report could have been aimed at portraying the Jewish Agency as an enemy that both the Jews and Brits should join Palestinians in opposing, and perhaps there was still hope in a British solution that would favour the Palestinians. This creates a narrative that is more anti-Zionist than anti-British and aims to convince the British observers that they ought to be on the same wavelength. In this way, the paper attempts to characterise the Palestinian struggle (as the newspapers name, meaning “*Defence*”, would suggest) as a just, defensive fight against the Zionist enterprise that both its regular readers and Britain should rally to support.

With the benefit of hindsight, one may observe that any hope in meaningful British support was misplaced. Although the British media was unanimous in refuting Jewish terrorist attacks that occurred in Mandatory Palestine, by the time the Israeli political entity had been established, such acts were placed beyond the scope of acceptable criticism. And so we find, seventy-five years later, that what was once “terrorism” is now “self-defence”.

Responses of the Jewish media

Analysis of *The Palestine Post*

Like the British and Palestinian media, the Jewish press too characterised the King David Hotel bombing as an act of terror. In *The Palestine Post*, the July 23rd headline read: “41 Dead,

151 *ibid.*

152 *ibid.*

153 *Al-Difa’ (1946)* ‘British White Paper blames the Jewish Agency and confirms with undisputable proofs its participation in the criminal acts’, 25 July, p. 1.

53 Injured, 52 Missing, in Terrorist Attack on Secretariat”.¹⁵⁴ It is significant to note that in 1929, it had been decided that *The Palestine Post* would be published in English in order to appeal to the wider international community.¹⁵⁵ As well as condemning the “Noon-hour outrage by gang” in its sub-headline, the paper also attempts to reassure an impassioned British reader by informing them of the safety of “John Shaw and other senior officers”.¹⁵⁶ The paper proceeds in this apologetic tone by providing a full list of British officers known to have survived and explaining that “Patrol wireless cars and armoured cars assisted in the hunt for suspect cars.”¹⁵⁷

The Palestine Post emphasises the witness testimony of a woman who had been warned about the blast as can be seen when we read that at “about 12.35, *The Palestine Post* was told, also by a woman, in English, that the government officers were about to be blown up and that people had been warned to evacuate the building.” In this, one will realise more of the fear and anxiety to the paper’s tone. This is as it makes many supplementary points, one of which was that the woman spoke English. This is significant as it attempts to shift some of the blame to the British authorities and away from the Jewish community.

On July 24th, British readers are again prioritised, with the main headline reading: “Attlee Tells Commons Britain will not be ‘Diverted by Terrorism’”.¹⁵⁸ However, Jewish ambitions in Palestine are still prioritised, with the main body of the article clarifying that what Attlee had said Britain would not be diverted from was “a final and just settlement of the Palestine question.”¹⁵⁹ Again, Britain is painted as a paternal figure settling a feud between two peoples, whereas in reality it was a colonial power acting, as Arthur Koestler famously said, as one nation promising another nation the land of a third nation.¹⁶⁰

Stirring scenes are conjured of “Jerusalem stilled and silent in a day of mourning” and “amid the rubble of the wrecked Secretariat wing... rescuers... still working desperately.”¹⁶¹ The report places a human face on victims of the bombing by describing “late in the evening, dramatic scenes of the rescue of Mr. D. C. Thompson... buried for 31 hours”.¹⁶² In 1946, those under the rubble were afforded sympathy. But in 2023, the Palestinian victims of Israeli bombing campaigns in Gaza, struggling to dig their dead and wounded from be-

154 *The Palestine Post* (1946) ‘41 Dead, 53 Injured, 52 Missing, in Terrorist Attack on Secretariat’, 23 July, p. 1.

155 Frenkel, E., *The Press and Politics in Israel: The Jerusalem Post from 1932 to the Present* (Jerusalem, Greenwood Press: 1994), pp. 3-4.

156 *The Palestine Post* (1946) ‘41 Dead, 53 Injured, 52 Missing, in Terrorist Attack on Secretariat’, 23 July, p. 1.

157 *ibid.*

158 *The Palestine Post* (1946) ‘Attlee Tells Commons Britain will not be “Diverted by Terrorism”’, 24 July, p. 1.

159 *ibid.*

160 Shlaim, A. (2005) ‘The Balfour Declaration And its Consequences’, in Louis, W. R. (ed.) *Yet More Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain*. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 251-270.

161 *ibid.*

162 *ibid.*

neath decimated buildings, remain anonymous.

The diversity of the community in Jerusalem is highlighted to convey a common humanity in the face of terror:

“Over the radio, in all three languages, came a moving message from the Chief Secretary... expressing his ‘grief, horror, and disgust.’”¹⁶³

However, a pressing concern in *The Palestine Post* is the potential blowback of the atrocity for the Jewish community. “Press... in the United States stresses the possible effect of the outrage in throwing back the Jewish cause”¹⁶⁴ and that “some broadcasters have suggested that President Truman may discontinue his pressure for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine.”¹⁶⁵ And when Truman is quoted the next day on the “wanton slaying of human beings”, he says that “Such acts of terrorism will not advance... the effort that is being made.”¹⁶⁶

The July 25th edition reports on the conclusions of the British government’s White Paper and the evidence of links between the Haganah and its associated Palmach force and the Irgun and Stern Gang, who are described as “three para-military organisations”. Nevertheless, there are justifications offered for their actions, which were “intended as a warning to the British Government of the consequences that would follow if the Government did not comply with the wishes of the Jewish community in Palestine.”¹⁶⁷ As with the violent and threatening language employed by Israeli political and military figures today, there was a clear link between the terrorism of these groups and their political aims. This is announced in stark terms when *The Palestine Post* announces that:

“The Jewish Agency Executive was not prepared to wait for a declaration of the Government’s policy, but decided to cause ‘one serious incident’ in order to influence that policy.”¹⁶⁸

The use of violence as a political tool is also reflected in the broadcasts of “Kol Israel” in which they stated that:

“The paralyzing of the railways all over the country... serves as a warn-

163 *ibid.*

164 *ibid.*

165 *ibid.*

166 *The Palestine Post (1946)* “Wanton Slaying of Human Beings”, 25 July, p. 1.

167 *The Palestine Post (1946)* ‘Evidence Seeks to Link Jewish Agency with Violence’, 25 July, p. 1.

168 *ibid.*

ing to the Government of the White Paper.”¹⁶⁹

In a statement that is eerily similar to recent Israeli claims of victimhood, even when bombing refugee camps, Kol Israel had also claimed that:

“The scope of the attack has proved that the Jews are capable of acting under the most difficult conditions.”¹⁷⁰

As with previous days, on July 25th *The Palestine Post* continued to give detailed coverage of recovery attempts, as “Officers and soldiers joined in brave attempts to reach any entombed persons who might still be alive.”¹⁷¹ Detailed, hour-by-hour timelines identify discoveries of further victims of the bombing:

“2.35am, the body of an unidentified soldier.

4.30, the body of Khalil Abdullah Yussef, messenger.

6.00, Capt. Mackintosh, Signals, succumbed in hospital.”¹⁷²

The impact on the reader is significant. One can almost imagine themselves at the site of the atrocity, where “Among the objects found were parts of a typewriter, half-typed sheets, a blood-stained piece of knitting wool, the needles still in it, and a sandwich near the body of an unidentified woman.”¹⁷³

As we see here, when sympathy is the goal, the detail on the victims of a terrorist attack is abundant, right down to the hours their bodies are discovered. On July 23rd, *The Palestine Post* had even estimated the financial cost of the damage to the hotel at 100,000 Palestinian pounds.¹⁷⁴ In 2023, however, you will find no estimates of the financial or human cost of Israeli bombs.

On July 25th, *The Palestine Post* does briefly refer to Arab states’ efforts to internationalise the question of Palestine by raising the issue at the United Nations.¹⁷⁵ However, a quotation from a British Foreign Ministry spokesperson, who states that “Britain... always welcomed a discussion before UNO¹⁷⁶ of controversial subjects”, belittles the significance of an in-

169 *ibid.*

170 *ibid.*

171 *The Palestine Post (1946)* ‘H. E. Visits Wreckage’, 25 July, p. 1.

172 *ibid.*

173 *ibid.*

174 *The Palestine Post (1946)* ‘41 Dead, 53 Injured, 52 Missing, in ‘Terrorist Attack on Secretariat’, 23 July, p. 1.

175 *The Palestine Post (1946)* ‘Arab States Take Palestine to UNO’, 25 July, p. 1.

176 United Nations Organisation.

digenous struggle for statehood. As with the Balfour Declaration, where the Palestinians were relegated to “existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine”,¹⁷⁷ here, their freedom is reduced to a “controversial subject”.

Analysis of *‘Al ha-mishmar*

‘Al ha-mishmar’s headline also attempts to convey a unified condemnation of the atrocity, with “Jerusalem Shocked by the Brutal Attack”,¹⁷⁸ rather than only its Jewish, Palestinian, or British residents.

‘Al ha-mishmar, which was a left-wing Jewish publication, was particularly vociferous in its rebuking of the bombing. Perhaps shockingly to a modern reader, the very first sentence of their report denounces the attack as “an act of Nazi-style brutality.”¹⁷⁹ There are several references to the diversity of the victims, with the bombing “claiming the lives of many people – Jews, Arabs, and English.”¹⁸⁰ There is also an emphatic vituperation of the “massive explosion”, which is described as an “act of sabotage” and a “brutal attack... and the shedding of innocent blood” which “aroused feelings of horror among the entire population”.¹⁸¹ The civilian nature of the target is further emphasised when we are told that “the explosion occurred when the offices were crowded, and only a few... managed to leave.”¹⁸²

If we refer back to the definition of terrorism we cited earlier in this text, the King David Hotel bore all the hallmarks of a terrorist attack. The Irgun’s goal was to drive the British out of Palestine, or in other words, “to compel a government... to do or to abstain from doing any act”, they did so by causing “death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants”, and their actions were certainly designed “to intimidate a population”.¹⁸³

‘Al ha-mishmar went out of their way to foreground condemnation of the atrocity from within the Jewish community. On July 23rd, the day after the bombing, they reported that “The Jewish Agency... strongly condemn the act, demanding the criminals be brought before an international court.”¹⁸⁴ Seeking to create a binary between a unified, peaceful community

177 Nashashibi, S., (2014) ‘Balfour: Britain’s original sin’, *Al Jazeera*, 4 November. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/11/4/balfour-britains-original-sin>.

178 *‘Al ha-mishmar* (1946) *Jerusalem Shocked by the Brutal Attack*, 23 July, p. 1.

179 *ibid.*

180 *ibid.*

181 *ibid.*

182 *ibid.*

183 United Nations (2004) *Security Council resolution 1566 (2004) on Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/rulcoflaw/blog/document/security-council-resolution-1566-2004-on-threats-to-international-peace-and-security-caused-by-terrorist-acts/>.

184 *‘Al ha-mishmar* (1946) *Jerusalem Shocked by the Brutal Attack*, 23 July, p. 1.

and irrational and violent terrorists, they state that:

“Jerusalem was shocked and horrified today by the destructive and criminal attack of the Irgun Zvai Leumi terrorist organisation.”¹⁸⁵

The Irgun are further denounced as a “reckless fascist gang that broke all restraint and is flooding the country with a wave of terror and blood.”¹⁸⁶ And the Tel Aviv Municipal Council are cited as expressing “their deep pain and sorrow to the bereaved families” in the wake of the “despicable and premeditated attack”.¹⁸⁷

However, there is little mention of the reaction of the Palestinians, or how their aspirations may have been affected by the atrocity. Instead, by July 24th, it is a British official’s concern at the potential “Impact on world sympathy for Zionism” of the attack that makes the headline.¹⁸⁸ In London, we are told, “All morning papers harshly condemned the act”¹⁸⁹, and “In the House of Commons... a series of ministers expressing their outrage at the criminal act in Jerusalem.”¹⁹⁰

The statements of British MPs regarding the bombing at times seem incredulous. Independent conservative MP Daniel Lipson is quoted as saying that the “vile” and “senseless, disgraceful act that tarnishes the Jewish name” has been unanimously condemned by “all British Jews, including leaders of the Zionist movement.”¹⁹¹ This contradicts the analysis previously observed in *the Manchester Guardian*, who stated that “many humane and moderate Jews in Palestine... [would] think first with pride of the men who struck this blow” and would view the attack as “a brave and heroic action.”¹⁹²

Unbelievably, and despite the Irgun’s well-documented admission of culpability, Labour MP Sydney Silverman, after castigating the “mental derangement of this outburst”, said to the Prime Minister:

““Can I ask if there is reliable evidence that the perpetrators are indeed Jews?”¹⁹³

Silverman went on to warn against “the detention of every moderate... Jewish leader...

185 *ibid.*

186 *ibid.*

187 *ibid.*

188 *Al ha-mishmar* (1946) “Impact on world sympathy for Zionism,” says London, “we are horrified.”, 24 July, p. 1.

189 *ibid.*

190 *ibid.*

191 *ibid.*

192 *The Manchester Guardian* (1946) ‘Crisis in Palestine’, 23 July, p. 4.

193 *Al ha-mishmar* (1946) “Impact on world sympathy for Zionism,” says London, “we are horrified.”, 24 July, p. 1.

without trial”.¹⁹⁴ Another Labour MP, John Hynd, “advised caution against creating a force similar to the ‘Black and Tans’ (the British force that operated in Ireland during the rebellion and was notorious for its cruelties) or the Nazis.”¹⁹⁵

If we compare these reports to the present day, we find that British MPs were far more capable of advising their own government to show restraint in an arrest campaign against the Jewish community in Palestine in 1946 following a terrorist attack on their own headquarters than they are now in advising a foreign government to show restraint in an indiscriminate bombing campaign against what former British prime minister David Cameron described as a “prison camp”.¹⁹⁶ No-one will forget Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party, agreeing that the political entity of Israel “had the right” to cut off power and water to the Gaza Strip,¹⁹⁷ or Rishi Sunak, head of the Conservative Party, telling Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, “we want you to win”.¹⁹⁸ With Western governments totally unwilling to acknowledge Israeli carpet bombing campaigns as acts of terror, one cannot bear to imagine what such a “victory” entails.

Analysis of *Ha'aretz*

As with the other Jewish publications we have analysed, *Ha'aretz* denounced “Significant damage” and “Heavy killing in a horrific attack on government and military offices in Jerusalem”, in which “Dozens of men and women perished”.¹⁹⁹ Interestingly, they are cautious in giving exact figures, stating that:

“The number of casualties has not yet been determined, but it is presumed to exceed fifty.”²⁰⁰

As we will later discover in our analysis of reports of the Jabalia refugee camp bombing in the Jewish press, such caution has been discarded in recent years and replaced with an unquestioning acceptance of IDF statements, often with no attempt whatsoever to verify or corroborate their claims. In the case of the King David Hotel bombing, *Ha'aretz* instead relied on the eyewitness testimony of their own Jerusalem correspondent. He describes,

194 *ibid.*

195 *ibid.*

196 Watt, N. and Sherwood, H., (2010) ‘David Cameron: Israeli blockade has turned Gaza Strip into a “prison camp”’, *The Guardian*, 27 July. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/jul/27/david-cameron-gaza-prison-camp>.

197 McShane, A., (2023) ‘Israel ‘has the right’ to withhold power and water from Gaza, says Sir Keir Starmer’, *LBC*, 11 October. Available at: <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/sir-keir-starmer-hamas-terrorism-israel-defend-itself/>.

198 Soteriou, E., (2023) “We want you to win”: Rishi Sunak says he “supports Israel’s right to defend itself” and “go after Hamas”, *LBC*, 19 October. Available at: <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/rishi-sunak-supports-israel-defend-itself-go-after-hamas/>.

199 *Ha'aretz* (1946) ‘Heavy killing in a horrific attack on government and military offices in Jerusalem’, 23 July, p. 1.

200 *ibid.*

immediately after the bombing, hearing “a great outcry of the wounded and dying”²⁰¹ as “Glass shards were thrown far away”.²⁰² In horrifying scenes, the reporter tells us how:

“... one person was thrown with such force that he hit the outer wall of the... building across the street. He was completely crushed, and parts of his body were scattered on the sidewalk.”²⁰³

In 2023, those who are accustomed to accessing social media will have witnessed videos and photographs from Palestine that they wish they never had. But in the Jewish media, the grisly human cost of hi-tech Israeli military offensives is often kept out of sight. In *Ha'aretz's* report of the 1946 King David Hotel bombing, we rely on written testimony of “Body parts of the victims were found on the sidewalks”,²⁰⁴ “one body was found on the roof of a nearby building”,²⁰⁵ and “The bodies of the dead were laid out on stretchers”, but the effect remains chilling. We read of people losing hope, as “the rescuers despaired of saving a large number of men and women buried under the building’s debris”, and we read of those who persevered in their efforts, as a “police commander... was bandaged... at the site and continued his duty.”²⁰⁶

On July 24th, alongside the “utter condemnation” of British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, *Ha'aretz* includes the Leader of the Opposition Antony Eden’s characterisation of the “heartless and unforgivable act”.²⁰⁷ Updates on the rescue operation continue, with reports of “the slight hope... [that] grew due to the rescuers’ success in saving three people... from under the debris.” *Ha'aretz* published a full list of victims’ names – Palestinians, Jews, and Brits.²⁰⁸ In *Ha'aretz's* estimation, these were victims worth reporting. In the Palestine of today, however, such a courtesy is rarely afforded.

201 *ibid.*

202 *ibid.*

203 *ibid.*

204 *ibid.*

205 *ibid.*

206 *ibid.*

207 *Ha'aretz* (1946) ‘Attlee: “Terror will not sway the government from its path to a fair solution to the Palestine problem”’, 24 July, p. 1.

208 *Ha'aretz* (1946) ‘Dead, Injured, and Missing’, 24 July, p. 1.

Media responses to the Jabalia refugee camp bombing of October 31st 2023

Background

At the time of writing, Israel's latest bombardment of the Gaza Strip has become its bloodiest in history. The Israeli rhetoric during the onslaught was nothing short of genocidal. Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu suggested dropping a nuclear bomb on Gaza, saying that the Palestinian population could "go to Ireland or deserts", and that "the monsters in Gaza should find a solution by themselves";²⁰⁹ Agriculture Minister Avi Dichter said that the murderous campaign would lead to "Gaza Nakba 2023";²¹⁰ and IDF spokesperson Daniel Hagari insisted that "the emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy".²¹¹ Attempts to dehumanise the entire population of Gaza were prevalent. Eliyahu declared that "there is no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza";²¹² Defence Minister Yoav Gallant claimed to be "fighting human animals and...are acting accordingly" in justifying his imposition of a "complete siege" that would deprive Palestinians of food, electricity, and fuel,²¹³ and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu invoked Amalek, in a reference to the rival nation to ancient Israel mentioned in the First Book of Samuel:

"Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys."²¹⁴

One may argue that this language had a direct influence on the brutality of the military campaign that ensued and perhaps even the implicit acceptance displayed by Western governments. Relentless and indiscriminate bombing and attacks on civilian infrastructure became facts of life for the Palestinian population, and the destruction of refugee camps, hospitals, bakeries, schools, and mosques emerged as the motif of this sustained assault.

The Jabalia refugee camp, in the north of Gaza, which was established by the United Nations after the mass expulsions of 1948 and the creation of the Israeli political entity, was

209 *The Times of Israel* (2023) 'Far-right minister: Nuking Gaza is an option, population should 'go to Ireland or deserts'', 5 November. Available at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/far-right-minister-nuking-gaza-is-an-option-population-should-go-to-ireland-or-deserts/.

210 Hauser Tov, M., (2023) "We're Rolling Out Nakba 2023;" Israeli Minister Says on Northern Gaza Strip Evacuation', *Ha'aretz*, 12 November. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-12/ty-article/israeli-security-cabinet-member-calls-north-gaza-evacuation-nakba-2023/0000018b-c2be-dea2-a9bf-d2be7b670000>.

211 McKernan, B. and Kierszenbaum, Q., (2023) 'Emphasis is on damage, not accuracy': ground offensive into Gaza seems imminent, *The Guardian*, 10 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/10/right-now-it-is-one-day-at-a-time-life-on-israels-frontline-with-gaza>.

212 *The Times of Israel* (2023) 'Far-right minister: Nuking Gaza is an option, population should 'go to Ireland or deserts'', 5 November. Available at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/far-right-minister-nuking-gaza-is-an-option-population-should-go-to-ireland-or-deserts/.

213 Kasraoui, S., (2023) 'Israel Defence Minister Calls Palestinians 'Human Animals' Amid Israeli Aggression', *Morocco World News*, 9 October. Available at: <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2023/10/358170/israel-defense-minister-calls-palestinians-human-animals-amid-israeli-aggression>.

214 Lanard, N., (2023) 'The Dangerous History Behind Netanyahu's Amalek Rhetoric', *Mother Jones*, 3 November. Available at: <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2023/11/benjamin-netanyahu-amalek-israel-palestine-gaza-saul-samuel-old-testament/>.

one of the most bombed areas of Gaza in the 2023 attacks. It is the largest Palestinian refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, with 116,011 inhabitants living within an area of 1.4 square kilometres.²¹⁵ At the time of writing, major attacks were reported on October 9th, 12th, 19th, 22nd, and 31st, and November 1st, 2nd, 4th, 13th, 14th, and 17th.

In this section, we will focus on the media's response to the October 31st attack. Six, 2000 pound bombs were dropped on residential buildings in the camp.²¹⁶ More than 50 Palestinians were killed, with an estimated 150 wounded.²¹⁷ Local resident Ragheb Aqal described "homes buried under the rubble and body parts and martyrs and wounded in huge numbers".²¹⁸ Further afield, Norwegian physician Dr. Mads Gilbert said: "There is absolutely no doubt that this is a mass murder."²¹⁹ And Brazilian President Lula da Silva pleaded: "For the first time, we are witnessing a war in which the majority of the dead are children. Stop! For the love of God, stop!"²²⁰

From the genocidal rhetoric of the Israeli government to the indiscriminate attacks of their military, the evidence was present. This was an act of terror.

Responses of the British media

Analysis of *The Guardian*

The Guardian ran with the headline: "Dozens killed after Israeli airstrikes on Gaza refugee camp".²²¹ Palestinian deaths have increasingly been reduced to a murder mystery in the Western media, with "Dozens killed" written in the passive tone. Rather than stating that the Israeli airstrikes killed these people, it is as if the relation between the two was merely incidental. This language reflects the dissociative amnesia displayed by Mark Regev, a senior advisor to Netanyahu, when he stated on MSNBC News that he "did not" admit Israel had killed any children, startling the news anchor who had just informed him of the thousands of murdered children.²²²

215 UNRWA (2023) *Jabalia Camp*. Available at: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip/jabalia-camp>.

216 *Ahram Online* (2023) 'Israeli airstrike on Gaza's Jabalia refugee camp kills, injures 400 Palestinians', 31 October. Available at: <https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/511327.aspx>.

217 *Al Jazeera* (2023) 'Dozens killed in Israeli air attack on Jabalia refugee camp: Gaza official', 31 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/31/dozens-killed-in-israeli-air-attack-on-gaza-refugee-camp-medical-official>.

218 *Al Jazeera* (2023) 'Jabalia bombardment an "earthquake"', 31 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/31/israel-hamas-war-live-israeli-air-attacks-continue-across-gaza?update=2452083>.

219 *Al Jazeera* (2023) "'Stop this mass killing': Doctor says US and Europe need to step in", 31 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/31/israel-hamas-war-live-israeli-air-attacks-continue-across-gaza?update=2451919>.

220 Phillips, T., (2023) 'South American countries recall ambassadors and cut ties with Israel over war with Hamas', *The Guardian*, 1 November. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/31/bolivia-israel-hamas-gaza-war-crime>.

221 Carroll, R., (2023) 'Dozens killed after Israeli airstrikes on Gaza refugee camp', *The Guardian*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/31/dozens-killed-after-israeli-airstrikes-on-gaza-refugee-camp>.

222 Aktas, A., (2023) "'We don't know how those children died': Israeli top adviser on child deaths in Gaza", Anadolu Agency, 19 November. Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/we-dont-know-how-those-children-died-israeli-top-adviser-on-child-deaths-in-gaza/3058209>.

The subheading immediately gives the Israeli version of events: “Israeli military says it bombed Jabalia camp to target a key Hamas commander, Ibrahim Biari.”²²³ When you first open the article online, this is the sole analysis viewable to the reader. This immediately gives the Israeli voice an authority and supremacy and rationalises what would otherwise be patently obvious as a war crime and abominable act.

The first paragraph does abandon the passive tone and clarifies that “Israeli airstrikes destroyed apartment blocks and killed dozens of people at a refugee camp”.²²⁴ However, what dampens the shocking nature of the atrocity in the Western discourse, perhaps, is its repetitive nature. We read here that it took place “on the 25th day of a conflict”.²²⁵ In the preceding weeks, numerous attacks on refugee camps, including Jabalia, had been widely reported. By now, a persistent foregrounding of the Israeli narrative, often with little to no pushback, has established a situation where attacks on civilian infrastructure are, if not acceptable to the Western palate, at least expected.

In the second paragraph, figures of fifty people dead and 150 injured are attributed to “Hamas officials”.²²⁶ Hamas are a proscribed terrorist organisation in the United Kingdom, placing a question mark on the numbers given. Furthermore, the incident came after reports casting aspersions on the figures emerging from Gaza,²²⁷ despite international humanitarian agencies considering them “broadly accurate and historically reliable”, according to a report in Reuters.²²⁸ The term “Hamas officials” is also (some may argue deliberately) far more ambiguous than referring to, for example, “the Gaza Ministry of Health”. The third paragraph does refer to the “Hamas-run health ministry”,²²⁹ but again the link to Hamas seems to delegitimise the authority of what is a governmental institution.

There is a stark difference in the way Hamas and Israeli officials are quoted in the report. In the third paragraph, we read that “The Hamas-run health ministry called the attack a ‘heinous’ massacre.”²³⁰ The citation is only one word, and there is no identification of who said it. In contrast, in the fifth paragraph, an Israeli spokesperson is named and quoted in full sentences:

223 *ibid.*

224 *ibid.*

225 *ibid.*

226 *ibid.*

227 Barnes, J., (2023) ‘Death tolls from Hamas-run health ministry are not trustworthy, former Reuters chief warns’, *The Telegraph*, 24 October. Available from: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2023/10/24/hamas-israel-death-toll-health-ministry-trustworthy-reuters/>.

228 Tétrault-Farber, G., (2023) ‘Despite Biden’s doubts, humanitarian agencies consider Gaza toll reliable’, *Reuters*, 27 October. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/despite-bidens-doubts-humanitarian-agencies-consider-gaza-toll-reliable-2023-10-27/>.

229 Carroll, R., (2023) ‘Dozens killed after Israeli airstrikes on Gaza refugee camp’, *The Guardian*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/31/dozens-killed-after-israeli-airstrikes-on-gaza-refugee-camp>.

230 *ibid.*

“Lt Col Richard Hecht, said Israel had attempted to minimise civilian casualties in a complex operation: ‘This is the tragedy of war... We’ve been saying for days: ‘Move south, civilians that are not involved with Hamas, please move south.’”²³¹

Later in the article, another Israeli spokesperson is mentioned by name and again quoted in full:

“‘Hamas, with its psychopathic leadership and its sadistic murderers, must cease to be,’ said Tzachi Hanegbi, Israel’s national security adviser. ‘These monstrous terrorist organisations must never again be allowed to control the Gaza Strip.’”²³²

The emotive and inflammatory language in this second example, it must be noted, would be highly unlikely to be included as a description of any Israeli institution or individual, even if it was quoted from a Palestinian official. Despite this being an article about an Israeli attack on a refugee camp, it is Hamas, a Palestinian organisation, who we read being described as “sadistic murderers” and a “monstrous terrorist organisation”.²³³ One can only imagine the backlash if *The Guardian*, or any British publication for that matter, had cited a Hamas official describing the Israeli military in the same terms.

Hanegbi is given further airtime:

“Hanegbi said that Israeli forces sought to avoid civilian casualties and encouraged civilians to relocate to ‘protected areas’ in the south where they could receive food.”²³⁴

It is incredible that the claim of “avoiding civilian casualties” is conveyed with no pushback in a report of an intentional bombing of a refugee camp. This is reflective of a clear and persistent double standard, for if any Palestinian military group had conducted an operation and then claimed to avoid civilian casualties, the claim would be ridiculed, denounced, or simply not reported. When the Israelis make the same claim, however, directly after having killed over fifty people in a refugee camp, their words are reported verbatim. Hanegbi’s narrative continues in *The Guardian’s* piece:

“This is our commitment as a country that acts according to the laws of

231 *ibid.*

232 *ibid.*

233 *ibid.*

234 *ibid.*

war. This is also the way to increase and preserve the legitimacy without which it would be very difficult to conduct the military campaign until the goal is achieved.”²³⁵

This is a shocking statement, but by providing no commentary, the article gives no indication that Hanegbi’s words are controversial, if not outrageous. Firstly, the very first sentence of this article, “Israeli airstrikes have destroyed apartment blocks and killed dozens of people at a refugee camp”,²³⁶ suggests that Israel does not “act according to the laws of war”. Secondly, when Hanegbi mentions “preserving legitimacy”, one might ask: amongst whom? Furthermore, if this is a response to a massacre of over fifty civilians, then what precisely is the “goal” of “the military campaign”?

To be fair to *The Guardian*, “Abu Obeida, a spokesperson for Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades”, is mentioned by name and quoted, although this is relegated to the very last paragraph of the article.²³⁷ It is also notable that they correctly make a distinction between the political wing of Hamas and the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, its military wing. Nevertheless, the quote from Abu Obeida is purely informative in nature, “We will release a certain number of foreigners in the next few days”,²³⁸ with none of the emotion or blistering rhetoric of the Israeli spokesperson.

I would argue that there are key terms missing from this article. There is no description of the Israeli attack on Jabalia refugee camp as “indiscriminate” or an “act of terror”. In fact, the only condemnation of the atrocity is in a quote from Hamas officials. In contrast, Hamas’ attack of October 7th is described by *The Guardian* themselves as a “murderous onslaught”.²³⁹ This is a double standard. Furthermore, the Israeli claim to have killed a senior Hamas commander in the bombing is prominently featured in the subheading, whereas the response of Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem, who “denied any senior commander there and called the claim an Israeli pretext for killing civilians”, as per Reuters,²⁴⁰ is not communicated in either *The Guardian* nor any of the British articles we will analyse. As we will note, this reflects an underlying presumption that Israeli claims are authoritative and factual, and Palestinian claims are suspect, questionable, or not worthy of report.

Analysis of the *Daily Mail*

²³⁵ *ibid.*

²³⁶ *ibid.*

²³⁷ *ibid.*

²³⁸ *ibid.*

²³⁹ *ibid.*

²⁴⁰ al-Mughrabi, N. and Rose, E., (2023) ‘Israel strikes dense Gaza camp, says it kills Hamas commander’, *Reuters*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/hamas-says-it-fires-israeli-troops-pressing-gaza-ground-assault-2023-10-31/>.

The *Daily Mail* has become known in recent years for employing an emotive and provocative tone, so it is no surprise that their headline refers to a “senior jihadi commander” who “IDF claims their jets took out”.²⁴¹ Straight away, the bombing of a refugee camp is presented as a battle, with the “jihadis” as a common enemy shared by Israelis and the readership, and the “IDF jets” allies on a noble mission.

Again, the victims of the atrocity are quickly glossed over: “more than 50 people have been killed and 150 wounded.”²⁴² We do not know their names, ages, or anything about their lives. The Palestinian dead are almost always anonymous. Except, one may add, when they are occasionally identified as “terrorist leaders” by the Israelis. This is evidenced in the third paragraph, where Ibrahim Biari, who the IDF had claimed to have killed, is described as “the commander of Hamas’ Central Jabaliya Battalion”.²⁴³ In the next paragraph, an IDF statement characterises Biari as “one of the leaders responsible for sending ‘Nukbha’ terrorist operatives”.²⁴⁴ “Nukbha”, an elite unit of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, is misspelt here. Here also, in the fourth paragraph of an article about a bombing of a refugee camp, we find the first reference to murder. It is not in reference to the attack the article is about, however, but “the murderous terror attack [of Hamas] on October 7th.”²⁴⁵

There is further focus on Biari, with a “wanted” style photo of the Hamas operative written in Hebrew.²⁴⁶ It is interesting that the *Daily Mail* chose not to translate the poster into English, even though it was on the IDF’s own Twitter account later that evening. Beneath the picture, the *Daily Mail* confirms that it was “supplied by the IDF”,²⁴⁷ reinforcing the perception of the Israeli military as a reliable source.

Another graphic included in the piece goes further in romanticizing a Western perception of Israeli military supremacy and is another attempt to shift the frame of reference from a vicious assault on a refugee camp to an intense battle between Israel and Hamas. In a lurid visualisation entitled “Targeting the Hamas tunnel network”, a waving Israeli flag accompanies a box-off boasting of “bunker buster bombs”.²⁴⁸ The vivid cartoon shows three levels. On the ground level, buildings are struck by rockets as a military jet soars into the sky, and in

241 Salvoni, E., Bunyan, R., Parashar, A., and Craven, N., (2023) ‘Israel say they carried out airstrike that Hamas claim killed more than 50 people at Gaza’s Jabalia refugee camp: ‘Dozens of bodies’ are recovered after site is reduced to giant crater - IDF claim their jets took out senior jihadi commander’, *Daily Mail*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12693827/More-50-killed-Israeli-strike-Gazas-Jabalia-refugee-camp-Palestinian-health-officials-claim.html>.

242 *ibid.*

243 *ibid.*

244 *ibid.*

245 *ibid.*

246 *ibid.*

247 *ibid.*

248 *ibid.*

between the buildings a military tank fires into the distance. Then, there are various levels of a labyrinth underground lair. This is “What’s underground”,²⁴⁹ we are told. There are labels for illustrations of “Tunnels lined with concrete for strength”, “Control rooms with sophisticated equipment”, and “Hostages being held in large halls deep down in the network”.²⁵⁰ The “control room” in question shows four men around an office desk with a computer and printer and a green Hamas flag on the wall. On the lowest level, two hostages are drawn on two sets of bunkbeds, each guarded by a masked man. To reinforce the connection between these underground dungeons and events on the ground, there are ladders with armed men ascending to the top.

The scene is so vivid, it is easy to forget that you are reading a report of a refugee camp massacre. But more pertinently, what is the source of this information? After all, this is “What’s underground”, and another box-off shows a sprawling map of “Known Hamas tunnels”.²⁵¹ These are not even presented as allegations but rather as facts on the ground, yet no sources are provided. The accompanying text of the article sheds some light, however. We read that “Israel today said it has killed ‘dozens’ of Hamas terrorists during ‘fierce’ fighting ‘deep’ inside Gaza”, and “Israel said its forces had fought Hamas gunmen inside the militants’ vast tunnel network today”, and “The IDF said its forces ‘struck a Hamas terrorist outpost’ in the northern Gaza Strip”.²⁵² Unfortunately, this unquestioning acceptance and obsequious reliance on the Israeli military as *the* primary source of information means that instead of impartial or informative journalism, the *Daily Mail* report is reduced to a parroting of Israeli talking points.

There is a puzzling quality to the manner in which the *Daily Mail* confirms and then obfuscates responsibility for the atrocity of the Jabalia attack. In the headline, we read: “Israel say they carried out airstrike that Hamas claim killed more than 50 people at Gaza’s Jabalia refugee camp”.²⁵³ This, combined with the fact that there is no other possible or even claimed perpetrator of the attack, seems definitive. But then, unbelievably, a photograph of huge sinkholes and decimated buildings is described as “the site of alleged Israeli strikes”.²⁵⁴ Another image is noted as “A building...completely levelled by suspected Israeli airstrikes”.²⁵⁵ This is despite the fact that the Israeli military had taken responsibility! Later in the article, the writers suddenly remember this fact, as a photograph of Palestinians attempting to

249 *ibid.*

250 *ibid.*

251 *ibid.*

252 *ibid.*

253 *ibid.*

254 *ibid.*

255 *ibid.*

rescue the wounded is described as their “search for survivors after Israel launched air strikes”.²⁵⁶ However, even when Israeli accountability is admitted, their declared motivations are automatically accepted at face-value. The next image, of a Palestinian man carrying a young girl, is accompanied with the line: “Men carried injured children after the Jabalia refugee camp came under attack as Israel attempted to kill Hamas terrorists.”²⁵⁷

In the very next line of the article, the contrast in the way Palestinian claims are treated is stark: “Figures released by Hamas on the number of Hamas casualties cannot be independently verified.”²⁵⁸ The inclusion of the term “Hamas casualties” is so shocking that one wonders if it was written in error. Or perhaps this was a Freudian slip, for the underlying theme of the article is that the bombing of a refugee camp is justified by the claimed presence of Hamas.

The *Daily Mail* makes much more use of pictorial evidence than *The Guardian*, with an array of horrifying images of wanton destruction. Indeed, the article mentions “apocalyptic scenes”, although the description of “distraught onlookers” seems to allude to a humanitarian calamity rather than a massacre or act of terror.²⁵⁹ Indeed, survivors of the attack are referred to throughout as “distraught”, “devastated”, or “horrified”.²⁶⁰ Continuing with this theme, local Palestinian residents who again remain anonymous are cited as “likening it to an earthquake and saying that the ground began to collapse around them”.²⁶¹ It seems that for the writers of the *Daily Mail*’s report, the fundamental difference between an earthquake and an air strike is forgotten.

Analysis of the *Daily Mirror*

The headline of the *Daily Mirror*’s report gives a much higher death toll than *The Guardian* or *Daily Mail*, and also immediately apportions blame to the Israeli military: “Israeli airstrike destroys Gaza refugee camp at Jabalia and kills more than 100 people”.²⁶² The subheading describes the attack as “the outrage at Jabalia”.²⁶³ Incredibly, out of all the British publications we have analysed, this is the first denunciation of the attack we have seen.

The first paragraph of the article is brief, but again is unequivocal in stating that the victims

256 *ibid.*

257 *ibid.*

258 *ibid.*

259 *ibid.*

260 *ibid.*

261 *ibid.*

262 Lines, A., (2023) ‘Israeli airstrike destroys Gaza refugee camp at Jabalia and kills more than 100 people’, *Daily Mirror*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/israeli-airstrike-destroys-gaza-refugee-31329189>.

263 *ibid.*

“were killed by an Israeli air strike”.²⁶⁴ It also provides a fuller description of Jabalia itself, saying that the attack “devastated Gaza’s biggest refugee camp... north of Gaza City, which is home to 114,000 people” and “levelled Block 6 in the camp”.²⁶⁵

In contrast to the previous two articles, Palestinian voices are brought to the beginning of the article. Eyewitnesses are cited as saying that “most of the dead were women and children”,²⁶⁶ emphasizing the indefensibility of the assault. Palestinian witnesses are also named and cited in full:

“Palestine Red Crescent Society spokesman Nebal Farsakh said: ‘The situation is absolutely horrific. We have been witnessing this increasing number of casualties among Palestinian civilians in Gaza due to attacks against residential buildings, homes, streets, as well as places of worship and hospitals.

Hospitals are already overwhelmed, and they barely can deal with the casualties. They are working at full capacity. This comes at the same time all hospitals are literally collapsing due to shortages of medical supplies as well as medicines, and they are running out of fuel, which is urgently needed.’”²⁶⁷

This harrowing account and vital context was sorely lacking in the other articles we analysed. Whereas the *Daily Mail’s* report presents the Jabalia attack in the frame of an ongoing battle against Hamas militants, the *Daily Mirror* informs us that this bombing was part of a sustained assault on civilian infrastructure, with repeated bombings on “homes... places of worship and hospitals” meaning that “hospitals... barely can deal with the casualties.”²⁶⁸

Clearly the *Daily Mirror* article is markedly more accusatory in tone than *The Guardian* or *Daily Mail* reports of the Jabalia refugee camp bombing. Early on, the attack is named as an “outrage”,²⁶⁹ but the *Mirror* still balks at describing it as an act of terror.

Interestingly, the *Mirror’s* report of the King David Hotel bombing was also described as an “outrage”, but on that occasion, the “terrorist” appellation was applied. The King David Hotel bombing was characterised as the “bloodiest terrorist outrage” in which “a jeep, full of Jewish terrorists armed with tommy guns, drove up the curving entrance way to the King

264 *ibid.*

265 *ibid.*

266 *ibid.*

267 *ibid.*

268 *ibid.*

269 *ibid.*

David Hotel”, and the writer denounced the “diabolical thoroughness with which Jewish terrorists planned this brutal and bloody attack”. A 2018 *Mirror* article on the King David Hotel again refers to those responsible as “terrorists” and “militants”.²⁷⁰ This is significant because it refutes the notion that the “terrorist” designation of the Irgun assailants, which would never be applied to the Israeli military in the Western media, was due to the norms of that time. Indeed, with the King David Hotel being, according to some, “not an ordinary hotel, but also the nerve centre of British rule over that country”,²⁷¹ one may argue that the bombing of the Jabalia refugee camp has even more right to be described as an act of terror. Yet, as we have seen above, it never would be in the British media of today.

Responses of the Palestinian and Arab media

Analysis of *Al Jazeera*

Of all the media we have analysed, *Al Jazeera* had by far the most detailed reportage of the October 31st Israeli bombing of the Jabalia refugee camp, with live updates, several detailed reports, and a separately published series of photographs. In contrast to the British and Jewish media we studied, *Al Jazeera* have had reporters on the ground in Gaza throughout the Israeli bombing campaign. As we will see, this heavily impacts their ability to independently verify the claims of various parties and seek out the analysis of relevant experts and eyewitnesses.

There is also a much greater attempt to communicate international responses to the attack. On November 1st, the day after the attack, *Al Jazeera* ran the headline: “‘Inhumane’: World reacts to Israeli attacks on Jabalia refugee camp”.²⁷² The bombing is denounced as “inhuman”, rather than dismissed as a “strike” or “blast”, and the October 31st incident is placed in the context of ongoing “attacks”. Significantly, there is a direct contrast drawn between “Israeli attacks” and “world reaction”, framing the aggressor as a pariah state that has committed an atrocity. The subheading clarifies the reason for “global criticism”, highlighting the atrocious nature of the attack as “Israeli air strikes on a densely populated Gaza camp”,²⁷³ and the first paragraph emphasises that it was a “barrage” of air strikes.²⁷⁴

In the second paragraph, the report notes that “Footage from the scene showed women

270 Myall, S., (2018) ‘King David Hotel bombing killed 91 and struck at heart of British rule in Palestine - now Prince William is staying there’, *Daily Mirror*, 26 June. Available at: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/real-life-stories/king-david-hotel-bombing-killed-12786374>.

271 Hoffman, B., ‘The Bombing of the King David Hotel 1946’, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 31(3), pp. 594-611. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2020.1726575>.

272 *Al Jazeera* (2023) “‘Inhumane’: World reacts to Israeli attacks on Jabalia refugee camp”, 1 November. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/1/a-wake-up-call-world-reacts-to-jabalia-camp-attack>.

273 *ibid.*

274 *ibid.*

and children being helped down half-destroyed buildings as rescuers and local residents dug through the rubble to find survivors.”²⁷⁵ In this way, we read of the welfare of the wounded and survivors of the assault before official governmental statements or claims.

“The Ministry of Health in Gaza”²⁷⁶ is not tied to a political affiliation, as they were in British reports. But Regardless of this, *Al Jazeera* makes an effort to verify the numbers they provide by reporting that “The Indonesian Hospital, where most of the victims were taken, confirmed that more than 50 people were killed.”²⁷⁷

Then, we find a claim that was completely omitted from all the British and Jewish media reports we analysed:

“ Hamas’ military wing said on Wednesday that seven of its civilian captives have been killed in the strikes, including three foreign passport holders.”²⁷⁸

This is an explosive claim, and one would think highly newsworthy. It is also highly embarrassing for the Israeli and Western governments, who were at the time demanding a release of all hostages as a prerequisite for any ceasefire, as it suggests that continued Israeli attacks are directly causing their deaths. Within Israeli society at least, this could lead to increased opposition to the bombing campaign, which could explain its omission from Jewish reports.

The theme of international reaction continues, and the *Al Jazeera* report gives a much a stronger sense of the attack as a globally condemned act, with statements from political leaders of the EU, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Yemen, Pakistan, and Iran all cited. From further afield, we learn that “without naming Jabalia, some states have begun to distance themselves from Israel. Bolivia has cut diplomatic ties while neighbours Colombia and Chile recalled their ambassadors for consultations.”²⁷⁹

There are also condemnations from independent humanitarian organizations, including Doctors Without Borders. Again, in this instance, *Al Jazeera* seems more adept in providing eyewitness accounts from Gaza, quoting a nurse who tended to survivors of the attack:

“Young children arrived at the hospital with deep wounds and severe burns. They came without their families. Many were screaming and ask-

275 *ibid.*

276 *ibid.*

277 *ibid.*

278 *ibid.*

279 *ibid.*

ing for their parents.”²⁸⁰

This level of detail and reliance on eyewitness accounts from independent sources must be compared with accounts we will later read from the Jewish media, where generalised statements of the victims’ identities are accepted from the Israeli military at face value, with no attempts to verify their claims. *Al Jazeera* does report Israeli claims to have killed a Hamas commander, but this is relegated to the end of the piece. Furthermore, the final line of the article, which states that “Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected calls for a ceasefire”,²⁸¹ does not hold weight or authority after the global condemnation conveyed.

Despite *Al Jazeera* empathising with the plight of the Palestinian people, there is no characterisation of the bombing of Jabalia as a terrorist attack. One could argue that this reflects attempts by *Al Jazeera*, particularly since the establishment of *Al Jazeera* English in 2006, to gain acceptance in the Western arena as a professional and credible media organization. By characterising Israeli military attacks as terrorism, *Al Jazeera* would be making a major political statement.

Another obvious difference between *Al Jazeera’s* reportage of Jabalia and the Palestinian media’s coverage of the King David Hotel bombing is that *Al Jazeera* makes no reference to the Jewish identity of the perpetrators of the attack. Instead, they cite the Gazan health ministry’s description of “a heinous Israeli massacre”.²⁸²

Despite no characterisations of Israeli actions in Gaza as terrorism, it must be noted that *Al Jazeera’s* mere presence in Gaza, particularly through its English-language arm, has shifted the public debate on the Palestinian question in the West. During Israel’s 2008-9 assault on Gaza, *Al Jazeera* was one of the only English-language media organisations able to report on the ground, because they were already present there when Israel closed the borders. At the time, Ahmed Shihab-Eldin commented:

“Israel has invaded Gaza, divided it, and banned foreign journalists from entering – but *Al Jazeera* English was inside before the war began, and its reporting is as inexorable, though more precise, than Israel’s ‘surgical attacks.’”²⁸³

In 2023, a similar situation abounds. However, *Al Jazeera’s* journalists often pay a heavy price

280 *ibid.*

281 *ibid.*

282 *Al Jazeera* (2023) ‘Dozens killed in Israeli air attack on Jabalia refugee camp: Gaza official’, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/31/dozens-killed-in-israeli-air-attack-on-gaza-refugee-camp-medical-official>.

283 Shihab-Eldin, A., (2009) ‘*Al Jazeera* English Beats Israel’s Ban on Reporters in Gaza with Exclusive Coverage’, *HuffPost*, 5 February. Available at: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/al-jazeera-english-beats_b_155125.

for their intimate coverage of Israeli atrocities. In the October 31st bombing of the Jabalia refugee camp, *Al Jazeera* broadcast engineer Mohamed Abu al-Qumsam suffered an unimaginable personal loss. Alongside their initial report, *Al Jazeera* ran a separate article headlined: “*Al Jazeera* engineer loses 19 family members in Israeli air raid”.²⁸⁴ In this piece, the attack is directly condemned as “a ‘massacre’ and an ‘unforgivable act’ by Israeli forces” and “heinous and indiscriminate Israeli bombing”.²⁸⁵ It is also named a “tragedy” and contextualised as coming “amid [a] relentless Israeli bombardment of the besieged Gaza Strip”.²⁸⁶

Analysis of *Al Quds*

The coverage of the Jabalia refugee camp attack of October 31st in the Palestinian *Al Quds* publication opens with a statement from “The Ministry of Health in Gaza”, with the institution again not tied to a political affiliation.²⁸⁷ *Al Quds* gives the same figure as the *Daily Mirror*, directly reporting the Ministry’s figure of “100 martyrs, according to a preliminary toll”, although this is qualified with an assertion that “the number may be larger and may be close to the number of victims of the Baptist Hospital massacre, because the area that was bombed was ‘densely populated.’”²⁸⁸

We also learn that the Ministry’s spokesperson “described the situation in the hospital as ‘extremely catastrophic.’”²⁸⁹ This places the attack within the overall context of the situation in Gaza. In the British articles we have analysed, although the number of dead and wounded in the attack on Jabalia is given, we do not learn anything about the survivors or their wellbeing except for photographs of the wounded being carried away. Through eyewitness testimony, the *Al Quds* account connects the atrocity to international standards:

“The director of the Indonesian Hospital also said that the victims suffered burns and deformities that show that the occupation army used ‘internationally prohibited weapons’ in the bombing, noting that the hospital will stop working completely tomorrow evening due to a lack of fuel.”²⁹⁰

Notably, the perpetrators of the attack are referred to simply as “the occupation army”, a

284 *Al Jazeera* (2023) ‘*Al Jazeera* engineer loses 19 family members in Israeli air raid’, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/31/al-jazeera-engineer-loses-19-family-members-in-israeli-bombing-of-jabalia>.

285 *ibid.*

286 *ibid.*

287 *Al Quds* (2023) ‘400 killed and wounded in a “horrific” Israeli bombing near the Indonesian hospital in Jabalia, Gaza’, October 31. Available at: <https://www.alquds.com/ar/posts/98826>.

288 *ibid.*

289 *ibid.*

290 *ibid.*

widely accepted term for the Israeli political entity amongst Palestinians. This is significant because it automatically frames the Israeli military as a belligerent force and aggressor and refutes longstanding Israeli claims of acting in self-defence. Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories, confirmed that as an occupying force Israel cannot claim this right under international law in comments she made to the National Press Club in Canberra, Australia on November 14th 2023, just two weeks after the Jabalia massacre and as the Israeli onslaught on Gaza continued unabated, stating:

“Israel cannot claim the right of self-defence against a threat that emanates...from a territory that is kept under belligerent occupation.”²⁹¹

Citing a “spokesman for the Civil Defence in Gaza”, the *Al Quds* report refers to the victims of the Jabalia bombing as “citizens on the ground who were martyred and wounded”.²⁹² It is a longstanding feature of Palestinian reportage of Israeli military attacks to refer to fatalities as “martyrs”. The Arabic term for “martyr”, “*shahid*”, also means “to witness”, which again links to the concept of a criminal act, although it is not directly reported in this article as such, which is “witnessed” by its victims.

The use of the term “martyred” rather than “killed” may also be interpreted as a sign of the defiance and resistance of the Palestinian population, and a refusal to be seen as victims. This can be contrasted to much of the British media’s response to the incident, where Palestinians are seen through a binary lens of either helpless victim or mindless aggressor.

Although *Al Quds* employs unequivocal terms in its characterisation of the Jabalia attack, this is primarily through quotations from organisations on the ground. The report does not specifically condemn the operation as an act of terror nor its culprits as terrorists. We may also note that, unlike Palestinian reports of the King David Hotel, there is no link made to the Jewish (or even Israeli) identity of the perpetrators of the attack.

Responses of the Jewish media

Analysis of *The Jerusalem Post*

The Jerusalem Post report of the Israeli assault on Jabalia refugee camp takes us to an alternative dimension. Their headline reads: “IDF takes command of Hamas military stronghold in Jabaliya in Gaza”.²⁹³ Not only has the location morphed from a refugee camp to a “mil-

291 *Al Jazeera* (2023) ‘UN Special Rapporteur: Israel can’t claim “right of self-defence”’, 15 November. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2023/11/15/un-special-rapporteur-israel-cant-claim-right-of-self-defence>.

292 *Al Quds* (2023) ‘400 killed and wounded in a “horrific” Israeli bombing near the Indonesian hospital in Jabalia, Gaza’, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.alquds.com/ar/posts/98826>.

293 Zaig, G., (2023) ‘IDF takes command of Hamas military stronghold in Jabaliya in Gaza’, *The Jerusalem Post*, 31 October. Available at: <https://>

itary stronghold”, but the victims of the bombing are also described in radically different terms. In the subheading, an astounding assertion is made: “The IDF also killed 50 Hamas terrorists in the Jabalya area of the Gaza Strip.”²⁹⁴ There is no evidence provided for this claim.

In the first paragraph of the article, Jabalia is again described as a “military stronghold”.²⁹⁵ We are given a more specific designation of the perpetrators than in other accounts, “IDF troops under the command of the Givati Brigade”,²⁹⁶ which may suggest that the *Post’s* readership would be more familiar with specific Israeli military units than, for example, a British audience. The declaration that the IDF “took control over a Hamas military stronghold in western Jabaliya” is attributed to an unnamed “military spokesperson”.²⁹⁷ As the article continues, it becomes evident that this anonymous spokesperson is the source of *The Jerusalem Post’s* entire reconstruction of events.

This initial paragraph is followed by a post on X from the IDF, which includes a satellite image of Jabalia. The image is entitled: “Hamas Military Compound Used for the Training and Execution of Terror Activities, Located in Western Jabaliya.”²⁹⁸ Again, there is no evidence provided for this, so it is difficult to examine the veracity of the claim. One area of the image is highlighted in red and a small, target symbol is visible. I am not sure if this is meant to signify that the area is a “military target” or something else. Various labels superimposed onto the image indicate the locations of “underground tunnel shafts”, “intelligence centres”, and “weapons production facilities”.²⁹⁹ The *Daily Mail’s* report analysed earlier stated that:

“Video released by the IDF shows Israeli troops walking through the bombed out streets of northern Gaza while raising their guns at the destroyed buildings – ready to pounce at any movement of Hamas terrorists potentially hiding within.”³⁰⁰

There are no videos, photographs, or eyewitness accounts provided, however, to prove that the locations indicated on the image exist. Instead, the reader is expected to take the pronouncements of the IDF as fact. Outside of the red target zone, other, nearby labels indi-

www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-771045.

294 *ibid.*

295 *ibid.*

296 *ibid.*

297 *ibid.*

298 *ibid.*

299 *ibid.*

300 Lines, A., (2023) ‘Israeli airstrike destroys Gaza refugee camp at Jabalia and kills more than 100 people’, *Daily Mirror*, 31 October. Available at <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/israeli-airstrike-destroys-gaza-refugee-31329189>.

cate “mosques”, a “medical clinic”, a “school”, and a “water pumping station”, reinforcing the idea that Hamas are embedded in civilian areas and attempting to legitimise attacks on such neighbourhoods. Indeed, the article makes a direct reference to “terrorist infrastructures...which took over civilian buildings in Gaza City.”³⁰¹

The use of photographs in *The Jerusalem Post's* Report is markedly different to other articles we have analysed. If we look at the piece in the *Daily Mail*, for example, we noted many photographs displaying the aftermath of the attack, with tragic images of huge sinkholes, decimated buildings, and survivors carrying the wounded. In the *Post*, on the other hand, a banner image at the top of the report simply shows two clouds of smoke rising on the horizon, accompanied by the caption: “Smoke rises following an Israeli strike inside the Gaza Strip, as seen from Israel.”³⁰² One could say that the image and caption mirror Gaza’s position in the Israeli gaze as a place of chaos seen only from a distance. This type of reporting also serves to quell any fears or doubts of supporters of Israel’s military aggression by obscuring the true victims of their actions.

In fact, there is not a single photograph of the victims of the Jabalia bombing in the entire *Post* report. The exception is the poster of Ibrahim Biari, the Hamas commander the Israeli military claimed to have killed in the assault. Unlike the *Daily Mail* report, which included the Hebrew version of the poster, it is here translated into English, which could reflect the *Post's* longstanding desire to appeal to a Western audience.³⁰³ There is no analysis or independent confirmation of Biari’s assassination, and as with the British media responses we analysed, the *Post* does not mention Hamas’ claim to the contrary.

Bizarrely, a short paragraph at the end of the report reads:

“This report came hours after the director of Gaza’s Indonesian Hospital told *Al Jazeera* on Tuesday that at least 50 Palestinians were killed and 150 were wounded in Israeli air strikes on Jabaliya refugee camp.”³⁰⁴

The citation from the director of the Indonesian Hospital such an incidental footnote, it almost seems as if it is referencing a different event. Its brevity underlies its lack of credence in the *Post's* view and it is bookended by further statements of the IDF.

In 1946, this same publication, then called *The Palestine Post*, employed an entirely contrasting

301 Zaig, G., (2023) ‘IDF takes command of Hamas military stronghold in Jabaliya in Gaza’, *The Jerusalem Post*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-771045>.

302 *ibid.*

303 Frenkel, E., *The Press and Politics in Israel: The Jerusalem Post from 1932 to the Present* (Jerusalem, Greenwood Press: 1994) pp. 3-4.

304 *ibid.*

tone in its response to the King David Hotel bombing carried out by the Irgun. In uncompromising language, the atrocity was described as a “terrorist attack” and an “outrage by gang”.³⁰⁵ The 1946 report also conveyed significant opposition to the bombing from within the Jewish community, publishing a joint statement from the Jewish Agency and Jewish National Council in which they condemn “the dastardly crime perpetrated by [a] gang of desperadoes”.³⁰⁶ Such sentiment from the Jewish community, or indeed from any community, is wholly absent from *The Jerusalem Post* article on the Jabalia attack.

As we noted in the previous section of this book, the *Daily Mail* also condemned the perpetrators of the King David Hotel bombing as a “Jewish terror organisation”.³⁰⁷ At the time, they had also published the Irgun’s insistence that “the tragedy of the Palestinian government offices was not caused by Jewish soldiers... it was caused by the British themselves who disregarded a warning and refused to evacuate the building”,³⁰⁸ in a message eerily reminiscent of the IDF’s dropping of “humanitarian leaflets” today, warning residents in Gaza to leave their homes (to a location unknown) before their neighbourhood is razed to the ground.³⁰⁹

For both British and Jewish publications, one begins to question which factor is more influential in determining what is or is not a “terrorist attack”: the actions involved, or the identity of the victims?

Analysis of *The Times of Israel*

Like *The Jerusalem Post*, the coverage of the Israeli October 31st assault on Jabalia refugee camp in *The Times of Israel* features no images of the destruction caused or the Palestinian victims of the bombing. It does, however, lead with photographs of two Israeli soldiers killed whilst fighting in Gaza that day. Although their deaths were not connected to the Jabalia bombing, the two are linked in the article’s headline: “2 IDF soldiers killed in Gaza as troops take Hamas post, kill commander, 50 terrorists”.³¹⁰ The deaths of Israeli soldiers are surprisingly under-reported in the British media’s reportage of events in Gaza, but here they are prominently featured. They are also personally identified as “Staff Sgt. Roi Wolf, 20, from Ramat Gan, and Staff Sgt. Lavi Lipshitz, 20, from Modiin, who both served in the

305 *The Palestine Post* (1946) ‘41 Dead, 53 Injured, 52 Missing, in Terrorist Attack on Secretariat’, 23 July, p. 1.

306 *ibid.*

307 Gordon, A., (1946) ‘Hotel GHQ Death-Roll may be over 90’, *Daily Mail*, 23 July, p. 1.

308 *ibid.*

309 Sinmaz, E., (2023) ‘Israel drops leaflets warning people to flee southern Gaza towns’, *The Guardian*, 16 November. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/16/israel-drops-leaflets-warning-people-to-flee-southern-gaza-towns>.

310 Fabian, E., and agencies, (2023) ‘2 IDF soldiers killed in Gaza as troops take Hamas post, kill commander, 50 terrorists’, *The Times of Israel*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/2-idf-soldiers-killed-in-gaza-as-troops-take-hamas-post-kill-commander-50-terrorists/>.

Givati Infantry Brigade's reconnaissance unit", unlike the anonymous "terrorists".³¹¹

The article walks a fine line in admitting Israeli military setbacks. On the one hand, an IDF spokesperson says that these two soldiers died "bravely in battle" to elicit honour and respect from the Israeli public. Later in the article, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant is quoted as saying that the army were "paying a heavy price" in Gaza, something we may note was glossed over in the British reports we analysed, but he tempers this by proclaiming that "the results and achievements on the battlefield are very high".³¹² Relating this statement in a report on the bombing of a refugee camp may be designed to eliminate any feelings of guilt or doubt amongst the Israeli public and to present the bombing of Jabalia as a battle with an enemy rather than indiscriminate bombing. Indeed, immediately after Gallant's statement, we are told that the "huge blasts [which] hit the Jabaliya residential area" were "what the IDF later confirmed was a targeted attack on a Hamas commander and infrastructure".³¹³ The characterisation of the massacre as a "targeted attack" was not found in any other report we analysed. Again, the IDF "confirm", rather than "allege" or "claim", so there is no need for pushback, despite the Israeli establishment's documented history of giving false accounts of such incidents, as we detailed in the first section of this text.

The Times of Israel report admits that "Several buildings in the Jabaliya area collapsed", but relates that "they were brought down when Hamas terror tunnels beneath them collapsed following airstrikes targeting the head of the battalion and terror infrastructure."³¹⁴ The sole source of this information should be familiar by now: "the IDF said".³¹⁵ The use of "collapsed" is another notable use of the passive voice, so often employed to render Palestinians victims with no assailant. Even the "Hamas terror tunnels" were "collapsed following airstrikes",³¹⁶ rather than "blown up by the Israeli military", although no verification of this contention is offered or sought. By contrast, we read that the figure of the fifty who died, provided by the "Hamas-run health ministry", a phrase we found mirrored in the British media, "could not be independently verified".³¹⁷ This is deliberately misleading, as they could have easily cited the same figure from the Indonesian Hospital, as many publications had done.

Later in the article, we hear about those victims. Citing *Al Jazeera* footage, we read that "A

311 *ibid.*

312 *ibid.*

313 *ibid.*

314 *ibid.*

315 *ibid.*

316 *ibid.*

317 *ibid.*

group of young men pulled two children from the upper floors of a damaged apartment block, cradling them as they climbed down”, as well as “AFP video footage showing at least 47 corpses being recovered”.³¹⁸ A Palestinian resident, Ragheb Aqal, describes seeing “homes buried under the rubble and body parts and martyrs and wounded in huge numbers.”³¹⁹ But there is no sense in the report that any of this counteracts the IDF’s contention that “the same area of conflict” was a “military stronghold”.³²⁰ By now, the narrative of a just war is so deeply entrenched that an assault on a refugee camp is not only not an act of terror, but a military victory to be celebrated.

Analysis of *Ha’aretz*

Surprisingly, it is *Ha’aretz*, a left-wing Israeli publication, that is most emphatic in erasing the Palestinian victims of the attack on Jabalia. The headline focuses exclusively on the two Israeli soldiers who were killed that day: “Two Israeli Soldiers Killed in Gaza Ground Operation”.³²¹ The sub-headline then gives their names, military ranks, and hometowns and describes them as “fallen”, and is followed by photographs of the two.³²² From the start of this piece, the sympathy is with the aggressor and the Palestinians are rendered invisible.

However, as mentioned in the headline and then repeated in the first paragraph, these two soldiers were killed “during ground operations in the Gaza Strip”.³²³ The third paragraph describes “fierce battles against armed Hamas members” which were “part of the Israeli offensive on the Jabaliya refugee camp” where “IDF infantry forces captured a Hamas military position”.³²⁴ In fact, the first three paragraphs in their entirety are taken directly from an IDF statement, which also contains detailed claims that the captured position “contained large amounts of arms and ammunition, as well as rocket-launching positions and tunnels used by terrorists to escape to the coastal area”.³²⁵ Once again, no independent verification is sought or offered for these claims, and no expert commentary or analysis is included.

It is not until the fourth paragraph of *Ha’aretz*’s report on the events of October 31st that the Israeli bombing of the Jabalia refugee camp is even mentioned:

“The statement also said that the Israeli aerial strike on Jabaliya led to

318 *ibid.*

319 *ibid.*

320 *ibid.*

321 *Ha’aretz* (2023) “Two Israeli Soldiers Killed in Gaza Ground Operation”, 1 November. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-01/two-israeli-soldiers-killed-in-gaza-ground-operation/0000018b-8859-df47-a3df-fe592d370000>.

322 *ibid.*

323 *ibid.*

324 *ibid.*

325 *ibid.*

the collapse of Hamas' 'underground military infrastructure' under the buildings that were hit."³²⁶

We previously noted that in *The Jerusalem Post* and *Times of Israel* articles on October 31st, the victims of the bombing were transformed from civilians to "50 Hamas terrorists". In Ha'aretz, however, there are no casualties of the bombing, civilian or otherwise, with the exception of the singular Hamas commander who is named in the following paragraph.

In the last paragraph of the piece, we learn that the Indonesian Hospital in the north of Gaza "reported many dead and wounded".³²⁷ No names, photographs, or even numbers of the dead are included, neither is there any information about those who were wounded by the Israeli assault. A post on Ha'aretz's live feed on October 31st adopts a similar tone, simply stating that "The IDF took responsibility...for the attack", but again qualifying the massacre as "part of the IDF's takeover of the Hamas stronghold in the camp".³²⁸

One may compare Ha'aretz's reticence and reluctance to condemn the Jabalia massacre with the Jewish media's coverage of the 1946 King David Hotel bombing, which *'Al ha-mishmar* repudiated as an "act of Nazi-style brutality"³²⁹ and Ha'aretz themselves called a "horrific attack"³³⁰ in which "Body parts of the victims were found on the sidewalks".³³¹

Ha'aretz have often been a thorn in the side of the Israeli establishment, publishing stories that are embarrassing or inconvenient to their military and government. On November 18th 2023, for example, as Israeli bombs decimated hospitals and bakeries in Gaza, Ha'aretz quoted an Israeli police source as stating that, during the Hamas incursion of October 7th:

"an IDF combat helicopter that arrived to the scene and fired at terrorists there apparently also hit some festival participants."³³²

The claim that the Israeli military were responsible for an unspecified number of the Israeli deaths on October 7th was explosive and challenged the entire pretext and justification for the assault on Gaza. Because of this, Ha'aretz were widely censured in the Jewish media, with the *Times of Israel* running the headline: "Israel Police slams 'Ha'aretz' claim IDF heli-

326 *ibid.*

327 *ibid.*

328 Khoury, J., (2023) 'IDF takes responsibility for attack in Jabaliya that resulted in many deaths', *Ha'aretz*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-31/ty-article-live/idf-conducts-raid-in-gaza-rescues-woman-soldier-kidnapped-by-hamas-on-october-7/0000018b-83d7-d805-a98f-b7df34bc0000#512303569>.

329 *'Al ha-mishmar* (1946) 'Jerusalem Shocked by the Brutal Attack', 23 July, p. 1.

330 *Ha'aretz* (1946) 'Heavy killing in a horrific attack on government and military offices in Jerusalem', 23 July, p. 1.

331 *ibid.*

332 Breiner, J., (2023) 'Israeli Security Establishment: Hamas Likely Didn't Have Advance Knowledge of Nova Festival', *Ha'aretz*, 18 November. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-18/israeli-security-establishment-hamas-likely-didnt-have-prior-knowledge-of-nova-festival/0000018b-e2ec-d168-a3ef-f7fe8ca20000>.

copter may have harmed civilians on Oct. 7”.³³³

Nevertheless, as we see in the *Ha’aretz’s* reportage of the Jabalia massacre, and unlike the Jewish media’s forthright reactions to the Irgun’s operations against the British, categorising the IDF’s operations against Palestinians as acts of terror is wholly inconceivable for the Jewish media of today.

³³³ *The Times of Israel* (2023) ‘Israel Police slams ‘Ha’aretz’ claim IDF helicopter may have harmed civilians on Oct. 7’, 19 November. Available at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/israel-police-slams-haaretz-claim-idf-helicopter-may-have-harmed-civilians-on-oct-7/.

Conclusions

“Standing at the edge of one of the craters in the wake of the attack, Abdel Kareem Rayan, a resident of the camp, held a paper listing the names of the 15 family members that he said he lost. ‘They were innocent, just staying (in the camp). What wrong did they do?’ he said.”³³⁴

On November 16th 2023, Airwars, a UK-based transparency watchdog affiliated with the Department of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths University in London, conducted a meticulous investigation into the true civilian toll of the October 31st Israeli assault on the Jabalia refugee camp. By collating 106 individual sources, largely comprised of specific eyewitness accounts posted onto social media accounts, Airwars estimated 126-136 civilian deaths, including 69 children, and 280 civilian injuries.³³⁵ In the case of the Rayan family, they identified and recorded each of the names of his family.³³⁶ The Airwars estimate is far higher than the figure of 50 provided by the Ministry of Health in Gaza and the IDF, although the Indonesian Hospital had told BBC News on October 31st that they had “received 400 casualties, including 120 dead”.³³⁷ Founded in 2014, Airwars noted that the massacre was “the most named victims we have ever monitored in a single event,” and that “almost every named victim we found died along with at least one other family member.”³³⁸

The Airwars report is far more rigorous and specific in identifying the victims of the attack than any of the media we have analysed. When we compare the brutal civilian toll with the singular named Hamas commander and “dozens of additional terrorists” the Israeli military claimed to have killed,³³⁹ the IDF’s acceptance of civilian death becomes unacceptable. Satellite imagery from after the pounding of Jabalia on October 31st displayed “at least five large craters, including two approximately 40 feet wide, consistent with the impact of 2,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions. The attack destroyed not just one residential apartment building, but a whole block.”³⁴⁰ According to one analysis of the Jabalia attack:

“...the IDF appears to have accepted a level of expected civilian casualties that was not just larger but several times larger than that used by the

334 Farrell, S., Bhandari, A., Kumar Dutta, P., and Trainor, C., (2023) ‘No place of refuge: Israeli strikes hit Gaza refugee camps’, *Reuters*, 3 November. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS/GAZA-JABALIA/byprdygje/>.

335 Airwars (2023) *ISPT0783*. Available at: <https://airwars.org/civilian-casualties/ispt0783-october-31-2023/>.

336 *ibid*.

337 Gritten, D., (2023) ‘Jabalia: Israel air strike reportedly kills dozens at Gaza refugee camp’, *BBC News*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-67276822>.

338 Airwars (2023) *ISPT0783*. Available at: <https://airwars.org/civilian-casualties/ispt0783-october-31-2023/>.

339 Farrell, S., Bhandari, A., Kumar Dutta, P., and Trainor, C., (2023) ‘No place of refuge: Israeli strikes hit Gaza refugee camps’, *Reuters*, 3 November. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS/GAZA-JABALIA/byprdygje/>.

340 *ibid*.

U.S. and the U.K. in any of the operations during the war against ISIS and other counterterrorism campaigns.”³⁴¹

Why then has the October 31st bombing of Jabalia not been reported as an act of terror? As we have detailed in earlier sections, the Israeli establishment had a focus “on damage and not on accuracy”³⁴² in Gaza and saw “no such thing as uninvolved civilians”.³⁴³ October 31st was one of many criminal outcomes of this genocidal intent.

Across the British, Arab, and Jewish media, there was not one characterisation of the Jabalia massacre as a terrorist attack. Indeed, we have come to accept in the West that the Israeli military are automatically absolved of such appellations. However, in the author’s estimation, there is no intrinsic reason for this to be the case. In 1946, when the Irgun bombed the King David Hotel on the instructions of the Haganah, predecessors to the IDF, the act was described in the British media as “insensate fanaticism” carried out by “terrorists”,³⁴⁴ by the US President as the “wanton slaying of human beings”,³⁴⁵ and in the Jewish media as a “destructive and criminal attack”.

Why are the violent acts carried out by the Israeli military today not condemned to the same extent?³⁴⁶ Let us apply the conditions of the UN definition of terrorism cited at the beginning of this text to the Jabalia massacre.

Firstly, was it an action that was “intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants”³⁴⁷?

In the case of the 2023 assault on Gaza, we have a wealth of information to draw on when determining the overall intent of the Israeli regime. On October 13th, Israeli President Isaac Herzog said, in reference to the Palestinians: “It is an entire nation out there that is responsible.”³⁴⁸ On November 1st, Knesset member and former Public Diplomacy Minister Galit Distal Atbaryan proposed “erasing all of Gaza from the face of the Earth.”³⁴⁹ Another Israeli politician, Tally Gotliv, called for a “doomsday kiss”, widely understood as a

341 Lattimer, M., (2023) ‘Assessing Israel’s Approach to Proportionality in the Conduct of Hostilities in Gaza’, *Lawfare*, 16 November. Available at: <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/assessing-israel-s-approach-to-proportionality-in-the-conduct-of-hostilities-in-gaza>.

342 McKernan, B. and Kierszenbaum, Q., (2023) ‘Emphasis is on damage, not accuracy’: ground offensive into Gaza seems imminent, *The Guardian*, 10 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/10/right-now-it-is-one-day-at-a-time-life-on-israels-frontline-with-gaza>.

343 *The Times of Israel* (2023) ‘Far-right minister: Nuking Gaza is an option, population should ‘go to Ireland or deserts’’, 5 November. Available at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/far-right-minister-nuking-gaza-is-an-option-population-should-go-to-ireland-or-deserts/.

344 *The Times* (1946) ‘Action to Cope with Terrorists’, 24 July, p. 1.

345 *The Palestine Post* (1946) “‘Wanton Slaying of Human Beings’”, 25 July, p. 1.

346 *‘Al ha-mishmar* (1946) ‘Jerusalem Shocked by the Brutal Attack’, 23 July, p. 1.

347 United Nations (2004) *Security Council resolution 1566 (2004) on Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/security-council-resolution-1566-2004-on-threats-to-international-peace-and-security-caused-by-terrorist-acts/>.

348 Blumenthal, P., (2023) ‘Israeli President Suggests That Civilians In Gaza Are Legitimate Targets’, *HuffPost*, 13 October. Available at: https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/israel-gaza-isaac-herzog_n_65295ce8e4b03ea0c004e2a8.

349 Conley, J., (2023) ‘Israeli MP Says It Clearly for World to Hear: “Erase All of Gaza From the Face of the Earth”’, *Common Dreams*, 1 November. Available at: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/israel-gaza-genocide>.

nuclear threat, and demanded “Shooting powerful missiles without limit. Not flattening a neighbourhood. Crushing and flattening Gaza.”³⁵⁰ Defence Minister Yoav Gallant vowed to “eliminate everything” there.³⁵¹

In terms of the 31st October bombing of the Jabalia refugee camp specifically, IDF Spokesperson Richard Hech claimed that the target of the operation was “a senior commander” but “acknowledged that the IDF knew that civilians were present”.³⁵² The latter is a gross understatement. As a report in Lawfare explains, any “collateral damage estimation in advance of the Jabalia airstrike would have included the following basic information... The United Nations had over 110,000 refugees registered in Jabalia over an area of 1.4 square kilometers... Despite Israel’s warnings to the Gaza population to move to the south, a significant proportion of the civilian population in Jabalia remained in place... Other recent Israeli attacks on Jabalia had caused numerous civilian casualties.”³⁵³ Lawfare concludes that this information “must have resulted in a very high estimate for civilian casualties. Given the location, population spread, and choice of weapons, the actual toll of hundreds of civilians killed or wounded would have been a reasonable expectation.”³⁵⁴

The evidence above makes it impossible to contend that the Israeli military did not deliberately target civilians in Jabalia on October 31st. By creating a narrative where every person and location in the Gaza Strip is a legitimate military target, as reflected in media reports that characterised Jabalia as a “military stronghold” and the victims of the bombing as “50 terrorists”,³⁵⁵ the Israeli political entity has managed to avoid culpability for these crimes in recent years. Nevertheless, unsubstantiated political statements do not outweigh swathes of eyewitness accounts and verified facts, as compiled, for example, in the Airwars investigation.³⁵⁶

Secondly, was “the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act”?³⁵⁷ In this instance, we have a wealth of Israeli public pronouncements to draw upon relating to Hamas, the governmental authority in Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister

350 Mordowanc, N., (2023) ‘Israeli Official Calls for ‘Doomsday’ Nuclear Missile Option’, *Newsweek*, 10 October. Available at: <https://www.newsweek.com/israeli-official-calls-doomsday-nuclear-missile-option-1833585>.

351 Roth, K., (2023) ‘Israel appears to be on the verge of ethnic cleansing in Gaza’, *The Guardian*, 16 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/oct/16/israel-gaza-mass-evacuation-ethnic-cleansing>.

352 Airwars (2023) *ISPT0783*. Available at: <https://airwars.org/civilian-casualties/ispt0783-october-31-2023/>.

353 Lattimer, M., (2023) ‘Assessing Israel’s Approach to Proportionality in the Conduct of Hostilities in Gaza’, *Lawfare*, 16 November. Available at: <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/assessing-israel-s-approach-to-proportionality-in-the-conduct-of-hostilities-in-gaza>.

354 *ibid*.

355 Zaig, G., (2023) ‘IDF takes command of Hamas military stronghold in Jabalya in Gaza’, *The Jerusalem Post*, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-771045>.

356 Airwars (2023) *ISPT0783*. Available at: <https://airwars.org/civilian-casualties/ispt0783-october-31-2023/>.

357 United Nations (2004) *Security Council resolution 1566 (2004) on Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/security-council-resolution-1566-2004-on-threats-to-international-peace-and-security-caused-by-terrorist-acts/>.

Benjamin Netanyahu claimed that the Israeli military's operations in Gaza was designed to put pressure on Hamas.³⁵⁸ Former Israeli Minister of Justice Gideon Sa'ar said on October 14th that Gaza "must be smaller at the end of the war."³⁵⁹ And Nissim Vaturi, the Deputy Speaker of the Israeli parliament, said: "Don't allow fuel in, don't allow water in until the hostages are returned back!"³⁶⁰ As Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of UNRWA concluded, the heavy civilian death toll in Gaza "cannot be 'collateral damage'", stating that the Palestinian people were being subjected to "collective punishment".³⁶¹

As we mentioned earlier, the symbol of the 2023 Israeli assault on Gaza has been the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure. Unproven Israeli claims of targeting individual Hamas combatants, as in the case of the Jabalia massacre, does not absolve the aggressor from the wanton destruction of hospitals, schools, and bakeries. These attacks both terrorise and intimidate the civilian population of Gaza and, as senior Israeli figures confirm, are designed to compel the Palestinian authorities to cede to Israeli demands.

Both elements of the 2004 United Nations definition of terrorism were present in the Israeli bombing of the Jabalia refugee camp on October 31st 2023. An act of terror is neither defined by the identities of its victims or perpetrators. The lives of the 91 Arab, British, and Jewish victims of the King David Hotel bombing in 1946 were no more sacred than those of the 126+ Palestinians victims of the Jabalia massacre in 2023, and the Jewish militants of the Irgun and Haganah in 1946 were no more criminal than the Jewish militants of the IDF in 2023. A moral consistency is imperative. Therefore, just as the King David Hotel bombing was condemned as a criminal act, so too should the Jabalia massacre.

The Jabalia refugee camp bombing was unequivocally a terrorist act. May Allah have mercy on the oppressed.

358 Carroll, R., (2023) 'Netanyahu declares it is "time for war" as Israel hails hostage release', *The Guardian*, 30 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/30/netanyahu-declares-it-is-time-for-war-as-israel-hails-hostage-release>.

359 *Ha'aretz* (2023) 'Israeli minister says Gaza Strip "must be smaller by the end of the war"', 14 October. Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-14/ty-article-live/idf-kills-hamas-head-of-aerial-forces-strikes-dozens-of-gaza-targets-overnight/0000018b-2c64-da5e-abef-ad656b090000>.

360 Wilkins, B., (2023) "'We Are Too Humane. Burn Gaza Now,' Says Senior Israeli Lawmaker", 18 November. Available at: <https://www.common-dreams.org/news/gaza-genocide>.

361 United Nations (2023) *Civilians in Gaza Must Not Be Collectively Punished for Atrocities Committed by Hamas, Speakers Tell Security Council, Urging Ceasefire*. Available at: <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15473.doc.htm>.

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October. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/31/dozens-killed-in-israeli-air-attack-on-gaza-refugee-camp-medical-official>.

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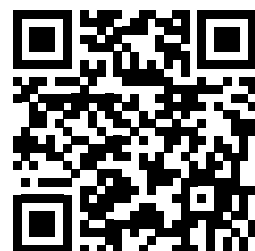
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On July 22nd 1946, the Irgun blew up the King David Hotel, the headquarters of the British authorities in Palestine, killing 91 and injuring 46. On October 31st 2023, the "Israeli Defence Forces", a direct product of the Irgun, bombed the Jabalia Refugee Camp in Gaza, killing at least 50 and injuring many more. In the British media, the former was described as a terrorist attack, whereas the latter was not. Why is this the case?

In this timely polemic, public speaker and academic Mohammad Hijab and translator and journalist Jody McIntyre analyse and compare the responses of the British, Arab, and Jewish medias to these two atrocities. As entrenched western support for the Zionist project is pushed to its limits, this text highlights and questions an apparent double standard in reporting acts of terror in Palestine.