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Subject: THE JB REPORT: When Has War Even Been 'Proportional?'
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The Report

18 NOVEMBER 2023

The anger arises at Israel mostly because it is Jewish, and thus far its conventional disproportionality is proving more effective than the terrorist disproportionality of Hamas. **~ Victor Davis Hanson**

AMERICAN GREATNESS

When Has War Even Been 'Proportional?'

Israel's conventional disproportionality is proving more effective than the terrorist disproportionality of Hamas

By Victor Davis Hanson
Nov 16, 2023

Proportionality in war is a synonym for lethal stalemate, if not defeat.

When two sides go at it with roughly equal forces, weapons, and strategies, the result is often a horrific deadlock—like the four years of toxic trench warfare on the Western Front of World War I that resulted in 12 million fatalities.

The purpose of war is to defeat the enemy as quickly as possible with the least number of causalities—and thereby achieve political ends.

So, every side aims to find superior strategies, tactics, weapons, and manpower to ensure as great a *disproportionate* advantage as possible.

Hamas is no exception.

Its savage precivilizational strategy to defeat Israel hinged on doing disproportionate things Israel either cannot or will not do.

First, Hamas spent a year planning a preemptive butchery spree inside Israel. Its ruthless murdering focused on "soft targets" like unarmed elderly, women, children, and infants, mostly asleep at a time of peace and holiday.

Second, it sought to collectively shock Israel into paralysis by the sheer horror of decapitating civilians, burning babies, mass raping, and mutilating bodies.

Another apparent aim of such premodern barbarity was to blame Israel's "occupation" for turning Gazans into veritable monsters, with hopes of derailing the renewed Abraham Accords.

Third, the gunmen took more than 240 hostages back with them to Gaza.

Again, that was a disproportionate tactic designed to meter out the release of captives in exchange for "pauses" and "cease-fires" to save Hamas.

Additionally, Hamas made implicit threats of gruesome executions of captives unless Israel ceased their retaliation for October 7.

Fourth, all the while Hamas shot rockets into Israel, more than 7,000 in total, and all aimed at civilians.

Not one launch was preceded by dropping leaflets or sending text messages to Israeli civilians to vacate the intended target areas—a protocol often used by the Israel Defense Forces.

The unapologetic aim was to kill thousands of Israelis at random and *disproportionately*.

In fact, in just the last few four weeks, Hamas has launched more than twice as many rockets into Israel as Nazi Germany managed to launch V-2s into Britain in five months.

Fifth, Hamas sought to create a multibillion-dollar tunnel city beneath Gaza. The labyrinth's sole purposes were to stockpile weapons and ensure safe havens for terrorists to shoot rockets and regroup after their terrorist missions.

Sixth, the subterranean headquarters of Hamas elites, along with weapons depots, were strategically placed under hospitals, mosques, and schools to "shield" them from Israeli attacks.

The expectation was that the IDF would be hesitant to target such "civilian" and "humanitarian" areas in a way Hamas never would.

Seventh, Hamas forced the civilians of Gaza to remain among the street fighting. They often shot those who resisted.

They also killed Gazans who fled the city. Hamas sought to increase civilian fodder as collateral damage from Israeli attacks. Such deaths were to be broadcast worldwide to win sympathy for Hamas terrorists and force a cease-fire.

Eighth, Hamas bragged that it could repeat strategies 1-7 endlessly on the supposition Israel would tire, the world would turn against it, and it at last could murder enough Jews to end Israel altogether.

Israel in turn seeks its own disproportionate response to defeat Hamas.

First, it seeks to single out and kill the actual Hamas terrorists, and especially the 2,000 or so killers of October 7.

Second, it tries to warn civilians to flee anywhere that Hamas masses. Just as Hamas wants its own civilians killed for propaganda purposes, so Israel seeks to avoid killing them.

Third, by targeting Hamas and warning civilians to keep their distance, Israel does not deny that there will be collateral damage.

But it hopes to convince the world that any civilian deaths are mostly the fault of Hamas and not the IDF.

And to the degree that Gaza City is left in rubble, Israel wishes to remind its enemies that the wages of murdering Jewish infants unfortunately will be a disproportionate response, whose full effects will deter any future attack.

Fourth, Israel understands that a country of 9-10 million is facing a virulently hostile 500 million-person Arab Middle East. The United Nations is on the side of Hamas. A now anti-Semitic Europe has been hijacked by immigrants from the Middle East. Israel's sole patron the United States is buffeted by a hard-left new Democratic Party that is not a reliable partner.

The result is that Israel still cannot conduct a fully disproportionate war without endangering its source of military resupply in the United States, and a wider conflict with the Islamic world.

And so, the war continues.

Hamas strives for a more disproportionate terrorist agenda to prolong the war. And Israel strives for a more disproportionate retaliation to end it.

The anger arises at Israel mostly because it is Jewish, and thus far its conventional disproportionality is proving more effective than the terrorist disproportionality of Hamas.

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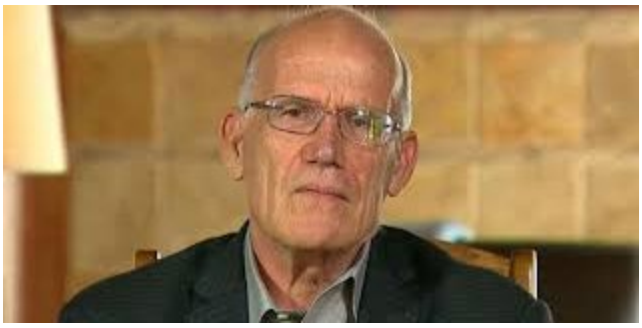

Victor Davis Hanson is a distinguished fellow of the Center for American Greatness and the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. He is an American military historian, columnist, a former classics professor, and scholar of ancient warfare. He has been a visiting professor at Hillsdale College since 2004. Hanson was awarded the National Humanities Medal in 2007 by President George W. Bush. Hanson is also a farmer (growing raisin grapes on a family farm in Selma, California) and a critic of social trends related to farming and agrarianism. He is the author most recently of The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won, *The Case for Trump* and the recently released *The Dying Citizen*.

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Israeli video compilation shows the savagery and ease of Hamas' attack

BY JULIA FRANKEL

Updated 12:13 AM EST, October 17, 2023
AP

https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-hamas-attack-military-war-a8f63b07641212f0de61861844e5e71e

Pace et Salute...JP

PORKQUOTE: ***Relax...You may only have a few minutes left***