

Opinion The Gaza Ghetto Uprising

Gideon Levy May 05, 2019 2:14 AM

The cruelty and temerity of the people in Gaza once more reached new heights Saturday: dozens of rockets on Israel before the week of its Independence Day, just after its Holocaust Remembrance Day, and worst of all, two weeks before its Eurovision. How dare you Gaza, how dare you.

Israel still hasn't recovered from the Holocaust, is preening itself for its Independence Day, the musicians are starting to arrive at Ben-Gurion Airport, and you're firing Qassam rockets. How will we be able to celebrate? News reports give the impression that Israel is under siege; Gaza is threatening to destroy it. Twitter has already suggested "Eva's Story on the Gaza Border" – a play on the social media campaign about the Holocaust.

Pundits explain that it's all because of Hamas' greed. Ramadan is beginning and "they're under crazy pressure for cash." Or, "It's all because of the weak security policy that has gotten the terror groups used to Israel; we only strike buildings."

And so they shoot, those villains. Hamas wants money, Israel's too soft on them, they are terror, we are peace; they were born to kill. On Friday the army killed four protesters by the Gaza border fence, but who's counting. In Israel a teenage boy tripped while running for a shelter. "When a lack of policy and continuity yields to blackmail," a voice of wisdom mumbled, and nobody could figure out what he was proposing. Benny Gantz, the alternative. This is what we have an opposition for.

Everything is completely disconnected from context and reality, intentionally and willfully. Half a week after Holocaust Remembrance Day, the knowledge that 2 million people have been locked up more than 12 years behind barbed wire in a giant cage doesn't remind Israel of anything and doesn't arouse anything. Half a week before Independence Day, the struggle for freedom and independence of another people is perceived as murderous terror for no reason.

Even the desperate attempt to prevent the brink of starvation is perceived as greed; the effort to somehow impart the appearance of a holiday in the holiest month of the year is depicted as extortion. That's how low the brainwashing goes and no one protests. Everyone accepts it with a shrug. Anyone who doubts how hollow and destructive the inculcation of the Holocaust is in Israel should look at the responses in Israel to this Gaza Ghetto Uprising. Anyone who ignores the reality in Gaza or tries to deny its disaster has learned nothing.

Gaza is a ghetto and what's happening in the south is a ghetto uprising. There's no other way to describe it. You can make claims against Hamas but you can't make any claims against Gaza. It's fighting for its freedom and no struggle is more just than its struggle, and Hamas is its leader.

The countdown to Hamas' death has already begun: Only seven more months until the UN report, until Gaza is unfit for human habitation. But Israel yawns and its spokespeople only know how to tout "deterrence," that monster we've created to justify every killing, closure and bout of destruction, as we lie ourselves to death that there's something to deter 2 million unemployed, desperate, humiliated people, some of whom are hungry or dying for lack of medical care, and all of whom are locked up.

No one in Israel can imagine life in Gaza over the past 12 years. There are people who see to it that we don't know, including Israel's ban on the entry of Israeli journalists, which has stoked no protest at all. "Eva's Story" should be filmed in Gaza way before it's filmed in the Gaza border area.

A country that is established on the memory of the ghettos, which only a few days ago sanctified that memory, hides its face from the much larger ghetto that it built with its own hands and doesn't want to see, one hour from the center of that country. A country that was established in a bloody struggle will not recognize the justness of the struggle of another people and wonders whether that people even exists. A society that considers itself exemplary, which was established on the world's indifference to its suffering, shows monstrous heartlessness to the suffering it is causing.

"What were they before?" a woman asked me Friday in a lecture I gave in Tel Aviv. And what were we? What have we become?