

Did Netanyahu set a trap for genocide?

We are told by the mainstream media as well as Israeli sources that October 7 came as a complete surprise to Netanyahu and that he underestimated Hamas' military capability and had no indication that Hamas had constructed a massive tunnel system in preparation for their attack. As a challenge to this account, as a follow up to the article by M. Shahid Alam (1), I add the following documentation which strengthens the case for a trap.

The attack of October 7 led by Hamas was the culmination of the concentration camp conditions in Gaza and the longstanding record of Israeli settle colonialist oppression of the Palestinian people. Nevertheless, did the Palestinian attackers on October 7 fall into the trap set by Netanyahu and likely his closest advisors? It is clear that Israel's response richly served the Zionist agenda, i.e., the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the realization of the plan of depopulation of Gaza and the West Bank. With Trump in office, U.S. imperial interests in the Middle East will continue using its Israeli and Gulf states assets at the expense of the Palestinian people until a strong challenge is posed by the global BDS movement coupled with a reprise of Arab Spring, this time prevailing over its reactionary opponents.

Evidence for this trap include:

1) Israeli leaders long regarded Hamas as a useful asset (2).

“The prime minister himself spoke briefly at times about his position regarding Hamas. In March 2019, he said during a meeting of Likud MKs, at which the subject of transfer of funds to Hamas was under discussion, that, “Whoever opposes a Palestinian state must support delivery of funds to Gaza because maintaining separation between the PA in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza will prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.” (3).

2) The vast tunnel system in Gaza was constructed by virtue of Israeli funding through Qatar under Israeli more than adequate surveillance.

“Much has been written about the transfer of dollars by Qatar to Hamas as requested by Netanyahu. Fact-checking by Time magazine, indicated that during 2012-2018, \$1.1 billion in cash was distributed in Gaza. This money served as the organization's lifeline, economically and militarily. Netanyahu argued that this money pacified the local population and brought tranquility along the border.” (4).

‘Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vehemently denied accusations he allowed Qatar to fund and strengthen the militant group Hamas in order to divide Palestinians into rival political camps, slamming the claims as “ridiculous.” Netanyahu's opponents in Israel argue his government spent years actively boosting Hamas in Gaza by allowing Qatar to channel hundreds of millions of dollars to the coastal enclave in a risky game of “divide-and-rule,” that was meant to play the Islamist militants from Hamas off against the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank... Netanyahu... however, dismissed those charges, claiming he only allowed Qatari money to flow into Gaza to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe, not to strengthen the arm of the administration there. “We wanted to avoid a civilian humanitarian collapse — disease, rampant

hunger and other things that would have created an impossible humanitarian situation,” he said. “That’s why successive Israeli governments allowed this money to go in, not in order to strengthen Hamas. We didn’t want to strengthen Hamas at all. We wanted to weaken it and degrade its capabilities as far as we could.” (5).

I submit that Netanyahu was lying, given the well documented evidence for Hamas as a useful asset. And to believe Netanyahu motives were humanitarian is to believe the perpetrator of genocide is a humanitarian!

Is it plausible that Netanyahu did not know that the tunnel system was being constructed, given Israel’s very sophisticated intelligence apparatus? Please note the following challenge to Netanyahu:

“Israeli politicians to blame for Hamas massacre - they all must resign...You sold us security. You knew about the tunnels in Gaza and did nothing. You allowed a second Holocaust to potentially happen on Jewish land. We demand: return the kidnapped and resign” (6).

3) Israeli intelligence must have known these plans before October 7 and warned Netanyahu.

“The memo, which was viewed by The Times, said that Hamas had purchased sophisticated weapons, GPS jammers and drones. It also said that Hamas had increased its fighting force to 27,000 people — having added 6,000 to its ranks in a two-year period. Hamas had hoped to reach 40,000 by 2020, the memo determined.” (7).

“Lapid: Netanyahu Was 'Bored, Indifferent' to pre-Oct. 7 Warnings During Joint Briefing... Lapid testified before a civilian inquiry panel, established after the government rejected forming a formal commission, that Netanyahu's top military aide said terrorist groups perceived weakness in Israel due to social unrest from the judicial overhaul... Lapid then explained that this was why he attended several meetings of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. "I was presented with intelligence at the highest level of classification. Its implications were clear: **Israel is at an exceptionally high level of risk,**" he said. Lapid added that Netanyahu was warned by Shin Bet Chief Ronen Bar about the security implications of the government-led judicial overhaul. "I'd like to refute the notion that political leaders weren't told that Hamas was not deterred. I was told. The material I saw was shown to the cabinet as well," Lapid said. The opposition leader recounted meeting Bar the night before the reasonableness standard was canceled, where he received "unprecedented warnings about the security risks and internal divisions caused by the judicial overhaul..." "All the heads of the defense establishment, the IDF, Shin Bet security service, police and intelligence agencies are warning the government and the [security] cabinet of a violent escalation," he said at the time. At the end of his testimony, Lapid said that he does not absolve the defense establishment of responsibility for the events of October 7. "It gave warnings, but it wasn't prepared according to its own warnings," he said. **According to Lapid, the defense establishment "knew and warned," but instead of acting accordingly, it "waited for orders" from the government. "There's no excuse for this. There can be no justification," he added.** [bold added] (8).

I submit that orders were not given because Netanyahu laid the foundation for, anticipated and welcomed the invasion of October 7 as a pretext for the genocide and ethnic cleansing that followed, a reprise of Nakba.

Footnotes

(1) Alam, M. Shahid M. 2024. “Postscripts on Israel: October 7 Surprise?”, CounterPunch, January 22, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2024/01/22/postscripts-on-israel-october-7-surprise/>

(2) Speri, Alice. 2023. “Before They Vowed To Annihilate Hamas, Israeli Officials Considered It An Asset”, *The Intercept*, October 14, <https://theintercept.com/2023/10/14/hamas-israel-palestinian-authority/>; Bisharat, Ghousoon. 2024. “The not-so-secret history of Netanyahu’s support for Hamas”, *+972 Magazine*, November 11, <https://www.972mag.com/netanyahu-hamas-october-7-adam-raz/>.

(3) Raz, Adam. 2023. “A Brief History of the Netanyahu- Hamas Alliance”, *Haaretz*, November 5, <https://www.rsn.org/001/a-brief-history-of-the-netanyahuhamas-alliance.html>.

(4) Lukacs, Yehuda. 2024. “Netanyahu and Hamas: The Best of Enemies”, *The Blogs* November 11, <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-and-hamas-the-best-of-enemies/>.

(5) Ronzheimer, Paul. 2023. “Netanyahu: Don’t accuse me of boosting Hamas with Qatari money”, *Politico*, November 11, <https://www.politico.eu/article/benjamin-netanyahu-hamas-qatar-money-war-israel-gaza-palestine/>.

(6) Cohen, Merav and Ein Hasholsha, 2024. “Israeli politicians to blame for Hamas massacre- they all must resign – opinion”, *Jerusalem Post*, January 18, <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-782576> .

(7) Bergman, Ronen and Adam Goldman. 2023. “Israel Knew Hamas’s Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago”, *New York Times*, Updated December 2, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>.

(8) Peleg, Bar. 2024. Lapid: Netanyahu Was 'Bored, Indifferent' to pre-Oct. 7 Warnings During Joint Briefing, *Haaretz*, August 29, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-08-29/ty-article/.premium/lapid-netanyahu-was-bored-indifferent-to-pre-oct-7-warnings-during-joint-briefing/00000191-9da1-da8a-a991-bfe514450000>.

My bio

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<http://www.ijan.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/FINAL-JNFeBookVol4.pdf>.
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