

Why is War Always \223Disproportionate\224?
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Warfare has never been a ballet of equality between combatants. When World War I began, the Nazis, Japan, and even Italy, disproportionately attacked and bombed weak countries that had done nothing to them. Civilians were targeted and the Axis\222 occupations were brutal.

But by late 1944, the tide had turned. The United States and Great Britain were disproportionately powerful in the air, encountering little opposition from the Nazis. The US dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, which was no longer able to do anything about it. If today\222s demonstrators were around then, they would have castigated the Allies because the Axis was no longer equal. Well, we were not equal to them at the onset of that war either\227but that did not stop them from mayhem and establishing the death factories that murdered millions. The difference is that fascists do not care what demonstrators say; they kill them.

Today, outraged mobs are demonstrating around the world that Israel\222s response to unremitting shelling is \223disproportionate.\224 In their ideal world, when Hamas fires rockets without guidance systems (they cannot be aimed) from the middle of refugee camps or in the most crowded of towns, Israel should either ignore this or should fire the same kind of rockets back at them. This is a ridiculous notion, as would be clear if Mexico started shelling San Diego and we did the same back to them. It is obvious that our response would be disproportionate.

Hamas has provoked Israel because they knew the response, when it finally came, would be horrendous. They are masters of the cult of death and the art of mob manipulation. Hamas plays its own \223disproportionate\224 game deliberately. They plant weapons among civilian populations because they want the damage to be publicized around the world and don\222t care if they suffer disproportionate deaths. One Hamas leader, courting martyrdom, refused to evacuate with the other leaders, and the Israelis nailed him in his home, along with his four wives and 11 children, whom he wouldn\222t let go to safety. He had already sacrificed one son as a suicide bomber.

The root of this mayhem is an aspect of human nature that nurses \223resentment,\224 an emotion that simmers coldly and seeks revenge. The Muslim Brotherhood, born in Egypt and father to Hamas, was founded early in the 20th century based on Arab resentment of the modern world. The founders resented the challenges to their traditional values: total control over women, a hierarchy of elders, obedience of the young, and a dream of a return to the imagined beginnings of Islam in the 7th century. They have used a combination of brainwashing, intimidation, and the indulgence of the Muslim world\227even those countries led by people who fear their success. The \223Cult of Resentment\224 (a key element of Shia Islam as well) works very well in a world of 24/7 news coverage.

Unfortunately, the indignation aimed at Israel is disproportionate to the indignation over suicide bombers, such as those targeting girls\222 schools and police stations in Afghanistan, and the horrors let loose on Mumbai, India. There was no indignation over shelling southern Israel because the death toll was \223insignificant,\224 a consequence of Hamas\222 incompetence, not because they didn\222t want it to be more lethal. However, Iran is smuggling in better rockets. Should Israel wait for them?

Resentment is a poisonous drug. Somali pirates resent the wealth of the shipping transiting their area and they feel entitled to take it. So far, cargo ships have protected themselves using high-pressure fire hoses, buzzing by helicopters, and occasionally capturing the pirates. If they blew the pirates out of the water, would anyone care that it was disproportionate?

Closer to home, James Blanning, who grew up in Aspen, Colorado, resented that Aspen had become \223trendy.\224 His response was to leave four gift-wrapped bombs in downtown Aspen on New Year\222s Eve and shoot himself before being apprehended. A little disproportionate, wouldn\222t you say? Where did he learn that?

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