



THE BULLSHEET

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"GRANVILLE'S PAPER"

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If it talks like a Nazi, walks like a Nazi, and normalizes genocide like a Nazi...

Anonymous,
Student Submission

Let's conduct a thought experiment. First, we need some basic information so don't get scared just yet.

In international law, under the Genocide Convention, genocide is prohibited and considered a crime against humanity. It is considered by some as "the crime of all crimes" and preventing genocidal violence is an idea almost ubiquitous to the very notion of rights and international law. Genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitements to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide, and *complicity in genocide* are all prohibited and punishable under the convention. Now, let's assume that the experts and expert bodies who have warned that Israel is committing a genocide in Gaza are correct. No matter what you 'think' about Palestinians or 'where' you stand, let's just 'entertain' this statement: Israel is committing a genocide in Gaza.

With all that we know through the genocide convention, international law, history, and our own basic humanity, what should you do? I suspect that as a citizen of the United States or another country, you would look at where the State and the institutions that represent you stand. If you are a citizen of the United States or a member of its state/sponsored institutions, what do you expect from them and what are your obligations under the Genocide Convention? If there is a genocide happening against a people, what is supposed to happen where you are? I would hope that the parties to the genocide convention would be acting to *stop* the genocide (as is their obligation). As a moral discerning citizen, I imagine you would want the state that represents you to make sure it is not complicit in genocide (also prohibited under the Genocide Convention) and *against* unimaginable crimes like the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, or the Rwandan genocide.

Let me paint a picture for you: over 900 scholars of genocide issued a warning about Israel's genocidal violence on October 15, 2023 (over 5 months and an eternity ago); we are witnessing Israeli public figures and institutions not only commit genocidal violence but also publicly issue genocidal statements, bespeaking the intent to commit genocide (one of the more difficult aspects to prove about a genocide). The US has vetoed three UN Security Council resolutions demanding a ceasefire in Gaza and abstained on the most recent resolution demanding a ceasefire (Israel almost immediately violated both the Security Council's resolution and the ICJ orders). To date, the US has given Israel over \$130 billion in military funding (it is the largest recipient of US foreign aid) and over 80% of all Israeli weapons imports came from the US between 1950 and 2020. US universities have hundreds of billions of dollars hidden behind investments and hedge funds. These billions of dollars, just through academic institutions, are invested in arms manufacturers, technology firms, etc. that are directly responsible for arming Israel, dispossessing Palestinians, and enabling genocidal violence.

So I just want us to hold for a moment the possibility that there is a genocide. Then, what has become of us and our shared humanity? Is humanity a club that extends rights and protections from genocide in order of proximity to whiteness? If human/ rights are a foundational principle of how we organize civil life in our institutions, what are our duties and obligations during a genocide? *As a matter of principle*, what should we be doing?

As university presidents, professors, scholars, administrators, and students, what are our principles? If we have principles, what are our limits for staying silent on and tolerating rights abuses and crimes against humanity? (That last question is terrifying and laughable at the same time). Is there any baseline? What is the number we imagine on the price tag we have put on Palestinian life? What more has to happen or what hypothetical has to become a reality so that Dr. Weinberg will send out an email calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and our institutions and public officials will decide that investing in Israeli institutions and arms manufacturers makes them genocidaires?

I will let you draw your own conclusions but this is what I think: there is, in fact, no limit and no baseline. According to experts and scholars of genocide studies, the US cannot call the inhumane Israeli violence in Gaza a genocide as it is a party to this genocidal violence. Even as we see slaughter after slaughter of aid workers, healthcare workers, journalists, and professors and the eradication of the healthcare system by Israel, the White House announced this week that Israel has not violated any international law - contrary to all evidence. Not only have the United States and its allies greenlighted, armed, and justified Israel's genocide, they have also produced powerful racist imaginations about Palestinians and provided preemptive rationale and deniability for every crime that the Zionist state commits. This is so pervasive that it is almost unnoticed and unremarkable at this point. Just take how "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" is widely misinterpreted by Zionists and their allies as calling for the extermination of Jews. Speaking at Denison last semester, M. E. O'Brien remarked that "in psychoanalysis, we call this a projection of what's actually happening to the people of Gaza, that is imagined as being desired by Palestinians to happen to Israelis." We have more than one historical example of genocidal regimes that not only committed genocides but fantasized about themselves as victims acting in self-defense and self-preservation.

Two years ago René Garret '22 wrote in *The Denisonian*, "Have we ever stopped to ask ourselves what the political interest of Denison is? Denison has no political interest. As a private institution, Denison administers a 1 billion endowment, which has ballooned to this point as a benefit of a communications and administration strategy that is politically flat. In only accruing the latest strategies in DEI, donning itself with a committee on anti-racism, and failing to meaningfully engage with racism at an institutional level, Denison facilitates an academic culture that is dangerously silent on racism, antiBlackness, poverty, and ableism." What do we think about those who were complicit in the Armenian genocide or the Nazi Holocaust? But this is not a comparative moral claim, there is no comparison when it comes to genocide. Every life is precious *and* genocide defies comprehensibility. We are far past the time to act, there is no time left. *Justice delayed is justice denied.*

The other day I saw this written atop an image of those who have stayed silent on the genocide in Gaza: if it talks like a Nazi, walks like a Nazi, and normalizes genocide like a Nazi... Well, take this "thought experiment" to its logical ends and I hope logic fails you too.

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