

Lying About The Gaza Flotilla Disaster

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It's been one lie after another in the US media about the Israeli attack on the Gaza-bound relief flotilla. No matter that the Israeli media views the whole incident as a debacle for Israel, in this country the Israel-can-do-no-wrong crowd is on overdrive defending the operation. As usual, facts don't matter to them.

Except they do.

The first thing you need to know about the Gaza flotilla disaster is that the intention of the activists on board the ships was to break the Israeli blockade. Delivering the embargoed goods was incidental.

In other words, the activists were like the civil rights demonstrators who sat down at segregated lunch counters throughout the South and refused to leave until they were served. Their goal was not really to get breakfast. It was to end segregation.

That fact is so obvious that it is hard to believe that the "pro-Israel" lobby is using it as an indictment.

Of course the goal of the flotilla was to break the blockade. Of course Martin Luther King provoked the civil authorities of the South to break segregation. Of course the Solidarity movement used workers' rights as a pretext to break Soviet-imposed Communism.

The bottom line is that the men and women of the flotilla had every right to attempt to destroy an illegal blockade that Israel had no legal standing to impose and which was designed to inflict collective punishment on the people of Gaza. (There is no truth to the story that Israel would have delivered the goods on the ships to Gaza if asked; the Israelis never made that offer and, judging by years of precedent, would [have blocked](#) any delivery).

As for the Israeli argument that its soldiers were attacked, that is ridiculous. Israeli commandos were ordered to board a civilian ship in international waters and the government that sent them claims that the resisting passengers attacked them without provocation. This is like a carjacker complaining to the police that the driver bashed him with a crowbar that was under the seat. Neither carjackers nor hijackers should expect their victims to acquiesce peacefully.

Here are the facts about life in Gaza today -- facts that only can be changed by breaking the blockade. These data come from the [American Near East Relief Association \(ANERA\)](#), which provides relief to Gazans to the extent permitted by the Israeli (and American) authorities. ANERA is neither "pro-Israel" nor "pro-Palestinian." It has no political agenda at all. It merely determines what human needs are and tries to respond to them.

- 8 out of 10 Gazans depend on foreign aid to survive.

- The World Food Program says Gaza requires a minimum of 400 trucks a day to meet basic nutritional needs - yet an average of just 171 trucks worth of supplies enters Gaza every week,
- Clothes that were held in the port of Ashdod for over a year were released into Gaza but arrived covered with mold and mildew, unusable.
- 95% of Gaza's water fails World Health Organization standards leaving thousands of newborns at risk of poisoning.
- Anemia for children under the age of 5 is estimated at 48%.
- 75 million liters of untreated sewage are pumped into the Mediterranean Sea every day - because piping and spare parts are not permitted.
- During the 2009 bombing:
 - More than 120,000 jobs were lost as Gaza's industrial zone was destroyed...
 - 15,000 homes and apartments were damaged or destroyed... 1/3 of all schools were destroyed. None of these can be rebuilt, because construction supplies are kept out by the Israeli authorities.
- Also, check this out from **Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip**

Since 2006 Israel has limited the import of various goods to the Hamas-controlled territory to a “humanitarian minimum”, though there is no official list for traders to observe. Instead, Israel makes decisions on a case-by-case basis, which has resulted in an odd assortment of prohibited items, as [detailed](#) by Gisha, an Israeli human-rights organisation. Newspapers, tea, A4 paper and chocolate are among the items that have at one point been

barred. But though certain goods cannot be brought in by boat or through Israel, they do still come—often faster and cheaper, too—through the tunnels. The main impact of the blockade is on people, who have been barred from leaving, and on exports.. It is a partial list of commodities allowed into Gaza and commodities banned.

Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip
Selected items as of May 6th 2010

Prohibited	Permitted
Coriander, ginger, nutmeg	Aniseed, cinnamon, black pepper
Canned fruit, dried fruit	Fresh fruit, frozen fruit
Fresh meat	Frozen meat and vegetables
Seeds and nuts	Rice, chickpeas, beans
Fishing rods, ropes for fishing	Frozen fish
Fabric for clothing	Clothes
Chicken hatcheries, chickens	Cartons for transporting chicks
Donkeys, horses, goats, cattle	Animal feed, hay
Musical instruments	Medicine and medical equipment
Newspapers	Chemical fertiliser and pesticide
Wood for construction	Wood for doors and windows

Source: Gisha