

Daily Polls Show That Israelis Continue to Choose This War, Even if They Don't Want Netanyahu

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Despite the mass protests calling for a hostage deal and new elections, Israelis still, seemingly without opposition, support the war in Gaza even if it means the sending their children to kill or be killed

Israeli troops take selfies on the backdrop of destruction in Gaza. Credit: Tsafrir Abayov/AP

Most Israelis know that Benjamin Netanyahu is lying to them. Most suspect that his policies are motivated by personal and family interests. Otherwise, the polls would not predict just 18 Knesset seats for Likud under his leadership. And yet most Israelis support him. Yes, in contrast to what polls and pundits are telling us.

This is because the most reliable poll is the continued participation of thousands of Israelis in the onslaught involving mass killing and rampant destruction in Gaza, and in the oppression and expulsion operations taking place in the West Bank.

The unshakable willingness of parents to send their children to kill and be killed, to wound and be wounded, and then to suffer all their lives from post-trauma, is a constant, unchanging response in a poll conducted daily. The whitewashed language and the consensus in the media, along with the cleaving to the belief that war is the solution, is a kind of answer to a question asked between the lines – who do they support?

TikTok photos posted by soldiers – indicating the unwillingness or inability of the IDF to halt the flow of selfies from Gaza – show a smug bestiality devoid of any inhibitions of soldiers and constitute one kind of poll. Parents who don't express shock or concern that their children, with their own smartphones, are providing the International Criminal Court with incriminating evidence against themselves, are also poll responders who embrace Netanyahu and his military policy, even if they aren't asked about it and even if they don't vote for him.

[Reservists rushing between the Kaplan Street demonstrations](#) and the ruins of Gaza or its skies, peppered with bombers or predator drones, are also respondents to a poll, whose answer is unambiguous. The continuous whining that the world is antisemitic is the desired response to a poll that leaves Netanyahu drooling every morning.

Anti-government protesters in Jerusalem, on Sunday. Credit: Itai Ron

So is the refusal to understand that in contrast to our TV screens, which remain focused on the horrors of October 7 and the heartbreaking reports about its victims, viewers of foreign TV channels

have seen the horrors of bombing and [deliberate starvation in the Gaza Strip over the last six months](#). They are familiar with hundreds, if not thousands, of heartbreaking reports about Palestinian victims.

Many Israelis know that the government led by Netanyahu is consciously allowing tormented hostages to die of hunger, lack of medication, exhaustion, abuse, or from Israeli airstrikes. Apparently, more Israelis than ever before support this undeclared “Hannibal directive” (which allows the military to endanger the life of a soldier to prevent him from being abducted). All for the sake of absolute victory.

Many Israelis know that the hostages and their families and their terrible suffering do not interest this government. They were shocked by politicians’ public statements of derision and their lack of empathy. Many Israelis know that cabinet members are inept clowns in the best case, or wily politicians looking after their own sectors in the worst case.

Israeli soldiers in Gaza.Credit: IDF Spokesperson’s Unit

Many Israelis know that the minister of finance and settlements is destroying our economy. They know that the war is destroying the economy. That the minister of police is giving instructions to silence protesters, while destroying the police. That the minister of education is destroying education and that the minister of communications opposes the freedom of the press. They know that the minister of defense isn’t bringing security. The state is on the ropes, they know.

And they know that the erroneous conception formulated by the prime minister, in collaboration with intelligence and security agencies, according to which Hamas in Gaza was contained, behaving as we wanted it to behave, is the reason for the great calamity that struck the more than 1,400 dead and abducted people, their families and their communities.

And yet, Israelis continue to support this government by the very fact that they report for “work” (the accepted euphemism for the invasion and killing) in Gaza, loyally fulfilling the mission of dispossession carried out by the Israel settlement-defending forces in the West Bank. By the very fact that the Israel Medical Association is not expressing its shock at the reports of starvation in Gaza, with jurists and child welfare organizations not even raising questions regarding the high number of Palestinian children being killed. Support for this government stems from the fact that Kaplan Street demonstrators did not join en masse the dozens of courageous activists who accompany Palestinian farmers and shepherds in order to shield them from settler violence. Neither before nor during this war.

Palestinians waiting for food distribution in the southern city of Rafah, Gaza Strip.Credit: Hatem Ali,AP

The erroneous conception stems from a goal which has not changed: to get the Palestinians used to the idea that even their minimal ambition for a small sovereign state alongside Israel will not be realized, let alone their expectations that Israel in principle accept its responsibility for the expulsions of 1948 and agree to some process of refugee return, let alone their demands for equality between the river and the sea.

The goal remained what it was even when an Israeli government agreed to recognize the PLO in the Oslo Accords, but not, God forbid, the Palestinian people. Gradually, since the Palestinians refuse to get used to this idea, and because settler organizations have become Israel’s de facto rulers, [the realization of this goal has become ever more violent and brutal](#).

This is how we’ve arrived at the “decisive plan” devised by Bezalel Smotrich for the Palestinians.

Either agree to an inferior status, emigrate and be uprooted ostensibly voluntarily, or face defeat and death in a war. This is the plan now carried out in Gaza and the West Bank, with most Israelis serving as active and enthusiastic accomplices, or passively acquiescing in its realization, regardless of their revulsion for this government and its members. The vast majority still believe that war is the solution.

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P.S.

- Haaretz. Apr 1, 2024:
<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-04-01/ty-article/.premium/polls-show-that-israelis-continue-to-choose-this-war-even-if-they-dont-want-netanyahu/0000018e-98d8-d591-a5cf-9fdddf100000>