

Opinion | Haaretz Editorial

Editorial | Does Anyone in Israel Care About the Blood of Palestinian Children?

Thursday 9 January 2025, by [Haaretz](#) (Date first published: 9 January 2025).

The Israel Defense Forces killed two boys Wednesday, ages 8 and 10, in a drone strike in the Palestinian village of Tammun, near Nablus. This strike was not a response to the October 7 Hamas attack, which has served as a pretext for Israel's rules of engagement in Gaza ever since. Rather, it was a response to calls from the settler right for the Gazafication of the West Bank. According to the IDF, the drone strike targeted a terrorist cell that was placing explosives.

Palestinian residents examine the site of the drone strike in Tamun, West Bank on Wednesday. Credit: Zain Jaafar/AFP

According to figures from the IDF, it has carried out [110 airstrikes in the West Bank](#) since the war began, killing 220 Palestinians. But this is not enough for the settler right. It will not relent until the West Bank looks like Gaza and all Palestinians, whether they are Hamas terrorists or children who are outdoors, are considered to be terrorists who must be killed.

The vision of the settler right was expressed this week by their representative in the cabinet, [Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich](#). After the terrorist attack in Al-Funduq Monday, in which three Israelis were shot dead, Smotrich declared that "Al-Funduq, Nablus and Jenin must look like Jabalya so that Kfar Sava does not become [Kibbutz] Kfar Azza." The mayors of a few West Bank settlements took advantage of the deadly attack to demand from the government and the military the opening of a new front in the West Bank, telling them to take off their "kid gloves." Their demands were met.

The attempt to portray the treatment given to West Bank Palestinians as being with "kid gloves" is absurd. It's not only IDF operations, on land and in the air, but also the settler violence that is breaking all records, whether in regard to the Palestinian communities whose residents are forced to leave on account of harassment or the rounds of pogroms and near-lynching.

But none of this is of any interest to the people who want to see expulsions and the destruction of [civilian infrastructure and entire buildings in the West Bank](#), too. They look at images of the devastated Gaza Strip and the statistics of tens of thousands of people killed there and are filled with envy. They are jealous of Gaza, where, according to the consensus in Israel, there are no uninvolved noncombatants. This week, Likud lawmaker Moshe Saada said that he had no problem with children in Gaza dying. "The only way to restore security is to continue the siege on Gaza. Our mistake was that we haven't done this up to now," he said. Defense Minister Israel Katz promised the settlers this week that Israel will act forcefully, emphasizing, "Palestinian terrorism will not be tolerated, and Jewish blood will not be spilled in vain."

But what about the [blood of Palestinian children](#)? This is no longer of any interest to anyone in Israel. The settler right must not be permitted to drag the country into a war of Gog and Magog, a

Jewish Armageddon, in the belief that this war will lead to the final redemption. The settler right's desire to turn the West Bank into Gaza must be thwarted.

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P.S.

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The above article is Haaretz's lead editorial, as published in the Hebrew and English newspapers in Israel.