

## **“Total Moral, Ethical Failure”: Holocaust Scholar Omer Bartov on Israel’s Genocide in Gaza**

(Interviewed by Nermeen Shaikh on Democracy Now! December 30, 2024)

(To watch or read the full interview, go to: [https://www.democracynow.org/2024/12/30/omer\\_bartov\\_israel\\_gaza\\_genocide](https://www.democracynow.org/2024/12/30/omer_bartov_israel_gaza_genocide))

Since October 7, 2023, Israel’s onslaught in Gaza has killed more than 45,500 Palestinians and injured more than 108,000. At the same time, Gaza officials continue to accuse Israel of deliberately blocking aid deliveries. Human rights organizations are condemning Israel for attacking Palestinian lifesaving infrastructure, including Gaza’s water supply and medical system. All of this has led the world’s leading specialist on the subject of genocide to declare Israel is carrying out a combination of “genocidal actions, ethnic cleansing and annexation of the Gaza Strip.” Omer Bartov, an Israeli American professor of Holocaust and genocide studies at Brown University, describes why he believes Israel is committing a genocide in Gaza right now.

In Bartov’s words:

Israel cannot and would not be able to continue its actions in Gaza without complete support, especially from the United States, also from European countries, Germany foremost, but also in many ways France and the U.K. The U.S. administration, under Biden, could have ended this war as early as November or December 2023, because Israel cannot conduct such operations on such a scale without constant assistance from the United States, first of all, by the vast amount of munitions that are going to Israel on a daily basis, tank and artillery shells, interceptor rockets. **All of this is coming on a vast scale from the United States to the tune now of about \$20 billion being paid by the American taxpayer. Had an American administration said to Netanyahu in December 2023, “You have to wrap this up, or you’re on your own,” he would have had to stop, because it would have simply been impossible. But instead, this was not done.**

And the result of that is, obviously, first of all, the massive destruction of Gaza. Second, it means that the entire edifice of international law that was put into place in the wake of World War II and the Holocaust in order to prevent genocide ever happening again, through the Nuremberg tribunal, through the Genocide Convention of 1948, the Geneva Accords of 1949 and so forth, and now the Rome Statute more recently — all this apparatus has been shown as meaningless if a country like Israel, supported by its Western allies, can act with impunity. And the result of this is that all other rogue states in the world could now say, “Well, if Israel can get away with it, why should we not?” And so, in that sense, this is a total moral, ethical failure by the very countries that claim to be the main protectors of civil rights, democracy, human rights around the world. And apart from the regional catastrophe that is happening right now, this has much larger ramifications for what we will see in the future.

*--Omer Bartov, professor of Holocaust and genocide studies at Brown University. He is an Israeli American scholar who has been described by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum as one of the world’s leading specialists on the subject of genocide.*

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### **A Word from the New Haven Sunday Vigil for Peace and Justice**

**In the U.S., our responsibility as citizens in these times is a grave one and a critical one. We face a new presidential administration owned and controlled by billionaires whose goals are transparent: to further consolidate wealth and power into fewer and fewer hands by all necessary means. These will include domestic repression, the defunding and dismantling of social programs, and the persecution of a large portion of the population as well as even greater military, economic, and political support for other far right governments throughout the world which share these goals. Full citizen engagement and resistance has become imperative.**

***RESIST THIS ENDLESS WAR***

**<https://newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com>**

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