

From 1944 to 2024, from FDR to Biden, from D-Day to Rafah

By Lev Tsitrin

In a few weeks, the media spotlight will be on the parade of western heads of state gathered at Normandy beaches to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-day. June 6 will be filled with speeches, reflections, and recollections. There will be op-eds on how the world has changed since the end of WW2, Germany turning from Nazism to democracy, Russia becoming an enemy instead of an ally.

And I wonder whether another parallel will be drawn – between Allied invasion across the English channel eighty years ago, and Israel's operation in Rafah today.



Probably not – but not because of the vast difference in the scale of the two operations: Rafah is being watched today by the world with the same, if not greater, absorbing passion as was the D-Day eighty years ago. Yet contrasts abound, though the significance of both events is very similar: the D-Day sealed the fate of the Nazi Germany; while the fighting would continue for almost another year, the war's final outcome was no longer in doubt. Having to fight on two fronts, Nazis had no chance of prevailing. The theater in which they could operate was contracting; the areas of supply of war materiel was getting smaller and smaller. The same is true of the Rafah

operation: take Rafah, and not only will the remaining Hamas battalions be crushed, but the route for the bulk of Hamas' weaponry – the underground tunnels connecting Gaza with Egypt – will be choked off. Bereft of resupply of arms, Hamas will dwindle, and gradually become exhausted and disappear as a fighting and therefore, governing, force.

The contrasts between 1944 and 2024 are stark. Pro-Nazi rhetoric that was heard in a portion of America's German-speaking community before the WW2 was, by 1944, a thing of the long-forgotten past. There were no protests at MIT and Harvard and Columbia demanding the end of the war, there were no encampments festooned with signs like "No to Second Front!" "Let Berlin live!" FDR kept pumping the war materiel into both England and the Soviet Union non-stop, and Eisenhower was not pulling his punches: RAF's bombing raids of Germany alternated with those by American bomber squadrons. Everyone knew that the country was at war with people who turned into monsters, either voluntarily, or through government's coercion. Yes, many innocents – children including – were being killed in Germany, yet everyone knew who was to blame: not FDR, but Hitler.

What a difference eighty years makes! America is unrecognizable. A wave of pro-Hamas sentiment swept over the US. In Dearborn, Michigan, the heartland of Arab-American population, Hamas supporters demand that America stops supplying arms to Israel because its war on Hamas hurts Palestinian women and children. Ditto the ignorant "progressive" college professors and their empty-headed big-mouthed students ensconced in campus encampments. Ditto the "progressives" in Congress. Ditto much of the press. To them, Israel rather than Hamas personifies genocidal wishes and practices.

And Biden listens – and obliges. No FDR, he does not talk to the country in "fireside chats," calming the nerves and explaining that Hamas has under arms some 40,000 terrorist thugs, plus another 40,000 apparatchics, who deliberately push their wives and kids into harms way as human shields – so the numbers of Palestinian casualties should be expected to be proportionate and taken in stride, and that rather than rending its hair in loud lamentations and pushing their governments into demanding that Israel should stop, the

Western public should demand that Hamas unconditionally releases all hostages, steps out of its tunnels and surrenders. Instead of being a modern FDR, Biden follows, rather than leads, playing Hamas' game in gnashing his teeth over deaths of the accomplices to Hamas terrorism, and pausing arms shipments to Israel. His generals, no modern Eisenhowers either, are echoing their Commander-in-Chief in claiming that Rafah operation needs not happen.

If in 1944 Biden rather than FDR was America's president, if today's generals and not Eisenhower were commanding US forces back then, if Americans of German ancestry would have behaved the way the Arab-Americans do today, if college students loudly protested the war, if the press was pitying the Nazis rather than their victims, if there were doubts that Nazism as such could be defeated (because Nazism was an "idea" after all, it was a "social movement" – and ideas and social movements are indestructible, we are being told by today's talking heads who insist that Israelis are headed for a failure if their goal is eradicating Hamas – though how those same talking heads are able to claim in the same breath that the Palestinians who are inflamed by Hamas' "indestructible idea" of destroying Israel and, in eagerly participating in Hamas' "social movement," are getting killed while serving as Hamas' human shields are "innocent," is beyond me), there would have been no D-Day – and no V-Day almost a year later either, for that matter. In 2024, Hitler's successors would be still giving speeches in Reichstag, the grand-kids of Hitler's soldiers would still be goose-stepping in parades all over Europe, their shouts of "Heil!" echoing in its every corner – and, of course, there would be no gathering of the heads of democratic countries in Normandy in a few weeks because there would be no democratic countries, (nor would there be free Normandy to come to, for that matter!). Some difference!

We hear that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Not so. There is a colossal difference between 1944 and 2024, between FDR and Biden, between Eisenhower and today's US generals, between the press forming public opinion then, and the press now, between the greatly anticipated D-Day and the much-maligned Rafah operation, The change is for the worst: the West has become ignorant, and can no longer tell the right from the wrong, losing its moral footing in the process. The

anti-Western forces of ignorance and medieval darkness – called Islamism by some, Islamofascism by others– are on the rise, ascending over the confused and frightened West.

Still, not all is lost. Amidst the 2024 confusion, there are still islands of 1944 sanity in the world. While the [New York Times](#) informs us that “if it were up to the Biden administration, Israel would not go into Rafah at all ... [and the Secretary of Defense] Austin and Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as other senior American military officials, have pointed to past American efforts in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan as examples of what they think Israeli forces should and should not do” (as if Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan were US’s successes rather than failures!), and the leaders of Germany and France who will surely be present at the D-Day ceremony on June 6 [warn Israel against going into Rafah](#) (would they have opposed the D-Day that freed their countries from Nazism?), the majority of Israelis understand that the country’s back is against the wall, that the total victory over Hamas is a must. They also understand that it can only be achieved by taking Rafah; they know that the Rafah operation is the 2024 equivalent of the 1944 D-Day.

The latest news seem to suggest that it may have already started, despite the Biden-led naysayers. May Israel’s D-Day in Rafah be successful, inflicting decisive defeat on Hamas with as few Israeli losses as possible. Godspeed!