

In Memoriam



IDF soldiers killed

by Phyllis Chesler

Day after day, I stare at their beautiful faces, learn their names, and read about the Israeli soldiers who have fallen in battle. I try to imagine their lives in all the cities of the land, lives cut so short. I salute them. I weep for them, and will always remember them.

The fallen soldiers are mainly men—boys really—in their early twenties, although some are only 19. Thus far, [over 500](#) Israeli soldiers have been killed in battle; 168 in Gaza since 10/7.

Demographically speaking, this is equivalent to approximately 18,444 fallen American soldiers.

In addition, [three thousand](#) members of the IDF have been wounded which is the equivalent, demographically, to 110,666 wounded American soldiers.

Although one does not hear about this very much, about [200,000](#) Israelis have been displaced, pulled back from both the north and the south. This is the demographic equivalent of more than seven–nearly eight–million displaced American civilians.

Imagine the cost of such relocation, imagine the trauma of such internal exile.

This is a nightmare, a horror, a continuation of the atrocities launched by Hamas against Israel on 10/7.

You would not know any of this if all you read was the Western media. With some honorable exceptions, your attention would be primarily focused on the number of Gazans dead–statistics which routinely combine Hamas's soldiers with pro-Hamas Gazan civilians. Even so, one can never trust the totally untrustworthy statistics issued by Hamas.

Where is the media and activist outcry about the Red Cross's craven refusal to visit the Israeli hostages and to deliver medicine to the sick and dying? Where is the world's righteous indignation about the Arab Muslim world's refusal to allow Gazan civilians even temporary asylum?

Jews have watered our ancient homeland with their blood. Arabs have always, always attacked Jews, whether they lived in Iraq or Syria, in Morocco or Iran, or in the Holy Land. Jihad against the infidel always meant "Kill the Jews first."

In the 1948 war of Independence, 4000 Israeli

soldiers and 2000 Israeli civilians were murdered.

I've been told that during the Six Day War of self-defense in 1967, more than 700 soldiers fell in six days but no one knew this, (there were no cellphones), and so "it did not affect morale."

According to Ambassador Michael Oren, [2,656 Israeli soldiers](#) were killed in the 1973 Yom Kippur war.

So many wars of self-defense, so many false accusations that Israel launched only unjust wars of aggression.

Nine or more wars later—here we are again.

One Israeli told me that his young soldier son has just lost thirteen friends, "real friends," who have fallen in battle, and "how each funeral is devastating." But he adds: "When you see the amazing kids this country has raised, you feel even more how lucky they were to grow up in this country and that this truly is a special place worth defending."

Another Israeli described the unending shiva calls and how "the burial grounds are a place of honor, love, solace, and community. When one visits the homes of the bereaved, the mourners are surrounded by supporters from their towns and loved ones."

The spirit of the people is amazing. I received a Newsletter about how a platoon of army reservists on their way to Gaza were treated at the Jerusalem market. The entire line of shoppers insisted on paying for their food and would not take "No" for an answer.

A third Israeli broke my heart with her eloquence. She wrote: "These dutiful Israeli soldiers will not

grow old. Nor hug their parents again, nor meet someone they will love, nor parent, nor stroll in a Nature preserve in their beautiful land...ever again."

Finally, the most humbling email I've received to date, was from an Israeli mother whose sons were in combat. She said that my words sustained her and functioned as a light in the darkness.

Oh, but they will all be enshrined in both history and memory. However, they were so young! I am about sixty years older than many of them and thousands of miles away. How many universes have been lost? How many future children and grandchildren will never be born?

When will the American government finally understand that Islamist Jihad is a *religious* war against infidels, (Jews, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Baha'i), a war launched by Islamist barbarians? What will it take for Western journalists and academics to understand that the Jihadists are coming for the Sunday people next; that Iran has Europe and America in its gunsights?

Most important, when will our government decide to respond to Iran's attacks on America?