THE FOG OF WAR

• Facts conflict with atrocity propaganda peddled by Israel

As AFP goes to press on Oct. 12, Israel has begun a devastating bombing campaign against Palestinians in Gaza in response to a bloody attack by Hamas on Oct. 7 that left hundreds of Israelis dead. Critical questions remain, however, about many of the terrible claims that the Israelis have used to justify the brutal assault on the densely populated city.

In the lead up to any war, how many times have we heard breathless reports of atrocities designed to gin up support? Over the last hundred years, some of the most infamous lies include Germans bayoneting babies in Belgium, Saddam killing babies in incubators, and, of course, Assad gassing his own people.

Now, it appears scholars have the Oct. 7 Hamas attack to add to the list. Questions remain as to how Hamas was able to acquire the supposed 5,000 missiles it launched against Israel without Israeli or U.S. intelligence knowing of the imported weapons. Early reports wavered from Palestinians jury-rigging the missiles from Israeli bombs that failed to detonate to Iran supplying them.

Israel supposedly has one of the best intelligence operations in the world. How did Hamas fighters, who can barely scrape up enough ammunition for sustained fighting, manage to sneak them across the heavily guarded borders?

A Wall Street Journal report on Oct. 8 by Summer Said claimed Hezbollah and Iran helped orchestrate the attacks. If this is true, how did Hamas leaders sneak across the heavily guarded borders to meet with Hezbollah and Iranian officials in Lebanon without Israel and the U.S. knowing about these meetings?

In response to the article, independent journalist Andrew Macgregor Marshall announced publicly on the social media platform X that he doesn’t know why anyone would believe Said. He fired her in 2008 when they both worked for Reuters after it came out that she had been making up stories then.

More importantly, if Iran helped Hamas carry out the attacks, why are top U.S. and Israeli officials now backpedaling on this claim? On Oct. 8, White House spokesperson John Kirby and Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Herzog both said there is no evidence to support the claim.

The most grotesque of all these claims are the early accounts of mass rapes. These claims have spread widely and have been used to justify a heavy response, but there is little evidence they happened.

In one particularly gruesome im-

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