

DEFAMATION: BREAKING THE SILENCE

"This is probably also why each testimony opens with a headline like "If you shoot someone in Gaza it's cool, no big deal," or "Those guys were trigger-happy, totally crazy.... The activists from Breaking the Silence aren't journalists, and their report is intended not to explain but to shock. It's propaganda."

BtS collects testimonies from IDF veterans and releases them to the public - all without context. These faulty edited reports make the reader (in Hebrew and in the poorly translated English) believe that Israeli soldiers indiscriminately kill Palestinians. A careful analysis of the testimonies reveals there are actually phone calls, warning shots, leaflets, and warning explosions to protect Gazan civilians from warfare.

BtS is funded by foreign organizations.

BtS, a supposedly inner-Israel organization for the Israeli public, takes the majority of its support from European organizations that leverage money to unfairly smear Israel.

BtS funders demand preconditions.

BtS claims its funders do not influence its work. However, NGO-Monitor discovered that organizations like Oxfam gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to collect testimonies "to conduct interviews with 'as many' soldiers as possible who will testify regarding [Israeli] 'immoral actions' that violate human rights."⁵

BtS chooses to release testimonies to the global public instead of taking soldiers to court.

BtS does not take questionable incidents to the Military Advocate General Corps, where rule-breaking soldiers' actions may be prosecuted.

Breaking the Silence (BtS) is an organization of Israeli Defense Force veterans that has "taken it upon themselves the role to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories." It periodically releases reports and anonymous and unverified soldier testimonies, edited and redacted to promote outrage.

Breaking the Silence came to national attention in 2015, when they published a 237 page report of sweeping accusations from the 2014 Gaza War. International media headlines ranged from mild to "Israeli soldiers killed civilians..." in the Washington Post, to other preposterous accusations.

BtS may appear on your campus at event lectures or other public events, despite their stated mission to inform the Israeli public.



A CREDIBLE ORGANIZATION?

- 1 Does not uphold its mission statement
- 2 Makes sweeping accusations
- 3 Takes anonymous, unverifiable testimonies
- 4 Distorts testimonies with outrages headlines
- 5 Does not refer questionable incidents to the Israeli courts.
- 6 Funded by foreign anti-Israel conditional grants
- 7 Creates impression outside Israel that questionable incidents are procedural

³ The Latest "Breaking the Silence" Report Isn't Journalism. It's Propaganda. Matti Friedman/ Mosaic Magazine. May 15, 2015.

⁴ Data based on Israel's Ch. 10 investigative magazine "Hamakor," from July 12, 2016.

⁵ "Europe to Breaking the Silence: Bring Us As Many Incriminating Testimonies As Possible". NGO-Monitor.org. May 04, 2015.