



Typeset in Caslon 11pt.

© 2024 Seditonist Distribution

*Fuck copyright, no rights reserved. Store, reproduce and transmit this publication in any form you wish and by any means, with or without prior permission or acknowledgement. Permission to use the texts within was neither sought nor given. Do the same.*

A few notes...

This collection was overwhelming compiled by M.Gouldhawke an âpihtawikosisân writer to whom we owe a great deal of thanks for inspiring the rest of this publication. You can find the original compilation and other articles of note, especially to the student of history, colonialism and contemporary resistance at: [mgouldhawke.wordpress.com](http://mgouldhawke.wordpress.com)

Further thanks go to Kuwasi Maroon, for helping with to further source and compile materials, proofing, and the transcribing of "Rasta Time in Palestine".

\* \* \*

This reader has been put together as a guiding stone for fellow anarchists to better understand the conflict in *The Levant* and the responses of their comrades throughout the past hundred years. This reader is inherently incomplete, and is for the most part stripped of citations beyond the source materials. We keenly encourage you to look further into these texts, the authors, and the events they describe.

Gouldhawke states that to their knowledge, Mustapha Khayati, Fredy Perlman and Bassel al-Araj did not self-identify as anarchists. However, in their view they were anarchist-adjacent enough to have their writing included here.

Our thanks also to the brave people on both sides of the frontier who fight for a better world, one which is free of the reckless hate which fuels the slaughter and consumes so many.

No one involved in this work agrees with every statement or argument made within it's pages.

Neither will you.

*SEDITIONIST DISTRIBUTION*

If you have any suggestions for additions to this reader for future editions, contact us: [seditionist@riseup.net](mailto:seditionist@riseup.net)

# CONTENTS

## 1936-1944

9 Solidaridad Obrera  
*The Right of Peoples to Determine Themselves*

11 Vernon Richards  
*Terrorism In Palestine: "Democracy" at Work*

13 Emma Goldman  
*On Zionism*

17 Albert Meltzer  
*Anarchist Tactic For Palestine*

20 War Commentary  
*Palestine Riots-Zionism*

22 Internationalist / War Commentary  
*Palestine*

## 1945-2022

29 Mustapha Khayati  
*Two Local Wars*

40 Fredy Perlman  
*Anti-Semitism and the Beriut Pogrom*

54 Sam Dolgoff  
*Anarchists in Israel*

60 Insurrection  
*The Palestinian Struggle Continues*

61 Benjamin Zephaniah  
*Rasta Time in Palestine - Travelogue*

65 Alfredo M. Bonanno  
*Extracts from "Palestine, Mon Amour"*

72 Anarchist & Libertarian Coalition of Pisa and Valdera  
*Anarchists In Israel: An Important Presence*

83 Uri Gordon  
*Anarchism in Israel and Palestine*

87 Bassel al-Araj  
*Dismantle It And Let Them Fall*

93 Anon / Salish Sea Intifada  
*Notes On Expanding the Struggle for the Liberation of the Palestinian People*

## 2023

101 Fauda and the Black Rose Anarchist Federation  
*Voices from the Front Line Against the Occupation*

106 CrimethInc  
*From the Galilee to Gaza: A Voice from Palestine*

110 The Fayer Collective  
*Strategizing for Palestinian Solidarity: Expanding the Toolkit*

115 Geelong Anarchist-Communists  
*Workers' Power Against Genocide Fighting For A Free Palestine*

117 Tommy Lawson  
*Palestine, Platitudes and Silence*

123 Anon and The Final Straw Radio  
*Reflections of a Jewish Anti-Zionist in Palestine*



**1936 - 1944**





## **The Right of Peoples to Determine Themselves** **Solidaridad Obrera** *(1936)*

The latest news from the African continent reveals that a formidable unrest is brewing. An honest rebellion against the fascist forces is noted. Acts of protest are being expressed everywhere and are occurring with a rare spontaneity.

The soul of the Muslims is at a full boil. The African soil again relives great days. It will not take much for the ground scorched by a burning sun to transform into a gigantic bonfire of freedom.

Since the expulsion of Ab-Del-Krim, the Moroccan territory has been a haven of peace and tranquility. The leader of the colossal uprising that kept in check two European powers was confined on the island of Réunion with his family and a large harem.

The phenomenon we are witnessing in the Moroccan zone is the logical corollary of the great unease that is manifesting among the faithful of Islam. In Palestine they are maintaining a fight to the death with the Jews and their protectors. The kingdoms of Arabia, of Iraq and Hedjaz uphold the banner of irredentist claims.

The occasion was favorable for the indigenous of the Riff. The power that subjugated an important area, graciously granted by an agreement between France and Spain, is writhing in a civil war of intense magnitude. Faced with the natives of the country, there exists no army to defend international legality. The text of the agreement has vanished entirely.

General Franco represents the breaking of the treaties established by the powers to share the terrestrial globe. The Rifians have absolutely nothing to do with the ignominious Spain embodied by the military insurgents.

Our internationalist thinking, one hundred percent, induces us to pose the problem of the colonies. We must consider the workers of the Riff as sufficiently capable of dealing with their own lives and wealth.

The struggle against fascism, which at this time has a clear international character, must advise us to try with all our means to foment a healthy atmosphere of rebellion in the communities of the Riff. It is in our interest to prevent the Spanish zone from serving as a sea and air base for our bitterest enemies.

This campaign must be carried out without losing time. We must pay attention to the measures taken by Germany in the last few days. Military service of two years has been decreed, which will be mandatory for all Germans.

It wouldn't be unusual if German and Italian Fascism could rely on some of the positions held by Spanish Fascism. We can't depend on the counterbalance of certain contradictions, because the war glimpses sharper details.

It is necessary that an irredentist spirit be fomented in the sector occupied by Franco. This decision is not at odds with our principles. It's a matter of freedom.

We must be generous and idealist. The Spanish revolution must be a mirror in which the world proletariat contemplates. Our revolution must serve as a template. And we would be counter-revolutionaries if in obtaining freedom for the workers of the [Iberian] Peninsula we were to maintain under siege the Moroccan zone, entrusted years ago to monarchical Spain.

The revolutionary right that will emerge after the completion of the Spanish revolution will grant absolute freedom to the colonies as an essential chapter of the new popular conquests.

We must erase the bloody and muddy past that the Spanish military has charted in the towns and villages of the Riff. We must rectify the barbarism and lechery of the officials who took Morocco for a place of recreation and profit.

Peoples have to determine themselves. The Spanish zone of the Riff must be granted complete independence.

*Source:*

*Solidaridad Obrera, AIT [International Workers' Association], Voice of the National Confederation of Labour [CNT], Barcelona, August 28, 1936*

*Url: [ainfos.ca/04/nov/ainfos00201.html](http://ainfos.ca/04/nov/ainfos00201.html)*

## **Terrorism In Palestine: “Democracy” at Work**

### **Vernon Richards**

*(1937)*

The tragic events in Palestine have provided yet another happy hunting ground for Mussolini.

The Press announces that Arab notabilities in Lybia have sent a message to Mussolini reaffirming their solidarity with the Arabs in Palestine. This message naturally comes as a result of Mussolini's fine words when he called himself the “defender of Islam.” On the other hand Alfred Roke, a member of the Arab Higher Committee declared to Arthur Koestler, News Chronicle special correspondent that he was expressing the opinion of the Committee, including the Mufti, when he said “We know that Italy regards the Arab question only as a card in a bigger game. She aims at annoying Britain until the conquest of Abyssinia is recognised.” However, apart from once more exposing Mussolini as the opportunist par excellence, the events in Palestine once more shows that all Imperialisms, whether they be democratic or totalitarian are ruthless.

Mussolini brought “civilization and Christianity” to Abyssinia with bombing aeroplanes and mustard gas. An attempt was made on Graziani's life. It was followed by the wholesale destruction by fire and bombs of human lives and the huts in which the natives lived. The British Government regretted that such methods should be adopted. The British Government also disagreed with Germany's methods of reprisals by shelling Almeria, over the Deutschland incident.

And yet the British Government does not deprecate such action on the North West Frontier, or in Palestine.

As a result of the destruction of various aerodromes, General Wavill, Commander in Chief of the British Forces in Palestine ordered the destruction of houses belonging to “Arab extremists, suspected of having been involved in these acts of incendiaryism.”

Le Temps reports that an order from Jerusalem states that “amongst the punitive measures taken by the authorities in order to put an end to the wave of terrorism

which has broken out in the country, the houses in regions where arms have been stolen are to be “branded” in equal numbers to the number of arms stolen. For one rifle stolen, one house will be blown up, for one rifle handed back one house will be exempted.”

“By order of the authorities and to repress the latest acts of terrorism, twenty houses were dynamited today in different villages suspected of having sheltered rebels.”

Further, *Le Temps* (October 20) states that a telegram from Jerusalem reports that “as reprisals against the attacks launched by Arabs in Damaria, on Monday, where members of the police force were obliged to give up their arms and ammunition, a detachment of British troops, aided by police authorities, the following morning dynamited three houses in the town.”

It should be noted that the police had only been obliged to give up their arms, and were not killed by the Arabs. So that this incident should not be repeated, the British mercenaries blow up three houses. And the *National Press* talks of Democracy! And British Ministers talk of the “ruthless” tactics of Mussolini and the “Reds” in Spain!

*V.R.*

*Source:*

*From ‘Spain and the World’, Vol. 1. No. 22. London, October 27, 1937*

*Url: [mgouldhawke.wordpress.com/2023/12/06/terrorism-in-palestine-democracy-at-work-vernon-richards-1937](https://mgouldhawke.wordpress.com/2023/12/06/terrorism-in-palestine-democracy-at-work-vernon-richards-1937)*

**On Zionism**  
**Emma Goldman**  
*(1938)*

To the Editor,  
"Spain and the World".

Dear Comrade,

I was interested in the article, 'Palestine and Socialist Policy', by our good friend Reginald Reynolds in 'Spain and the World' of July 29th. There is much in it with which I fully agree, but a great deal more which seems to me contradictory for a Socialist and a near-anarchist. Before I point out these inconsistencies, I wish to say that our friend's article lends itself to the impression that he is a rabid anti-Semite. In point of truth, I have been asked by several people how it happens that 'Spain and the World' printed such an anti-Semitic article. Their surprise was even greater that Reginald Reynolds should be guilty of such tendency. Knowing the writer I felt quite safe in assuring my Jewish friends that Reginald Reynolds has not a particle of anti-Semitic feeling in him, although it is quite true that his article unfortunately gives such an impression.

I have no quarrel with our good friend about his charges against the Zionists. In point of fact I have for many years opposed Zionism as the dream of capitalist Jewry the world over for a Jewish State with all its trimmings, such as Government, laws, police, militarism and the rest. In other words, a Jewish State machinery to protect the privileges of the few against the many.

Reginald Reynolds is wrong, however, when he makes it appear that the Zionists were the sole backers of Jewish emigration to Palestine. Perhaps he does not know that the Jewish masses in every country and especially in the United States of America have contributed vast amounts of money for the same purpose. They have given unstintingly out of their earnings in the hope that Palestine may prove to be an asylum for their brothers, cruelly persecuted in nearly every European country. The fact that there are many non-Zionist communes in Palestine goes to prove that the Jewish workers who have helped the persecuted and hounded Jews have done so not because they are Zionists, but for the reason I have already stated, that they might be left in peace in Palestine to take root and live their own lives.

Comrade Reynolds resents the contention of the Jews that Palestine had been their homeland two thousand years ago. He insists that this is of no importance as against the Arabs who have lived in Palestine for generations. I do not think either claim of great moment, unless one believes in the monopoly of land and the right of Governments in every country to keep out the newcomers.

Surely Reginald Reynolds knows that the Arab people have about as much to say who should or should not come into their country as the under-privileged of other lands. In point of fact our friend admits as much when he states that the Arab feudal lords had sold the land to the Jews without the knowledge of the Arab people. This is of course nothing new in our world. The capitalist class everywhere owns, controls and disposes of its wealth to suit itself. The masses, whether Arab, English or any other, have very little to say in the matter.

In claiming the right of the Arabs to keep out Jewish immigration from Palestine, our good friend is guilty of the same breach of Socialism as his comrade, John McGovern. To be sure the latter makes himself the champion of British Imperialism while Reginald Reynolds sponsors Arab capitalist rights. That is bad enough for a revolutionary socialist. Worse still is the inconsistency in pleading on behalf of land monopoly, to which the Arabs alone should have the right.

Perhaps my revolutionary education has been sadly neglected, but I have been taught that the land should belong to those who till the soil. With all of his deep-seated sympathies with the Arabs, our comrade cannot possibly deny that the Jews in Palestine have tilled the soil. Tens of thousands of them, young and deeply devout idealists, have flocked to Palestine, there to till the soil under the most trying pioneer conditions. They have reclaimed wastelands and have turned them into fertile fields and blooming gardens. Now I do not say that therefore Jews are entitled to more rights than the Arabs, but for an ardent socialist to say that the Jews have no business in Palestine seems to me rather a strange kind of socialism. Moreover, Reginald Reynolds not only denies the Jews the right to asylum in Palestine, but he also insists that Australia, Madagascar and East Africa would be justified in closing their ports against the Jews. If all these countries are in their right, why not the Nazis in Germany or Austria? In fact, all countries. Unfortunately, our comrade does not suggest a single place where the Jews might find peace and security.

I take it that Reginald Reynolds believes in the right of asylum for political refugees. I am certain he resents the loss of this great principle, once the pride and glory of England, as much as I do. How then, can he reconcile his feelings about political refugees with his denial of asylum to the Jews. I must say I am puzzled.

Our friend waxes very hot about national independence for the Arabs and for all other peoples under British Dominion. I am not opposed to the struggle for it, but I do not see the same blessings in national independence under the capitalist régime. All the advancement claimed for it is like the claims for democracy, a delusion and a snare. One has to point out some of the countries that have achieved national independence. Poland, for instance, the Baltic States or some of the Balkan countries. Far from being progressive in the true sense, they have become Fascist. Political persecution is not less severe than under the Tsar, while anti-Semitism, formerly fostered from on top, has since infested every layer of social life in these countries.

However, since our friend champions national independence, why not be consistent and recognise the right of the Zionists or the Jews at large to national independence? If anything, their precarious condition, the fact that they are nowhere wanted, should entitle them to at least the same consideration that our comrade so earnestly gives to the Arabs.

I know of course that a great many of the Jews can lay no claim to being political refugees. On the contrary, most of them have remained indifferent to the persecution of workers, socialists, communists, trade-unionists and anarchists, so long as their own skins were safe. Like the middle-class in Germany and Austria, they have exploited labour and have been antagonistic to any attempt on the part of the masses to better their condition. Some German Jews had the temerity to say that they would not object to driving out the 'Ostjuden' (Jews coming from Poland and other countries). All that is true, but the fact remains that since Hitler's ascendancy to power all Jews without exception have been subjected to the most fiendish persecution and the most horrible indignities, besides being robbed of all of the possessions. It therefore seems strange for a Socialist to deny these unfortunate people a chance of taking root in new countries, there to begin a new life.

The last paragraph in 'Palestine and Social Policy' caps the climax. The author writes: "What does it matter who makes a demand or why it is made, or who pays the bill if that demand is just? To reject a just demand is to brand ourselves as friends of tyranny and oppression; to accept it and to work for it is not only our duty but the only policy that will expose the pretensions of our enemies."

The question is, dear Reginald Reynolds, who is to decide what is a 'just demand'? Unless one makes oneself guilty of the charge the writer hurls against the Jews, "the intolerable arrogance of people who regard their own race as superior", one cannot very well decide whether the demand of natives for the monopoly of their

country is any more just than the desperate need of millions of people who are slowly being exterminated.

In conclusion, I wish to say that my attitude to the whole tragic question is not dictated by my Jewish antecedents. It is motivated by my abhorrence of injustice, and man's inhumanity to man. It is because of this that I have fought all my life for anarchism which alone will do away with the horrors of the capitalist régime and place all races and peoples, including the Jews, on a free and equal basis. Until then I consider it highly inconsistent for socialists and anarchists to discriminate in any shape or form against the Jews.

*Emma Goldman*  
*26th August 1938*

*Source:*

*Spain and the World, August 26 1938 Reprinted in 'British Imperialism & The Palestine Crisis: Selections from the Anarchist Journal 'Freedom' 1938-1948' (London: Freedom Press, 1989)*

*Url: [theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-on-zionism](http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-on-zionism)*



## **Anarchist Tactic For Palestine**

### **Albert Meltzer**

*(1939)*

The Arab revolution is centred on Palestine. The re-awakening of the Arab nation and the consequent nationalist revolution has brought the masses of Palestine in conflict with British Imperialism. Every movement against British Imperialism must be welcomed as the rulers of this country rule (or, synonymously, misrule) the larger part of the world's colonial peoples. The opposition of revolutionaries to British Imperialism and its allies must be taken for granted.

The clashing of two nationalisms (Jewish and Arab in this case) has inevitably given rise to controversy abroad. In the Houses of Parliament sympathy is naturally pro-Zionist; as one MP is reputed to have said, when asked why he supported the Jews in Palestine against the Arabs: "In my constituency I have thousands of Jewish Voters — I haven't a single Arab". The Labour Party, free from the responsibility in the Government of a bloody suppression of all vestiges of Arab life, urges the Government to insist upon the policy of a Jewish National State. The majority opinion here seems to be pro-Zionist, perhaps because the Zionists are so definitely pro-Imperialist while the Arabs are vaguely accused of being pro-Fascist. It would be a surprise, therefore, to read about the Government's rejection of the Jewish side in the Palestine talks (up to the moment of writing) if the Government had not to reckon with millions of other Arab and Moslem subjects in the Empire. Chamberlain's policy of "Appeasement" has up to now not been primarily in the interests of the Democratic Imperialisms, and in the Palestine issue, again, he is far less concerned with the maintenance of Imperialism than his "Left" opponents!

What is the case for Zionism? Zionism represents the age-old desire of the Rabbis to return to the "Holy Land". The significance of the word "Zion" (the Biblical and traditional name) will be noted. The Rabbis, whose jobs depend on the keeping-up of the race-barriers and the consequent survival of the religion, in the fear of assimilation, have fostered these artificial laws in order to maintain, by tribal "totems and taboos" a separate race. Naturally, they have failed, and Zionism is the way they are endeavouring to succeed. There is to-day no pure race, despite the claims of Hitler and the Rabbis. It will be noted that the revival of Judaism has

only been a reaction to pogroms and persecution. In times and countries where there has been complete racial and religious toleration, assimilation has begun; intolerance always defeating its own ends.

Herzl began the move for "Back to Zion". Was his primary concern for the refugees, then fleeing from the pogroms of the Tsar? On the contrary, Herzl refused far more suitable land in Africa, insisting on the "Holy" Land. Finally, the Balfour War Government promised Palestine to the Jews, as well as to the Arabs, when Turkey was defeated. Since the Mandate, the introduction of capitalist Western ideas has undoubtedly benefited the Arab workers, as has the introduction of the proletarian organisations of Europe. But this no excuse, whatever the Zionists may say. Capitalism introduced in this fashion benefited everywhere the working class; the same thing happening in Russia was hailed as a triumph of "communism". It was nothing of the sort. Despite the coming of capitalist benefits, the struggle against capitalist malevolences must be fought.

Originally there was no agitation against Jewish immigration; moreover there was never previously any anti-Semitism in the Arab countries. Not until immigration became colonisation, and the aim of a Jewish state, did the trouble commence. The Zionist leaders, keeping up a pretence that they were struggling against Fascism, have been the motivators of Fascism in Palestine and have the responsibility for the heavy toll of wasted lives. Fascism? From the "Jewish Hitler", Vladimir Jabotinsky, with his "Storm Troop" Revisionists to the Rothschild and Imperialist Zionists in London (who take good care to keep out of the "Holy" country), from the "Nuremberg" laws of the synagogue to the basic ideology of Zionism (nationalism based on race and not on country) the whole of the Jewish nationalist movement has been as fascist as any other nationalist movement which has left its early liberal phase. The labour leaders like Ben Gurion accuse the Arabs of being in the pay of Hitler and Mussolini and under that pretence act the Hitlers and Mussolinis. Meanwhile they dupe the masses of Jewish workers in the pogromist countries that there is only one future — Palestine — and furnish the excuses for the anti-Semitic governments.

Undoubtedly the Arab revolution must have the support of the workers abroad. Let us not be duped as "revolutionary socialists" have been duped, however. There is no hope for the future in a Palestine under the Grand Mufti and Company. There is no reason to suppose that a bourgeois nationalist government will do more for the working class than did the Imperialist government. The lesson of Ireland alone affords proof. The struggle must be against Imperialism first, against Zionism secondly, and lastly against the bourgeois nationalist government when created. There is no evidence that the present nationalist movement is capable of such a

task. The task is to forget the past and to build up a revolutionary labour movement in Palestine, without consideration of nationality. The only hope there for workers' unity is a movement that will not include within its ranks the religious leaders of Judaism or Mohammedism, and exclusive of Jewish or Arab or British exploiters. From which side it will come remains to be seen, there is little hope of a revolution in Palestine becoming a social revolution. It may be necessary at the moment to struggle alongside the petty bourgeoisie against Imperialism, but it must be borne in mind that they can neither play a revolutionary role, and that neither the Nehrus in India nor the Muftis in Palestine can be considered as friends, but only as pawns, of the revolutionary working-class.

The programme of the new Palestinian labour movement must be for the overthrow of the Mandate; for autonomy; for a struggle against the autonomous government when created, for workers' control and freedom. The anarchist tactic for the situation in Palestine is the only road that will lead away from the present debacle; the co-operation of the Arab revolutionaries throughout the Near East, in co-operation with anti-Zionist Jewish minority and all workers, of whatever race, will alone push forward the opportunity for a complete revolution.

*ALBERT MELTZER*

*Source:*

*From the newspaper, 'Revolt!', March 25, 1939*

*Url: [mgouldhawke.wordpress.com/2023/11/05/anarchist-tactic-for-palestine-albert-meltzer-1939/](https://mgouldhawke.wordpress.com/2023/11/05/anarchist-tactic-for-palestine-albert-meltzer-1939/)*

## **Palestine Riots - Zionism**

### **War Commentary**

*(1944)*

#### *Palestine Riots*

Trouble is once again threatened in the "Holy Land". It is reported that members of the "Hagana", the illegal New Zionist movement of "Revisionists" (Jewish Fascist organisation which claims some 70,000 members) are carrying out secret military manoeuvres in the desert by the Dead Sea, and their extremists are once more active.

The list of explosions and attacks in the past few weeks cannot be overlooked. It seems as if the extreme Zionist nationalists hope to provoke Arab-Jewish disturbances during the occasion of the Passover holidays, in order to rally the Jewish community there to their fascist programme.

Liberals in this country and more especially in America seem quite inept at realising the essentially fascist nature of the Revisionists, though it could not be clearer if they had used the name and done with it. Only the association elsewhere of fascism and anti-semitism prevents that. Apart from being a secret military organisation that drills its members in preparation for the taking over of power; apart from being extremely nationalistic and desiring a State in which one race only shall be the herrenvolk, the Revisionists have a completely totalitarian programme, and though they have long since forsworn their earlier praise of Mussolini, the imprint of fascism bears itself upon their reason for existence, their aims for getting power, and the manner in which they propose to run their State.

Many British soldiers have seen this in the past few years; without necessarily being supporters of British imperialism themselves they have marvelled at the nature of this opposition, imagining fascism could not originate among even the reactionaries of a race that had suffered so much from it in other forms. It is not progressive anti-imperialism that impels the Revisionists to attempt to bar from synagogues Jewish soldiers in the British Army, as has happened in some instances, according to the tales of soldiers arriving home. Even "Christianity" does not go that far!

In the struggle between British imperialism and Revisionism there is no choice we can make. Nor do we support the bourgeois Arab nationalists, forever safeguarding their own position without considering the interests of the masses:

who bargain away Arab lands with the richer Jewish community and hope to get it back by political jerrymandering with the authorities.

### **Zionism**

Zionism has become reactionary because instead of being a scheme for immigration, as many at first thought it would be, it became a scheme for colonization, and therefore of imperialism. If there are now differences between imperialism and the more impatient nationalists, we may see it paralleled in South Africa in the struggle between Smuts and imperialism on the one hand and Malan and the Afrikaander Nazis on the other, who certainly cannot be termed “progressive” by their “friends at court”.

We hear many voices in this country urging that the scheme for a totalitarian Zionist State in Palestine should be helped to succeed because it would assist the Jewish people to a homeland of their own. It is pointed out that in so vast a portion of the world they are persecuted and need a haven of refuge. With this we are not disposed to agree, for these plans are suggested for after the war, when presumably it is taken for granted that persecution and anti-semitism will continue. This may well be the case, but it is the duty of all to prevent this state of affairs by making the social revolution that will end persecution for all peoples, which is not only a more humane, but an easier, task, than rooting thousands and millions from their native homelands and settling them in a few miles of desert knowing full well of the dissension of those already there.

The greatness of the Jewish people never made itself manifest when it was an imperialism, a compact tribe of warriors inspired with the idea of a God personally responsible for fighting its battles against all the nations of the world, framing severe penal codes for itself and despising the rest of the world. Nor was it manifest in the years it was constricted to the ghetto and forced into trade and usury. Its greatness came with the Diaspora, in its spreading civilisation amongst the nations; most of all when the French Revolution broke down all barriers, and its apostles of freedom arose like Heine who were cosmopolitans and not narrow nationalists. Fortunately no Revisionist racial bar prevented Freud, Spinoza, Zamenhof, Mendelssohn, Einstein, Marx and others from merging their gifts among the nations.

*Source:*

*'War Commentary, For Anarchism', Vol.5, No.12, Mid-April, 1944*

*Url: [freedomnews.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/War-Commentary-1944-04-15.pdf](http://freedomnews.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/War-Commentary-1944-04-15.pdf)*

## Palestine Internationalist / War Commentary (1944)

The war in Palestine continues to take up headlines in the Press, as politicians bicker in pretences at armistices and parleys, not in the least in an endeavour to find a reasonable solution, but solely in order to preserve the balance of power existing in the “cold war”.

The ironic nature of the war is that the opposing forces consider themselves as fighting against something which does not happen to be on the other side of the barricades. The thousands of immigrants arriving from Europe are passionately keen to defend their stakes in Israel, and after years in D.P. [Displaced Persons] camps and concentration camps they are anxious to “fight back”; but, of course, the Arabs they are fighting against were not responsible for European anti-Semitism. The Arabs regard themselves as fighting against European influence; to them it is a “new aggression of the West against the East” and they regard it as a par with British Imperialism or the Italian war in Abyssinia.

There is a certain amount of truth in both claims, because undoubtedly much of the outside criticism of Zionism comes from anti-Semitism and support for Zionism out of sympathy with Jewish victims of Nazi and other oppression in Europe. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the majority of Zionists regard the Arabs in the same way as other colonisers have regarded other “native inhabitants”, and it is hardly an answer for the Israeli authorities to claim cooperation from certain Arab tribes, such as the Druses, who have always been on unfriendly terms with other Arabs and inclined towards their enemies. Similar tactics were pursued by the British in India.

There is not the slightest question of Jewish superiority in any renewed outbreak of fighting, no matter how rated the Arab, troops may have been in the past; and particularly since the British withdrawal enabled them to bring in thousands of Jewish D.P.s and also munitions from all over Europe, as well as volunteers. The Arabs accuse Britain of betraying their interests in withdrawing at the particular time it did (had it withdrawn in 1936, for instance, the Jews could have been militarily defeated by them, since at that time they had no possibility of calling in large-scale immigration from Europe, importing arms from countries like Czechoslovakia, nor had they the thousands of British-trained troops from the war.) On the other hand, the Zionists generally have portrayed Britain as aiding

the Arabs on the grounds of the association with Abdullah of Transjordan, and there is a left-wing picture (which is now accepted as truth by all Zionists) of Bevin forcing through a pro-Arab policy against the Cabinet's wish, and being able to call the war off any time he chose.

Bevin's ability to control the Arab States' policy in regard to Palestine (but not in regard to Egypt or the Sudan!) may be doubted. It is more certain that Britain has played a diplomatic game of keeping in with both sides: influencing the Arab countries by the military missions under Glubb, etc., and relying on the pro-British sentiments of Weizmann and the Social-Democrats on the Jewish side. An alternative theory is pointed out by many: namely, that Britain and America — who are agreed on policy in every country in the world — may be not so much at loggerheads over this one small country as may be imagined. America ostensibly and loudly backs the Jewish side and calls on their support in the case of war. This is convenient for whoever may be President (having to placate the New York Jewish vote) and in addition, American influence among European Jewish circles can be considered. On the other hand, Britain ostensibly backs the Arabs — she has "traditional friendships" among the Arab countries, and calls on their support in the case of war. The Jewish vote in this country does not count very highly; and in any case is not generally pro-Zionist. Thus, whoever wins is an ally against Russia for Britain — or America!

It cannot be doubted that Palestine may be an important focal point in another war, since Russia has seen the weakness of the Arab countries, and that even such a small body as Palestine Jewry can resist them all, and if it had not been restrained, might by now have toppled them all over. Her striking point in a war might well be the oil fields of Iran and with only "Glubb's Girls" to stop them might soon be in Cairo. The Israeli leaders are well aware of their importance to world politics, and disinclined to give way over limiting their territory, to please the Arabs.

### **ARAB REFUGEES**

Meanwhile, the most pressing of all post-war problems has received very little notice — namely the displacement of thousands of Arabs from their homes. These thousands became refugees not because of "misleading Arab propaganda" as the Israel Government claims, but because they feared terrorists attacks such as that of the Jewish Fascists on Deir Yassin, when a village which had actually not cooperated with and even resisted Arab terrorists, was massacred by Jewish terrorists. As the thousands of Jewish immigrants come in, the Israel Government can only accommodate them in the deserted Arab cities, and in such towns as Jaffa, transform it completely from an all Arab city to a Jewish city. Before very long, there will simply be nowhere for them to go back to, and having gone, the Israel Government does not particularly want them back, however it condemned the methods which drove them away.

It is futile and unreasonable to blame the Jewish immigrants for this problem of Arab homelessness; they have themselves certainly nowhere else to go, and are naturally bitter at the cynical ease with which Great Powers who deny the great open spaces under their control to settlers, declare that they ought not to go to Palestine but elsewhere. They cannot be expected to stay behind barbed wire and bars until their death, as has been apparently the view of the British Government in its great Cyprus concentration camp experiment (which still goes on). They are no more likely to consider Arab claims than the thousands of Europeans who swarmed to build up America considered the Indians. In spite of all the bunk about peace by settlement and negotiations between the Powers, under the United Nations delusion, the fact is that conflict, in these circumstances inevitable, and victory will certainly go to the strongest side. The Powers are not really interested in any other solution, but are doing their best to use the Palestine struggle as one of the many pawns in the cold war.

### NO EASY SOLUTION

As internationalists we ought not to delude ourselves into any other facile solution, but rather to look for hopes that in the future some measure of international co-operation will come about, not between governments or political leaders, but from the people from below, and in the meantime to expose such delusions as those spread by the leaders of all sides in any war. But the major deduction to be drawn from the Palestine conflict is the utter degeneration of Soviet Russia into Czarism, a fact known to everybody with the least perception who witnesses the flight of so many Jews from Europe, but one concealed not least by the Zionist parties who welcome Russian U.N.O. [United Nations Organization] support, and who have in any case a certain vested interest in anti-Semitism. There can be no denying the fact that if conditions were normal and decent in Rumania, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the other countries behind the Iron Curtain, there would be no "D.P. problem": the fact of open and silent pogroms in those countries causes the great exodus from Eastern Europe to the overladen D.P. camps of Germany and Italy, and the great freights of human cargo leaving the Danubian ports. The Communists may deny responsibility for this, but the fact remains that all opposition to Stalin has been stamped out in those countries and if Stalin so wished, anti-Semitism could not last a minute. It has not been tolerated in Russia for many years because of its identification with and exploitation by the "White" Czarists, but now that Red Czarism is so firmly in the saddle, it is used throughout the Great Russian Empire of Eastern Europe to divide and rule.

### INTERNATIONALIST

*Internationalist' is a known pen name used by Albert Meltzer. -M.Gouldhawke*

Source:

*From 'Freedom, Anarchist Fortnightly', Vol. 9, No. 24, November 27, 1948*

Url: [freedomnews.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Freedom-1948-11-27.pdf](http://freedomnews.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Freedom-1948-11-27.pdf)







**1946 - 2022**



## **Two Local Wars** **Mustapha Khayati** *(1967)*

THE ARAB-ISRAEL WAR was a dirty trick pulled by modern history on the good conscience of the Left, which was communing in the great spectacle of its protest against the Vietnam war. The false consciousness that saw in the NLF the champion of “socialist revolution” against American imperialism could only get entangled and collapse amidst its insurmountable contradictions when it had to decide between Israel and Nasser. Yet throughout all its ludicrous polemics it never stopped proclaiming that one side or the other was completely in the right, or even that one or another of their perspectives was revolutionary.

In immigrating into underdeveloped regions, the revolutionary struggle was subjected to a double alienation: that of an impotent Left facing an overdeveloped capitalism it was in no way capable of combating, and that of the laboring masses in the colonized countries who inherited the remains of a mutilated revolution and have had to suffer its defects. The absence of a revolutionary movement in Europe has reduced the Left to its simplest expression: a mass of spectators who swoon with rapture each time the exploited in the colonies take up arms against their masters, and who cannot help seeing these uprisings as the epitome of Revolution. At the same time, the absence from political life of the proletariat as a class-for-itself (and for us the proletariat is revolutionary or it is nothing) has allowed this Left to become the “Knight of Virtue” in a world without virtue. But when it bewails its situation and complains about the “world order” being at odds with its good intentions, and when it maintains its poor yearnings in the face of this order, it is in fact attached to this order as to its own essence. If this order was taken away from it, it would lose everything. The European Left is so pitiful that, like a traveler in the desert longing for a single drop of water, it seems to aspire for nothing more than the meager feeling of an abstract objection. From the little with which it is satisfied one can measure the extent of its poverty. It is as alien to history as the proletariat is alien to this world. False consciousness is its natural condition, the spectacle is its element, and the apparent opposition of systems is its universal frame of reference: wherever there is a conflict it always sees Good fighting Evil, “total revolution” versus “total reaction.”

The attachment of this spectator consciousness to alien causes remains irrational, and its virtuous protests flounder in the tortuous paths of its guilt. Most of the “Vietnam Committees” in France split up during the “Six Day War” and some

of the war resistance groups in the United States also revealed their reality. "One cannot be at the same time for the Vietnamese and against the Jews menaced with extermination," is the cry of some. "Can you fight against the Americans in Vietnam while supporting their allied Zionist aggressors?" is the reply of others. And then they plunge into Byzantine discussions . . . Sartre hasn't recovered from it yet. In fact this whole fine lot does not actually fight what it condemns, nor does it really know much about the forces it supports. Its opposition to the American war is almost always combined with unconditional support of the Vietcong; but in any case this opposition remains spectacular for everyone. Those who were really opposed to Spanish fascism went to fight it. No one has yet gone off to fight "Yankee imperialism." The consumers of illusory participation are offered a whole range of spectacular choices: pacifist demonstrations; Stalino-Gaullist nationalism against the Americans (Humphrey's visit was the sole occasion the French Communist Party has demonstrated with its remaining faithful); the sale of the Vietnam Newsletter or of publicity handouts from Ho Chi Minh's state . . . Neither the Provos (before their dissolution) nor the Berlin students have been able to go beyond the narrow framework of anti-imperialist "action."

The antiwar movement in America has naturally been more serious since it finds itself face to face with the real enemy. Some young people, however, end up by simplistically identifying with the apparent enemies of their real enemies; which reinforces the confusion of a working class already subjected to the worst brutalization and mystification, and contributes to maintaining it in that "reactionary" state of mind from which one draws arguments against it.

Guevara's critique seems to us more important since it has its roots in real struggles, but it falls short by default. Che is certainly one of the last consistent Leninists of our time. But like Epimenides, he seems to have slept for the last fifty years to be able to believe that there is still a "progressive bloc," which for some strange reason is "lapsing." This bureaucratic and romantic revolutionary only sees in imperialism the highest stage of capitalism, struggling against a society that is socialist in spite of its imperfections.

The USSR's embarrassingly evident defects are coming to seem more and more "natural." As for China, according to an official declaration it remains "ready to accept all national sacrifices to support North Vietnam against the USA" (in lieu of supporting the workers of Hong Kong) "and constitutes the most solid and secure rear guard for the Vietnamese people in their struggle against imperialism." In fact, no one doubts that if the last Vietnamese were killed, Mao's bureaucratic China would still be intact. (According to *Izvestia*, China and the United States have already concluded a mutual nonintervention pact.)

Neither the manichean consciousness of the virtuous Left nor the bureaucracy are capable of seeing the profound unity of today's world. Dialectics is their common

enemy. Revolutionary criticism begins beyond good and evil; it is rooted in history and operates on the totality of the existing world. In no case can it applaud a belligerent state or support the bureaucracy of an exploiting state in the process of formation. It must first of all lay bare the truth of present struggles by putting them back into their historical context, and unmask the hidden ends of the forces officially in conflict. The arm of critique is the prelude to the critique by arms.

The peaceful coexistence of bourgeois and bureaucratic lies ended up prevailing over the lie of their confrontation. The balance of terror was broken in Cuba in 1962 with the rout of the Russians. Since that time American imperialism has been the unchallenged master of the world. And it can remain so only by aggression since it has no chance of seducing the disinherited, who are more easily attracted to the Sino-Soviet model. State capitalism is the natural tendency of colonized societies where the state is generally formed before the historical classes. The total elimination of its capital and its commodities from the world market is the deadly threat that haunts the American propertied class and its free-enterprise economy — this is the key to its aggressive rage.

Since the great crisis of 1929, state intervention has been more and more conspicuous in market mechanisms; the economy can no longer function steadily without massive expenditures by the state, the main “consumer” of all noncommercial production (especially that of the armament industries). This does not save it from remaining in a state of permanent crisis and in constant need of expanding its public sector at the expense of its private sector. A relentless logic pushes the system toward increasingly state-controlled capitalism, generating severe social conflicts.

The profound crisis of the American system lies in its inability to produce sufficient profits on the social scale. It must therefore achieve abroad what it cannot do at home, namely increase the amount of profit in proportion to the amount of existing capital. The propertied class, which also more or less possesses the state, relies on its imperialist enterprises to realize this insane dream. For this class, pseudocommunist state capitalism means death just as much as does authentic communism; that is why it is essentially incapable of seeing any difference between them.

The artificial functioning of the monopolistic economy as a “war economy” ensures, for the moment, that the ruling-class policy is willingly supported by the workers, who enjoy full employment and a spectacular abundance: “At the moment, the proportion of labor employed in jobs connected with national defense amounts to 5.2% of the total American labor force, compared with 3.9% two years ago. . . . The number of civil jobs in the national defense sector has increased from 3,000,000 to 4,100,000 over the last two years.” (Le Monde, 17 September 1967.) Meanwhile, market capitalism vaguely feels that by extending its territorial control it will achieve an accelerated expansion capable of balancing the ever-increasing

demands of non-profit-making production. The ferocious defense of regions of the “free” world where its interests are often trifling (in 1959 American investments in South Vietnam did not exceed 50 million dollars) is part of a long-term strategy that hopes eventually to be able to write off military expenditures as mere business expenses in ensuring the United States not only a market but also the monopolistic control of the means of production of the greater part of the world. But everything works against this project. On one hand, the internal contradictions of private capitalism: particular interests conflict with the general interest of the propertied class as a whole, as with groups that make short-term profits from state contracts (notably arms manufacturers), or monopolistic enterprises that are reluctant to invest in underdeveloped countries, where productivity is very low in spite of cheap labor, preferring instead the “advanced” part of the world (especially Europe, which is still more profitable than saturated America). On the other hand, it clashes with the immediate interests of the disinherited masses, whose first move can only be to eliminate the indigenous strata that exploit them, which are the only strata able to ensure the United States any infiltration whatsoever.

According to Rostow, the “growth” specialist of the State Department, Vietnam is for the moment only the first testing ground for this vast strategy, which, to ensure its exploitative peace, must start with a war of destruction that can hardly succeed. The aggressiveness of American imperialism is thus in no way the aberration of a bad administration, but a necessity for the class relations of private capitalism, which, if not overthrown by a revolutionary movement, unrelentingly evolves toward a technocratic state capitalism. The history of the alienated struggles of our time can only be understood in this context of a still undominated global economy. The destruction of the old “Asiatic” structures by colonial penetration gave rise to a new urban stratum while increasing the pauperization of a large portion of the super-exploited peasantry. The conjuncture of these two forces constituted the driving force of the Vietnamese movement. Among the urban strata (petty bourgeois and even bourgeois) were formed the first nationalist nuclei and the skeleton of what was to be, from 1930 on, the Indochinese Communist Party. Its adherence to Bolshevik ideology (in its Stalinist version), which led it to graft an essentially agrarian program onto the purely nationalist one, enabled the ICP to become the leading force of the anticolonial struggle and to marshal the great mass of peasants who had spontaneously risen. The “peasant soviets” of 1931 were the first manifestation of this movement. But by linking its fate to that of the Third International, the ICP subjected itself to all the vicissitudes of Stalinist diplomacy and to the fluctuations of the national and state interests of the Russian bureaucracy. After the Seventh Comintern Congress (August 1935) “the struggle against French imperialism” vanished from the program and was soon replaced by a struggle against the powerful Trotskyist party. “As for the Trotskyists, no alliances, no concessions; they must be unmasked for what they are: the agents of fascism” (Report of Ho Chi Minh to the Comintern, July 1939). The Hitler-Stalin Pact and the banning of the Communist Party in France and its colonies allowed



the ICP to change its line: “Our party finds it a matter of life or death . . . to struggle against the imperialist war and the French policy of piracy and massacre” (i.e. against Nazi Germany), “but we will at the same time combat the aggressive aims of Japanese fascism.”

Toward the end of World War II, with the effective help of the Americans, the Vietminh was in control of the greater part of the country and was recognized by France as the sole representative of Indochina. It was at this point that Ho preferred “to sniff a little French shit rather than eat Chinese shit for a lifetime” and signed, to make the task of his colleague-masters easier, the monstrous compromise of 1946, which recognized Vietnam as both a “free state” and as “belonging to the Indochinese Federation of the French Union.” This compromise enabled France to reconquer part of the country and, at the same time the Stalinists lost their share of bourgeois power in France, to wage a war that lasted eight years, at the end of which the Vietminh gave up the South to the most retrograde strata and their American protectors and definitively won the North for itself. After systematically eliminating the remaining revolutionary elements (the last Trotskyist leader, Ta Tu Thau, was assassinated by 1946) the Vietminh bureaucracy imposed its totalitarian power on the peasantry and started the industrialization of the country within a state-capitalist framework. Improving the lot of the peasants, following their conquests during the long liberation struggle, was, in line with bureaucratic logic, subordinated to the interests of the rising state: the goal was to be greater productivity, with the state remaining the uncontested master of that production. The authoritarian implementation of agrarian reform gave rise in 1956 to violent insurrections and bloody repression (above all in Ho Chi Minh’s own native province). The peasants who had carried the bureaucracy to power were to be its first victims. For several years afterwards the bureaucracy tried to smother the memory of this “serious mistake” in an “orgy of self-criticism.”

But the same Geneva agreements enabled the Diem clique to set up, south of the 17th parallel, a bureaucratic, feudal and theocratic state in the service of the landowners and compradore bourgeoisie. Within a few years this state was to nullify, by a few suitable “agrarian reforms,” everything the peasantry had won. The peasants of the South, some of whom had never laid down their arms, were to fall back in the grip of oppression and superexploitation. This is the second Vietnam war. The mass of the insurgent peasants, taking up arms once more against their old enemies, also followed once again their old leaders. The National Liberation Front succeeded the Vietminh, inheriting both its qualities and its grave defects. By making itself the champion of national struggle and peasant war, the NLF immediately won over the countryside and made it the main base of armed resistance. Its successive victories over the official army provoked the increasingly massive intervention of the Americans, to the point of reducing the conflict to an open colonial war, with the Vietnamese pitted against an invading army. Its determination in the struggle, its clearly antifeudal program and its unitary perspectives remain the principal

qualities of the movement. But in no way does the NLF's struggle go beyond the classical framework of national liberation struggles. Its program remains based on a compromise among a vast coalition of classes, dominated by the overriding goal of wiping out the American aggression. It is no accident that it rejects the title "Vietcong" (i.e. Vietnamese communists) and insists on its national character. Its structures are those of a state-in-formation: in the zones under its control it already levies taxes and institutes compulsory military service.

These minimal qualities in the struggle and the social objectives that they express remain totally absent in the confrontation between Israel and the Arabs. The specific contradictions of Zionism and of splintered Arab society add to the general confusion.

Since its origins the Zionist movement has been the contrary of the revolutionary solution to what used to be called the "Jewish question." A direct product of European capitalism, it did not aim at the overthrow of a society that needed to persecute Jews, but at the creation of a Jewish national entity that would be protected from the anti-Semitic aberrations of decadent capitalism; it aimed not at the abolition of injustice but at its transfer. The original sin of Zionism is that it has always acted as if Palestine were a desert island. The revolutionary workers movement saw the answer to the Jewish question in proletarian community, that is, in the destruction of capitalism and "its religion, Judaism"; the emancipation of the Jews could not take place apart from the emancipation of humanity. Zionism started from the opposite hypothesis. As a matter of fact, the counterrevolutionary development of the last half century proved it right, but in the same way as the development of European capitalism proved right the reformist theses of Bernstein. The success of Zionism and its corollary, the creation of the state of Israel, is merely a miserable by-product of the triumph of world counterrevolution. To "socialism in a single country" came the echo "justice for a single people" and "equality in a single kibbutz." It was with Rothschild capital that the colonization of Palestine was organized and with European surplus-value that the first kibbutzim were set up. The Jews recreated for themselves all the fanaticism and segregation they had been victims of. Those who had suffered mere toleration in their society were to struggle to become in another country owners disposing of the right to tolerate others. The kibbutz was not a revolutionary supersession of Palestinian "feudalism," but a mutualist formula for the self-defense of Jewish worker-settlers against the capitalist exploitative tendencies of the Jewish Agency. Because it was the main Jewish owner of Palestine, the Zionist Organization defined itself as the sole representative of the superior interests of the "Jewish Nation." If it eventually allowed a certain degree of self-management, it is because it was sure that this would be based on the systematic rejection of the Arab peasant.

As for the Histadrut [the Israeli labor union], it was since its inception in 1920 subjected to the authority of world Zionism, that is, to the direct opposite of

workers' emancipation. Arab workers were statutorily excluded from it and its activity often consisted of forbidding Jewish businesses to employ them.

The development of the three-way struggle between the Arabs, the Zionists and the British was to be turned to the profit of the Zionists. Thanks to the active patronage of the Americans (since the end of World War II) and the blessing of Stalin (who saw Israel as the first "socialist" bastion in the Middle East, but also as a way to rid himself of some annoying Jews), it did not take long before Herzl's dream was realized and the Jewish state was arbitrarily proclaimed. The cooption of all the "progressive" forms of social organization and their integration within the Zionist ideal allowed even the most "revolutionary" to work in good conscience for the building of the bourgeois, militaristic, rabbinical state that modern Israel has become. The prolonged sleep of proletarian internationalism once more brought forth a monster. The basic injustice against the Palestinian Arabs came back to roost with the Jews themselves: the State of the Chosen People was nothing but one more class society in which all the anomalies of the old societies were recreated (hierarchical divisions, tribal opposition between the Ashkenazi and the Sephardim, racist persecution of the Arab minority, etc.). The labor union assumed its normal function of integrating workers into a capitalist economy, an economy of which it itself has become the main owner. It employs more workers than the state itself, and presently constitutes the bridgehead of the imperialist expansion of the new Israeli capitalism. ("Solel Boneh," an important building branch of the Histadrut, invested 180 million dollars in Africa and Asia from 1960 to 1966 and currently employs 12,000 African workers.)

And just as this state could never have seen the light of day without the direct intervention of Anglo-American imperialism and the massive aid of Jewish finance capital, it cannot balance its artificial economy today without the aid of the same forces that created it. (The annual balance of payments deficit is 600 million dollars, that is, more for each Israeli inhabitant than the average earnings of an Arab worker.) Since the settling of the first immigrant colonies, the Jews have formed a modern, European-style society alongside the economically and socially backward Arab society; the proclamation of the state of Israel only completed this process by the pure and simple expulsion of the backward elements. Israel forms by its very existence the bastion of Europe in the heart of an Afro-Asian world. Thus it has become doubly alien: to the Arab population, permanently reduced to the status of refugees or of colonized minority; and to the Jewish population, which had for a moment seen in it the earthly fulfillment of all egalitarian ideologies.

But this is due not only to the contradictions of Israeli society. From the outset this situation has been constantly maintained and aggravated by the surrounding Arab societies, which have so far proved incapable of any contribution toward an effective solution.

Throughout the British Mandate period the Arab resistance in Palestine was completely dominated by the propertied class: the Arab ruling classes and their British protectors. The Sykes-Picot Agreement put an end to the hopes of the Arab nationalism that was just beginning to develop, and subjected the skillfully carved up area to a foreign domination that is far from being over. The same strata that ensured the Ottoman Empire's domination over the Arab masses turned to the service of the British occupation and became accomplices of Zionist colonization (by the sale, at very inflated prices, of their land). The backwardness of Arab society did not yet allow for the emergence of new and more advanced leaderships, and every spontaneous popular upheaval ran into the same coopters: the "bourgeois-feudal" notables and their commodity: national unity.

The armed insurgence of 1936-1939 and the six-month general strike (the longest in history) were decided and carried out in spite of opposition from the leadership of all the "nationalist" parties. They were widespread and spontaneously organized; this forced the ruling class to join them so as to take over the leadership of the movement. But this was in order to put a check on it, to lead it to the conference table and to reactionary compromises. Only the victory of the fullest, most radical implications of that uprising could have destroyed both the British Mandate and the Zionist goal of setting up a Jewish state. Its failure heralded the disasters to come and ultimately the defeat of 1948.

That latter defeat signaled the end of the "bourgeois-feudality" as the leading class of the Arab movement. It was the opportunity for the petty bourgeoisie to come to power and constitute, with the officers of the defeated army, the driving force of the present movement. Its program was simple: unity, a vaguely socialist ideology, and the liberation of Palestine (the Return). The Tripartite aggression of 1956 provided it with the best opportunity to consolidate itself as a dominant class and to find a leader-program in the person of Nasser, who was presented for the collective admiration of the completely dispossessed Arab masses. He was their religion and their opium. But the new exploiting class had its own interests and goals. The slogans used by the bureaucratic military regime of Egypt to win popular support were already bad in themselves; in addition, the regime was incapable of carrying them out. Arab unity and the destruction of Israel (invoked successively as the liquidation of the usurper state or as the pure and simple driving of the Israeli population into the sea) were the core of this propaganda-ideology.

What ushered in the decline of the Arab petty bourgeoisie and its bureaucratic power was first of all its own internal contradictions and the superficiality of its options (Nasser, the Baath Party, Kassem and the so-called "Communist" parties have never ceased fighting each other and compromising and allying with the most dubious forces).

Twenty years after the first Palestinian war, this new stratum has just demonstrated its total inability to resolve the Palestinian problem. It has lived by delirious bluff, for it was only able to survive by permanently raising the specter of Israel, being utterly incapable of effecting any radical solution whatsoever to the innumerable internal problems. The Palestinian problem remains the key to the Arab power struggles. It is everyone's central reference point and all conflicts hinge on it. It is the basis of the objective solidarity of all the Arab regimes. It produces the "Holy Alliance" between Nasser and Hussein, Faisal and Boumédiène, Aref and the Baath.

The latest war has dissipated all these illusions. The total rigidity of "Arab ideology" was pulverized on contact with an effective reality that was just as hard but also permanent. Those who spoke of waging a war neither wanted it nor prepared for it, while those who spoke only of defending themselves actually prepared the offensive. Each of the two camps followed their respective propensities: the Arab bureaucracy that for lying and demagoguery, the masters of Israel that for imperialist expansion. The most important lesson of the Six Day War is a negative one: it has revealed all the secret weaknesses and defects of what was presented as the "Arab Revolution." The "powerful" military bureaucracy of Egypt crumbled to dust in two days, disclosing all at once the secret reality of its achievements: the fact that the axis around which all the socioeconomic transformations took place — the Army — has remained fundamentally the same. On one hand, it claimed to be changing everything in Egypt (and even in the Arab world as a whole); on the other, it did everything to avoid any transformation in itself, in its values or its habits. Nasser's Egypt is still dominated by pre-Nasser forces; its bureaucracy is an agglomeration without coherence or class consciousness, united only by exploitation and the division of the social surplus-value.

As for the politico-military machine that governs Baathist Syria, it is entrenching itself more and more in the extremism of its ideology. But its phraseology takes in no one anymore (except Pablo!). Everyone knows that it did not fight and that it gave up the front without resistance because it preferred to keep its best troops in Damascus for its own defense. Those who consumed 65% of the Syrian budget to defend the territory have definitively unmasked their own cynical lies. Finally, the war has shown, to those who still needed showing, that a Holy Alliance with someone like Hussein can only lead to disaster. The Arab Legion [Jordanian Army] withdrew on the first day and the Palestinian population, which has suffered for twenty years under its police terror, found itself unarmed and unorganized in the face of the Israeli occupation forces. Since 1948 the Hashemite throne had shared the colonization of the Palestinians with the Zionist state. By deserting the West Bank it gave the Israelis the police files on all the Palestinian revolutionary elements. But the Palestinians have always known that there was no great difference between the two colonizations, and the blatancy of the new occupation at least makes the terrain of resistance clearer.

As for Israel, it has become everything that the Arabs had accused it of before the war: an imperialist state behaving like the most classic occupation forces (police terror, dynamiting of houses, permanent martial law, etc.). Internally a collective hysteria, led by the rabbis, is developing around "Israel's inalienable right to its Biblical borders." The war put a stop to the whole movement of internal struggles generated by the contradictions of this artificial society (in 1966 there were several dozen riots, and there were no fewer than 277 strikes in 1965 alone) and provoked unanimous support for the objectives of the ruling class and its most extremist ideology. It also served to shore up all the Arab regimes not involved in the armed struggle. Boumédiène could thus, from 3000 miles away, enter the chorus of political braggadocio and have his name applauded by the Algerian crowd before which he had not even dared to appear the day before, and finally obtain the support of a totally Stalinized ORP ("for his anti-imperialist policy"). Faisal, for a few million dollars, obtained Egypt's withdrawal from North Yemen and the strengthening of his throne. Etc., etc.

As always, war, when not civil, only freezes the process of social revolution. In North Vietnam it has brought about the peasantry's support, never before given, for the bureaucracy that exploits it. In Israel it has killed off for a long time any opposition to Zionism; and in the Arab countries it is reinforcing — temporarily — the most reactionary strata. In no way can revolutionary currents find anything there with which to identify. Their task is at the other pole of the present movement since it must be its absolute negation.

It is obviously impossible at present to seek a revolutionary solution to the Vietnam war. It is first of all necessary to put an end to the American aggression in order to allow the real social struggle in Vietnam to develop in a natural way; i.e. to allow the Vietnamese workers and peasants to rediscover their enemies at home: the bureaucracy of the North and the propertied and ruling strata of the South. Once the Americans withdraw, the Stalinist bureaucracy will seize control of the whole country — there's no getting around this. Because the invaders cannot indefinitely sustain their aggression; ever since Talleyrand it has been a commonplace that one can do anything with a bayonet except sit on it. The point is not to give unconditional (or even conditional) support to the Vietcong, but to struggle consistently and uncompromisingly against American imperialism. The most effective role is presently being played by those American revolutionaries who are advocating and practicing insubordination and draft resistance on a very large scale (compared to which the resistance to the Algerian war in France was child's play). The Vietnam war is rooted in America and it is from there that it must be rooted out.

Unlike the American war, the Palestinian question has no immediately evident solution. No short-term solution is feasible. The Arab regimes can only crumble under the weight of their contradictions and Israel will be more and more the

prisoner of its colonial logic. All the compromises that the great powers try to piece together are bound to be counterrevolutionary in one way or another. The hybrid status quo — neither peace nor war — will probably prevail for a long period, during which the Arab regimes will meet with the same fate as their predecessors of 1948 (probably at first to the profit of the openly reactionary forces). Arab society, which has produced all sorts of dominant classes caricaturing all the classes of history, must now produce the forces that will bring about its total subversion. The so-called national bourgeoisie and the Arab bureaucracy have inherited all the defects of those two classes without ever having known the historical accomplishments those classes achieved in other societies. The future Arab revolutionary forces that will arise from the ruins of the June 1967 defeat must know that they have nothing in common with any existing Arab regime and nothing to respect among the established powers that dominate the present world. They will find their model in themselves and in the repressed experiences of revolutionary history. The Palestinian question is too serious to be left to the states, that is, to the colonels. It is too close to the two basic questions of modern revolution — internationalism and the state — for any existing force to be able to provide an adequate solution. Only an Arab revolutionary movement that is resolutely internationalist and anti-state can both dissolve the state of Israel and have on its side that state's exploited masses. And only through the same process will it be able to dissolve all the existing Arab states and create Arab unity through the power of the Councils.

*Translated by Ken Knabb*

*Source:*

*Internationale Situationniste #11, October 1967*

*Url: [cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/localwars.html](http://cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/localwars.html)*

## **Anti-Semitism and the Beirut Pogrom**

### **Fredy Pearlman**

*(1983)*

Escape from death in a gas chamber or a Pogrom, or incarceration in a concentration camp, may give a thoughtful and capable writer, Solzhenitsyn for example, profound insights into many of the central elements of contemporary existence, but such an experience does not, in itself, make Solzhenitsyn a thinker, a writer, or even a critic of concentration camps; it does not, in itself, confer any special powers. In another person the experience might lie dormant as a potentiality, or remain forever meaningless, or it might contribute to making the person an ogre. In short, the experience is an indelible part of the individual's past but it does not determine his future; the individual is free to choose his future; he is even free to choose to abolish his freedom, in which case he chooses in bad faith and is a Salaud (J.P. Sartre's precise philosophical term for a person who makes such a choice [The usual English translation is 'Bastard']).

My observations are borrowed from Sartre; I'd like to apply them, not to Solzhenitsyn, but to myself, as a specific individual, and to the American cheerleaders rooting for the State of Israel, as a specific choice.

\* \* \*

I was one of three small children removed by our elders from a Central European country a month before the Nazis invaded the country and began rounding up Jews. Only part of my extended family left; the rest remained and were all rounded up; of these, all my cousins, aunts, and grandparents died in Nazi concentration camps or gas chambers except two uncles, whom I'll mention later.

A month more and I, too, would have been one of those who actually underwent the rationally-planned scientific extermination of human beings, the central experience of so many people in an age of highly developed science and productive forces, but I wouldn't have been able to write about it.

I was one of those who escaped. I spent my childhood among Quechua-speaking people of the Andean highlands, but I didn't learn to speak Quechua and I didn't ask myself why; I spoke to a Quechua in a language foreign to both of us, the Conquistador's language. I wasn't aware of myself as a refugee nor of the Quechuas as refugees in their own land; I knew no more about the terrors — the



expropriations, persecutions and pogroms, the annihilation of an ancient culture — experienced by their ancestors than I knew about the terrors experienced by mine.

To me the Quechuas were generous hospitable, guileless, and I thought more of an aunt who respected and liked them than of a relative who cheated them and was contemptuous of them and called them dirty and primitive.

My relative's cheating was my first contact with the double standard, the fleeing of outsiders to enrich insiders, the moral adage that said: It's all right if it's We who do it.

My relative's contempt was my first experience with racism, which gave this relative an affinity with the Pogromists she had fled from; her narrow escape from them did not make her a critic of Pogromists; the experience probably contributed nothing to her personality, not even her identification with the Conquistador, since this was shared by Europeans who did not share my relative's experience of narrowly escaping from a concentration camp. Oppressed European peasants had identified with Conquistadores who carried a more vicious oppression to non-Europeans already before my relative's experience.

My relative did make use of her experience years later, when she chose to be a rooter for the State of Israel, at which time she did not renounce her contempt toward the Quechuas; on the contrary, she then applied her contempt toward people in other parts of the world, people she had never met or been among. But I wasn't concerned with the character of her choice at the time; I was more concerned with the chocolates she brought me.

\* \* \*

In my teens I was brought to America, which was a synonym for New York even to people already in America among the Quechuas; it was a synonym for much else, as I was very slowly to learn.

Shortly after my arrival in America, the state power of the Central European country of my origin was seized by a well-organized gang of egalitarians who thought they could bring about universal emancipation by occupying State offices and becoming policemen, and the new State of Israel fought its first successful war and turned an indigenous population of Semites into internal refugees like the Quechuas and exiled refugees like the Central European Jews. I should have wondered why the Semitic refugees and the European refugees who claimed to be Semitic, two peoples with so much in common, did not make common cause against common oppressors, but I was far too occupied trying to find my way in America.

From an elementary school friend who was considered a hooligan by my parents, and also from my parents themselves, I slowly learned that America was the place where anyone would want to be, something like Paradise, but a Paradise that remained out of reach even after one entered America. America was a land of clerks and factory workers, but neither clerical nor factory work were America. My hooligan friend summarized it all very simply: there were suckers and hustlers, and you had to be dumb to become a sucker. My parents were less explicit; they said: Study hard. The implied motivation was: God forbid you should become a clerk or factory worker! Become something other: a professional or a manager. At that time I didn't know these other callings were also America's, that with every rung reached, Paradise remained as unreachable as before. I didn't know that the professional's or even the clerk's or worker's satisfaction came, not from the fullness of his own life, but from the rejection of his own life, from identification with the great process taking place outside him, the process of unfettered industrial destruction. The results of this process could be watched in movies or newspapers, though not yet on Television, which would soon bring the process into everyone home; the satisfaction was that of the voyeur, the peeper. At that time I didn't know that this process was the most concrete synonym for America.

Once in America, I had no use for my experience of narrowly escaping a Nazi concentration camp; the experience couldn't help me climb the ladder toward Paradise and might even hinder me; my hurried climb might have been slowed considerably or even stopped altogether if I had tried to empathize with the condition of the labor camp inmate I might have become, for I would have realized what it was that made the prospect of factory work so fearsome: it differed from the other condition in that there were no gas chambers and in that the factory worker spent only his weekdays inside.

I wasn't alone in having no use for my Central European experience. My relatives had no use for it either. During that decade I met one of my two uncles who had actually lived through a Nazi concentration camp. Once in America, even this uncle had no use for his experience; he wanted nothing more than to forget the Pogrom and everything associated with it; he wanted only to climb the rungs of America; he wanted to look and sound and act no differently from other Americans. My parents had exactly the same attitude. I was told that my other uncle had survived the camps and gone to Israel, only to be hit by a car soon after his arrival.

The State of Israel was not interesting to me during that decade, although I heard talk of it. My relatives spoke with a certain pride of the existence of a State with Jewish policemen, a Jewish army, Jewish judges and factory managers, in short a State totally unlike Nazi Germany and just like America, my relatives, whatever their personal situations, identified with the Jewish policemen and not with the policed, with the factory owners and not the Jewish workers, with the Jewish hustlers and not the suckers, an identification which was understandable among

people who wanted to forget their close encounter with labor camps. But none of them wanted to go there; they were already in America.

My relatives gave grudgingly to the Zionist cause and were baffled — all except my racist relative — by the unqualified enthusiasm of second to nth generation Americans for a distant State with Jewish policemen and teachers and managers, since these people were already policemen and teachers and managers in America, my racist relative understood what the enthusiasm was based on: racial solidarity. But I wasn't aware of this at the time. I was not an over-bright American high-schooler and I thought racial solidarity was something confined to Nazis, Afrikaaners and American Southerners.

I was starting to be familiar with the traits of the Nazis who'd almost captured me: the racism that reduced human beings to their genealogical connections over five or six generations, the crusading nationalism that considered the rest of humanity an obstacle, the Gleichschaltung that cut off the individuals freedom to choose, the technological efficiency that made small humans mere fodder for great machines, the bully militarism that pitted walls of tanks against a cavalry and exacted a hundred times the losses it sustained, the official paranoia that pictured the enemy, poorly armed townspeople and villagers, as a nearly omnipotent conspiracy of cosmic scope. But I didn't see that these traits had anything to do with America or Israel.

\* \* \*

It was only during my next decade, as in American college student with a mild interest in history and philosophy, that I began to acquire a smattering of knowledge about Israel and Zionism, not because I was particularly interested in these subjects but because they were included in my readings. I was neither hostile nor friendly; I was indifferent; I still had no use for my experience as a refugee.

But I didn't remain indifferent to Israel or Zionism. This was the decade of Israel's spectacular capture and trial of the Good German Eichmann, and of Israel's spectacular invasion of large parts of Egypt, Syria and Jordan in a six-day Blitzkrieg, a decade when Israel was news for everyone, not just for refugees.

I didn't have any unconventional thoughts about the obedient Eichmann except the thought that he couldn't be so exceptional since I had already met people like him in America. But some of my readings did make me start wondering about my Zionist relative's racism.

I learned that people like the ancient Hebrews, Akkadians, Arabs, Phoenicians and Ethiopians had all come from the land of Shem (the Arabian Peninsula) and had all spoken the language of Shem, which was what made them Shemites

or Semites. I learned that the Jewish religion had originated among Semites in the ancient Levantine State Judah, the Christian religion among Semites in the ancient Levantine towns Nazareth and Jerusalem, the Mohammedan religion among Semites in the ancient Arabian towns Mecca and Medina, and that for the past 1300 years the region called Palestine had been a sacred place to the Islamic Semites who lived there and in surrounding regions.

I also learned that the religions of European and American Jews, like the religions of European and American Christians, had been elaborated, during almost two millennia, by Europeans and more recently by Americans.

If Europeans and American Jews were Semites in terms of their religion, then European and American Christians were also Semites, a notion that was generally considered absurd.

If Jews were Semites in terms of the language of their Sacred Book, then all European and American Christians were Greeks or Italians, a notion almost as patently absurd.

I started to suspect that my Zionist relative's only connection to the Zion in the Levant was a genealogical connection traced, not over six, but over more than sixty generations. But I had come to consider such racial reckoning a peculiarity of Nazis, Afrikaaners and American Southerners.

I was uneasy. I thought surely there was more to it than that; surely those who claimed to descend from the victims of all that racism were not carriers of a racism ten times more thorough.

I knew little of the Zionist Movement, but enough to start being repelled. I knew the Movement had originally had two wings, one of which, the Socialist one, I could understand because I was starting to empathize with victims of oppression, not from insights I gained from my own experience but from books equally accessible to others; the other wing of Zionism was incomprehensible to me.

The egalitarian or Left Zionists, as I then understood them, did not want to be assimilated into the European states that persecuted them, some because they didn't think they ever could be, others because they were repelled by industrializing Europe and America. The Messiah, their Movement, would deliver Israel from exile and guide her to Zion, to something altogether different, to a Paradise without suckers or hustlers. Some of them, even more metaphorically, hoped the Messiah would deliver the oppressed from their oppressors, if not everywhere, then at least in a millennial egalitarian Utopia located in a province of the Ottoman Empire, and they were ready to join with the Islamic residents of Zion against Ottoman, Levantine and British oppressors. They shared this dream

with Christian millenarians who had been trying for more than a millennium to found Zion in one or another province of Europe; both had the same roots, but I suspected the left Zionists had inherited their millenarianism from the Christians. The egalitarian Zionists were arrogant in thinking the Islamic residents of Zion would embrace European leftists as liberators, and they were as naive as the egalitarians who had seized state power in the country of my birth, thinking the millennium would begin as soon as they occupied State offices and became policemen. But as far as I could see, they weren't racists.

The other Zionists, the Right, who by the time I reached college had all but supplanted the Left, at least in America, were explicit racists and assimilationists; they wanted a State dominated by a Race ever so thinly disguised as a religion, a State that would not be something altogether different, but exactly the same as America and the other states in the Family of Nations. I couldn't understand this, for it seemed to me that these Zionists, who included statist, industrializers and technocrats, were not only racists but also Conversos.

Earlier Conversos were Jews in fifteenth century Spain who, to avoid persecution, discovered that the long-awaited Jewish Messiah had already arrived, a millennium and a half earlier, in the person of Jewish prophet Jesse, the Crucified. Some of these Conversos then joined the Inquisition and persecuted Jews who had not made this discovery.

The modern Conversos hadn't become Catholics; Catholicism was not the dominant creed in the twentieth century; Science and Technology were. I thought Jesse had at least affirmed, if only as relics, some of the traits of the ancient human community, whereas Science and Technology affirmed nothing human; they destroyed culture as well as nature as well as human community. It seemed sad that the long-preserved and carefully-guarded specificities of a cultural minority that had refused to be absorbed were to shatter on the discovery that the technocratic State was the Messiah and the Industrial Process the long-awaited millennium. This made the whole trajectory meaningless. The dream of these racist Conversos was repulsive to me.

\* \* \*

It wasn't until the following decade, when I was over thirty, that my nearness to the Nazi Pogrom began to be meaningful to me. This transvaluation of my early experience happened suddenly, and was caused by something like a chance encounter, an encounter which, also by chance, included an odd reference to the State of Israel.

This was the decade when America waged its war of extermination against a people and an ancient culture of the Far East.

It happened that I was visiting my Americanized relatives at the same time that my Andean aunt was with them for the first time since their separation. This was the aunt who had respected the Quechua-speaking people, although not enough to learn their language, and had stayed among them when the others left.

The conversation among the relatives turned to pious reflections about the uncle who had gone to Israel and been killed by a car after having survived the Nazi concentration camps.

My Andean aunt couldn't believe what she heard. She asked her relatives if they had all gone crazy. The story about the car accident had been told to the children so often that the adults had come to believe it.

That man wasn't killed in an accident, she shouted. He committed suicide. He had survived the concentration camps because he had been a technician employed in applying chemical science to the operation of the gas chambers. He had then made the mistake of emigrating to Israel, where his collaboration had been made public knowledge. He probably couldn't face the accusing eyes; maybe he feared retaliation.

My first response to this revelation was revulsion against a human being who could be so morally degraded as to gas his own kin and fellow-captives. But the more I thought about him, the more I had to admit there had at least been a shred of moral integrity in his final self-destructive act; that act didn't make him a moral paradigm, but it contrasted sharply with the acts of people who lacked even that shred of moral integrity, people who were returning from the Far East and affirming their deeds, actually boasting of the unnatural atrocities they had inflicted on their fellow human beings.

And I asked myself who the others really were, the pure ones who had exposed and judged Eichmann the obedient German.

I didn't know anything about the people in Israel and had never met an Israeli, but I was increasingly aware of the loud American cheerleaders for the State of Israel, and not the Left Zionists among them but the others, my racist relative's friends. The Leftists had all but vanished in a dark sectarian Limbo no outsider could penetrate, a Limbo that stank almost as strongly as the one that held Messiah Lenin's and Stalin's heirs, with sects twisted out of shape by the existence of the State of Israel, ranging from those who claimed their seizure of power was all that was needed to turn the State of Israel into an egalitarian community, to those who claimed the existing State of Israel was already the egalitarian community.

But the Left Zionists shouted only at each other.

It was the others who made all the din, who shouted at everyone else. And these were explicit about what they admired in the State of Israel; they affirmed it, they boasted of it, and it had nothing to do with the ailing wing's egalitarianism. What they admired was:

- the crusading nationalism that considered the humanity surrounding it as nothing but obstacles to its flowering;
- the industrial potency of the Race that had succeeded in denaturing the desert and making it bloom;
- the efficiency of the human beings remade into operators of big tanks and incredibly accurate jets;
- the technological sophistication of the instruments of death themselves, infinitely superior to that of the Nazis;
- the spectacularly enterprising secret police whose prowess was surely not inferior, for such a small State, to that of the CIA, KGB or Gestapo;
- the bully militarism that pitted the latest inventions of life-killing Science against a motley collection of weapons, and exacted a hundred or a thousand times the losses it sustained.

This last boast, which expressed the morality of exacting hundreds of eyes for an eye and thousands of teeth for a tooth, seemed particularly repulsive in the mouth of a cheerleader for a theocratic State where an ethical elite claimed to provide inspired guidance on moral questions; but this will surprise only those uninformed about history's theocracies.

During this decade, the racism, the anti-Semitism, to be more precise, of these admirers of the State of Israel became virulent. Zion's expropriated Semites were no longer considered human beings; they were Backward Arabs; only those among them who had been turned into good assimilated Israelis could be called human; the others were dirty Primitives. And Primitives, in the definition given a few centuries earlier by Conquistadores, not only had no right to resist humiliation, expropriation and desolation; Primitives had no right to exist; they only squandered nature's resources, they didn't know what to do with God's precious gifts! Only God's chosen knew how to use the Great Father's gifts, and they knew exactly what to do with them.

Yet even while dwelling on the backwardness of the expropriated, the cheerleaders became paranoid and pictured the pathetic resistance of the expropriated as a vast conspiracy of untold power and nearly cosmic scope.

Sartre's expression *mauvaise foi* [The usual English translation is 'Bad faith.'] is too weak to characterize the posture chosen by these people, but it's not my concern to coin another expression.

\* \* \*

I survived into my forties, thanks partly to the fact that America still hadn't exterminated itself and the rest of humanity with the high-powered incinerants and poisons with which it was mining [Mining in the sense of setting explosive mines, making earth lethal], or rather undermining, its own as well as other people's lands.

This decade combined what I had earlier thought uncombinable; it combined a barrage of revelations about the Holocaust, in the form of movies, plays, books and articles, with the Pogrom, perpetrated on Levantine Semites in Beirut by the State of Israel. [Written in mid-August, this statement referred to Israel's invasion and not yet to the Pogrom in the strict 19th century sense perpetrated in September. (Sept 16–18, 1982, to be exact)]

The revelations touched the Holocaust in Vietnam only marginally; maybe two generations have to pass before such filth is hung out to air. The revelations were almost all about the Holocaust I had narrowly escaped as a child.

People who don't understand human freedom might think the terrible revelations could have only one effect, they could only turn people against the perpetrators of such atrocities, they could only make people empathize with the victims, they could only contribute to a resolve to abolish the very possibility of a repeat of such dehumanizing persecution and cold-blooded murder. But, for better or worse, such experiences, whether personally lived or learned from revelations, are nothing but the field over which human freedom soars like a bird of prey. The revelations about the forty-year-old Pogrom have even been turning up as justifications for a present-day Pogrom.

Pogrom is a Russian word that used to refer, in past years that now seem almost benign, to a riot of cudgel-armed men against poorly armed villagers with different cultural traits; the more heavily the State was involved in the riot, the more heinous was the Pogrom. The overwhelmingly stronger attackers projected their own character as bullies onto their weaker victims, convincing themselves that their victims were rich, powerful, well-armed and allied with the Devil. The attackers also projected their own violence onto their victims, constructing stories of the victims' brutality out of details taken from their own repertory of deeds. In nineteenth century Russia, a Pogrom was considered particularly violent if fifty people were killed.



The statistics underwent a complete metamorphosis in the twentieth century, when the State became the main rioter. The statistics of modern German and Russian and Turkish state-run Pogroms are known; the statistics from Vietnam and Beirut are not public yet.

Beirut and its inhabitants had already been made desolate by the presence of the violent resistance movement of the expropriated refugees ousted from Zion; if the casualties of those clashes were added to the number killed by the State of Israel's direct involvement in the riot — but I'll stop this; I don't want to play numbers games.

The trick of declaring war against the armed resistance and then attacking the resisters' unarmed kin as well as the surrounding population with the most gruesome products of Death-Science — this trick is not new. American Pioneers were pioneers in this too; they made it standard practice to declare war on indigenous warriors and then to murder and burn villages with only women and children in them. This is already modern war, what we know as war against civilian populations; it has also been called, more candidly, mass murder or genocide.

Maybe I shouldn't be surprised that the perpetrators of a Pogrom portray themselves as the victims, in the present case as victims of the Holocaust.

Herman Melville noticed over a century ago, in his analysis of the metaphysics of Indian-hating, that those who made a full-time profession of hunting and murdering indigenous people of this continent always made themselves appear, even in their own eyes, as the victims of manhunts.

The use the Nazis made of the International Jewish Conspiracy is better known: during all the years of atrocities defying belief, the Nazis considered themselves the victimized.

It's as if the experience of being a victim gave exemption from human solidarity, as if it gave special powers, as if it gave a license to kill.

Maybe I shouldn't be surprised, but I can't keep myself from being angry, because such a posture is the posture of a Salaud, the posture of one who denies human freedom, who denies that he chooses himself as killer. The experience, whether personally lived or learned from revelations, explains and determines nothing; it is nothing but a phony alibi.

Melville analyzed the moral integrity of the Indian-hater.

I'm talking about modern Pogromists, and more narrowly about cheerleaders for Pogroms. I'm talking about people who haven't personally killed fifty or five or even one human being.

I'm talking about America, where the quest is to immerse oneself in Paradise while avoiding any contact with its dirty work, where only a minority is still involved in the personal doing of the dirty work, where the vast majority are full-time voyeurs, peepers, professors, call them what you will.

Among the voyeurs, I'm concentrating on the voyeurs of Holocausts and Pogroms. I have to keep referring to what's on the screen because that's what's being watched. But my concern is with the watcher, with one who chooses himself a voyeur, specifically a voyeur of Holocausts, a cheerleader for death squads.

Mention the words Beirut and Pogrom in the same sentence to such a one, and he'll vomit all the morality inside him: he won't vomit much.

The likeliest response you'll get is a moronic chuckle and a cynical laugh.

I'm reminded of my uncle, the one who wasn't hit by a car, who at least had the shred of moral integrity to see what others saw and reject it, and I contrast my uncle with this person who either sees nothing at all, or who cynically affirms what he sees, cynically accepts himself.

If he's an intellectual, a professor, he'll respond with the exact equivalent of the moronic grin or the cynical laugh but with words; he'll bombard you with sophistries, half truths and outright lies which are perfectly transparent to him even as he utters them.

This is not an airy, wide-eyed idealist but a gross, down-to-earth property-oriented materialist with no illusions about what constitutes expropriation of what he calls Real Estate. Yet this real estate man will start telling you that the Levantine Zion is a Jewish Land and he'll point to a two-thousand year old Title.

He calls Hitler a madman for having claimed the Sudetenland was a German land because he totally rejects the rules that would have made it a German land, international peace treaties are included in his rules, violent expropriations are not. Yet suddenly he pulls out a set of rules which, if he really accepted them, would pulverize the entire edifice of Real Property. If he really accepted such rules, he would be selling plots in Gdansk to Kashubians returning from exile, tracts in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota to Ojibwas reappropriating their homeland, estates in Iran, Iraq and much of Turkey to homeward bound Indian Parsees, and he would even have to lease parts of Zion itself to Chinese descendants of Nestorian Christians, and to many others besides.

Such arguments have more affinity with the moronic chuckle than with the cynical laugh.

The cynical laugh translated into words would say: We (they always say We) We conquered the Primitives, expropriated them and ousted them; the expropriated are still resisting, and in the meantime We have acquired two generations who have no other home but Zion; being Realists, we know we can end the resistance once and for all by exterminating the expropriated,

Such cynicism without a shred of moral integrity might be realistic, but it might also turn out to be what C.W. Mills called Crackpot Realism, because the resistance might survive and spread and it might go on as long as the Irish.

There's yet another response, the response of the cudgel-armed Defense League bully who thinks the absence of a brown shirt makes him unrecognizable.

He clenches his fist or tightens his grip on his club and shouts: Traitor!

This response is the most ominous, for it claims that We are a club to which all are welcome, but the membership of some is mandatory.

In this usage, Traitor does not mean anti-Semite, since it is aimed at people who empathize with the plight of the current Semites. Traitor does not mean Pogromist, since it is aimed at people who still empathize with the victims of the Pogrom. This term is one of the few components of the vocabulary of a racist through the ages; it means: Traitor to the Race.

And here I reach the single element which the new anti-Semite had not yet shared with the old anti-Semite: Gleichschaltung, the totalitarian 'synchronization' of all political activity and expression. The entire Race must march in step, to the same drumbeat; all are to obey.

The uniqueness of the condemned Eichmann becomes reduced to a difference in holiday ritual.

It seems to me that such goons are not preservers of the traditions of a persecuted culture. They're Conversos, but not to the Catholicism of Fernando y Isabela; they're Conversos to the political practice of the Fuehrer.

The long exile is over; the persecuted refugee at long last returns to Zion, but so badly scarred he's unrecognizable, he has completely lost his self; he returns as anti-Semite, as Pogromist, as mass murderer; the ages of exile and suffering are still included in his makeup, but only as self-justifications, and as a repertory of horrors to impose on Primitives and even on Earth herself.

I think I've now shown that the experience of the Holocaust, whether lived or peeped, does not in itself make an individual a critic of Pogroms, and also that it

does not confer special powers or give anyone a license to kill or make someone a mass murderer.

But I haven't even touched the large question that is raised by all this: Can I begin to explain why someone chooses himself a mass murderer?

I think I can begin to answer. At the risk of plagiarizing Sartre's portrait of the old anti-Semite, I can at least try to point to one or two of the elements in the field of choice of the new anti-Semite.

I could start by noticing that the new anti-Semite is not really so different from any other TV-watcher, and that TV-watching is somewhere near the core of the choice (I include newspapers and movies under the abbreviation for 'tell-a-vision'). What the watcher sees on the screen are some of the 'interesting' deeds, sifted and censored, of the monstrous ensemble in which he plays a trivial but daily role. The central but not often televised activity of this vast ensemble is industrial and clerical labor, forced labor, or just simply labor, the *Arbeit* which *macht frei*. ['Work Liberates': a slogan posted at the entrance to Nazi slave labor camps.]

Solzhenitsyn, in his multi-volumed *Gulag Archipelago*, gave a profound analysis of what such *Arbeit* does to a human individual's outer and inner life; a comparably profound analysis has yet to be made of the administration that 'synchronizes' the activity, the training institutions that produce the Eichmanns and Chemists who apply rational means to the perpetration of the irrational ends of their superiors.

I can't summarize Solzhenitsyn's findings; his books have to be read. In a brief space I can only say that the part of life spent in *Arbeit*, the triviality of existence in a commodity market as seller or customer, worker or client, leaves an individual without kinship or community or meaning; it dehumanizes him, evacuates him; it leaves nothing inside but the trivia that make up his outside. He no longer has the centrality, the significance, the self-powers given to all their members by ancient communities that no longer exist. He doesn't even have the phony centrality given by religions which preserved a memory of the ancient qualities while reconciling people to worlds where those qualities were absent. Even the religions have been evacuated, pared down to empty rituals whose meaning has long been lost.

The gap is always there; it's like hunger: it hurts. Yet nothing seems to fill it.

Ah, but there's something that does fill it or at least seems to; it may be sawdust and not grated cheese, but it gives the stomach the illusion that it's been fed; it may be a total abdication of self-powers, a self-annihilation, but it creates the illusion of self-fulfillment, of reappropriation of the lost self-powers.

This something is the Told Vision which can be watched on off hours, and preferably all the time.

By choosing himself a Voyeur, the individual can watch everything he no longer is. All the self-powers he no longer has, It has, And It has even more powers; It has powers no individual ever had; It has the power to turn deserts into forests and forests into deserts; It has the power to annihilate peoples and cultures who have survived since the beginning of time and to leave no trace that they ever existed; It even has the power to resuscitate the vanished peoples and cultures and endow them with eternal life in the conditioned air of museums.

In case the reader hasn't already guessed, It is the technological ensemble, the industrial process, the Messiah called Progress. It is America.

The individual deprived of meaning chooses to take the final leap into meaninglessness by identifying with the very process that deprives him. He becomes We the exploited identifying with the exploiter. Henceforth his powers are Our powers, the powers of the ensemble, the powers of the alliance of workers with their own bosses known as the Developed Nation. The powerless individual becomes an essential switch in the all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing God, the central computer; he becomes one with the machine.

His immersion becomes an orgy during the crusades against those who are still outside the machine: untouched trees, wolves, Primitives.

During such crusades he becomes one of the last Pioneers; he joins hands across the centuries with the Conquistadores of the southern part and the Pioneers of the northern part of this double continent; he joins hands with Indian-haters and Discoverers and Crusaders; he feels America running in his veins at last, the America that was already brewing in the cauldrons of European Alchemists long before Colon (the Converso) reached the Caribs, Raleigh the Algonquians or Cartier the Iroquoians; he gives the coup de grace to his remaining humanity by identifying with the process exterminating culture, nature and humanity.

If I went on I would probably come to results already found by W. Reich in his study of the mass psychology of Fascism. It galls me that a new Fascism should choose to use the experience of the victims of the earlier Fascism among its justifications.

*Source:*

*Fifth Estate, issue number 310 (Vol. 17 No. 3 1983)*

*Url: [theanarchistlibrary.org/library/fredy-perlman-anti-semitism-and-the-beirut-pogrom](http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/fredy-perlman-anti-semitism-and-the-beirut-pogrom)*

## **Anarchists in Israel**

### **Sam Dolgoff**

*(1986)*

In the mid-1970s Esther and I embarked on a two-week tour of Israel, not merely to see the sights, but to contact our anarchist comrades publishing their organ *Problemen*. We also wanted to contact Israeli settlers whom we already knew at home. We felt that the trip was all the more necessary because altogether too many comrades did not even know that there were a few anarchist groups in Israel, much less an anarchist publication there.

We immediately contacted the editor of *Problemen*, Joseph Ludin, a prolific writer, himself an anarchist refugee from Poland. Ludin and the comrades were most hospitable. "You are most welcome to stay with us and save hotel bills." We spent some time at Ludin's home in Tel-Aviv where we were informed about the situation in Israel and what our comrades were trying to do. A little later we were escorted to the anarchist center in Tel-Aviv, a good-sized hall with an impressive library of Hebrew, Yiddish and a sprinkling of Russian and Polish literature, a well-equipped kitchen and other conveniences.

It was at the center where we had the pleasure of meeting Dina, the widow of the unforgettable Polish anarchist Eliesor Hirshauge. Dina lived on the premises and took care of the hall. She presented us with an autographed copy of Eliesor's work, *The Anarchist Movement in Poland: Memoirs and Comments*. The little book is really a most important work, a primary source which should be translated into English and other idioms. Dina passed away a few years ago. The center was closed and the books donated to libraries.

While in Israel we were anxious to meet F. Hochhauser Armony, listed in the directory as a "teacher of languages." I greatly enjoyed reading his dispatches and articles in the Spanish anarchist periodicals *Solidaridad Obrera*, *CNT* and other anarchist journals. Armony was a talented and prolific writer who, before coming to Israel, lived in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and other countries. He and his comrade, Simcha Hamburg, now co-editor of *Problemen*, spent a few hours with us at our hotel in Haifa. Armony was by no means an uncritical Israeli patriot as were so many settlers, but he deeply deplored the attitudes of many anarchists who, while rightfully condemning Israeli nationalism and chauvinism, ignored the atrocities committed by the Arab tyrants against their own subjects. We mourned his death a few years ago.

We noted considerable interest in anarchism in student circles manifested in conversations with students we met at the universities in Haifa and in Tel-Aviv. Ludin, Dina and other comrades informed us that the anarchist center was overcrowded for the occasional discussion meetings. All the young people we talked with violently denounced the outrageous conduct of the fanatical orthodox Jews. In their attitude toward women, their contempt for legal restrictions and traditional conservative attitudes toward sex and parental authority, the young Israeli rebels are just as, if not more advanced than the young nonconformists elsewhere.

We came across quite a few Israeli imperialists who insisted that Israel should by force of arms reconquer territories which they claimed belonged to Israel thousands of years ago. However, sentiment for peace was so intense that many Israelis would gladly make peace even if further concessions had to be made.

Although Israeli Arabs are entitled to the same legal rights as other Israeli citizens, there are, unfortunately, many Israelis who mistreat their Arab neighbors as "inferior" menials fit only to do the low paid "dirty work" which nobody else wants. They look upon the Arabs somewhat like American racists do negroes. (The Jewish fascist Rabbi Kahane was lately elected to the Israeli legislature, the Knesset.)

We felt better about all this when we visited the Jerusalem studio of our old friend the artist Rohr whom we knew in New York. Rohr is not an anarchist, but his tolerant humanistic attitude impressed us. Rohr maintained that if Israeli Jews were ever to attain good relations with the Arabs here in Israel, their whole attitude toward them must change. They must adopt a truly brotherly attitude toward their Arab neighbors in Israel, learn to live together in mutual esteem and respect as equals.

Rohr did not merely preach, but lived his ideals. He conducted his life in accordance with the noblest libertarian traditions of the pioneers who built the Israeli kibbutzim. When he made his periodic trips to the United States and other countries to sell his paintings (we have a few) and deliver talks about life in Israel, all the proceeds went, not to him, but to his kibbutz. Unfortunately we could not accept his invitation to visit his kibbutz. I do not know what happened to him or to his family, but did hear that they suffered a number of misfortunes.

### **The Israeli Anarchists**

Problemen, the first bi-monthly periodical of the Israeli anarchists whose first editor was the Russian Jewish anarchist Abba Gordin (deceased), was originally published in both Yiddish and Hebrew, the official language of Israel. I was told that Problemen was no longer published in Hebrew, only in Yiddish, which many, if not most, Israelis did not understand, because there were not enough capable Hebrew anarchist writers and, more importantly, that Problemen was really an

international periodical: the only surviving Yiddish language paper in the world. In view of this, *Problemen* publishes cultural, historical, literary articles and essays and news of common interest to the former readers of the defunct Yiddish anarchist papers. Comments on Israeli problems are usually found in the editorial article. There is no official policy or formal statement of principles. Important points are summed up in the following extracts:

*Everyone knows that by us in Israel there is no shortage of demagogues and liars. The government ruined the economy, spread chauvinism, reinforced the power of the clergy, sharpened the enmity between us and the Arab people.... we deplore the hypocrisy of the Israeli Labor Party. They blame the Begin government for everything, but they have themselves been guilty of the same crimes when they were in power.*

*We know from our own experience that politicians and diplomats neither will, or can, ever achieve peace between nations. They find it easier to make war than to make peace. A state of peace involves understanding and agreement between peoples, not capitulation of one party to another. But peace is never made in good faith or without ulterior motives. This is why it would be easier to conclude peace with the Arab people than with their rulers. To achieve this we must renounce ruling the Arab people in Israel, abandon our snobbish attitude, and together with them live in brotherhood.*

(In this connection we were impressed by the declaration of an old settler in a kibbutz we visited that the pioneer settlers in Israel were welcomed and assisted by their Arab neighbors before, not after the Israeli state was established.)

*As far as the eleventh election campaign of both the reactionary and liberal parties to the Knesset is concerned, we know full well that both these parties are ideologically bankrupt, without social vision. Their one aim is the conquest of power. Their party and personal interests are, for them, more important than the interests of the people. Neither one nor the other will solve the difficult problems facing Israel. Neither one nor the other has a constructive social program for the people; obliterate the gulf between the few rich and the many poor or establish peaceful relations with the Arabs living in Israel. Neither one nor the other will, or is able to do away with the bureaucratic state apparatus; end the shameful parliamentary intrigues which are for both blocs necessary to promote their political careers and secure for themselves well paid and privileged posts.*

*Especially tragic for the Israeli masses is the domination of the minority of orthodox religious politicians over the majority of the people. Their hooligans terrorize the non-religious citizens, stone passing vehicles violating the Sabbath. They connive to obtain for themselves the best well paying job in the*



*state agencies, supporting administrations that give them more. The religious politicians blackmail both the liberal and reactionary parties to grant their demands in exchange for their indispensable support in coalition governments. All this, and more, is why even the most "liberal" parties are, for their own self-interest, unwilling and unable to curtail the power of the ultra-religious well-organized power bloc. This can only be accomplished by organizing free non-party people's clubs to protect them from religious domination.*

*Unfortunately, the Israeli masses, the only ones able to break up this criminal alliance between the powerful, all-pervasive governmental bureaucracy, the military adventurers, the ultra-reactionary clergy and the capitalists, are psychologically and educationally unable to revolutionize Israeli society. As children they are already indoctrinated to blindly obey their parents, their elders, their "revered leaders." Later, they are taught never to question the "revealed truths" hammered into their heads by their teachers and their "superiors." They are taught that for "success in life" they must conform to things as they are, to respect authority- never revolt.*

*What has become of the libertarian grass-roots people's movements that flourished before the establishment of the Israeli state- the communes, the settlements, the kibbutzim, the cooperatives, the self-managed workers industrial and agricultural enterprises? ... The constructive libertarian institutions are now becoming increasingly corrupted by the cult of state centralization. Now, over thirty years later, we see how heavy a price in freedom of action, in loss of morale, in creativity, in self-management, the Israeli people are paying for their submission to the state; a swollen bureaucracy, the continuing degeneration of the kibbutzim into de facto capitalist enterprises with low-paid wage labor, private property, production for profit and the other "blessings" of capitalism.*

In spite of all this, the Israeli comrades are forced, like the other tendencies, to accept the fact that Israel must be defended. The day after the proclamation of the state of Israel (15 May 1948) Assam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab League, threatened that: "This will be a war of extermination and momentous massacres like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades." In discussion with Israeli anarchists it was emphasized that the unilateral dismantling of the Israeli state would not at all be anarchistic. It would, on the contrary, only reinforce the immense power of the Arab states and actually expedite their plans for the conquest of Israel.

Israel is a tiny, impoverished land lacking the indispensable military and economic resources to defend itself without outside help. Its very existence depends upon the military, financial and economic support of the United States, and, if need be, its direct military intervention. It is to all intents and purposes reduced to the status of a satellite subject to the control of the United States.

Far from curtailing the concentrated power of the state, the necessity for defense of Israel-freely acknowledged by our comrades- depends upon putting into effect the indispensable military, economic, legislative and social measures needed to keep Israel in a permanent state of war preparation. Such war preparations, instead of lessening, only accelerate the trend toward despotism, the permanent characteristic of every state. The Israeli anarchists (and they are not the only ones, the non-anarchists too) know only too well that curtailing the power of the state under such circumstances offers no real alternative. But they do feel their moral obligation as anarchists to resist as much as they can the growing despotism of the Israeli state.

Since "politicians and dictators" will not, and cannot in good faith, conclude peace with Israel, it would not, as claimed by Problemen, be at all easy, but actually impossible to consummate peace with the Arab people. To achieve a true accord and alliance with the Arab people, the Arab masses would have to defy their rulers by refusing to obey their commands. This the backward, fanatically religious Arab masses, who are by no means more progressive and perhaps more reactionary than their rulers, are not inclined to do. With relatively few honorable exceptions, the majority of Arabs hate the "Israeli invaders." Under such deplorable circumstances "peace and brotherhood" between Arab and Israeli people is doubtless a laudable but impractical proposal. But it is still their moral obligation, as anarchists, to plant by word of mouth and by example, that voluntary cooperation, mutual aid and solidarity of all peoples in brotherhood must, and can eventually be achieved.

There is no anarchist movement in Israel. If Joseph Ludin could no longer edit the paper, there would be no one to replace him and Problemen, the only anarchist paper in Israel, would disappear. Yet the few aging comrades courageously continue to propagandize the necessity for the disappearance of the state, to be replaced by free local, provincial, national and international federations and confederations of free peoples. They know, of course, that our ideal cannot be realized in the foreseeable future. But for them, the essence of anarchism as a living movement of the people is to stimulate the spirit of revolt and influence movements for the free society in an anarchistic direction.

This is a realistic policy. A small, but growing movement of progressive workers, radical minded students and oppressed feudal agricultural toilers in revolt against political-social-economic despotism is, however faintly, beginning to emerge. Many of these rebels (I met quite a few in American academic circles on my tours) are receptive to anarchist ideas.

Iran is a good example. As I write these lines I read a graphic report by the Iranian militant Alexander Bazarov in the Canadian anarchist journal *Strike!* (February 1985). The headline "STRIKE WAVE SWEEPS IRAN: A CLASS RE-AWAKENS!" refers to a month-long strike of twenty thousand workers in

the great iron industry of Ispahan. During the height of the strike, the workers detained the management inside the plants as hostages. This strike was by no means an isolated incident. In the past six months there were a hundred spontaneous rank-and-file workers' strikes.

In another article in the Iranian bimonthly emigre journal *Ezane Azud* (The Free Man) dedicated toward the spread of anarchist ideas among the exiled Iranian community we are informed that "The courageous individuals and groups both inside and outside of Iran continue to organize for the overthrow of religious autocracy."

We left Israel in the hope that the inspiring efforts of the little band of comrades, struggling against such great odds, will be encouraged and sustained.

*Source:*

*"Fragments: a memoir," by Sam Dolgoff (Refract Publications, 1986)*

*Url: [theanarchistlibrary.org/library/sam-dolgoff-anarchists-in-israel](http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/sam-dolgoff-anarchists-in-israel)*

## **The Palestinian Struggle Continues**

### **Insurrection**

*(1988)*

The Palestinians in struggle continue to die, but they are no longer news. A few lines lost in a sea of more recent events, some concerning even greater massacres in other parts of the world. It is clear that war and death are still man's favorite sport. It is impossible however to go into everything that is happening in the world. We must instead focus our interest on situations that we understand best and try to do something about them, at least at the level of counter-information if nothing else. As far as the Palestinian struggle is concerned, we must underline the importance of an insurrectional struggle that has been going on for over nine months, and which is putting one of the strongest armies in the world in great difficulty. In spite of the brutal beatings, imprisonment, torture and killing of the young Palestinians and the systematic burning of the homes of the Palestinian people, the struggle continues unabated.

Israel would not be able to continue its war on the Palestinian people were it not for the interests and financial and political support that they get from the USA and the European countries that have a vested interest in maintaining the Zionist State.

There have been a number of actions of solidarity in Italy and France, such as pickets of banks and airlines, boycotts and sabotage of Israeli products and demonstrations.

Like the struggle of the South African blacks against apartheid, the Palestinians in struggle need internationalist revolutionary solidarity.

*Source:*

*From 'Insurrection: Anarchist Magazine', Issue Five, (Autumn 1988)*

*Url: [elephanteditions.net/uploads/elephant/insurrection-5.pdf](http://elephanteditions.net/uploads/elephant/insurrection-5.pdf)*

## **Rasta Time in Palestine - Travelogue**

### **Benjamin Zephaniah**

*(1990)*

#### **Enter The Dragon**

As we waited to be checked by custom officers, I got into a conversation with an Arab-American family who were touching on 'Arab soil' for the first time. As we spoke, we were approached by soldiers who led us into separate rooms. I never saw them again

#### **The Search**

"Take off your clothes and bend over" I was told, and I started to do so. Off came my shirt, my shoes, my socks and then I handed the soldier my passport. "You are British", he said, and in my best English accent I said: "Yes sir, I certainly am". To this he replied "Please put on your clothing and go through customs as normal, there's been a mistake".

#### **First Night In Jerusalem**

The Palestinian sat on the ground, just a few yards from where some believe Jesus was entombed. He was physically handicapped, his arms were short and his hands were set at an awkward angle, and a soldier was trying to force him to take his penis in his mouth. I was amazed at the way I was left to watch this and I started to move forward to make sure I was seeing right. Then the soldier turned towards me, he was speaking loud and laughing but I could not understand what he was saying. But I do know it was something to the effect of 'do you want a try?'. So I tried to give him my passport. When he saw it, he pushed my hand away, zipped up and ran off into the streets of Old Jerusalem.

#### **Leaving Jerusalem**

I had to wake so early this morning, everything had to be done early because at 12 o' clock every Palestinian goes on strike. It's part of the Intifada and today there's good news. Many Palestinians in Israel (1948 borders) have also gone on strike,, but there is no room for celebration as the streets are full of soldiers. The atmosphere in the taxi was tense, the five Palestinians with whom I shared the fare were reasoning in arabic, about the state of their country and the big question 'would we get into Gaza?' I was left trying to pick up on any little word I could, then the good old taxi driver tunes his radio onto the BBC world service.

### **To Gaza, No Poems Allowed**

The BBC newsman told us that one youth had been killed and several injured in clashes with soldiers in Gaza. The Israeli forces had imposed a curfew on the area and all press reporters had been instructed to leave. All roads leading to Gaza had been blocked and no-one was being let in or out. As he spoke we could see the road block ahead. We were then stopped, as usual our baggage was searched, and we had to show our ID cards. It was a quiet affair, hardly anyone spoke, and after being searched we were left to sit in the car for about ten minutes for some reason. Many other cars were just sent back. A young soldier came to our car and shouted like a mad man at me, "what do you want in Gaza? What business have you there?". Well I explained to him I was a man of God, and I had waited all my life to see the Holy Land. He went and spoke to some other soldiers, I guess they felt sorry for me and they let me in. I smiled. The other passengers in the car were told to leave and I went the rest of the way on foot. I could not believe what I saw of Gaza. At first it was like a very poor Third World town under siege and it reminded me of pictures I have seen of 'Nazi' concentration camps. Some may argue that there are many differences, but again, it was the similarities that I noticed: the large fences, people being marched off, etc. At the same time, I had the feeling of a hero returning home, but I had never been there before. Groups of people (who were mainly children) just followed behind me, most were looking in amazement at my locks. Then of course, the soldiers came. What followed was what I had been seeing on television back home and now I was at the centre of it. Stones were being thrown, people were being beaten, arrested or forced to get off the streets. What the people wanted was a poetry reading and I was really excited by the idea. Word spread quickly that I was a poet and I had to prove it, but after making inquiries, I Learned that poetry was not allowed because it could draw a crowd.

### **The War Of Wards**

Apart from the war itself, Shifa Hospital in Gaza must be the worst sight I have ever seen. Officially it is a state hospital but the tax payers of Gaza think differently. There were two doctors who had to work for three days non-stop before being relieved. Not being a reporter, I was surprised at their willingness to show me around and also at the way injured people (who were not come) pushed their injuries before my eyes. This I found very strange, as I am used to photographing the nice things in life, I found it very difficult to take pictures of burns, cuts, bullet wounds and broken legs. People were also very willing to tell me their stories and I listened to all they had to say. The story that stays with me the most was told to me by the victim's mother as the victim lay in a coma. The boy, aged 12 years, had been hit by a jeep driven by an Israeli woman, who then reversed back over his legs, and then drove forward over his legs a third time.

### **Reggae In Tel Aviv**

This was the only time in my life when I have ever come near to what I believe is a culture shock. After leaving Gaza with its third world image and its war-like atmosphere, it took only one half hour to reach Tel Aviv and I could not believe my eyes. Not a solidier in sight, it was so modern and almost every building is run on solar power. Maybe this would not have shocked me if i would have arrived from London, New York or Johannesburg, but the contrast with Gaza really hit me. My first night was spent at what I was told was the only reggae club in the city and the only club to let anyone in regardless of race. Inside it was just like any other club but they played reggae. I watched as half-naked people acted as if they were enjoying themselves. A 'brother' from my home town of Handsworth speaks to me about his dream of coming to the Holy Land, he tells me Tel Aviv is a cool place, but my mind is on Gaza.

### **Drowning In The Sea Of Galilee**

Here I was at the Sea of Galilee and all I did was jump in, panic because my feet could not reach the ground and get out. Shame, just look at the miracles done here, I told myself, "I must learn to swim before I try to walk!"

### **Talking to Nazareth**

Here I saw for the first time, Israeli and Palestinians living together, not really in harmony, but living together with a touch of Apartheid. Two restaurants next door to each other, one Palestinian, one Jewish, two hotels next to each other, one Palestinian, one Jewish and so on. The problem was I could not find anyone I needed. So I spent the next few days wandering the streets, playing football and eating good food with some beautiful people. But this is Israel and people only spoke of the political situation when they had gained your trust. Very different to the hungry, angry, loud and tearful people of Gaza. Here, as in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Ramallah, I was seen as a news carrier or messenger because of the fact I was travelling from one place to the other. The greatest interest of most people was Gaza, because I knew more about the current situation than the locals, I was made to feel like a V.I.P., a very important poet.

### **Black Up In Jericho**

I came across many Arabs of African Descent in Jerusalem, but I was really taken aback by the amount of brothers and sisters on Jericho. It was like being in Africa and it was very hard trying to tell people that I came from England. Most people insisted that I could only come from Africa and it was very hard trying to tell people that I came from England. Most people insisted that I could only come from Africa, but a couple did suggest that I could be an American footballer. Still, every half hour I had to go through the whole history of British slavery and the migration of the Caribbean people to Britain. Maybe if I'd been a better educated person I would have known what to expect, but to tell the truth I enjoyed the surprise. My time in Jericho was mostly spent smoking Shisha and speaking of

what I had seen in Gaza and England.

The Christians song I had learned in school called 'Joshua in the Battle of Jericho', played on my mind. The image given to me by all those Christians back home had gone in one day. This place was so quiet, it only had one main road, few shops, and no Christians.

### **Getting Out**

Getting out was a lot easier than getting in.

*Transcribed for this reader by Kuwasi Maroon. Permission neither sought nor given.*

*Source:*

*Rasta Time in Palestine (Shakti Publishing ltd, 1990), Republished by Seditonist Distro 2024*

*Url: [seditonist.uk/distro/readables/zine/rasta-time-in-palestine/](http://seditonist.uk/distro/readables/zine/rasta-time-in-palestine/)*



## Extracts from “Palestine, Mon Amour”

Alfredo M. Bonanno

(1997)

### **The Insurrectional Struggle in Palestine**

What the Israeli State is doing in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank is quite in keeping with the logic of wars of conquest that soldiers learn in their training courses everywhere.

It would be quite normal for anarchists to unconditionally denounce what is happening, were it not that they find themselves in an area that is culturally strange to them.

If we were to talk about the situation in South Africa, for example, everything would be a foregone conclusion. But it is quite a different matter to denounce what the Israelis are doing. The reason is clear. The Jews suffered the project of extermination put into act by the Nazis, so by definition they deserve our sympathy.

No one is denying them that sympathy, which is also our own. Here it is not a question of the Jews but of the Israeli State and, naturally, those of its subjects who are lending themselves to the extermination of the Palestinian people that is taking place.

The fact that there is a popular insurrection in course in the territories and that at least one Palestinian is killed each day does not help to make the situation any clearer. We have simply got used to it. When we see the figures as a whole, things change.

During this last year [1988] 405 Palestinians were killed whereas a source of the Israeli ministry of defence talks of 392 killings. Just think, even taking the Israeli figures as good, it is a question of nearly one death a day. For the Palestinian wounded they are talking about 20,000, whereas the above mentioned ministry talks of 3,640.

At least ten wounded a day. On the other side, bearing in mind the data of the Israeli defence ministry, 11 Israelis have been killed, with 402 colon and 703 soldiers wounded. The figures speak for themselves.

To these figures should be added (according to Israeli sources) 20,000 arrests, 4,000

imprisoned without trial, 5,521 prisoners in concentration camps. 138 habitations destroyed by dynamite in reprisal, 32 expelled, 137 days of curfew in one year, with an uninterrupted period of 42 days, and this is only for 1988.

On the other hand, the insurrection has cost Israel 250 million dollars in additional military expenditure, 750 million dollars loss of the gross national income, 14 per cent less tourism, an overall loss of over 25 per cent of the national income.

The insurrection is putting Israel in serious difficulty. And beyond the strictly economic or political situation there is also, you might say, the question of image. Israel is having recourse to means and procedures that are damaging the sympathy and solidarity that the Jews had gained as a result of their suffering and repression at the hands of power over centuries. By becoming oppressors they have become 'nasty' and this means a lot today.

One day in December 1987 the revolt exploded after four Palestinian commuters were killed and seven wounded when their minibus was overturned by an Israeli heavy military vehicle. The streets filled with boys and youths. This is what came to be known as the Intifada. In the lead, on the barricades, were the Shebab, the boys born in the shanty towns and concentration camps under the military oppression of Israel after 1967. From that day onwards, from these first four dead, the insurrection has continued unabated.. [Seeing the situation now before going to press in 1998 thing haven't changed, the Intifada continues unabated.]

The means used by this insurrection are the classic ones that so many political know-alls had declared out of date, given that we are in the virtual post modern era. Revolt can only start off from what is available, in this case, stones. Then sabotage, using rudimentary, simple means, followed by the boycott of Israeli cigarettes and soft drinks, followed by civil disobedience and strikes.

For its part, the Israeli State is hitting back hard. The same goes for the colons who are shooting demonstrators and carrying out numerous acts of vandalism in the villages.

Defenceless Palestinians are beaten to death. Four boys from the village of Salim near Nablus were buried alive by Israeli soldiers. Poisonous gases are used regularly with the result that over 1,800 Palestinian women have been forced to have abortions. Water and electricity are cut off in the insurgent villages. The spontaneous demonstration that took place after the killing of Abu Jihad in Tunisia was stopped immediately by the Israelis: sixteen dead. The telephones in the territories are cut off. It is forbidden to cross the border. Petrol and diesel pumps are blocked. The olive harvest is blocked. Plastic bullets, already tested in Ireland by the English occupying army, have been introduced and are used regularly.

Over the past few months [1989] another subtle form of destruction has been discovered. Mysterious phosphorus devices in the form of chocolate bars or toys have been left lying around in the occupied areas by Israeli soldiers and colons in order to wound children. As soon as they are picked up the objects explode. There were five such cases of wounding in Nablus in the month of December alone . On November 10 [1988] 24 houses were razed to the ground by Jiftlik bulldozers in the Jordan valley after the inhabitants were invited to gather up their poor belongings in carts. One week earlier, fifteen blocks in Taibe were dynamited. The inhabitants were all deported.

It is like seeing an exact replica of the Warsaw ghetto. Often history repeats itself, even turned upside down.

For his part, Shamir has publicly declared that he intends to give 'new impetus' to the settlement of the colons in the occupied territories.

In spite of the evidence provided by these facts, there are still people, even anarchists, for whom any excuse is good enough to justify Israel's repressive action. It would be well for comrades to see things as they really are so that we can decide what needs to be done, here and now.

*['Lotta insurrezionale in Palestina', published in Provocazione no. 18, December 1988, page 3, entitled 'Repressione e lotta insurrezionale in Palestina']*

### **The Palestinians continue to die**

The fact that Palestinian people continue to die every day is no longer news anywhere in the world.

A few lines are drowned in the sea of new problems, some of which, unfortunately, register massacres of even greater dimension in other parts of the world. Man's favourite sport continues to be that of killing and war.

Not being able to take an interest in everything that happens in the world, one often turns one's attention to a particular situation and tries to do something at the level of information if nothing else. That is, one tries to redress the damage caused by the misinformation of the press.

As far as the Palestinian question is concerned, we must emphasize the importance of an insurrectional struggle that is putting one of the strongest armies in the world in serious difficulty.

This obstinate will to freedom has been distorted by Zionist propaganda, which is natural. But it has also been misrepresented by the propaganda of all those who, although they say they are lovers of freedom and truth, do not realise that those

facing armed tanks or who find themselves closed within a ghetto and submitted to continual bombardments, do not have much time to reflect on great principles of truth and freedom. In the first place, they must attack in order to survive. They must defend themselves because they are being killed. They cannot wait for the high priests of cultural research to find the way to explain the deeper reasons that lie behind the movement of the tanks.

Reports on the Palestinian problem have often been of this kind, articles aimed at taking a distance and pointing out reciprocal rights and wrongs aimed at diverting the possibility of a solidarity struggle here and now into the simple and simplistic depths of cultural discussion. Collaborationist and pacifying positions are not lacking, even in Palestine. Tepid rethinking that will do anything in order to leave things as they are and allow the Jews to widen their settlements even more and let the Palestinians carry on living in the ghettos.

But in the field of the real struggle the Palestinians continue to die, while on the other side, behind the insurmountable armour of their tanks, the persecuted of yesterday are applying the same methods as their old persecutors: destroy the houses of suspects, torture in the prisons and concentration camps, deport, kill in the streets, and so on.

How the Palestinians consider collaboration with the enemy is shown in the treatment reserved to those who collaborate with the Israeli army. In the space of a few days, at the end of August [1988], four were killed because they were informers in the pay of Israel. A few days later, a fifth was hacked to pieces with an axe. Drastic measures, certainly, but which give an idea of what these people are suffering.

When you get to certain levels, even feelings of pity and humanity begin to disappear.

*[‘I Palestinesi continuano a morire’, published in ProvocAzione no. 16, September 1988, page 8]*

### **The horror of growing accustomed to horror**

Growing accustomed to horror is far more striking than horror itself. Indignation quells and remains silent, and everything seems normal. This is the case of the repression against the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

One reason for this slow but constant habituation is the fact that the Palestinian revolt, that of the stones and improvised weapons ‘is no longer news’.

Another is the acceptance, on more than one side, of the reasons for the conflict. Those on the side of the Palestinians are against those who are on the side of the

Israelis. Many hope, sometimes in good faith, that things will work out in time and everything will resolve itself.

No matter how these 'things' come to an end and what solution is chosen, nothing in the world will be able to eradicate the horror of the past few months [1989], the horror of martyr turned executioner, persecuted turned persecutor. No matter how clever the defenders of Israel are — and as we know these include a number of anarchists — we cannot forget the Palestinian baby killed by gas in the refugee camp of Khan Yunis by Israeli soldiers. We cannot forget the five year old child killed in Nablus by plastic bullets or the 14 year old killed a few days earlier while he was playing in front of his house, again shot by the Israeli occupying army. We cannot forget the colon death squads which go out at night and murder the young Palestinians considered responsible for the rebellion.

Under such conditions the only thing that does surprise us is the strange insistence on trying to cover up responsibilities. We can see how this happens at a political level, but we don't see how it can happen at the level of comrades who should show more sensitivity in their defence of the persecuted, leaving aside subtle distinctions in designating responsibility.

*['L'orrore dell'abitudine all'orrore', published in Provocazione no. 17, November 1988, page 4, entitled 'L'orrore']*

### **No to the Palestinian State!**

The PLO have constituted a Palestinian State on the wave of the popular insurrection in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank.

Many undoubtedly see this as something positive, but we can only see it as a step backwards, a diversion from the direction that the Palestinian struggle has taken in recent months.

The PLO bureaucracy has intervened in the struggle with the complicity of the Islamic States who have high hopes for a Palestinian State in the Middle East. In this way a serious impediment has been put on the possibility of the struggle continuing to develop in an anti-State direction, the only direction that takes into consideration the needs of the Jewish people who have already settled in that area. The presence of a Palestinian State, however unlikely that might seem today, could not fail to lead to diplomatic and internally reached agreements that would make any peaceful coexistence between the two communities (Palestinian and Israeli) impossible. Yet both of them have a right to live on their own land.

A Palestinian State could not fail to move in the direction of all States: that of military reinforcement, armed intervention, and the transformation of future diplomatic agreements into instruments of threat and retaliation.

The path recently trodden by the Jews is there to show just how easy it is to turn the exploited and oppressed into exploiters and oppressors by regimenting them into the service of the State.

The Palestinian people's liberation struggle over the past forty years has had its dark moments, but even during the worst retaliatory actions such as that at Lod airport, it has never lost the quality of a popular revolt. Of course, the organisation was also just around the corner in the past, but always in a way that was purely instrumental and which could be discarded at any time. It in no way conditioned anyone in the name of a precise legal code to be established with the agreement of all nations.

We have no idea what the nations of the world, with the USA in the lead, really could do for the Palestinian people who continue to be tortured and killed. They will certainly not be able to affect the internal problems of the Israeli State, due to the very international law that makes all the States of the world sovereign, if nothing else. We will find that Israel has the unquestionable 'right' to continue to oppress the Palestinian people, just as the latter will have the undeniable 'right' not to be oppressed, occupied, destroyed, killed, tortured, etc.. Each will have its own 'rights', the defence of which will come through the force of their own (and others) weapons. Everyone knows what state of affairs that could lead to.

The newly constituted State could turn out to be a terrible obstacle in the Palestinian people's long and difficult road to liberation, if for no other reason than because it is hard for those who suffer to understand such things. The constitution of an organisation such as a State is often seen as something positive. One feels stronger, one has contractual power with all the other nations of the world on an equal level. But is this not just a way to provide a semblance of negotiation, and in reality to continue oppression? What if Arafat's passion to become head of State is no more than a diplomatic way of getting rid of the problem?

No one can say that this is not what is in fact happening. After all, the applause that greeted the Palestinian State in embryo has come from all sides, from foreign diplomats to organisations of comrades who certainly do not move in ministerial circles. What is the cause of this cordiality of intent? In the first place, the fact that both ministers and authoritarian revolutionaries are on the same wavelength: the size of the organisation is what determines its strength, and from this 'strength' comes victory. This kind of thing, which we could never share, does not make us feel the joy that so many are expressing for the birth of the Palestinian State.

But there is more. In our opinion, the Palestinian State will become an optimal diplomatic interlocutor.

Pressure will be made through diplomatic channels. There will be an attempt to

make Israel understand what it does not want to understand, closed as it is within its State logic. But what do all the other States of the world really care about the lot of five million Palestinians?

The same goes for the authoritarian revolutionaries. What alternative can they propose? Direct intervention against the Israeli State? Direct support for the Palestinian insurrection in the occupied territories? Of course not! Now that the State also exists for these latest pioneers of 'structure at any cost', there is a way for them to organise their support for this shadow of previous examples. And so all their problems will be solved.

We do not believe that the Algerian decision will improve the lot of the Palestinian people, be it real or not. The only reality we can turn our attention to and support is that of hundreds of young people who are resisting the Israeli tanks that occupy their land by throwing stones. This reality has nothing to do with diplomacy or the State.

*[No allo Stato Palestinese', published in Provocazione no. 18, December 1988, pages 1-2]*

*Transcribed by Jean Wier*

*Source:*

*Palestine, mon amour - Alfredo M. Bonanno (Elephant Editions, 1997)*

*Url: [elephanteditions.net/library/alfredo-m-bonanno-palestine-mon-amour](http://elephanteditions.net/library/alfredo-m-bonanno-palestine-mon-amour)*

## **Anarchists in Israel: An Important Presence** **Anarchist & Libertarian Coalition of Pisa and Valdera** *(2004)*

The development and the coming into the limelight of an anarchist and libertarian movement in Israel is an extremely important fact. The small size of the various anarchist groups who are struggling against the Wall and in general against the state of war, do not diminish in any way the political strength of this new situation which has sparked the interest of many people, and continues to do so. We are dealing with a part of the world, the Middle East, where capitalist development in the form of imperialism has created social conditions which are profoundly different from those created in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries. Consequently, libertarian socialism has met with many more obstacles to its birth and development.

The bourgeoisie there has not “dissolved all the feudal lies in the exchange value”, as Marx said in the [famous] Communist party Manifesto, in a somewhat extremist interpretation of a process which saw capitalism bring, together with blood and exploitation, a series of formal and substantial progress in the relationships between men.

Capitalist development there has, instead, turned those feudal lies and social structures to its own use and for its own benefit.

Take for example a regime like that of Saddam Hussein, famous for being a relatively secular if bloody regime, which grew in strict synergy with American imperialism, which developed a powerful form of State capitalism, but which governed by utilizing and perpetuating the clan structure of Iraqi society.

Paradoxically, up to a point, the State of Israel in that context is a sort of parody of progressive capitalism of the sort that Marx spoke of.

But a parody nonetheless. In Israel it is possible to have a demonstration of 100,000 gays and lesbians, there is relative press freedom and freedom of association, the appearance is that of a Western democracy. But all this is only for the “free” people, not for the slaves, not for the “human refuse”, to use the disgraceful expression used by the Israeli statesman Ben-Gurion in reference to the Palestinians.

A Western-style democratic bourgeois State, but at the same time one which tends towards a theocracy, based on the apartheid of the Palestinian Arab population: in



other words, it is one of the “paradoxes” of imperialism in a part of the world which is the nerve centre of energy resources.

In such a difficult, and at the same time important, context the presence of a visible, incisive libertarian political player is something which cannot be easily expected.

### **POINTS OF VIEW WE DON'T SHARE**

The Israel-Palestine question, which the Israeli anarchists refuse to call a “conflict” preferring to define it simply as “apartheid”, is famously at the centre of all the geopolitical and economic interests of the imperialist powers, and has been for some time.

Imperialism has always used the national question in its “game of chess”.

The expansionist policies of the imperialist powers have always been met with and have always interacted with community, religious or national identities which already existed but which these policies have sought to shape, to make them more functional.

In this way, imperialism has itself created “national questions” where there would otherwise have been only community, religious, national or some other identity.

With respect to the national questions and particularly regarding the Israel-Palestine question, the Italian radical left is marked by two different attitudes which we do not share.

On the one hand there is that anti-imperialism which is the radicalized child of a certain culture of the 1970s extreme left which sees the national question as one of the principal contradictions of the imposition of imperialism in the world, and therefore makes a “battle cry” of national questions. This at times takes the form of adopting that “campist” attitude adopted with respect to the “socialist camp” in times gone by.

As far as the Israel-Palestine question is concerned, at times certain totally unacceptable points of view regarding the legitimacy of national identities are taken.

The Jewish-Israeli identity becomes per se illegitimate as it is not based on any of the premises which national States are generally based on: links of territory, language and common administration. As the Jewish community is essentially based on religion, it is held to be illegitimate even without the crimes perpetrated by the State of Israel. In this sense, Zionism tends to become a sort of ideological original sin, a sort of cultural monster which is ripe for imperialism to make use of. Palestinian nationalism instead tends to become good per se, and there survives in fits and starts a conviction that the Palestinian people are “naturally” socialist.

At the other extreme are those ultra-internationalist positions, represented for example by the Bordighists or “Lotta Comunista”, who refuse to face up to the real, concrete nature of national questions and limit themselves to seeing them as simple “clashes between bourgeoisies”. This leads to a certain diffidence towards the popular struggles of the Palestinian people and a substantial negation of the very existence of a Palestinian question.

### ON THE LEGITIMACY OF NATIONS

With regard to the legitimacy of nations and of the very definition of the nation, several passages from the book “Israel, Palestine: The Truths of a Conflict” by the Editor-in-Chief of “Le Monde Diplomatique”, Alain Gresh, are of interest:

*In the Middle Ages, the term “nation” was understood in terms of its etymology, “nasci” (to be born): a nation was the totality of individuals born in the same place and having a common origin. The historian Suzanne Citron explains that the term “could also designate a religious community. Up to the Revolution, there was mention made in France of the Jewish nation [...] Language and religion are, among other things, elements of collective identity which anthropologists indicate with the expression ‘cultural’. The nation in its ancient sense was therefore, and foremost, a cultural fact”.*

*This ethnic-religious dimension would persist in Eastern Europe, the Balkans or the near East.*

*The French Revolution marked the emergence of the modern nation founded on a body of data which was permanent and stable throughout the centuries: a shared territory, history and culture.*

*In a celebrated conference [...], one of the most influential intellectuals of the Third Republic, Ernst Renan, replied: “a nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. It is the result of a lengthy past made up of efforts, sacrifices and disappointments; sharing common past glories and a desire to repeat them, these are the essential conditions in order to be a people”.*

*[...] No scientific criterion allows us to establish if a community of people is or is not a nation. What about the Corsicans? Or the Bretons? Or the Basques? We do not know how to define a nation, observes the British historian Eric Hobsbawm, but we can recognize nationalist movements. Some have succeeded while others have failed. In the former case, the nation becomes established around a State; in the later case, it dissolves, it becomes integrated into the dominant body or sometimes it resists, as in the case of the Kurds. In most cases, in fact, the nation has needed a State in order to realize itself fully, a State which unifies its national market, uproots any particularities and ensures the loyalty of its citizens. In order to consolidate the consensus of its citizens (which in the*

*early stages is often fragile), the State also imposes an “official history” which goes back to its “origins”. Vercingetorix was “invented by the Third Republic in its search for legitimacy”; Rumani a under Nicolae Ceaucescu claimed descent from the Dacians, an Indo-European people; certain leaders from the former Yugoslavia hid their crazed ambitions under even more grotesque historical myths. But despite these aspirations to eternity, nations are, we repeat, modern creations whose prehistory is often more imaginary than real.”*

The point of view expressed by Alain Gresch and those quoted by him, are certainly far from being libertarian points of view. However, their arguments serve to develop a correct reasoning regarding the Israel-Palestine question.

The unfurling of history generates collective identities none of which has greater legitimacy than the other because it is based on territory or language and not on religion or the collective memory of a more or less real common past.

It is the dominating interests coagulating around the State which officially “legitimizes” a collective identity which becomes a Nation. And it is the imperialist system of the States which directs the balance of powers, submitting one collective identity to another, utilizing the interests of the native dominant classes and often giving rise to more reactionary tendencies.

## **THE JEWISH-PALESTINIAN PROBLEM**

The Jewish-Palestinian question is emblematic in this sense.

The Jewish identity was formed over the centuries, basically starting from the fact that Jews have almost always been a religious minority wherever they have been found and have therefore been persecuted for that reason.

As the Israeli libertarian communist Ilan Shalif states, Zionism was born “as the dialectic opposite of anti-Semitism” at the beginning of the 1870s and 1880s. Before that time, in fact, the massacres and the incidents of intolerance and discrimination towards Jews were not supported by any precise racist ideology. Anti-Semitism was born out of that “frenzy for the ‘classification’ of peoples” that “was rife among the scientific and intellectual community” in order to justify the colonial adventures of the late 17th century.

The anti-Semitic pogroms provoked by the Czar of Russia beginning in 1881 also had a great influence on the birth of Zionism.

Zionism, or the ideology which foresees the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, doubtless contains within it since its inception certain disturbing features. Its complexities cannot, however, be synthesized in the present-day sneerings of the criminal Sharon.

The strong socialist leanings of early Zionism are well-known. It is interesting to note that for a while during the 1920s, the famous Zionist trade union, the Histadrut, formed part of a Palestinian Labour League which also included around a thousand Arab workers and which called for the emancipation of the workers, both Jewish and Arab.

It was the English imperial power which, starting with the famous Balfour Declaration and later with the support for and filtering of Jewish immigration into Palestine, pushed Zionism towards a more obviously colonialist and accordingly racist direction.

At the end of the '20s, the outline had already been drawn.

Here is what the anarchist Camillo Berneri (who was extremely sensitive to the Jewish question) had to say on the occasion of the bloody events of 1929:

*"Which side is right? The Arabs. Sentimentality is out of place. The world's press may well have recorded the Jewish victims and depicted the horrendous scenes of the massacre of defenceless Zionist colonists; there may well be a just tradition of pity towards the Jewish victims of absurd and unjust laws and of the pogroms which massacred them; the efforts of the Zionists may well be admirable, but all this is counterbalanced by the weight of the Arab victims, by the fact that Zionism serves as a screen for English imperialist policy, by the regime of inequality which dominates in Palestine [...]"*

*The Arabs have watched as hundreds upon hundreds of Jews disembark in Jaffa and Haifa, they have seen their most fertile lands occupied by Jews, they have seen fall into Jewish hands lands which have been made fertile by the labour of Arab farmers, they have seen the lion's share of public monies going towards the benefit of the Zionist community, they have watched land bought for a few shekels sold for astronomical sums... the demographic factor is not the central factor. What worries those in the area is the nature of Jewish immigration, economically selected and technically endowed with capital. The Immigration Ordinance of 1925 in fact states that Jewish immigrants must have an annual income of at least 60 pounds sterling or a minimum of 250 pounds sterling in capital".*

The Jewish-Palestinian national question was thus born, with the need of the British powers to create a wedge in the Arab world in support of its control over that strategic part of the world. That same control that it would lose after the Second World War when the world would be dominated by the twin powers of the USA and the USSR. This was to drive England towards closer relations with the Arab states and to turn its back on Zionism. It must be remembered that in 1948, the Israeli State was recognized by the UN thanks to the votes of the USSR and the USA and that England abstained from the vote.

At that stage, following the enormous tragedy of extermination at the hands of the Nazis, the aggressive character of Zionism became stronger, “legitimized” as it was by the weight of the Holocaust.

From a complex and well-articulated crucible of cultural, religious and territorial identities which were not in themselves linear, English imperialism first and US imperialism later brought about the creation of an Israeli Military State which itself created a regime of gruesome modern apartheid.

The Palestinian national identity which, like the Israeli identity, had been anything but linear up to that time, then became an extremely “real” reality, starting with the massacres, the discrimination, the looting.

Following the War of 1967, the condition of the Palestinians cannot simply be defined as a condition of “capitalist oppression”, just as the condition of the Jews in the Nazi camps or that of the Soviet dissidents in the gulags cannot be so defined.

The characteristic of capitalism as we understand it is that it places all men in a condition of formal liberty, relegating exploitation and the oppression of individuals to the economic sphere, with the exception, naturally, of using State violence at any time when the oppressed demonstrate that they will not accept the hard law of economics

While it is true that the reality of capitalism, even Western capitalism, never fully corresponded with this model, the current condition of the population of the Occupied Territories has little to do with that model.

When the State can destroy your house from one day to the next, when it can deny you water, when it can deport you, torture you, fence you in, prevent you from working or kill you, and when all this becomes the norm, even the class difference between Palestinians becomes subjective, an unessential factor of one’s existence.

All these calamities come about not because one is proletarian but because one is Palestinian and it is here that the national question passes from being a “purely cultural” question to a material one.

Certainly, in the final analysis it is imperialism, and therefor the capitalist system, which generates these calamities - but only in the final analysis.

## **THE SOCIAL QUESTION BETWEEN THE SECOND INTIFADA AND ISRAELI LIBERALISM**

If the national question exists, a real fact of the Middle-Eastern tragedy which cannot be avoided is that in the background there also exists the social question.

The Oslo Agreements of 1993 created a system of Middle-Eastern Bantustans.

These are territories which are controlled (if that is the right word) by the Palestinian National Authority, where a rotten class of corrupt leaders gathered around Arafat shamelessly sells out its aspirations for the emancipation of the Palestinian people in exchange for a few crumbs of Power and international recognition.

Unfortunately, the Palestinian popular masses have rarely been able to free themselves from the yoke of their indigestible ruling class.

Take for example the weighty role in Palestinian nationalism played at the time of the Arab Revolt in 1929 by the Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husseini, a religious authority and wealthy feudal lord who we find again side by side with the Nazis during the Second World War, and who was probably involved in the massacre of Jews in Bosnia.

The socialist tendencies in the Palestinian liberation movement in the '60s and '70s can only partly be attributed to a real phenomenon from within. It is much more likely attributable to the alliance between the Palestinian organizations and Soviet imperialism at the time.

However, there is no shortage of examples of autonomy in the history of the downtrodden Palestinian classes.

The Arab Revolt of 1936-39 was not only directed against the Zionists and the British, but also against the Palestinian Arab landowners.

The First Intifada of 1987 was a genuine movement from below, without hardly any direction at first, which caught unawares the historic Palestinian organizations and registered significant forms of popular self-organization.

Certainly, the Second Intifada (which began in September 2000 and still goes on) has for the most part been controlled from above, and not only by Fatah - but also by the religious fanaticism of Hamas, responsible for the destructive practice of indiscriminate bomb attacks against the Israeli civilian population.

Even so, there are examples of interesting phenomena during this intifada, such as the active participation in public demonstrations of Arab Israelis, those Palestinians with Israeli citizenship. In the 2001 elections, the Arab minority of Israel put into practice an organized abstentionism which saw practically total participation.

The bomb attacks are only one face of this Second Intifada. Popular resistance, in particular against the building of the Wall, has been the order of the day and a factor of great significance has been the growing number of mobilizations and direct actions carried out jointly between Palestinians, international pacifists and groups from the non-Zionist Israeli left.

Any positive evolution in the situation must come through effective struggle by the Palestinian resistance, but also through a rupture within Israeli society.

If we make a no illusions analysis of the forces at play, there can be no help whatsoever for the Palestinian cause from US Democrats (who under the Clinton-era Oslo Accords of 1993 demonstrated their nature as mediators), nor from European imperialism (which is unable to develop a policy of its own independently of the US), nor from the Arab states who have their own sub-imperialist interests.

Only by contradictions developing within Israeli society tied in with the struggle of the Palestinians can drive things forward. For this reason the suicide bomb attacks, apart from being aberrant from a human point of view and reactionary from a cultural point of view, are also profoundly wrong from a political point of view.

Not only are there in Israel significant minority sectors of young people who morally and materially rebel against the militarization of Israeli society (groups such as “Anarchists Against the Wall”), but also the class contradiction emerges at times in its crude reality.

Though unemployment among Palestinians is at 50%, it is nonetheless at 12% among Israelis and the neo-liberal policies are gnawing steadily at the Israeli proletariat's conditions, even more so than in Western countries.

Though over half a million Palestinians suffer from malnutrition, the incomes of the less well-off elements among Israelis has been reduced by 10% in recent years.

For some time now there have been phenomena such as the “Lionesses”, Israeli women from poor areas who organize against benefit cuts to large families, price rises and high interest rates.

The activities of the Lionesses include proletarian expropriation of bread in order to distribute it free in the poorer neighbourhoods, laying siege to banks and cutting off water supplies to rich neighbourhoods.

By the spring of 2003 there had already been a spree of strikes throughout Israel against cuts in social spending and in September 2004 once again there was a lengthy strike in protest at the delays in paying the wages of 20,000 local authority employees.

Thousands of families are reduced to hunger while the government is spending billions on financing the horrible war machine and building roads and houses for the settlers in the Occupied Territories.

Apartheid, the genocide of the Palestinian population and the impoverishment of the Israeli lower classes are two sides of the same coin.

It is clear that building a common front of struggle in this situation is not the easiest thing in the world.

### **THE THEORY AND PRACTICES OF ISRAELI ANARCHIST GROUPS**

Anarchism began to show new signs of life in Israel in the early 1970s. But Israeli anarchism can only be considered as an active political entity since the appearance on the scene a year and a half ago of the “Anarchists Against the Wall” initiative. Around this time too Internet began to provide us with detailed news of the libertarian presence in this area which is so important for the world’s powers.

The name “Anarchists Against the Wall” was invented by Israeli TV with reference to the groups of young libertarian-oriented people who had for some time been carrying out actions to damage the Separation Wall behing which the Sharon government hoped to “fence” the Palestinian population.

This group won its notoriety in Israel at the end of 2003, after the first serious injury from gunfire of one of its members, Gil Naamaty, who was shot in one leg while trying to knock down a section of the fence near the Palestinian village of Mas’ha.

Thanks also to its effective media skills, the group has also managed to bring its ideas to the attention of certain sectors of the public (and not only inside Israel) the inhuman injustice of a Wall which means only more expropriation of land at the expense of poor peasants, the destruction of houses and the end of every freedom of movement and work.

But the most important feature of the Anarchists Against the Wall from a political point of view is that they direct their energies into political work with the Palestinians and into the creation of joint mobilizations between Israelis and Palestinians. The principal aims of the group, according to one presentation of the group, is “to cooperate with Palestinian civilians in order to carry out acts of civil disobedience, using the popular grassroots insurrection as an alternative to politics based instead on various factionsd and parties...”.

And this is not only a slogan.

The 4-month camp at Mas’ha against the Wall in the spring and summer of 2003 which saw the participation of over a thousand Palestinians, Israelis and international pacifists, was responsible for the spread of political relationships and self-management of activities with the Palestinian people which have been going on for a year and a half. The injuring of Gil Na’amati and the participation in the insurrection at Budrus at the end of 2003 were the fruit of political work begun about a year earlier. From that point on, activity has been more or less non-stop with actions and joint demonstrations, and woundings and arrests of the Anarchists Against the Wall by the Israeli army.



This continued until what we can call the 5 days at Budrus and Beit Awwa (19-23 September 2004), where hundreds of Palestinians and hundreds of Israelis clashed with the army for 5 days, practically bare-handed, only to be shot at repeatedly with rubber-coated metal bullets, resulting in hundreds of injured.

The Anarchists Against the Wall initiative is a non-structured collection of groups. The social background would mostly seem to be from the pacifist and punk movements. They themselves define themselves as “anarchists more in the way they work than because of any ideological affiliations”. However, over the last year and a half they have demonstrated great political capacity, the ability to manage their public image and the ability to work as a group with the Palestinian people, apart from their great physical courage.

But there are other anarchist groups operating in Israel. In particular there are groups which are more classically rooted in communist, class-struggle anarchism such as the Anarchist Communist Initiative and the Israeli Libertarian Communist Collective. These groups, as far as can be understood from internet, seem to be less involved in the movement of actions against the Wall, but seem to have a greater propensity for analysing the social forces at play and for political elaboration. Whereas these various groups’ points of view on the Palestinian question are not too far apart, they do seem to differ on their approach to Israeli society.

While the Anarchists Against the Wall seem to ignore the class element and, at least in the short term, seem to have little faith in the Israeli workers’ movement, the anarchist communists and libertarian communists are much more attentive to the class contradictions within Israel and are more geared towards a perspective (even though it may be premature) of building opportunities for bi-national proletarian unity.

Finally, there is an Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative which sympathizes with the anarcho-syndicalist international (IWA/AIT), which even more directly than the anarchist communists, aims at creating Israeli-Palestinian workers’ organizations.

## **TOWARDS AN ANARCHIST POINT OF VIEW ON THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE QUESTION**

The differences between the various anarchist groups can be seen as a resource and source of strength and the movement as a whole shows great potential for the liberation of this land where the State shows its fiercest face at the service of the dominant Israeli classes and also of American imperialism.

For anarchists in the rest of the world it has never been easy to approach the Israel-Palestine question.

The absence of any sort of political reference point in such a dramatic and complex

situation has been a handicap of no small count to being able to express an authoritative point of view.

The Anarchists Against the Wall and other Israeli libertarian groups have given us once again a strong voice regarding a question of great importance in world politics.

A question which more than any other forces us to strike a balance between the need for a strategic perspective of the total social liberation from the yoke of Capitalism and the State, an anarchist society, and the need for indicate intermediate objectives which are able to improve the dramatic situation of the Palestinians in the short term.

An end to the Apartheid and the genocide, the withdrawal of troops from all the occupied territories, the immediate destruction of the Wall, the conquest of equal civil rights and labour rights for all the inhabitants of those lands: these are important objectives to which we must all contribute, even through international mobilizations.

As anarchists, we attach little importance to the possibility of these objectives becoming reality within a Palestinian State or a bi-national State with equal rights for all.

For the moment, the hypothesis of a Palestinian State which is not simply a bantustan seems as remote as the second hypothesis.

In any case, no State has ever granted freedom for the oppressed or indeed any partial improvement in their condition.

The only way to obtain both of these is the one which our Israeli comrades have indicated.

***COORDINAMENTO ANARCHICI E LIBERTARI PISA E VALDERA***  
*(Anarchist & Libertarian Coalition of Pisa and Valdera)*

*Source:*

*Anarchists in Israel: An Important Presence (Anarchist & Libertarian Coalition of Pisa and Valdera, 2004)*

*Url: [ainfos.ca/04/nov/ainfos00201.html](http://ainfos.ca/04/nov/ainfos00201.html)*

## **Anarchism in Israel and Palestine**

**Uri Gordon**

*(2009)*

Anarchism has been a political undercurrent in Israel and Palestine for a century, appearing in three disconnected waves: the libertarian socialism of the early Kibbutz communes, the publishing and cultural activities of Yiddish-speaking immigrants, and contemporary Israeli anarchism. In Palestinian society there are individual sympathizers but no organized anarchist movement, with Marxist parties such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) leading the secular left wing. Yet the first Intifada (1987–9) drew widespread support from anarchists as a grassroots uprising involving tax refusal, general strikes, urban confrontation, and the establishment of underground schools and mutual aid projects. Since 2000, Israeli and international anarchists have been leading solidarity campaigns in Palestine.

### **EARLY KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT, 1910–1926**

Anarchist ideas circulated widely in the second and third waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine, and were central to the formation of the early Kibbutzim. The first 28 communes were founded in 1910–14, following labor disputes and strikes at the colonies established during the first wave of immigration. The founders, mostly young and unmarried, built the communes on principles of collectivism, equality, and self-management, aspiring to create a free socialist society of Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

Anarchism was highly influential within the communards' party, Hapoel Hatzair (Young Worker), whose paper included articles by and about Proudhon and Kropotkin. Aharon David Gordon (1856–1922), a forestry clerk who immigrated as a laborer to Palestine aged 47, became a spiritual leader of Hapoel Hatzair and was very close to anarchism. Influenced by Hassidic mysticism and the writings of Nietzsche and Tolstoy, Gordon promoted collective manual labor as a key to Jewish regeneration, and spiritual liberation through creativity and reconnection to nature. A staunch anti-militarist and pacifist, Gordon did not speak of a Jewish state and called for respect and cooperation with Arab peasants.

Joseph Trumpeldor (1880–1920), an immigrant soldier who organized early Jewish defense forces, was influenced by Kropotkin and Tolstoy and declared himself “an anarcho-communist and a Zionist.” Inspired by Trumpeldor, Gdud Haavoda (Labor Battalion) was formed as a decentralized commune whose bands

of construction workers sought to establish a General Commune in Palestine.

Gustav Landauer had a direct influence on members of Hashomer Hatzair (Young Guardsman), an immigrating Zionist-socialist youth movement who founded a federation of new Kibbutzim in the third wave of immigration from 1919. Its members made explicit references to anarchism in their calls for communal independence, egalitarian relationships, direct democracy, and spiritual renewal. In the later 1920s, with the influx of private capital into the country and increasing economic and political control of the Kibbutzim by the central Jewish institutions in Palestine dominated by Ben Gurion's Mapai Party, anarchist tendencies in Palestine weakened.

### **YIDDISH ANARCHISM, 1948–1989**

After the State of Israel was established, anarchist circles formed among the Yiddishspeaking survivors of Nazism who immigrated to the country. The earliest was led in Tel-Aviv by Eliezer Hirschauge (1911–54), formerly an exponent of anarchism among Hassidic youth in Warsaw and author of a history of Polish anarchism. Activities took an upswing with the arrival in 1958 of prolific anarchist theorist, critic, and translator Abba Gordin (1887–1964). Gordin, a key member of the Moscow Anarchist Federation, had been living in New York since 1925, where he published the literary-philosophical review *Yiddische Shriften* (1936–57).

In Israel, Gordin founded the anarchist circle ASHUACH (Agudat Shocharei Chofesh, Freedom-Seekers Association), who had a large meeting-hall and a library of classic anarchist works in Yiddish, Hebrew, and Polish. ASHUACH had approximately 150 members and hundreds attended the lectures it organized. Gordin edited the association's monthly review in Yiddish and Hebrew, *Problemén/Problemot*. The review largely played down revolutionary propaganda in favor of philosophical and literary essays, and was especially interested in the spiritual roots of anarchism and in classical Jewish and current Yiddish literature. Gordin also regularly corresponded with prominent Yiddish anarchist publications in New York (*Freie Arbeiter Stimmë*) and Buenos Aires (*Dos Freie Wort*).

After Gordin's death, *Problemén* was edited by Shmuel Abarbanel until 1971, when Joseph Luden (1908 – ) assumed editorship and affiliated the review (now printed only in Yiddish) with a publishing house that released over fifteen Yiddish books and pamphlets of fiction and poetry. ASHUACH came to a halt in the 1980s as the old anarchists passed away, and the final (165th) issue of *Problemén* (December 1989) was the last Yiddish anarchist periodical publication in the world.

## ISRAELI ANARCHISM, 1967-PRESENT

Anarchist tendencies were present in the Israeli anti-militarist and anti-capitalist Left since its emergence, following the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian Territories and parallel to the wave of radicalism in western countries. Libertarians were active in the Israeli Socialist Organization (1967–77), which issued the paper *Matzpen* and cooperated with the Israeli Black Panthers – a militant movement of second-generation Jews from North African countries. During and after the 1973 war, the Black Front/Trippy Anarchist Group, based in a commune in Tel-Aviv, was active, producing flyers and pamphlets, and publishing *Liberation News* and the anti-militarist comic book *Freaky*. Radical student cells were active in Tel-Aviv (1975–6) and Jerusalem (1986–7). Protests against the first Lebanon war saw the release of subversive propaganda by the Committee for Public Health (1982–7), and the founding of the Israeli chapter of War Resisters International by Hungarian-Israeli anarchist Yeshaayahu Toma-Schick (1939–2004).

From the late 1980s anarchism was central to the politicized section of the punk movement and to army refusal and evasion during the first Palestinian Intifada. The Israeli Anarchist Federation (1991–3) held demonstrations against police brutality and Israel's first McDonald's outlet, put on benefit concerts, and later spawned the militant animal rights group Anonymous. Direct action and propaganda groups such as the Isra-hell Collective and the Anarchist Brigade of the Northern Galilee released photocopied political magazines including "It's All Lies" and "The War of Words." Tel-Aviv's Left Bank club was founded to provide a space for radical punk shows, talks, and exhibitions.

The movement grew quickly in the late 1990s with the anti-capitalist environmental group Green Action and the direct action campaign against the construction of the Cross-Israel Highway, which connected issues of pollution, open spaces, Arab land rights, and government-corporate collusion. Inspired by the major anti-capitalist protests in London and Seattle at the end of 1999, Israeli activists began organizing Reclaim the Streets parties and Food Not Bombs stalls, and founded the Salon Mazal infoshop and the Israeli Independent Media Center (Indymedia). The second Intifada reinvigorated Israeli radicals' anti-occupation and Palestinian solidarity efforts. The network Ta'ayush (Arab-Jewish Partnership), though not nominally anarchist, organized informally to break sieges to bring supplies into Palestinian towns and defend farmers from settlers and soldiers as they cultivated their land. From summer 2001 many international anarchists arrived in Palestine with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), accompanying Palestinian non-violent actions to tear down military roadblocks and break curfews, and serving as human shields and live witnesses during the Israeli offensive of spring 2002. The ISM was weakened following the killing of its volunteers Rachel Corrie and Tom Hurndall in the Gaza Strip, and a repressive Israeli campaign including raids on its flats and offices, deportations, and denials of entry.

From spring 2003 Israeli anarchists began to organize autonomously to cooperate

with Palestinians and internationals, particularly in the campaign against the construction of the Israeli Segregation Barrier in the West Bank. Invited by farmers from the village of Mas'ha, the group built a protest and outreach camp on their land, about to be confiscated for the fence. The camp lasted four months and led to the founding of the group Anarchists Against the Wall. Anarchists remain active in the West Bank and inside Israel, and have led the opposition to the second Lebanon war in August 2006.

*Source:*

*Published in The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest (2009)*

*Url: [theanarchistlibrary.org/library/uri-gordon-anarchism-in-israel-and-palestine](http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/uri-gordon-anarchism-in-israel-and-palestine)*

## **Dismantle it and let them fall**

### **Bassel al-Araj**

*(2020)*

I was writing an article with the title, “Why the Palestinian Authority must be dismantled” when a friend of mine shared with me the program of the Israeli Herzliya Conference taking place that year.

I was surprised to learn that senior Palestinian Authority figure Saeb Erekat, along with Prince Hasan of Jordan, were taking part. I decided to change the title to “Dismantle it and let them fall.”

So why must we abolish the PA and bring down its leaders?

### **1. The Harkis**

During the Algerian war of independence, many Algerians – at least 150,000 – joined the French army and secret police, and fought against the revolution. These so-called Harkis have a share of the blood of a million martyrs on their hands. The majority of them belonged to the class that benefited from the French occupation.

The situation in Palestine has many of the same features of what was happening in Algeria shortly before the revolution.

It is no secret that there is a comprador class directly benefiting from the existence of the occupation, and the current situation gives great privileges to that small fraction of society. Let us avoid taking up arms against one another. Let us dismantle it and let them fall.

### **2. The state is the death of the revolution**

Following the success of the Cuban revolution, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro disagreed over this dialectic. Guevara believed that revolutionaries needed to be freed from the burden of the state so they could export the revolution. Castro disagreed. But the reality is that Guevara was right and Castro was wrong.

Their disagreement concerned a state with all the attributes of a state. So what about half a state? Guevara’s analysis can be applied to the Palestinian question as well: After the 1993 Oslo accords were signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the obligations and duties of the state became a burden on the back of the revolution, at the expense of liberation.

And after the Zionists fled Gaza in 2005, Hamas was incorporated into the

Palestinian Authority and became constrained by a truce that was constantly renewed in deference to its governmental responsibilities and duties. So that we may be free of this burden, dismantle it and let them fall.

### **3. Corruption**

There is a lot to be said, but I will focus here on political corruption, as it is the most widespread form of corruption, found wherever you look, from the top of the pyramid all the way to the bottom.

From the Palestinian Authority to the legislature, all the way down to the national level, through parties and factions, the institutions of the Palestine Liberation Organization, public organizations and trade union groups — all have lost their legitimacy.

According to the Basic Law, we must wait for elections in order to choose alternatives, so we became hostages to Hamas' anger over [Fatah leader] Sakher Habash spouting blasphemies or Habash's anger for someone being 30 minutes tardy.

When they agreed on anything, it was to strip 41.8 percent of refugees (according to 2008 UNRWA statistics) of their rights to elect representatives in the national council, in order to maintain the stability of the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan. And they removed 1.4 million Palestinian citizens of Israel from their agenda. So to end this corruption, dismantle it and let them fall.

### **4. A contractor from within**

The Oslo accords transferred all the burdens and duties of the occupation to the PLO without restoring any rights, making it the cheapest occupation in history. Let us get rid of those burdens. Dismantle it and let them fall.

### **5. The culture of Oslo**

When I hear stories from elders about the culture and morals of Palestinian society during the first intifada, I'm genuinely shocked. It's as if they are talking about a totally different world.

When I look at this society, I see it overrun by consumerism and individualism, a lack of morals and principles, the spread of feelings of inferiority and colonized thinking.

Joining a political party has become about reaping the benefits, not about offering sacrifices and struggle. When I see all this I realize that in order to rid ourselves of this shame we must dismantle it and let them fall.



## 6. Security coordination

I cannot say that I know what security coordination with Israel is because I haven't read any official document describing what occurs during those meetings (which violates the most basic principle of good governance, transparency). But it is enough for me to cite Issa Qaraqe [the PA minister for prisoners affairs at the time] in his article on the end of security coordination. Dismantle it and let them fall.

## 7. Begging

We started to beg for anything, for what is worth having and what is not, especially after Arab states started giving large sums to the PLO and major countries started paying despite themselves just to pacify the revolutionaries. This affected the independent decision-making ability of Palestinians that Yasser Arafat fought his whole life to protect without giving in. So to end the begging, dismantle it and let them fall.

## 8. The legitimization of gangs

After Oslo, settlers were given the legitimacy to be on our lands. But the worst is perhaps yet to come, where dreaming of Acre will be a crime, owning Ghassan Kanafani's story Return to Haifa will be against the policy of the state and the horse of Mahmoud Darwish, which was left behind, will become an illegal migrant.

Is it any wonder that PA leader Mahmoud Abbas insists he does not want to undermine Israel's legitimacy? What I find most strange is Abbas' constant apologies for our people's struggles. So dismantle it and let them fall.

In order to determine everything it would take to dismantle it and let them fall, I would need all 20 years of negotiations and the number of words spoken by Saeb Erekat at the Herzliya Conference, but these eight points are enough to create a charge sheet against those who must fall.

We will become like the ancient Israelites roaming in the desert without shelter, if we remain in this condition between profiteers.

*Translation by Tamara Nassar*

*Source:*

*Dismantle it and let them fall (Bassel al-Araj The Electronic Intifada October 12 2020)*

*Url: [electronicintifada.net/content/dismantle-it-and-let-them-fall/31281](http://electronicintifada.net/content/dismantle-it-and-let-them-fall/31281)*



**2023**



## **Notes On Expanding the Struggle for the Liberation of the Palestinian People Anon / Salish Sea Intifada (2023)**

The western world finds itself in shock at a colonial superpower being caught off guard by a spectacular attack – settlers and western spectators fanatically call for blood because of the implicit threat, we could be next. In response to their world class embarrassment, the colonial state seeks a hundred eyes for an eye, thousands of teeth for a tooth and wages an open campaign of extermination against the Palestinian population they hold captive.

Before our eyes this genocide plays out. The ideologues of the colonial world rush to weigh one dead Israeli against hundreds of dead Palestinians, one captive against the thousands they hold in their prisons, the violence of small arms and patch work rockets against 70 years of ethnic cleansing, 16 years of a total military blockade on Gaza, and the constant airstrikes and military operations of a nuclear super power.

Some anarchists, still filled to the brim with enlightenment humanism, may rush to shout that we must not support this, we must condemn Hamas and the atrocities they commit! But who is this condemnation for? The people of Gaza cannot hear us through the blockade, over the rumbling of their empty stomachs, over the constant airstrikes, over the wails of now childless parents and now parentless children. And if they could hear us? They would not care because we have neither shipments of weapons, nor food and clean water, nor medicine and doctors for them.

It is true that colonialism produces monsters but first and foremost it is colonialism that produces them and they are made in the image of the colonial project. If we want to condemn monsters and atrocities we should start with that of the colonizer.

But we cannot simply condemn. When bombs drop, words mean nothing. We must think, we must act. It is through action that new connections can be made, it is through action that solidarity becomes tangible. It is through action that we may have tangible impact on the occupation and open a meaningful, anti-authoritarian pole of opposition.

I humbly offer these words for anarchists in the region to chew on, think about, critique, adapt, and act on to expand the struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people and to take steps towards the more long term, more meaningful, more dangerous solidarity.

### **Educate, Agitate, Attack – Expanding the Terrain of Struggle**

The war isn't as far away as we think it is. Israel is the forerunner in the development of counter-insurgency and policing techniques that get exported to the rest of the world. What they do to Palestine, US police and National Guard will do to us. But this isn't a one sided exchange. On one hand, large US corporations are supplying physical infrastructure for apartheid and genocide while on the other hand our taxes – compelled as they are – are funding the terror in such a direct way that makes us worse than accomplices, we are actively pulling the trigger.

If we wish to take seriously the proposition of solidarity we must move from a position of passive supporter to making their fight our fight and going all in with the risk it entails. From our region I would like to propose a model of analysis and action. It's a tool – take what's useful and burn the rest. My proposal is a three-pronged strategy of Educate, Agitate and Attack. They are not necessarily separate things though: the best education can be disruptive and agitative, you can agitate through attack, just as you can educate through attack. With a little creativity you can pull these three apart and reconfigure them in many exciting ways.

It's important to note that these are not discrete steps to a strategy, these are individual tools that work well together, are not necessarily separate and should all be done at the same time. Don't wait to attack, and don't get stuck in education by deluding yourself into thinking a critical mass of some abstract consciousness is needed to act further.

### **Education and Counter-Information**

I think many anarchists take for granted how plugged into news of the world we are and assume everyone has the same access to information we do. Not only is this plainly wrong but its also forgetting that most the information people readily have access to is beholden to private ideological interests (in this region that is largely Sinclair Broadcast Group and The McClatchy Company), state ideological interests, or more frequently a deluge of false information for profit via social media. If there is one thing that anarchists are about 20 years behind on, it's that information warfare is a key aspect of revolutionary struggle.

Every day the enemy's news is churning out bullshit, internet ideologues are writing their silly little blogs and tweets, and state militaries and intelligence agencies run bot armies to churn out nonsense to pollute the information ecosystem. The knee jerk response would be to say we simply need to do what they do, but better! But for anarchists this is a dead end. We are not here to produce an endless stream

of content for passive audiences, nor do we have large funders to pay for the infrastructure of a national 24-hour news network nor bot armies (though for the technically inclined, bot armies may not be that out of reach but that requires analysis of its own.) No, we must be more creative and prioritize educational interventions in physical space.

Some examples are of course the classics, graffiti and wheatpasting consistently (consistently as in maybe once every other day to keep areas plastered, not once every few weeks.) There's also setting up a table on a corner, in a park, in random areas with zines; handbills about what's going on; handbills about upcoming events; and trying to talk to passersby. But we can get a little more exciting and, if you will, a little more cringe. If you're wheatpasting, why not do it in the middle of the day in outrageous costumes or in black bloc to specifically draw attention to it? Why not take some friends and a loud speaker and go set up in a busy area (ideally blocking a road or doing something disruptive like shooting fireworks) and talk about what's going on? Handbills with more information to give out to people – or to just throw in the air by the hundreds – help a lot too. What about street theater? Again, ideally being as disruptive as possible with it. Just generally things were you can get people to stop and look and engage.

Then we can also get a little more daring with it. Maybe it's time for pirate radio to make a comeback. You can broadcast over other stations during rush hour about what's going on and how people can find out more. If there's a mass demonstration, why not do a break away march to a radio or TV station, get inside and force your way on air? This may seem risky and far fetched, but there's a genocide going on, what are you waiting for?

Ultimately education and counter-information only goes so far. Ideally we want to have face to face conversations with people, we ideally want to have an upcoming event or meeting to invite them to so they have a tangible next step. Having handbills with more information and with links to where they can learn more about what's going on and learn more about upcoming events is key.

To boil it down: Share information and offer people a tangible next step.

### **Agitation and Disruption**

To educate is not enough. We aren't going to learn our way to freedom, information alone will not stop a genocide. Neither, in most cases, will agitation and disruption but it is a start. When I talk of agitation I am talking of moving people to action – hype people up and give them a tangible list of targets and possible actions. When I am talking of disruption, I specifically mean the disruption of normal economic life. This is key both for general anarchist struggle and because of how deeply entwined daily life in the US is with the funding and logistical support of the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people.

When we think about disruption we need to be thinking about blocking commerce – stop transactions at stores and banks, disrupt the daily functioning of businesses and institutions that support or profit from the apartheid and genocide, block the transportation of people and freight. We also need to be thinking about breaking the spell of normality, the sense that everything is fine. An economic impact and a psychological impact. Every disruption is a chance to communicate and to educate. Well-worded banners and handbills, good chants and songs. Sometimes a speech can be useful to fire people up, but be careful because a speech makes a passive audience. Think big – how can we get people to act? Spreading and generalizing the conflict is key.

There are some long held disruptive tactics – protests that block traffic and intersections, though even better is taking those protests into businesses and institutions and getting them shut down for the day. Pickets at businesses and institutions that support and profit from the genocide. Highway or major thoroughfare blockades are great, but even better if you set up a hard barricade with banners and one open lane and have a handbill to give every car that passes. Blockading railways, with either shunts, sabotaging the tracks or physical blockades on the tracks are great to block commerce.

These require much more coordination and effort but boycotts and blockades are effective. There is a long term boycott campaign – Boycott Divest Sanction (BDS) – that can be plugged into and has a lot of information. If that's a little out of reach, the places to be boycotted can be continually disrupted and shut down, or their merchandise in stores can be stolen – ideally brazenly en masse – or otherwise sabotaged.

The idea is to bring the struggle from some far away place home and face to face to people so they cannot look away and pretend everything is fine and that it has nothing to do with them. And we have to think long and hard about how we approach this so that our actions and our messaging encourages people to act without waiting for a call to act or a single day of protest, we need to constantly push the idea that we are all protagonists in struggle, that we cannot wait for others to do what we can and that there are targets within our reach and a whole range of ways to engage.

### **Attack!**

Fundamentally, solidarity means attack. To physically destroy the infrastructure of oppression and genocide. This is what's going to do the most damage, is most likely to hamper the abilities of the genocidal structure to function, but this is also the most risky. There are two – complementary – ways to approach this. First as small crews and second as large crowds. One needn't look far to see what small groups do as anarchists regularly carry out small group actions. From broken windows to arson to breaking into labs and slaughterhouses and releasing captive creatures. All



of these tactics can successfully be applied to the struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people.

But we should think long and hard about our goals. Sure, a small group of us could go burn down some Amazon or Boeing infrastructure, but how much more powerful would it be if we got 1000 other people to storm and ransack the place with us? At any point we can and should undertake small group action but if we are trying to expand the terrain of struggle it is so a fuck-ton of people will engage in brazen, combative action and this takes a lot of time, building relationships, bold action and communication on our part, and careful planning.

In some instances this could be planning a combative breakaway march for the next mass demonstration, in other instances this could be taking the risk and putting in the effort of calling for our own mass combative action. But whether small group or mass action this entails risk and requires immense effort but this is fundamentally what it will take to open up another front in anti-colonial struggle to spread thin the colonizers.

It's crucial to dispense with the long held idea that we cannot be the cause of major upsurge and revolt, that we can only take a role of support and intervention. What is possible for us to do is largely determined by how much effort and consistency we are willing to put into a given line of struggle over a long period of time. We are usually bad at this, but it doesn't have to stay this way and to truly live up to the immense task laid before us in the imperial core it cannot stay this way.

### **Setting Sights**

What follows is a small and non-exhaustive list of targets that support, prop up and/or profit off the ongoing apartheid and genocide in the Salish Sea region.

First and foremost, every town and city will contain any number of people in power, businesses, non-profits, institutions, etc, that support Israel and push their propaganda. With some research these can be found and become prime targets. If nothing else we should make the territories we are in socially, and ideally physically, hostile to zionists. They're certainly doing this to people who support Palestinian liberation with people losing jobs and being black-listed from various industries and institutions.

Secondly, since Israel's founding in 1948 the US has sent over \$130 billion in aid. Between 2018 and 2022 the US has sent \$5.7 billion in military equipment via the Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) process, and since 1992 the US has given an additional \$6.6 billion worth of military equipment through the Excess Defense Articles program. U.S. European Command also maintains in Israel the U.S. War Reserve Stockpile, which can be used to boost Israeli defenses in the case of a significant military emergency. All of this information comes from the Department of State.

All of this money comes out of our taxes. When we pay rent and our landlords use that to pay property tax, a portion of that funds the Israeli war machine. When we make profit for our bosses and they use some of that to pay property tax, or pay to their landlord so they can pay property tax, we made money for the Israeli war machine. When we get paid and a chunk of that is taken for income tax, that goes to the Israeli war machine. The things we are compelled to do by the occupying military at home fund the occupying war machine both here and there. It is critical that we find ways to engage in long term rent and labor refusal.

Third, 2,200 soldiers from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit along with the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group and the USS Gerald R Ford Carrier Strike Group are in the region with orders to be ready to deploy. The military has also moved multiple military advisers to Israel to advise their ground invasion of Gaza. While today storming JBLM would be just a dream, what we can do are disruptions of and attacks on military recruiting centers as well as pushes to remove military recruiters from schools and universities. We can also take lessons from the Port Military Resistance should the need and opportunity to physically block the shipment of soldiers and military equipment arise. We should as well remember from PMR when the US military sent intelligence officer John Towry from JBLM to physically infiltrate activist and anarchist spaces.

Fourth, multiple tech companies which provide digital infrastructure for the apartheid and genocide have major infrastructure here in Washington. This includes Google with offices in Seattle and Kirkland, Microsoft with offices in Seattle and Redmond, and Amazon with offices in Seattle. Amazon also has Amazon Stores in Seattle and Whole Foods – which they also own – all over the region. There are also Amazon Distribution Centers in DuPont, Sumner, Seattle, Lacey, as well as one up north in Delta, British Columbia.

Fifth, Boeing which has major infrastructure in the region, has sent bombs to Israel. They have offices and a manufacturing area in Everett as well as offices in Seattle and Auburn.

Sixth, Starbucks which is all over the region and headquartered in Seattle is suing the Starbucks Union over a statement in support of Palestine.

Seventh, various police forces and agencies train with the IDF and bring the tactics and strategies they use against the Palestinian people back here to use on us. Seattle opposed a resolution to bar SPD from being trained by the IDF, police in Georgia train with the IDF through the GILEE program which puts local Cop City targets on the table (for more info, see Stop Cop City Solidarity), and ICE/Border Patrol who maintain a heavy presence in the region along with the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma train with the IDF.

Seventh, the BDS movement maintains a large list of corporations and institutions

supporting apartheid. The major corporations which they identify and many of which are to some degree or another in the region or contracted with another corporation, business or institution in the region are: Elbit Systems, Google, Amazon, HP and HPF, CAT, JCB, Volvo, Hyundai Heavy Industries, Chevron, Siemens, CAF, G4S/Allied Universal, AXA, PUMA, Carrefour, Booking.com, Airbnb, Sabra, Barclays, and Expedia.

This is a pretty surface level list of targets. More research is needed to get specific addresses, names and addresses of individuals involved, contractors and subcontractors etc.

### **Solidarity in the Long Haul**

What I have written here is for the short and medium term, but solidarity is a long term affair and unfortunately anarchists don't have the best track record with long term struggle. This can and must change. We must continue to be in the fight once the news moves to the next catastrophe. A year from now, ten years from now, until the day Israel falls and the Palestinian people are free.

Solidarity implies risk and danger, that part of making their fight our fight is also putting our bodies on the line. Do we go where the bombs are dropping to build personal connections with insurgent communities? Here the liberals have us beat and we can look to the example of Rachel Corrie who went to the occupied territories and was murdered by the IDF when she put her body between an armored bulldozer and the house of a Palestinian family that was to be demolished. She should be alive though and the struggle doesn't need more martyrs.

But for us to show up in a strange context with no connections will likely get us killed. We must build connections with individuals, crews and organizations active in struggle. The first step of this is learning the language which I see as the primary first step of international solidarity. From here we make connections, sometimes this can be facilitated by friends, by networks, by organizations or by the internet. Then we need structures – formal or informal matters not – to facilitate and sponsor bringing comrades from other places here to talk about their struggles, and to send us to their territories to see for ourselves, to make more connections, and to fight with them and face the same dangers they face.

From this basis of connection and affinity we can begin to approach more sophisticated aspects – how do we forge documents? How do we smuggle money, people, supplies, information, food, and weapons across borders? These things may seem far off and fantastical to us but this was the bread and butter of our forebears and what internationalism necessitates. In the past revolutionary and anti-colonial movements could rely on a super power bloc to help them with these things – with strings attached. We never could rely on such a thing, nor is there even such a thing to rely on anyway. What we do in our region and what others do in theirs – how

we fight, how we make connections, how we communicate – must be the seeds of a black international that can position anarchy as a global force of opposition that can provide material aid to liberatory struggles so people are not forced to choose between two or three different tyrants.

This is a long term project, we're talking 5 years, 10 years, 20 years. But this is what true solidarity necessitates, this is what an anti-nationalist internationalism necessitates. The task laid before us is enormous in scope and we will either rise to the challenge or once again fall obscure into the dustbin of history. The choice is ours.

*Anon*

*Source:*

*Salish Sea Intifada (Anon Puget Sound Anarchists March 11, 2023)*

*Url: [pugetsoundanarchists.org/salish-sea-intifada-notes-on-expanding-the-struggle-for-the-liberation-of-the-palestinian-people](https://pugetsoundanarchists.org/salish-sea-intifada-notes-on-expanding-the-struggle-for-the-liberation-of-the-palestinian-people)*

## **Voices from the Front Line Against the Occupation** **Fauda and Black Rose Anarchist Federation** *(2023)*

In this new, even more horrifying phase of the 75 year long occupation of Palestine by Israel, it is important to give a platform to Palestinians struggling against ethnic cleansing.

Black Rose / Rosa Negra (BRRN) reached out to Fauda, a small group centered in the West Bank that identifies itself as a Palestinian anarchist organization, to get their perspective on the current struggle. Fauda is a group that is new to us, and which we don't have more information about beyond the interview presented here and what can be found in their public channels. Because of our own limited understanding of Fauda's politics, strategy and activity, publishing this interview cannot be a complete endorsement of them. But we hope that this interview will be a step in creating more connections between revolutionaries in the US and the militant youth in Palestine, and more knowledge and understanding of each other.

Regardless of any similarities or differences in our politics, we believe that we need to be listening to the perspectives of militants on the ground resisting the violence of US-funded ethnic cleansing. We hope that this short interview can be a contribution to strengthening our own work here of undermining imperialism and settler-colonialism.

Other than edits for clarity across translation, the content of this interview is presented unaltered. We want to thank our Palestinian and Arabic-speaking friends for their help with conducting and translating this interview. We also want to extend our gratitude to the representative of Fauda who thoughtfully engaged with our questions during a moment of extreme uncertainty and violence.

**1. BRRN: Can you tell us about your group – what are your activities, and what makes Fauda distinct from other Palestinian political groups, like DFLP, PFLP, Hamas, Fatah, etc.?**

1. Our group is known as the “Fauda Movement in Palestine” and consists of young activists and academics from inside and outside Palestine. Our goal is to bring together all forces with various political and intellectual ideas and trends and focus them on fighting the unjust occupation and racist Zionist thought in Palestine. That's why we have good relations with some young people from the Jewish faith, some converts, some Muslims, Christians, and others.

The idea is that many Palestinians oppose the racist and unjust acts of the Zionist occupation, but they do not find a single axis around which they can unite. This is why we often see that instead of focusing on fighting racism and the Zionist apartheid regime, they attack each other.

Here we are playing the role of mediation between the various parties to bring together all the possibilities and capabilities of the Palestinians to combat the apartheid regime.

We have carried out various activities, including teaching Palestinian youth how to struggle and the methods of struggle and anarchist thought (the educational unit). Coordinating various vigils and protests, some peaceful and some in the form of a black bloc (the executive unit). Publishing news and everything related to Palestine and the Palestinian people, and what the Israeli army and security systems are doing. The suppression of individual and social freedoms, demolition of Palestinian homes, killing of children, massacres and genocide against the Palestinian people and so on (News Unit). And the dissemination of important information about the history of Palestine, the history of the Palestinian and Israeli conflict, and the intellectual differences that the new generation may face from its past, because here we are facing a fierce media war that distorts the facts and turns them in favor of Israel. As you know, Israel has channels that broadcast around the clock in Arabic in order to distort historical facts and spread its false narrative about the past and what is currently happening on the ground (Media Unit).

This is a short overview of the Fauda Movement in Palestine.

## **2. BRRN: What do you want comrades in the US to know about the situation in Palestine right now?**

2. Regarding this question, I want to tell all our brothers around the world, not just in the United States, to never trust what the global media empire tells you, as we have always seen how it distorts the news and turns it in favor of global colonialism and the Zionist occupation.

Here in Palestine we are suffering. We suffer from being robbed of the minimum requirements of life. I want you to know that there is not a single day – I assure you, literally – there is not a single day that the Israeli army does not arrest a young Palestinian man or woman as she walks in the street.

The Palestinian areas in the West Bank always suffer from electricity and water cuts on an almost daily basis. For years, the Israeli army has been seeking to forcibly displace some Palestinian areas in order to seize them and build new settlements there. In the past, the army was practicing all repressive and violent methods to clear out these areas and displace Palestinians from their land, but recently we see that they are practicing a soft policy for the same previous goals, i.e. forced displacement. This soft policy consists of cutting off electricity and water for a long period, not collecting waste from those areas so that a stench reeks in those areas, launching comprehensive military exercises close to those

areas to harm the Palestinian population in that area, and other inhumane actions carried out by the Zionist occupation. This is a very small and simple part of what is happening throughout the year here in Palestine, especially in the West Bank.

Currently, in the midst of this violent war, Israeli security forces have arrested a large number of civilians in the West Bank without any specific charges for fear of the outbreak of confrontations in the West Bank. Imagine that you are sitting at home with your family, and suddenly Israeli soldiers enter, pointing weapons at you and your family, and arrest you without any crime you committed. That's exactly the situation here. I wish they were just arrests. In many cases, arrests lead to severe torture in prisons and even death as a result of these systematic practices.

I want you to know something else, which is that the Palestinian Authority and President Mahmoud Abbas do not represent us, the Palestinian people, at all. We reject authority and we reject Abbas and all his ministers. I do not know whether you have heard of the security coordination agreement between the Zionist occupation and the Palestinian Authority. Years ago, the Palestinian Authority concluded an agreement under which it would serve the occupying entity in terms of security. That is, all the young Palestinian activists who fight the Zionist occupation in one way or another and the occupation cannot arrest them, the Palestinian Authority pursues them, arrests them, and hands them over to the occupation, and then no one knows the fate of that young man or that girl. These do not represent us, nor any other Palestinian. These are completely rejected in the Palestinian street, but unfortunately they are officially and internationally recognized by the United Nations and supported by the United States of America.

### **3. BRRN: What has the past week been like for you personally?**

3. The issue is not a matter of a week or two, my brother. We live in a state of oppression and deprivation of individual and social freedoms all year round. Yes, last week there were much more tragedies and painful news than in previous months. We received news of the death of many of our relatives and friends throughout the Palestinian territories. This is very painful. We have many friends in the West Bank and in Gaza. The Palestinian population in Gaza is now living in a very dangerous situation. For more than three or four days, they [the Israeli occupation forces] have cut off electricity and water in the Gaza Strip. When the electricity is cut off, many social services stop, especially hospitals. The bombing continues on the people of Gaza around the clock. Even in the middle of the night they bombard this small area. Israel has completely blockaded this area. People can't even escape them. The occupation prevents humanitarian aid from reaching Gaza. The occupation forbids food, forbids water, forbids medicine and everything else. Gaza has become a small dungeon, bombed from every side and place. Imagine that a mother sees her young infant injured and bleeding, but there is no hospital providing services due to a power outage. How would you like to describe this mother's feelings?

My brother, words cannot describe what is happening here. This area has become hell because of the occupation and the presence of Zionism in it.

**4. BRRN: What movements in Palestine do you think hold the most hope for the future of Palestinians and why – for example, the Lion’s Den of Nablus, or different workers struggles?**

4. We need youth movements that believe in the possibility of liberation, and that work to build unity with the rest of the movements and trends in Palestine. Experience has proven that one movement alone cannot accomplish a major achievement that leads to the liberation of Palestine. We need to all deal with each other, whether Muslims, Jews, Christians, converts, anarchists, and other ideas that exist in the Palestinian arena. This is what we seek: to bring everyone together under one banner and with one goal, which is to combat Zionism, liberate Palestine, and restore our freedom. Of course, there are many movements in the Palestinian arena, including the Lion’s Den. But the lion’s den is not the only movement. There are many other trends and movements, including labor struggles, striving with all their energy, but due to the strict security conditions and systematic repressive policies practiced by the occupation and also by the traitorous Palestinian Authority, they are not seen in a visible and significant way in public. Because we always need to be careful and cautious. For this reason, I was not able to conduct an audio or video interview with you.

**5. BRRN: In 2021 Palestinians across the West Bank, Gaza, and even those who are citizens of Israel, participated in a general strike in reaction to evictions of Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah. What role do you see for work stoppages and general strikes in this period?**

5. I think we have passed the stage of general strikes in Israel. Of course, I do not want to deny the importance of strikes and their effectiveness, but the situation here in Palestine and experience has proven that the only solution is struggle and even armed struggle against the apartheid regime.

The occupation does not hesitate to commit any type of crime, injustice, or persecution.

Even if you own a profession or a shop and you go on strike, the result will be that they will steal your shop and give it to another Zionist, or they will fire you from your job, and thus another Zionist will take the job. Easily!

The conditions here are completely different from what is happening to you in the United States, my brother.

**6. BRRN: Do you believe that there is any hope of large numbers of working class Israelis ever abandoning zionism – as small numbers of anarchists and socialists have, or do you think that the attachment to settler colonialism is too strong for them to ever overcome?**

6. The Zionists who are here in the Palestinian territories came here on the basis of the ideological principle that this land is their land and that the Jewish people are the chosen



people. Of course, everyone who believes in this principle and adopts this ideology cannot easily abandon Zionism, nor recognize the freedom of others and the principle of equality between human beings.

But we make a distinction between Zionism and Judaism. We have Jewish friends who speak Hebrew and believe in the Torah, but they do not believe in Zionism, and they even help us in our activities against the occupying entity. Therefore, yes, we hope that the number of these people will increase and that many of them, especially in the working class, will abandon this racist ideological principle that has no connection to Judaism at all. We welcome them and receive them with open arms, and we can work with them and live together in peace.

**7. BRRN: What do you think are the most effective acts of solidarity for liberation in Palestine that comrades in the US can take?**

7. I think the most important thing you can do is media support for the Palestinians. You can explain to the people in the United States the Palestinian issue as it is, not according to the false Israeli narrative. You can publish news and events taking place in Palestine. There are many videos and pictures of the daily crimes of the occupying entity on Palestinian websites. We also publish this news on our Instagram page @fauda\_palestine and our Telegram channel @fauda\_ps. You can translate this news and deliver the facts to our brothers in the United States. Do not make the official media and American and Israeli channels your only sources from which you receive news and follow events. Follow the Palestinian media as well. The Palestinian media faces a very severe media blackout. Try to break this blackout and reach some of the current facts in the Palestinian arena.

*Source:*

*Voices from the Front Line Against the Occupation (Fauda and Black Rose October 17 2020)*

*Url: [blackrosefed.org/interview-fauda-palestine/](https://blackrosefed.org/interview-fauda-palestine/)*

## **From the Galilee to Gaza: A Voice from Palestine** **CrimethInc** *(2023)*

Right now, the Israeli military is raining bombs onto people trapped in Gaza. They have already killed almost 3000 people and displaced over a million more. This is just the latest chapter in over a century of colonial violence targeting Palestinians.

We grieve for everyone throughout the region killed, injured, or displaced on October 7 and in the days before and since. But as in any struggle, those who have the most power have the most leverage when it comes to determining what form the conflict will take. We are concerned about the lives of Palestinians in Gaza and elsewhere around the world, not despite the deaths of Israelis, but because the only way to make anyone safe in the region will be to bring an end to the oppression of Palestinians.

Corporate media outlets in Europe and North America have spent the past ten days focusing attention on Israeli suffering rather than exploring the series of events that led to this situation. The vast majority of all perspectives on the situation are coming from outside Palestine. It is important to hear directly from Palestinians, who understand better than anyone else how the situation reached this point.

It has been very difficult to communicate with people in Gaza, owing to challenges including Israeli airstrikes targeting communications infrastructure. For now, we present the perspective of a Palestinian living in the north of Palestine, who speaks about different aspects of life under colonization and about the struggle for liberation through grassroots organizing and solidarity.

For more background on the situation, you can read this interview with an anarchist from Jaffa.

### **A Voice from the Galilee of Palestine**

I'm writing you here today from the Galilee of Palestine, a part of Palestine occupied by the Zionist colonial forces during the Nakba [catastrophe] in 1948. I'm writing these words during the month of October 2023, a month that will always be remembered as a turning point for Palestine and the Palestinian struggle. I am writing anonymously, because I'm writing from the belly of the beast, because

nowadays Israel's surveillance and political persecution of Palestinians in the 1948 territory is unprecedented, because the fascism and totalitarianism of the colonial project are escalating daily and every word we express involves taking a risk.

As I'm writing these words, warplanes are crossing the skies above my head. The sound of their engines is filling the neighborhood. They have been crossing the sky for the past ten days, day and night, from sunrise to sunset to sunrise.

All these warplanes are heading to Gaza. As I'm writing these words, a genocide is being committed there. Only two hours away from here, in Gaza, Israel—backed by global colonial imperial powers—is erasing my people from the face of the earth.

### **Gaza: The Ongoing Nakba and the Somoud**

Gaza, our beloved Gaza, Gaza the resistance, Gaza the eternal symbol of human resilience, Gaza the wound, the heartache, Gaza the somoud [steadfastness].

Gaza is located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, bordered by Israeli settlements to the east and north and by Egypt to the southwest. With a population of over 2.2 million people on just 365 square kilometers, it is among the most densely populated places in the world. 70% of the Palestinians in Gaza are refugees whose families were expelled from nearby towns by the Zionist colonial militias in 1948 during the Nakba.

In 2007, Israel imposed a blockade on Gaza by land, air, and sea. Since then, the state of Israel has carried out five major aggressions against Gaza.

The first took place in 2008, after the imposition of the blockade. It lasted 22 days, during which 1385 Palestinians were killed, including 318 children.

The second began in November 2012. It lasted for eight days. 168 Palestinians were killed, including 33 children.

The third began in July 2014 and lasted for 50 days. 2251 Palestinians were killed, including 556 children, and 1500 children were orphaned.

In May 2021, the fourth aggression took place during the uprising of dignity that erupted all over Palestine from the river to the sea. It lasted for eleven days, during which 230 Palestinians were killed, including 67 children. Twelve of those children were participating in a trauma recovery program when they were killed.

Today, a fifth aggression is happening in Gaza, and it is more brutal and catastrophic than anything that came before. Israeli airstrikes have already killed nearly 3000 people and wounded more than 12,000. More than 45 families have

been completely erased from the civil registry. Over one million people have been displaced and forced to flee their homes due to the Israeli bombs. Israel has cut off electricity, food, and fuel from Gaza and is bombing residential buildings, schools, mosques, hospitals, and ambulances. Entire neighborhoods have vanished.

People are starting to starve and have nowhere to hide, no way to escape. This is all happening with the clear and shameless support of Western governments, like the United States and the United Kingdom, who hurried to send military support to Israel. This is all happening while Israeli colonial propaganda is all over the international mass media trying to manufacture an anti-Palestinian campaign and frame it as a “war on terror” in order to legitimize mass ethnic cleansing and the ongoing Nakba that has been happening in Palestine for the past 75+ years.

### **“Who’s a Terrorist?”—The Manufacture of Consent**

As we’ve witnessed throughout history, propaganda and the tactic of “manufacturing consent” has always been used by colonial, imperial, and fascist entities to legitimize, maintain, and expand their control. This is also how they legitimize extermination and mass ethnic cleansing.

Manufacturing consent is the state strategy of creating a system in which people come to unquestioningly obey and consent to the principles, ideas, and plans promoted through corporate-sponsored propaganda and the mass media. It has been used to serve the interests of the United States and its allies in invading Afghanistan in 2001, invading Iraq in 2003, and causing wars and atrocities in Syria, Yemen, Libya, and many places around the world, resulting in the loss of millions of innocent lives and so much human suffering.

Today, the mass media is trying to dehumanize us as Palestinian people, to frame us as terrorists, in order to make it easier to justify every atrocity committed by Israel and its allies—both in Gaza specifically and against Palestinians in general. As Arabs and Palestinians, we know very well what it is like being seen and treated as “terrorists.” But the scale of the anti-Palestinian propaganda campaign that is being manufactured worldwide by states, governments and the mass media right now is unprecedented for us.

During the second intifada, after the events of 9/11 in 2001, the Palestinian hip-hop band “DAM” released the song “Meen Erhabi?”—“Who is the terrorist?” During this period, sentences like “death to the terrorist Arabs” were being shouted by Israeli settlers all over occupied Palestine. I remember listening to this song every day. It shaped my consciousness as a child. Today, 22 years later, the global system is pushing the narrative that “the Palestinian is a terrorist” like never before, and we say again and again: the colonizer is the terrorist, the settler is the terrorist, every government supporting Israel is a terrorist, Israel is the terrorist.

### **The System versus the People**

The situation in Palestine is exposing the cruelty and brutality of the global system, but also, the immense power of the people around the world.

From the side of the global system, we have witnessed so much atrocity and ugliness this past week. The United States sent the “Gerald R. Ford”—the biggest warship ever built—and the UK deployed their royal navy ships to support Israel in the genocide it is committing.

French police are beating protestors who show support for Palestine. French officials are demanding the deportation of immigrants who participated in a pro-Palestinian demonstration in France. In Germany, police are arresting and beating people just for holding the Palestinian flag. These colonial entities and fascist governments are once again revealing their real faces. As Palestinians, we’ve always known that the global system is against us, it is something we understand from a very young age. We expect nothing from colonial entities. We have no trust in governments or the global powers. Our trust is in the people and the power of the people only.

Despite all these atrocities, we are also witnessing the voice of liberation and justice resonating in the streets across the planet, we are witnessing the power of the people. The people know the truth, and there’s no suppressing this knowledge. We’ve seen thousands marching for the liberation of Palestine in the streets of London and Paris even after protests for Palestine were banned.

We’ve seen the streets of Lisbon and Porto filled with rage, love, and solidarity. We’ve seen the tens of thousands of our brothers and sisters rallying for Palestine in Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Morocco.

Today, every effort to bring the truth into the light matters. Every Palestinian flag raised matters. Every expression of solidarity matters. Every effort of organizing for Palestine matters. Every “from the river to the sea” matters.

Yes, these days are painful beyond comprehension but we know today more than ever, that liberation is inevitable.

It’s only a matter of time. Palestine will be free.

*Source:*

*From the Galilee to Gaza (CrimethInc. October 17, 2023)*

*Url: [crimethinc.com/2023/10/17/from-the-galilee-to-gaza-a-voice-from-palestine-1](https://crimethinc.com/2023/10/17/from-the-galilee-to-gaza-a-voice-from-palestine-1)*

## **Strategizing for Palestinian Solidarity: Expanding the Toolkit The Fayer Collective (2023)**

### **The Ceasefire in Gaza Starts Here**

In the weeks since Israel declared war on Palestine, people across the world have participated in protests against Israeli airstrikes in Gaza. Many of the largest protests have taken place in Europe and the United States, with 70,000 people taking to the streets in London last Saturday to demand an end to Israeli air strikes and the provision of arms to Israel. Protestors in Berlin (where pro-Palestine protests are now banned) clashed with police, who deployed pepper spray, water cannons, and physical force against protestors. Protests in support of Palestine have taken place in most major cities in the United States as well. In Chicago, 25,000 people assembled on October 21. For three weekends in a row, the Palestinian Youth Movement has called demonstrations in Atlanta that brought over 1000 people into the streets to demand an end to the Israeli occupation and the genocidal bombing of Gaza.

As of Thursday, November 2, the Israeli military had killed a reported 9193 Palestinians and wounded at least 32,000. At least half of the dead are civilian non-combatants, including at least 3,760 Palestinian children.

Grassroots support for Palestinians is at an all-time high despite Western politicians' and war profiteers' attempts to weaponize Jewish identity against them, outlaw and repress solidarity protests, and rally around Israel's "right to defend itself." But to stop the genocide in Gaza, activists in the United States will have to move from demanding a ceasefire to imposing one. This will require a shift from demands that appeal to the consciences of elected officials to tactics that create a political crisis for politicians and disrupt corporations' ability to profit from the oppression and genocide of Palestinian people.

### **75 Years of War**

As a result of the Nakba ("catastrophe") of 1948, 78% of Palestinians' historic homeland was declared a Jewish state. Approximately 500 Palestinian villages experienced ethnic cleansing and roughly 700,000 Palestinians became refugees. This is essential context for understanding subsequent events such as the Six Day War of 1967 and the 1973 Yom Kippur/Ramadan War, when a coalition of Arab states attempted to reclaim territory lost in the Six Day War.

On October 7, 2023, the fifty-year anniversary of the beginning of the Yom Kippur/Ramadan War, Hamas militants and other Palestinian groups breached the Gaza border by land, sea, and air in a surprise offensive.<sup>1</sup> These attacks left approximately 1200 Israelis dead and 5431 injured, including an unknown number of children. [^2] Hamas besieged several settlements in the territory around Gaza, taking 242 hostages. The Israeli government evacuated the area to regain control from Hamas, then carried out a larger evacuation to create a buffer zone in preparation to for the military invasion that is underway now.

So far, Hamas has released four Israeli civilian hostages. They have announced that they are prepared to release all the hostages in exchange for the return of all Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails, though they reported days ago that “almost 50” hostages had been killed by Israeli air raids.

Before October 7, there were 5200 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli custody, more than 25 times the number of hostages Hamas has taken. Some estimates claim that the total number of Palestinian prisoners has doubled since October 7. Israel’s airstrikes on Gaza have targeted civilian infrastructure including schools, aid agencies, mosques, and civilian housing units. There has been considerable controversy over whose missile hit the Al-Ahli hospital, but the tragedy illustrates how difficult it is to get information on the suffering taking place in Palestine and how readily Israeli officials will justify any kind of atrocity: shortly after the explosion at the hospital, an aid to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu posted on social media that Israel had bombed the hospital because Hamas combatants were inside, then quickly deleted the post.

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have long used military strategies targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. In 2008, Israeli Defense Forces Colonel Gabi Siboni described Israel’s strategy of disproportionate force in the Second Lebanon War of 2006 as a policy of deploying “force that is disproportionate to the enemy’s actions and the threat it poses,” force that “aims at inflicting damage and meting out punishment to an extent that will demand long and expensive reconstruction processes.” Part of the Dahiya Doctrine of asymmetric warfare, the strategy of disproportionate force predominantly targets civilian infrastructure rather than enemy combatants, seeking to deter future offensive attacks by tying up the economy and civilian population in lengthy, costly reconstruction processes.

This scorched-earth approach to war can be seen in Israel’s air strikes in Gaza. These attacks on civilian infrastructure appear to represent an intentional strategy in which civilians and the resources they depend on become the primary targets of war. This suggests that the strategy of disproportionate force Israel developed in Lebanon is implicated in the devastating loss of life and life-giving infrastructure in Palestine.

**“Ceasefire now!”**

Protests for Palestinian liberation have taken place in most major cities in the United States, often with thousands of participants. Many of these protests draw a through-line connecting the struggle for Palestinian liberation with the struggle against United States colonialism. Protesters have highlighted the fact that the United States government is the single largest donor to Israel’s military and most of the weapons used to kill Palestinians are manufactured by companies based in the United States.

In Atlanta, protesters have pointed to GILEE (Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange) as a local link between Israel’s oppression of Palestinians and the police violence and repression facing Atlantans. Based out of Georgia State University, GILEE facilitates the international exchange of policing and repression tactics between Georgia police officers and Israeli police forces. Five Atlanta Police Department commanders were scheduled to visit Israel from October 13-21 as part of GILEE.

Activists in Atlanta are acutely aware of the global network of repression linking the Stop Cop City and Defend the Atlanta Forest movement to the movement for Palestinian liberation. Many have noted that Israeli forces will train at Cop City if it is built. On October 12, 300 Georgia State University students walked out of class to protest GILEE, understanding it as part of a system of “Deadly Exchange.” On October 25, Emory University students organized a walkout of over 100 students to demand that the Emory administration divest from Cop City, the Atlanta Committee for Progress, and the GILEE Program.

The ties between the Atlanta Police Department, Cop City, and Israel’s military forces have become a topic of public scrutiny in Atlanta because of the movement to Stop Cop City and Defend the Atlanta Forest. But GILEE is just one of dozens of such deadly exchange programs in the United States. Eight years before Minneapolis police murdered George Floyd, for example, officers in the Minneapolis Police Department received training from Israeli police forces at a conference in Chicago.

Jewish people living in the United States have also mobilized against the bombardment and invasion of Gaza, urging Biden to call for a ceasefire. The vast majority of these protesters reject Zionism (the movement born at the end of the 19th century to establish a Jewish state in the land of historic Palestine and to support that state by any means necessary) as a component of Jewish identity. Instead, many anti-Zionist Jews embrace the diasporic ethos that Jewish people have embodied for millennia.

One of the largest organizations in the United States calling for Palestinian liberation is Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), a Palestine solidarity group founded in



1996. Jewish Voice for Peace sparked controversy in 2019 when the organization officially adopted an anti-Zionist position. On October 18, 2023, in Washington, D.C., Jewish Voice for Peace organized the largest known Jewish-led protest in solidarity with Palestinians. According to JVP, 10,000 people from across the country descended on the National Mall in a “Jews Against Genocide” rally. Nearly 500 Jews—including 25 rabbis—entered the Canon Building at the Capitol wearing shirts bearing the phrase “Not In Our Name” in bold letters. They held a sit-in for over three hours until they were arrested and dragged out in handcuffs.

Jewish Voice for Peace is not the only Jewish-led organization that has emerged in response to decades of violence against Palestinian people. In 2014, the Israeli military launched “Operation Protective Edge,” a military offensive in Gaza that killed more than 2200 Palestinians, over 65% of whom were civilians. In response to those attacks, a small group of Jewish youth who opposed the support American Jewish institutions for the invasion of Gaza founded IfNotNow, a Jewish youth organization based in the United States. The day before JVP demonstrated at the Capitol on October 18, members of IfNotNow blockaded all thirteen entrances of the White House while staff were inside and engaged in minor skirmishes with Secret Service police outside.

Though the number of Jews who have mobilized across the United States over the past four weeks is impressive, neither the demands they have presented nor the devastating civilian death toll in Palestine have swayed the decisions of elected officials.

### **How to Start a Ceasefire**

Recent demonstrations against the genocide in Palestine demonstrate nationwide popular support for Palestinian liberation among Jews and non-Jews alike. If these demonstrations have failed to end the attacks on Palestinians, it is because they are intended to appeal to the consciences of politicians whose support for Israel is based not on moral evaluations, but on economic calculations. Elsewhere, groups fighting for Palestinian liberation have begun to create an economic crisis for war profiteers by targeting the corporations that benefit from the bombing and invasion of Gaza.

Active in both the United Kingdom and the United States, a group called Palestine Action has targeted the weapons manufacturing company Elbit Systems, which supplies 85% of Israel’s drone fleet. On October 12, activists in Cambridge, Massachusetts splattered red paint on the front of an Elbit office before locking themselves together to blockade the entrance. Palestine Action recently announced its United States launch with a Zoom webinar on October 24 to explain their strategy, targets, and tactics. Early that same morning, activists targeted Intercontinental Real Estate, which owns the office building rented to Elbit in Cambridge. According to one report, they “smashed Intercontinental’s

intercom box clear off the wall, covered the front wall of Intercontinental Real Estate's Brighton office in red paint, and spray-painted 'Evict Elbit' in large black letters."

According to reporting by Globes, Elbit's stock prices have dropped by nearly 10% since October 7, while other weapons manufacturers have seen a 5-17% increase in the same period.

Earlier this year, Palestine Action forced a factory belonging to Elbit subsidiary UAV Defence Systems to permanently close after activists besieged it for 60 days straight. The group also forced Elbit to sell their Oldham-based subsidiary Ferranti in January 2022 after 18 months of sustained direct action at the factory. Six months later, the company permanently closed their London headquarters after the fifteenth direct action at the site.

In addition to targeting Elbit Systems and their subsidiaries, Palestine Action has also carried out a strategy of tertiary targeting, organizing actions at the offices and warehouses of companies with economic links to Elbit. Tertiary targeting puts pressure on a project's core contractors by pressuring businesses that have less of a stake in the project to sever ties with them. Tertiary targeting was also utilized by the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign of the early 2000s and the Stop Reeves Young campaign of the Stop Cop City movement.

Movements in the United States have long used tactics such as blockades, home and office demonstrations, sit-ins, vandalism, and sabotage to take action against wars abroad. In the last month, targeted actions against war profiteers such as Elbit Systems and their subsidiaries show that popular anti-colonial sentiment can be channeled into effective action by striking at the economic heart of the processes that make war possible, rather than the consciences of elected officials. Thousands of miles away from the genocide in Palestine, everyday people in the United States may feel powerless to end Israel's devastating attacks. But in fact, activists living in the colonial core have the power to directly disrupt the functioning of the institutions and war profiteers who benefit from genocide in Gaza.

*Source:*

*Strategizing for Palestinian Solidarity (The Fayer Collective, CrimethInc November 3 2023)*

*Url: [crimethinc.com/2023/11/03/strategizing-for-palestinian-solidarity-expanding-the-toolkit-from-demands-to-direct-action-1](https://crimethinc.com/2023/11/03/strategizing-for-palestinian-solidarity-expanding-the-toolkit-from-demands-to-direct-action-1)*

## **Workers' Power Against Genocide Fighting For A Free Palestine Geelong Anarchist-Communists (2023)**

Today the people of Palestine are like a modern day David, fighting against the Goliath of the Israeli Defence Forces, backed by Western governments. The prospects for military victory are dire, instead the liberation of Palestine depends on uprisings across the Middle East. Only another Arab Spring that breaks the reactionary regimes across the region can provide Palestinians with breathing room in their struggle.

But the liberation of Palestine also requires breaking the back of Western Imperialism. Australia maintains its own imperialist interests, exploiting Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and other neighbours. To further Australia's interests the government follows the lead of the United States. Our politicians cannot even call the violence in Palestine by its name; genocide and colonialism. Deputy Prime Minister and the local embarrassment of the Corio electorate, MP Richard Marles has said

“Israel is a liberal democracy. She cherishes human rights and values freedom of speech. And in that, Israel and Australia are the same.”

We too believe Israel and Australia have similarities – they are both colonial nations built on violence, genocide and exploitation. They both use ‘liberal democracy’ to cover up deeply entrenched racism and systemic violence.

Smashing Australian imperialism requires confronting Australian capitalism. We can't just petition politicians to speak out against the violence Israel enacts on Palestinians. There must be protests that break through the media's imperialist bias. There must be more occupations of government offices and the shutting down of companies that support the Israeli apartheid regime. But even if all the politicians changed their mind, words would not stop the IDF.

But the international labour movement also has an important role to play. In Belgium, transport unions recently declared they would refuse to transport weapons to Israel. Workers in Australia could use their industrial power; with strikes and boycotts they can halt the flow of profit and material to the Zionist regime.

Australian dock workers once refused to ship iron to Japan, while their armies occupied and slaughtered the Chinese. Wharfies also led the so called 'Black Armada', which helped defeat Dutch colonialism in Indonesia. There were strikes against the Vietnam war. Australian workers, through their unions, once played a powerful role in the liberation of South Africa from apartheid. We can do it again.

Geelong Anarchist Communists believe that we have an anti-imperialist duty to fight the interests of the Australian government and capital, to struggle in solidarity for the liberation of Palestine. We call on workers to form rank and file committees in their unions supporting Palestinian resistance, to boycott the production of all materials that support the Israeli regime, to refuse to transport Israeli goods, to attend rallies and occupations and to raise their voices. We will not stay silent in the face of genocide.

Smash Imperialism! Smash Colonialism!  
Freedom for Palestine!

*Source:*

*Workers' Power Against Genocide (Geelong Anarchists November 5, 2023)*

*Url: [geelonganarchists.org/2023/11/05/workers-power-against-genocide](https://geelonganarchists.org/2023/11/05/workers-power-against-genocide)*

## Palestine, Platitudes and Silence

### Tommy Lawson

(2023)

*In the end we will remember not the words of our enemies,  
but the silence of our friends.'*  
- Martin Luther King Jr.

It is no secret that the history of Palestinian resistance is deeply intertwined with the socialist movement. As anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism are basic principles, socialists have always opposed the occupation of Palestine by both Britain and Israel. Anarchist-Communists are part of the broader socialist movement and said principles are just as, if not more, deeply embedded in the tradition.<sup>1</sup> However, in the face of the latest barbarity unleashed by Israel upon the Palestinian population, two anarchist-communist organisations in Europe have taken stances that amount to either passivity or tacit endorsement of genocide. Their positions are illustrative of how mistakes in theory can have practical repercussions.

### **Anarchist Communist Group – Are all nationalisms as bad as each other?**

*“The struggle must be against Imperialism first, against Zionism secondly,  
and lastly against the bourgeois nationalist government  
when created.” Anarchist Tactic for Palestine*  
- Albert Meltzer 1939

The United Kingdom based Anarchist Communist Group (ACG) holds a standard anarchist critique of nationalism. That is, they understand that the project to construct a modern nation state is a bourgeois one, where a nascent ruling class attempts to organise a population in a manner that facilitates the exploitation of their labour power. In the context of the Israel-Palestine ‘conflict’ the ACG recognise the limits of the so-called ‘one and two-state’ solutions. By subordinating their needs to either state, the workers of Israel and Palestine do themselves a disservice. The ACG rightly recognise that even if Palestine was liberated from Israeli colonisation and a single, unified and democratic state was formed, it would not keep Palestinian workers safe nor guarantee their liberation. Such is the nature of the capitalist state. The ACG rightly identifies Hamas as a reactionary, bourgeois organisation and that their strategy will not ultimately succeed in liberating Palestine from Israeli colonisation.

Unfortunately the ACG takes all of these critiques and all the negative factors of the Palestinian movement for national liberation and draws the conclusion that the first duty of anarchists is to present arguments against nationalism. Their engagement with nationalism is one dimensional, and they neglect to even consider the arguments for anarchists to engage with national liberation movements. The ACG's position also leaves them with no way to engage the largest mass movement of a generation. They fail to contribute in any meaningful way to opposing Israel's colonial project, nor the imperialist forces that back it.

Not all cultural identities are reactionary, and by extension nationalism cannot always be reduced to a bourgeois project. For example, while indigenous communities may develop nascent bourgeois classes, the identity of indigenous populations in Canada, Australia and many other parts of the world are not the same as nationalisms of colonial, settler regimes. Sovereignty to such communities can mean collective control of land and life, rather than an identity forged and disciplined as an aspect of capitalist society. The ACGs view is limited and does not consider such nuances. As such their position represents a failure to understand the national liberation of oppressed nationalities, which thus includes that of Palestinians, in terms of concrete struggle.

The very real experience of oppression of a 'nationality', as identified and categorised by the occupying force, is subsumed under the broader abstraction of class. While class is shaped by the structure of economic relations, there are forces beyond relations in the workplace that determine social life. For example, that West Bank Palestinians are forced to drive on designated roads away from Israeli civilians, or that inhabitants of the Gaza strip are forced to go through designated, militarised checkpoints during daily commutes to employment in Israel. Thus to be concretely liberated as a 'Palestinian' requires smashing the Israeli regimes control over their lives first and foremost. The complicity of much of the Israeli working class in Palestinian oppression makes this even more difficult. ACG may grasp conceptually that apartheid must be smashed, but the answer they propose is simply to demand social revolution across Palestine and Israel now. This ignores strategic engagement with the problem.

For example the ACGs recent statement 'Neither Israel nor Hamas!' opens with a condemnation of Hamas' atrocities, before explaining many of the problems with Hamas reactionary politics (*Anarchist Communist Group, 2023*). These critiques are fair, but they totally avoid the question of why Hamas was elected in Gaza, or why they represent one of the few currents unwilling to totally surrender to Israel. The ACG instead suggests that industrial action is a solution to the crisis, with no analysis of the serious limitations to this strategy (*Anarchist Communist Group, 2023*). Unemployment in Palestine is incredibly high, and Palestinian workers in Israel are severely limited by laws, oppression and scabbing by Israeli workers. There is also the problem of just where Palestinian workers are employed, and how

they could possibly shut down the Israeli economy.

The ACG has made a mistake in its focus in the current political context. Many of the claims about Hamas, and Palestinians in general made by the Israeli media and parroted by the West have been debunked. Making Hamas the focus, rather than the Israeli occupation and imperialism only feeds into Islamophobia and hysteria, the result of which sees the ACG line up more closely with liberal positions than revolutionary ones. The ACG is also hosting a series of talks addressing the question of nationalism. As though nationalism were the most pertinent question, rather than what it takes to stop the war. This reflects more of a focus on distinguishing themselves from the rest of the left than engagement with the political tasks of the day.

French anarchists worked through these problems during the struggle for Algerian independence. The majority of the movement came to the conclusion that, despite criticism of the methods and organisation of the Algerian national liberation movement, a lack of engagement would not help the mass of the oppressed in their struggle nor offer the possibility of a reaction that could ripple across global capitalism (*Walmsley, 2021*). National liberation is a messy process, but it necessarily draws the mass of workers into actions that cannot be totally controlled by a nascent bourgeoisie, unleashing new desires and adding new dimensions to the potential of emancipation.

Hence, the destruction of the Israeli apartheid regime may not result in libertarian socialism. But not only would decolonisation be a moral good in and of itself, an anti-imperialist victory over Israel could be a very real challenge to capitalist interests and could open the potential of broader horizons. The success of Palestinian liberation invariably hinges not on how successfully Hamas conducts guerilla war against the Israeli Defence Force (IDF), but on the activity of the region's working classes. The fight against Israel could unleash a second, deeper 'Arab Spring.' The struggle however is not only a localised affair, it is also shaped by the activity of the global working class and the revolutionary forces within it. From the UK to Uruguay, anarchists and workers more generally have a role to play in the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial struggle.

Anarchists cannot simply denounce both sides as nationalist projects and proclaim the answer is international socialist revolution. It may be true in the abstract, but communism is an ideal and a vision we strive towards. The path there requires concrete goals and actions undertaken through strategic vision, and national liberation is an important concrete step towards liberation. While there are nearly a million people on the streets of London, mobilised against imperialism, the ACGs approach buries strategy and action under abstract ideals. They are rendering themselves and anarchist ideas redundant.

## Die Platform – Silence is support for the oppressor

*“Zionism serves as a screen for English imperialist policy, by the regime of inequality which dominates in Palestine”*  
– Camillo Berneri, 1929

It is over a month into the war in Gaza and the anarchist federation Die Platform (DP) is one of many German Left organisations that is silent on the Palestinian question. Die Platform is yet to present a statement or even a post on social media calling for a ceasefire, denouncing the war or declaring solidarity with the struggle of Palestinians. Last weekend the organisation held its 9th congress, where surely time could have been found to discuss the most pressing political issue of the moment. Instead, the only reference to the conflict is from a statement provided by the Catalan anarchist federation, Embat (*Die Platform, 2023*). There is no doubt Die Platform has internationalist values. They are outspoken in their support for the struggle in Sudan, and often report on relations with anarchist groups around the world (*Die Platform, 2023*). So why are Die Platform silent? Their failure to address the ‘Palestinian question’ reflects the broader mood in Germany and the influence of anti-Deutsch ideology on the German left.

Anti-Deutsch is a trend of thought that declares total opposition to all traces of German nationalism. In the context of the nation’s history and the holocaust this seems a reasonable reaction. However it goes much further than anti-nationalism. Anti-Deutsch activism is famous for giving uncritical support to Zionism. The Zionist myth of a Jewish ‘people’ is blindly accepted and turned into a fetishised concept.<sup>3</sup> This is an inversion of fascist Nazi ideology and false ‘race science’. Anti-Deutsch thus rejects any forms of Arab nationalism, despite Pan-Arab ideals having developed as a response to colonialism and imperialism. Anti-Deutsch are thus unable to relate to anti-colonial projects in the Arab world, identifying them incorrectly as inherently anti-semitic. In some parts of Germany, anti-Deutsch is most common amongst the militant ‘anti-fascist’ subculture. They use tactics of intimidation and violence against other tendencies on the left, including non-Zionist Jews. This is not, however, purely a problem of anti-Deutsch ideas. German society today continues to struggle with extreme racism, evidenced by attitudes towards refugees and a dangerous neo-Nazi movement. Giving a free pass to Zionism only covers up generalised racism by pretending that German culture has overcome its anti-semitism.

It is in this context that Die Platform is quite likely struggling to articulate a position. This is either because they are unwilling to confront anti-Deutsch activism, or because there is influence of these ideas within the organisation. Die Platform’s failure to openly address and confront a modern genocide is an uncomfortable situation for the global anarchist movement. The neo-liberal President of France, Emmanuel Macron, has called for a ceasefire before German anarchists. Germany



itself actively participates in the genocide and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. The German state supplies the IDF and German companies produce arms used to kill both the Palestinian resistance and civilians. There is a responsibility for genuine revolutionaries to confront the German ruling class.

Anarchists in imperialist nations have a duty to take on revolutionary defeatist positions. Organisations from Columbia, Uruguay, Brasil, Argentina, France, Spain, America, Australia, and others have no hesitation in denouncing Zionism. Die Platform is welcome to join countless voices across the world in solidarity with Palestinians against imperialism and colonialism.

### **Anarchism and the National Question**

Anarchism has always supported the struggles of the oppressed, and by extension, national liberation. The debate over national and cultural autonomy was after all, one of the issues we can say Mikhail Bakunin was fundamentally correct and Karl Marx was sometimes wrong. But anarchists have not supported national liberation blindly. It is always a matter for concrete analysis. Hence Errico Malatesta supported the struggle in Egypt against British, but thought it was unwise that his comrades sacrifice themselves in Greek nationalist struggles in Candia (Malatesta, 1897)<sup>4</sup>. Similarly Alfredo Bonnano concretely analysed Sicilian nationalism in his pamphlet *Anarchism and National Liberation* (Bonanno, 1976). Nestor Makhno and Maria Nikiforova utilised the fight against Austro-Hungarian occupation of the Ukraine to turn the struggle into a class war (Shubin, 2017). Similarly Ricardo Flores Magon and comrades in the Mexican Revolution (Morris, 1994). During the Spanish Revolution, both the Nosotros group and Camilo Berneri saw how inciting insurrection in Morocco through building relations with rebels there was key to international revolution and defeating Franco's fascist armies (Berneri, 1936).

In the context of Palestine, anarchist analysis has been clear since the British Mandate. Camillo Berneri identified Zionism as a tool utilised by British and American imperialism to exploit tensions in Arab territories. As Albert Metzler pointed out, Zionism brought a type of 'Jewish fascism' to Palestine, and with it anti-semitism. He understood that for social revolution to be achieved in Palestine, imperialism and colonialism would have to be confronted first (Metzler, 1939). As Wayne Price has noted, anarchists do not have to fall into a trap of 'all or nothing.' They can find ways to give practical support to the struggle. Anarchist support for Palestinian self-determination without having to support a bourgeois Palestinian state is perfectly consistent (Price, 2009).

The state that Israel has become is perhaps more authoritarian, more violent, more fascist than anarchists like Metzler or Berneri could have ever imagined. Thousands of Palestinian children have been indiscriminately murdered by the IDF, Gaza turned from an open air prison into a hellish landscape. In response, anarchists from all across the world have thrown themselves into the struggle with

solidarity. There is little time, nor need, for platitudes about the solutions of 'states'. One thing is incredibly clear; there will be no peace until the Israeli regime falls.

### **Conclusion**

Support for Palestinians overthrowing the very real oppression they face cannot be abstracted away by platitudes about nationalism nor can it be ignored. The Anarchist Communist Group of the UK and Die Plattform of Germany are not being consistent with anarchist principles nor practice. This appears to stem from mistakes in their approaches to theory and organising, and difficulties of their national context. But both organisations should understand that engagement with national liberation movements in general is necessary. It can be nuanced and considered, rather than blanket opposition. Everything from slogans to action can be carefully utilised to encourage popular mobilisation, to heighten the struggle against imperialism and connect these battles to the class struggle in general.

This is a historically defining moment. The massacre of Palestinians by Israel has brought millions of people onto the street. They are marching, blockading industries that supply the war, harassing politicians and finding creative, inspiring ways to take direct action. The injustice of the moment is broadly defined along class lines. The rich tend to support Israel and colonialism, while the rest of us stand with Palestinians.<sup>5</sup> As the mask is torn away, a whole new generation is learning how cruel the capitalist class truly is. Solidarity is a word on the lips of millions of young workers. True to their history, principles and theory, anarchists have a role to play. They should live up to the moment.

Long Live the Intifada.

*Source:*

*Palestine, platitudes and Silence (Tommy Lawson – Red & black notes November 16, 2023)*

*Url: [redblacknotes.com/2023/11/16/palestine-platitudes-and-silence](https://redblacknotes.com/2023/11/16/palestine-platitudes-and-silence)*

## Reflections of a Jewish Anti-Zionist in Palestine

### Anon and The Final Straw Radio

(2023)

**Anonymous:** So, I was born and have been living all of my time in Jerusalem, in Al-Quds. Palestine-Israel. I'm an anti-Zionist Jew and have been active in joint-Palestinian-Jewish struggles against occupation and Zionism since 2012. And in recent years, since Covid started, I've been active in mutual aid and food rescue groups in Jerusalem. Two groups that I've been involved with in the West Bank are Taayoush, which is active in the South Hebron hills and especially in the area of Masafer Yatta and Free Jerusalem, which is active in Al-Quds / Jerusalem, both in the eastern and the western part of the city.

**The Final Straw Radio:** Are these groups both mostly made up of settlers, or are they mixed between Palestinians and Israelis?

**Anonymous:** Well, Taayoush began 20 years ago in the second Intifada, as a joint Jewish Palestinian group, it used to be much bigger than it is now. Used to be hundreds of people and over the years, it got smaller and smaller. During the time that I've been active — I've also had breaks in activism, like I wasn't active all the time since 2012 — but in the years that I was or have been active with Taayoush there were almost no Palestinians. Obviously, the activity itself is shared because we go and stand with Palestinians in the West Bank, but in terms of activists that are a part of the group itself then these days it's actually only Jews. There was one Palestinian activist that I knew during my time, and Free Jerusalem is pretty much the same. I mean, the core, the actual activists, again, we are being active with Palestinians in Jerusalem, with local activists, but the group itself is almost only Jewish activists, like there was one or two Palestinians.

**TFSR:** So, initially you had introduced yourself as a Jewish anti-Zionist activist from Palestine, rather than as a Palestinian or an Israeli. Can you talk about the complexity of identities a bit in terms of like, do you identify in that the lands, all the land, being occupied Palestine? Or are you saying that...can you sort of break that down a little bit?

**A:** Uh yeah. I mean, generally I usually don't focus so much on identity questions, personally. because I prefer acting with other people on the basis of a shared goal, rather than acting based on a shared identity. But I mean, the fact remains that I am a Jewish Israeli citizen, with all the privileges that gives me under the Zionist

colonial regime. I will probably get, soon, to the functional privileges, what it means. And I think it's important for most of us as anti-Zionist Jews to emphasize differences between Judaism and Zionism. That's why I prefer to call myself an anti-Zionist Jew, rather than Israeli.

I see this piece of land—I'm an anarchist, so it's also complicated stuff [laughs]. But obviously I see all of this land is occupied, and I identify with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, and for independence, but I don't believe in states in general. It's not like I dream about one Palestinian state instead of one Israeli state.

Also over the years it became harder and harder to imagine the future here, like, concretely. Like “the solution is two states, one state” I think we lost interest in this kind of conversation because we'd rather be focused on the little stuff that we can do, and the solidarity, and creating connections for a better future.

Like I said, generally I support Palestinian struggle for freedom, and it means also the return of the refugees to their homes. Also, within the [19]48 borders, what's now called the state of Israel, not just in the occupied territories. And it's all over, like, where I live in Jerusalem many neighborhoods used to be Palestinian before 48, and in the other big cities, Tel Aviv, Haifa and many, many, many places. So yeah, I do believe that all of these places should return in some way, to the people who used to live there and their descendants. And I hope that we can still coexist somehow.

**TFSR:** I wonder if you could talk about a shared Palestinian and Israeli struggle against the occupation of Palestine as you've experienced it over the last few years, or at least since 2012. Particularly, I'm interested in the last few years, is the struggle possible anymore amidst this onslaught?

**A:** Maybe I'll start with a disclaimer, because I think the general stance of me and my activist friends/community is that this current Israeli government, as fascist and murderous as it is, didn't bring anything really new. We're not doing a history class but this state was established with the Nakba, the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, which never stopped to this day. So I say this disclaimer, because it is true that not only since the war but since this new government came to power about a year ago, the situation did get worse and the ethnic cleansing methods in the West Bank got more extreme. But still, it's important to stress that it's the same method that have gotten more extreme, it's not new methods. And it's not a new goal of this regime to ethnically cleanse Palestine. They only changed how they do it and how extended they do it. Anyway...

If we talk about how solidarity activity used to be in the last few years, usually, it's to go and accompany shepherds and farmers in the West Bank, and especially into areas that are called Masafer Yatta and the Jordan Valley, areas where many

shepherds and farmers were denied access to their lands by both the army and settlers. We used to go and document home demolitions or demolitions of water sources, sometimes help preparing and building infrastructure or help with the olive harvest. All kinds of standing with Palestinians.

Also a major part of the solidarity activism was joining Palestinian demonstrations across the West Bank. If you heard about Anarchists Against the Wall, we used to join these demonstrations for years. Sadly, they not active anymore.

Of course, there was always much violence, both by the army and settlers, because this violence is inherent to the occupation. Especially when we're talking about the demonstrations in the West Bank, in which dozens were killed over the years in places like Bil'in, Ni'lin, Nabi Saleh, Beita, Beit Dajan, and there's a long list.

However, in the last year or so activists started to get calls from communities to stay 24/7 for protective presence in villages due to increased army and settler violence. I'm stressing the word "army" before settlers because it's important to clarify that settler violence is a tool of the Zionist colonial regime and not an extreme part of it. And also, many times, it's hard to tell between soldiers and settlers, because they cooperate and they come together to attack. These days it's even harder to differentiate between them because they all dress the same, and they both have weapons. So it's like two tools of that state: one is military and one is citizens who have weapons, but they cooperate.

Over the last year or so, small communities that we used to be active with in the ways that I mentioned, were forced to leave their homes because of the increased violence and because their lives are in danger. If we can mention some names of villages: Simri and Widady, and Masafer Yatta in South Hebron Hills area; and Ein Samiya, Ras al-Tin and al-Qabun in Jordan Valley, and the area east of Ramallah.

All of that was even before the war started before October 7. It's still early to tell but since October 7, at least 13 more communities — a thousand people — were forced to leave their homes in the West Bank because of this increased violence, even more increased. That's according to statistics from B'Tselem. Obviously it's just the start, we don't know where it's heading.

I personally wasn't on the ground as much in recent weeks, but friends who were on the ground had to see, in front of their eyes, communities that they know personally, and have been standing with, they had to see them leaving their homes being subjected to violence.

If we talk about East Jerusalem, so since 2009, every week there is a demonstration in neighborhood called Sheikh Jarrah, which is both against the occupation and

Zionism in general, but also it's about evictions of families, of Palestinian families in the neighborhood in favor of Jewish settlers who take their homes. Israeli Jewish solidarity activists have been a part of these demos since the beginning, since 2009. There are ups and downs in terms of how the police reacts to this. There are times that there are a lot of arrests and a lot of violence and other times, there was less. In the last few months, the Israeli police started enforcing the complete ban on Palestine flags, on the raising the Palestine flag. We saw it personally especially in the Sheikh Jarrah demos.

Every week — locals, Palestinians from Sheikh Jarrah — and solidarity activists were arrested. There was a lot of police violence. Sadly, since the war started, since October 7th, the demos don't take place at all. For the first time since 2009, because people are barely allowed to sit in the streets in East Jerusalem these days without being arrested or subjected to police violence, let alone protest or raise their voice.

To answer the question if this type of activism is still doable, I mean, it's still happening. But what we can do and how much we can affect the situation is decreasing...it feels like every day. It feels like our power in front of the Israeli forces are getting weaker every day. And it's hard.

**TFSR:** Yeah, and for whatever this counts, the Israeli state has said that it made protests illegal because they considered that it pulls resources away from what they're doing in Gaza, or in parts of the West Bank more actively as military engagements.

**A:** Well, first of all, maybe it's important to say that in the West Bank, it's not a new thing. Any kind of demonstration is illegal under the occupation, since the occupation, since '67. Since the occupation itself. When Palestinians demonstrate in the West Bank, the Israeli army almost always uses rubber bullets, tear gas, stun grenades, and sometimes live ammunition. In the West Bank, it's nothing new that demonstrations are illegal.

**TFSR:** Moreso what I meant was that I heard that the Israeli state is saying that protests in [the borders of 19] 48 are illegal because it pulls resources from the military activities that they're doing in the other occupied territories.

**A:** Yeah, I mean, I'm not sure about the legal stance of the Israeli state about administrations right now, I know that they use a lot of laws that can be used in war times, which they do anyway in the West Bank, but now they also use it inside 48. But on the ground, we see that they don't allow, like, they practically don't allow it, it's true. Like the first demo that I personally joined, and it was on Thursday, I mean, since October 7th, it was on Thursday, it wasn't even...it's hard to call it a demonstration at all actually. We just stood there in front of the — maybe I would not say the name of the place (laughs) — we just stood with that with empty signs

and black tape on our mouths. And we didn't say anything. Immediately the police responded with batons and fists and kicking, and some people were injured. They just chased us across the city for an hour.

In Tel Aviv, at the same time, there was a protest and the police arrested 20 people. And if we talk about Palestinians wanting to demonstrate inside 48, then they arrest people before the demonstrations even begin. They arrested 3 ex-Parliament's members, 3 Palestinian ex-Parliament members, just for trying to plan a demonstration against the war. So it never came to be. Practically, they don't really allow any kind of, not only demonstrations, any raising of voice against what's going on.

I can expand on some stories. In the recent weeks a Jewish activist friend was arrested from his home because someone on the street saw a sign on his balcony, an anti-occupation sign. This person in the streets called the police, the police came and arrested him brutally. They torn the sign and they took some little Palestine flags that they found. He was [detained] for several hours and harassed by the cops, they said terrible stuff to him before he was released that night.

A teacher was arrested because of stuff he posted online against the war and criticizing the Israeli military. He was [detained] for four days, and then the court decided to let him go for four days and they banned him from using social media. And both stories are about Jewish dissidents, so if we're talking about Palestinian dissidents, we know many, many people were fired, or arrested or both, just because they posted something online. Like I said about those ex-Parliament members, there are many stories like that. This is the situation right now.

**TFSR:** Just step back for a second, when you were saying that it's kind of hard to tell the difference between settlers and the army or the police, it's the situation for Israeli citizens that they have to take some sort of time in one of the government services and usually that's in police or military, right?

**A:** True. Every Jewish Israeli citizen has to do almost three years — I mean for men it's almost three years, women it's almost two years — in the military, and sometimes in the police. More the police.

**TFSR:** Obviously there's staffing that that resolves (laughs), but that also seems like it would be a function of creating an "us versus them", like integrating people into a nationalist position that supports the occupying force, emotionally as well as integrating them into policing Arab and Palestinian bodies and life.

**A:** Definitely. Yeah, we all grew up, like all Jewish Israelis — except for Ultra-Orthodox Jews, which is a different story — but if we're talking about secular or "light" religious Jews in Israel then we all grew up in a very militaristic and

nationalist Israeli society. Everything is aiming towards going to the army when you become 18. Kindergarten, school, etc. For instance, there are programs almost in every school, like a joint program of the Army in the school that students go to field day trainings with the military.

Also, if at all, people learn Arabic in high school, then they learn it for the purposes of the intelligence of the Israeli military. Explicitly, it's not something that's hidden, soldiers come teach classes and things.

And yeah, for sure, I think one of the successes of the Zionist regime is because so many people here go to the army and they identify completely, mentally, with the state, and with the army. They see every criticism of the army as a criticism of themselves, or their families. So I'm so grateful, personally, that I didn't go to the army.

**TFSR:** Considering how hard the Zionist state works at, and how successful it is, at integrating people into an emotionally, physically, familiarly, socially— can you talk about instances, maybe even just generalized, when people such as yourself decided to speak out or broke with that consensus idea? Anecdotally what sort of examples have created circumstances where people haven't been allowed, or allowed themselves to integrate in. There have been movements in the past, like the refuseniks through various iterations to not join the military, or to not conduct certain operations, and I haven't heard about that sort of thing in a decade. I wonder if you have any sense of if there's a way to break the settler mindset, at least, because that seems like a first step towards some sort of solidarity.

**A:** First of all, if we talk about refusal in the last decades where there is a movement of people who refuse to go to the army, they even have a name, they're called Mesarvot. You can find them online, on Instagram or Facebook or whatever. It's a group of young people who decided not to join the army. Many of them are also active in the West Bank, or in East Jerusalem against the occupation. That's important to say. In general, unfortunately, very few people break away from these mindsets. I personally was kind of lucky, I guess, because my mom is not a Zionist. She didn't talk to me a lot about that as a kid, it definitely helped. She did talk to me sometimes about that.

I can say about myself that when there was another massacre in Gaza by Israel in 2008-2009, I just started reading online, a lot, about the occupation and resistance to the occupation. As soon as I became 18, I just decided to go and join one of the groups that are active in the West Bank. I think, then, breaking away from Zionism itself as an ideology, comes to us from learning about the Nakba, mostly, because you realize that the state was built on ethnic cleansing, massive ethnic cleansing. Jews didn't come here to an empty land, they actually, again, built a state on kicking out hundreds of thousands of people.



Then you also go to the West Bank and meet people who became refugees two or three times in their lives because they were kicked out in 48 and then again in 1967, or after that. There has been a lot of ethnic cleansing going on in the West Bank since the occupation in 67. You start seeing everything through this perspective.

When you walk around and see old houses, in Jerusalem or in many other cities, and you realize that people used to live there and you see everything through this lens. But everyone gets through it differently, I think. Obviously, today, the internet is a big part of it, like we talked about. Like you said, refuseniks 20 or 30 years ago didn't have the internet. They couldn't read about and watch videos of stuff going on in the occupied territories. I can really appreciate how they came to this decision not to serve the military. Back then also the percentage of people who didn't go to the military was much smaller even then today. It was a very, very rare thing.

**TFSR:** You mentioned some of the consequences anti-Zionist Israeli citizens that have been protesting, such as being batoned or beaten by the police, or arrested for a day or even four days in some instances. I wonder if you could speak about what you know about the repercussions for some of the Palestinians that are arrested for resisting currently.

I was recently listening to the latest episode of *It'sGoingDown* podcast where Scott Campbell spoke with Palestinian activist in the West Bank, and the guest spoke about mass arrests and administrative sentences for Palestinians for things as simple as putting things on social media, or materials found on their phones when they get stopped at the many, many checkpoints that they have to go through in the West Bank, or in other communities. I'm not sure if you could speak to the difference in repercussions that different people experienced in that way.

**A:** Yeah, I mean, first of all, because I'm not Palestinian and I haven't gone as often in the last few weeks to the West Bank as before, maybe I'm not the best person to answer that, but I can say what I know. First of all, in general, even the tool of administrative detention is a tool that's being used on all Palestinians. This tool allows Israel to arrest people on the basis of the fear that they would maybe do something and not based on something they already did. This almost never happens to Jewish Israeli citizens. Israel uses this tool against Palestinians in huge amounts. I think recently, a couple of thousands of Palestinians are being held using administrative detention.

That's not a new tool, but recently it's been used a lot more and probably for longer sentences. I mean, it's not technically sentences because people are being held under administrative detention, they don't go to regular courts like Israeli citizens would. They're tried in military courts, and these courts have almost a

100% conviction rate. This whole process is nothing like the process of a trial that is known in “democracies”, if we can call them that.

Many people — I heard from friends in the West Bank — when they just go around, soldier system, the first thing the soldier does is take their phone and see if they even watched a video or saw a photo from Gaza from the war. It is considered illegal now to do that, if you're Palestinian, even to watch a video.

Then they either arrested the person, or they break his phone. I've even heard about incidents of breaking the phone on people's heads. Obviously, a lot of violence. And also the freedom of movement in the West Bank is even more restricted now. People that I know didn't go to work for weeks because the entrance to the places they live were blocked, and even after they are not blocked anymore they're just scared to go around. It means lots of people lose their jobs and their ability to provide for their families.

Also there's a lot of raids, like even if people don't go around [leave their houses], there's a lot of raids. The army and settlers go into villages, into towns, into cities, and arrest people from their homes. Sounds like there isn't anywhere really safe in the West Bank right now, even when you're not talking about Gaza, obviously nowhere in the West Bank is safe right now. This is the situation.

**TFSR:** It seems like the closer the more integrated people get across that boundary that the settler state draws, between settler and Palestinian, the harsher the consequences for settlers, whereas the consequences have always been harsh for the Palestinians because the settler state just doesn't want them to exist.

As things have escalated to such a war as they are right now, what can anti-Zionist settlers do? If protests aren't possible in the street, if people are being beaten up for having the Palestinian flag, do you see any possible directions of struggle that anti-Zionist Jews can participate in that's effective?

**A:** Well, I think there's three different areas where we act in. One is inside 48, including Jerusalem, for instance. The second is the West Bank. The third is online. All three are harder right now because, like you said, inside 48 demonstrations are not really allowed to happen. And yet, people try.

Also, there is a difference between how the police in Jerusalem responds and the police in other places responds. The police in Jerusalem are especially brutal. We have to think how we respond to the recent events here, see if we can do stuff a little bit differently. Also to protect ourselves because it's not like we weren't beaten before or weren't subjected to violence before and the rest, but I think now it's more dangerous to have to think how we can also protect ourselves. Which we usually don't, we didn't think like that until now as much.

In the West Bank, there is still solidarity activists around doing protective presence. Also, you can read about what happens in a place called Wadi al-Siq a week after October 7. It's one of those villages that there has been protective presence of solidarity activists for several months, because of settler violence. That day, the army and settlers came together and they just took all the activists to one place and they beat them. They took them to a tent and they let armed settlers guard them there. So they don't get out and they don't document, they broke all the cameras, all the phones, either broke them or took them. All the Palestinian men, the soldiers and settlers took to a different place and just — there's horrible stories about what happened that are brutal assaults. There was an article in Haaretz, the Israeli journal, about this. Some of my friends were there, they heard from them also, personally, what happened, but they didn't see everything.

That's an example of how also on the West Bank activities are becoming more and more, well, harder. We feel weaker and weaker in front of what's going on. We still enjoy our privileges as Jews, the Israeli citizens. In terms of, like I said, when we are arrested, we are tried in a court and not in the military court and treated better. But it seems like also on the West Bank, they don't let us do what we, more or less, managed to do before. There were always problems. Of course, always. There was violence, always. There were arrests, always. But the opportunities to affect the realities get smaller and smaller. For sure.

Online, like I said, even Jewish Israeli citizens are arrested for posting stuff. Not only arrested, there's a big, right wing nationalist, obviously, movement in Israel and one of their main targets right now is activists. They look for stuff that people are posting, and they share their info, doxxing and all this kind of stuff.

On the other hand, we don't really know what's going to happen and we have to keep trying. Like I said, we still enjoy privileges, we still can raise our voices more than Philistines can. We just have to keep trying and find new ways and creative ways to do that. Especially in comparison to what Palestinians have been going through.

**TFSR:** So being that the US is a settler colonial state that has a lot of ties — both because of dual citizenship, as well as military and business and governmental ties between the two states... For instance, I know the struggle against Cop City and in Atlanta, in the US, has been a struggle that has partially been defined by the fact that police here train and share tactics with police and military in Israel. That awareness is there that there's a connection between the two.

I wonder if you know of any, or have any ideas about places, ways, points of pressure that people in the so-called US or abroad could apply pressure to not only call for a ceasefire, but press towards Palestinian liberation? Which seems like a whole nother conversation, I guess, like huge steps beyond just getting the current

incursions to stop. Do you have any ideas about how internationals could help?

**A:** You can look at what Palestine Action is doing, has been doing for several years. In the UK, they have a specific goal in mind, they said that they want to focus on an achievable goal while also talking about general Zionist colonialism and the occupation. But they have an achievable goal which is shutting down Elbit factories in the UK, and they succeeded in doing so. I don't remember exactly how many factories were shut down but they managed to shut down at least one or two.

I think the US is probably harder. As a state it considers itself to be the biggest ally of Israel or something. Many people in the US are supportive of Israel and I don't really know what the Palestine Solidarity movement looks like in the US, actually.

Applying pressure to governments seems, I mean, so far seems, not...it didn't bring a lot of success so far. Not in the US, not in Europe. We know they don't care, we know that Joe Biden doesn't care [scoffs]. But if there are mass demonstrations that make people realize what's going on, then that's a lot. Also, maybe focusing on, like, the Elbit factories in the UK — I know that there was a shipment, or there was a ship that was blocked in the US, right? I'm not sure where.

**TFSR:** Yeah, it was blocked for a little bit from loading in Oakland, I think. And then later people attempted to block it in Tacoma in Washington, but I think it was able to load, maybe offshore, load weapons up.

**A:** Mhm. These kinds of actions sound really important, it's kind of stuff that we can never dream of doing here. It's not like...we would be shot at, I think. It's not possible. If people in the US and Europe can use their privileges and the fact that there is a little bit more room to express yourself in these countries — I don't know how much, but a little bit more than here — of course do so.

I think another important thing is really sharing Palestinian voices, and I can list a few names of Palestinian activists in the West Bank that people can follow. Several activists from Masafer Yatta area include Basel Adra, Ali Awad, Sami H Huraini, Youth of Sumud, and Awdah Hathaleen. And Ayman Graieb was active mostly in the Jordan Valley in the east of Ramallah.

It's really important that these people, not only that their voices are heard, but that they are known worldwide because they are under threat personally because Israel targets nonviolent activists. Israel likes to say that it fights terrorism, but I think that the state prefers the violent struggle over the nonviolent one. We can see the way they treat nonviolent activists and also press.

I would also recommend the following Activestills Collective, which is a cooperative of photographers, Palestinian and Jewish, that are in Gaza and the

West Bank. They're really cool.

**TFSR:** I guess those are the questions that I had. Thank you very much for having this conversation, and in English, I really appreciate it.

**A:** Thank you. Thank you so much.

*Source:*

*Reflections of a Jewish Anti-Zionist in Palestine (TFSR November 19, 2023)*

*Url: [thefinalstrawradio.noblogs.org/post/2023/11/19/anti-zionist-jew-in-palestine-antifascists-repressed-in-budapest/#JewishAntiZionistPalestine](https://thefinalstrawradio.noblogs.org/post/2023/11/19/anti-zionist-jew-in-palestine-antifascists-repressed-in-budapest/#JewishAntiZionistPalestine)*





SOLIDARIDAD OBRERA  
VERNON RICHARDS  
EMIMA GOLDMAN  
ALBERT MELTZER  
WAR COMMENTARY  
INTERNATIONALIST  
MUSTAPHA KHAYATI  
FREDDY PEARLMAN  
SAM DOLGOFF  
INSURRECTION!  
BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH  
ALFREDO M. BONANNO  
ANARCHIST & LIBERTARIAN COALITION OF PISA AND VALDERA  
URI GORDON  
BASSEL AL-ARAJ DISMANTLE  
SALISH SEA INTIFADA  
FAUDA  
BLACK ROSE ANARCHIST FEDERATION  
CRIMEHINC  
THE FAYER COLLECTIVE  
GEELONG ANARCHIST-COMMUNISTS  
TOMMY LAWSON  
THE FINAL STRAW RADIO

FUCK COPYRIGHT  
REPRODUCE AND SHARE

**SEDITIONIST**