

Stop Israel's Massacre in Gaza!

Two years after the Israeli 'Defense' Forces indiscriminately slaughtered over a thousand Lebanese civilians in the quaintly-titled Operation Just Reward, Israel has turned its attention to Gaza, in the form of Operation Cast Lead. According to Palestinian medical sources, nearly 400 Palestinians have been killed, including numerous women and children. According to witnesses, hospitals are overwhelmed with the injured and the bodies of the dead are piling up in the morgues

The attacks have come as a six-month ceasefire between Israel and Hamas elapsed. However, even when this ceasefire was in place, this did not mean the people of Gaza were free of problems. Israel has instigated a crippling blockade of Gaza that has starved its people of food, fuel and even medical supplies. According to the BBC: "[a] jets pounded the southern Gaza Strip, hundreds of Palestinians stormed over a fence on the Gaza-Egypt border, but Egyptian security forces fired shots to prevent them entering." In fact, Egypt has consistently participated in the blockade of Gaza, time and again doing Israel's dirty work, caging Palestinians like animals and denying them essential supplies.

Why has Egypt done this? Egypt is a 'key regional ally' (i.e. pawn) of the United States, and as such, will carry out US policy. The Egyptian and Saudi regimes (and their US puppet-masters) are hoping Israel succeeds in destroying the Hamas government and replacing it with something more pliant. They are prepared to see Gaza's streets drenched with Palestinian blood to make this happen.

Of course, the collaboration by the Arab states has not been matched by its people. In Egypt and Lebanon, rallies of tens of thousands have taken place in support of the Palestinians. Large rallies have also taken place in Syria, Libya, Iraq and Jordan. Revulsion at the complicity of the Arab states was evident: left-wing Lebanese television station *Aljazeera* showed demonstrators outside the Egyptian embassy, some waving red flags and one sporting a Ché Guevara t-shirt. Even in Israel itself, where the population is subjected to a relentless propaganda machine in support of the state, a rally of over a thousand people assembled spontaneously in Tel-Aviv.

So what is Hamas, the supposed leader of Palestinian resistance to Israel, doing to defend the Palestinians? Unfortunately, their 'resistance' strategy is based on futile terrorist attacks on Israeli civilian targets. Since taking control of Gaza, the Islamic movement has fired hundreds of homemade rockets at the Israeli border town of Sderot. Whilst these attacks have rarely been deadly they have made life miserable for the inhabitants of this poor, working-class town. These attacks do nothing to militarily damage the regional superpower; they do however serve to harden Israeli public opinion, particularly amongst the poor workers of Sderot, who should be the Palestinians' natural allies. Such attacks help to create a fortress mentality within Israel, encouraging its workers and poor (themselves heavily exploited by Israeli capitalism) to support 'their' state in its attacks against 'the enemy.' The Israeli military can then take advantage of favorable Israeli public opinion to launch an attack. Its aim is to destroy or severely weaken Hamas, and see it replaced by something more pliant.

If Hamas were serious about organizing a resistance against Israel's occupation, it would base its strategy not on futile acts of terrorism by small bands of 'heroes', but on arming the Palestinian masses. It would organize regional defense committees in every city, town and village, democratically controlled by the workers, peasants and refugees, and composed of every able-bodied man and woman. Such a force would have a genuine mass base, and, conducting a campaign

of guerrilla street-fighting, would be a formidable foe for the Israeli occupation forces. But such a force would threaten the power of Hamas. One of Hamas' first actions upon taking control of Gaza was to raid the offices of the Palestinian Trade Union Federation, in an attempt to stifle any independent organization of Palestinian workers.

For its part, the Israeli labor movement has a moral duty to oppose Israel's barbarous actions. The Histadrut (Israeli Trade Union Federation) should refuse to cooperate with the 'war effort,' calling strikes amongst workers involved in the handling of military supplies, and, if necessary, an anti-war general strike. The workers and poor of Israel are the natural allies of the Palestinian masses of Gaza and elsewhere.

The Marxists have always said that there is no solution to the problems the capitalists have created within the framework of a decaying capitalist world system. The carrying out of the democratic tasks, such as the solution to the national question, is falling on the shoulders of the working class. Only a Jewish-Arab working class united by a revolutionary struggle leading to a socialist society can get us out of this hell of the capitalist system. The only solution that can put an end to both the state terror and the insane individual terror is to be found through a federal socialist state within the framework of a socialist federation of the Middle East as part of a Socialist Federation of the world.



- * **For an immediate cessation of hostilities by the Israeli military against the population of Gaza!**
- * **An immediate end to the crippling economic blockade to allow free movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza**
- * **Support for the suffering masses of Gaza by the Israeli labor movement – no cooperation with the Israeli war machine**
- * **For a Socialist Federation of the Middle East**

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