

Israeli Terror Against Gaza: Solidarity and Activism in an Age of Imperial Decline

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One of the most spectacular series to come out recently was based on a novel by the greatest spy thriller of our time, John Le Carre (hence, we shouldn't be surprised of the novel's adaptation in TV/movie form). It's called The Night Manager.

The plot had its own suspenseful and fascinating intrigues, but it was the simple moral-ethical objective of the series that anchored it to the conscience of its viewers: It's not just 'ideology' and 'bad ideas' that are needed to murder and massacre, but a lethal avalanche of the most heinous weaponry available to humankind today.

The world just witnessed the unashamed assault and massacre of nonviolent Palestinian Gazans protesting the grotesquely named 'border fence' - **in reality, a barbaric cage that contains and controls the world's largest open air prison** and its Palestinian inmates. It is, what the Israeli sociologist Baruch Goldstein called the world's largest concentration camp - not mincing his words, despite how provocatively that sounds to those who know the horror of that term in the context of the Holocaust.

Nevertheless, the utter depravity of the situation is that forcefully displaced as refugees in the first place (that is how most of the Gazans reside in Gaza now anyways), they - unlike any other people on the planet - cannot escape toward anywhere when either a natural disaster hits or the routine Zionist massacres bombard the people of Gaza. They cannot even become refugees (for a second or even third time for some) now, like Syrians or Afghans fleeing from war. They are stuck, to use Fanon's term, in the "zone of non-being, 'soul-less,' and to be treated like animals to be whipped or exterminated.

The surrounding slavishly pliant Arab regimes that barely even pay the lip service to the Palestinian cause that they used to are scandalously complicit and corrupt to the hilt. Sisi's dictatorship in Egypt issued some statement because he did not want the massive protests to spread to his own country, whose population is naturally furious at ongoing Zionist terror in the region. Sisi calling on Israeli restraint against unarmed protesters pours with savage hypocrisy considering his massacre within one day of at least one thousand peaceful protesters when lodging his coup against a democratic government in 2013 in Egypt.

In the context of Zionist genocidal barbarism and ethnic cleansing still - yes, still - taking place despite dozens of toothless UN resolutions, a small but important step was taken by the Turkish government to immediately call for a summit denouncing these latest murderous atrocities against the people of Gaza - which is simply the disgustingly latest assault over the past 7 years against the civilian population. And it's also important to be

very candid: despite whatever criticisms and limitations of the Turkish state, it is ONLY the Turkish government (amongst the Islamicate world) that demonstrated the principled courage to do this right now as the carnage was continuing and would perhaps get worse (though certainly 'isolated' Iran is taking a similar position against Israeli barbarity).

This is all the more ironic considering Turkey is a NATO member!

All of the Arab despots were obviously forced to oblige their Turkish hosts because otherwise they would all be exposed as the Zionist collaborators that they truly are.

Having said that, the Turkish government must continue doing much, much more for the Palestinian people, to end the inhumane and genocidal blockade of Gaza, and to support this struggling population's liberation from Israeli settler-colonialism.

Indeed, one of the comparisons many astute analysts have made concerning this latest moment of the unleashing of Zionist state terror against Palestinians is with the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa in 1960, where, similarly, large numbers of unarmed anti-Apartheid protesters confronted the violent brutality of the security services of the white minority regime, resulting in 69 deaths.

Nevertheless, there is an important difference between Sharpeville in 1960 and Gaza in 2018: the Sharpeville massacre occurred during the ostensible period of 'decolonization' - where even an imperial power like the US had to be rhetorically or superficially committed to affirming the formal political independence of the countries that suffered brutal colonialism.

How things have changed today? Could we have imagined that such an ignominious racist-sexist global predatory corporate imperial project once again would shine its bright red fire of bombs and bullets with the so-called 'international community' sitting idly by on the sidelines, merely 'disturbed' and 'traumatized' by images while sipping their lattes at Starbucks?

Simply put, here is what has happened: 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 has enabled a project the West desperately was aching for, the attempted recuperation of a totalitarian Western hegemonic regime that took off from 1492. But now in the 21st century, Western powers have realized that they must finesse over their internal differences because a far greater tectonic shift taking place in world affairs: 'the West' is being provincialized. The planet is not so small as white supremacists believed, and different societies are pursuing pluralistic projects of sovereignty, dignity, and justice that rejects a one-size-fits-all model of 'development.'

With virtually the direct colonization model back in vogue in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria, gone today are any of the pretenses to grand Wilsonian idealism that defined 'American exceptionalism' in opposition to those other horrible bloodthirsty European colonizers at the beginning of the 20th century.

One incredibly crucial but paradoxical signifier has now defined how the West has, to put it simply, 'come full circle' (in its imperial unity) once again: from the time when the US vehemently opposing the 'tripartite' attack of the UK, France, and Israel on Egypt in 1956, Trump's US in 2018 is today forcefully leading the front in 'tripartite' assaults - as was done

in Syria recently. And the war drums are beating for regime change in Tehran, for a wider assault in the Middle East that may reasonably be expected to replicate the unashamed massacres of Gazans that just took place.

In the 'geoculture' of the last two centuries following the Enlightenment, there has never been a period - including even in fascist and totalitarian interludes - where the project of liberal internationalism has been in such a serious crisis.

Perhaps it's time to pause and pose more meaningful and useful questions, however, such as, for example, why has 'liberal internationalism' been tied so closely, invested so heavily, in a patronizing neo-colonial model where terms such as 'humanitarian intervention' and 'responsibility to protect' - and even human rights, women's rights, gay rights - become mere bludgeons to whip the 'wretched of the earth' ever more harshly - rather than actually empower those on the margins? Indigenous struggles for dignity and traditional 'tools of conviviality' have been bulldozed for the march of some mythical 'progress' narrative that in actuality has engendered an 'Age of (unbearable) Anger'" for the planet's social majorities, as Pankaj Mishra aptly notes.

The Neocons, the 'chicken hawks' (who love to wage wars, but not actually to fight and die in them), the white supremacists, the 'masters of the universe' of the past 500 year world order, understand that the current juncture points to the most profound rupture of roughly a millennium: the political, economic, and cultural de-centering of the West.

And it is precisely because they know this world-historical shift is taking place that this venal neo-colonial establishment has more or less dropped all of the pretenses and veneers of liberal internationalism, the rule of law, and all of the other goodies promised to those who would blindly accept the terms of our 'Brave New World.'

In fact, we see the exact opposite taking place. Global hegemony and apartheid are trying to be instituted fullswing, with a racist, fascist state like Israel being the torchbearer of it - the most degenerate extension of a wounded empire.

None of this is to imply that the war criminals and their systems of oppression will succeed. On the contrary, these efforts at 're-colonization' are taking place precisely because, to put it mildly: the game is over.

Or at the very least, it is gradually getting over. That is, the *longue durée* of the Western hegemonic project since 1492 is coming to its terminal demise. And so whatever differences the Western, white supremacist plutocracies may have amongst each other, their elites are quickly becoming cognizant of this fact and they will fight tooth and nail to preserve what they had. And to be clear, that means the preservation of unjust systems of relations of power, domination, and hierarchy that virtually murdered, enslaved, and displaced the entire world. Good luck convincing the bulk of the tormented world to 'help' these elites to preserve that!

Nevertheless, it's also comical to see how when major global shifts in the balance of power takes place, who actually gets to do the 'dividing' and 'ruling.' The Euro-Atlantic rifts around Trump's trade wars with Europe, his unlawful withdrawal from the Iran nuclear accord that was benefiting European companies, and so on - are phenomena that rising states like China, Russia, India, etc. are chuckling at, since they have been the recipient of such classic colonial divide and conquer policies by Western states for hundreds of years.

As far as the more sensible sections of the establishment in the Western plutocracies, they are endeavoring, though kicking and screaming while doing it, to come to terms to greater equilibrium and balance in world affairs, with poles of power stretching from Beijing to Moscow to Islamabad, Tehran, and Ankara. President Obama's nuclear accord with Iran seems to sadly be the ONE identifiable marker of this less apocalyptic, more sensible thinking amongst these circles. The only imperial initiatives thereafter seem to only have accelerated and exacerbated the race to the precipice, toward more conflict, tension, and violence, rather than alleviating it.

Ultimately, there really is nothing more complicated than the question Noam Chomsky posed years ago: can the elites of the Western plutocracies tolerate the pain fact of their mere survival, with dignity and sustainable living of course, in a multipolar world, or must they risk at all costs the survival of the entire living species and the planet because they are no longer hegemonic, no longer number one.

These are questions that people not only in the global South need to think – and act fast! – about, but all peace- and justice-loving individuals and groups in global North as well.

The cold-blooded murder of Gazans by Israeli terrorist forces, not to mention terror unleashed by both state and non-state actors routinely today, remind us of a central, immediate action urgently requiring our public intervention, one on which liberals in the global North and South don't spend nearly enough of their mobilizing energy. This action is DISMANTLING – yes dismantling – the criminal military-arms industrial complex, 'smuggled' or 'unsmuggled,' the way it was beautifully done in the final episode of *The Night Manager*. The genocidal weaponry was literally blown up in that powerful final episode, and only a sociopath would not have felt a deep feeling of joy, comfort, even ecstasy – even while seeing images of flames and fire – knowing that these arms that were going to be deployed to principally murder and maim brown and black men, women, and children...were destroyed. It was a joyous occasion.

It must be remembered that the vast chunk of Israeli weapons are not made in Israel. Only by explicitly acknowledging that that these are American F-16s, American Apache helicopters, and American ammunition and weaponry that are simply employed by Zionist forces can we get a sense of how to disrupt the source that facilitates the ease of such killing...since the weapons just keep rolling in.

The billions and trillions in arms going to Western Middle Eastern protectorates to guard declining hegemonic power, resources, and its Zionist lapdog Israel will face a similar fate to what happened to those so-called 'smuggled' arms in *The Night Manager*, sooner or later. We hope the war criminals in charge of this decades-long global killing machine face a similar fate to the Eichmann-like moral monster in that series, good old 'Dicky'.

The Nuremburg principles, the Geneva Conventions, and the entire ambit of international law were not just for a period of the 20th century when the West was hegemonic and there was a Soviet menace to contain. Sadly, it seems like not just the Right, but also the Liberal-Left, who have become so colonized by the idea that we are in a 'state of exception' (because of that 'War on Terror' we were supposedly fighting...though we've actually been arming Al Qaeda folks in Syria since 2011 – go figure!) so that it justifies and legitimizes something precisely like the nightmare that we saw against Gazans days ago (because Gazans are Palestinians, are Arabs, are Hamas terrorists, hence can be utterly dehumanized to the point of shooting them point blank, even eight month-old children).

Whether we like it or not, coloniality is still what defines our world order. It's been hard to escape from as long as the guns have been pointing in one direction for around 500 years.

But the reverse is also true. We have finally been able to enter the most meaningful period of deepening and successful ongoing efforts at political, economic, cultural, and epistemological decolonization. Regardless of how starving and caged in they are, the refusal of the people of Gaza to back down and to continue to resist and demand their right to all of historic Palestine from where they were displaced, is what ought to prevent anyone from losing hope and faith in the resistance of the oppressed, everywhere.

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