FREE PALESTINE!

FROM ANARCHIST COMMUNISTS IN OCEANIA

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Supporting the Palestinian Resistance: A Statement from Oceania's Anarchists

Since the 19th century, the Zionist movement has waged brutal colonial war against Palestinian Arab society, nearly without pause. The recent attempted evictions in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of occupied East Jerusalem is only the latest in a long history of oppression and victimisation of the Palestinian working classes.

On Thursday 6 May, Palestinians began protests against the impending Israeli Supreme Court decision to evict Palestinians from the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in Jerusalem. As the protests escalated, Israel responded with violence, which only spurred further escalation.

While Israeli expansion into the remaining Palestinian territories continues unabated, every few years we see an explosion of state-violence designed to subdue Palestinian resistance. Expulsion of Palestinians from their homes and their land has been reinforced by an apartheid-style regime, bolstered by US imperialism.

In turn, the Israeli state supports and encourages pogroms against Palestinians, furthering the dehumanisation of both the oppressed and oppressor. Examples of Zionist violence abound – the bulldozing of Palestinian homes in Jenin, with civilians still inside; the use of white phosphorus during Operation Cast Lead; the establishment of Gaza as the "world's largest open air prison" where Palestinian nationals are starved, left without access to many staples, and subjected to horrific violations of their dignity.

In 2021, the Israeli state has once again announced its barbarity to the world. Israel has threatened to continue the attack until there is "total quiet", nothing if not a metaphor for ethnic cleansing in the face of popular resistance.

But as with all forms of resistance, the current struggle does not have one cause: alongside the economic shock triggered by COVID-19, Palestinians in the West Bank have also been provoked by the decision of the unpopular leader of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, to postpone upcoming elections – elections he knows he will lose.

In Gaza, resistance is largely led by Hamas – a right-wing, religious-nationalist and conservative organisation that oppresses the Palestinian working class in its own right. Israeli terror plays into the hands of Hamas and their project, preventing the Palestinian resistance from developing along working-class lines.

Palestinian resistance is not simply the concern of Palestinians, or of Muslims, or of humanitarians: it is the concern of all workers across the world. The success of the Palestinian struggle is dependent on its internationalisation, turning the struggle of this one group into a truly global working-class struggle that will not only answer "the national question" but the fundamental question of capitalism too. This is even more the case today as neighbouring Arab governments like Egypt and those in the Gulf abandon the façade of their opposition and formalise their alliances with Israel. If the struggles for liberty in these countries link up with the struggle in Palestine, then neither Israel nor the Arab dictatorships stand a chance.

The wildcat resistance by the Palestinians caught both Fatah, the main party of the Palestinian Authority, and Hamas, the main party in Gaza, off guard. Neither party controls the protests, which have overwhelmingly targeted the Israeli state. The response of Hamas has been to fire rockets at Israel, targeting civilians, and inviting the Israeli government to once again assault Gaza. This is not an attempt to support the protests, but to demobilise them; by transferring the struggle onto the military plane, Hamas hopes to sideline the Palestinian masses and prevent them from developing a working-class alternative for their resistance.

As anarchists our position against nationalism should not be mistaken for opposition to resistance – we are against nationalism because we believe that resistance can only be truly successful without it. Israel's occupation is a naked form of colonial oppression, and its Palestinian victims have every right to resist it by whatever means that are in accord with the final goal of liberation.

Liberal world leaders, be they American, Australian, spokespeople for the EU or the UN, speak of 'de-escalation' and 'restraint by both sides'; they only justify the ongoing oppression of Palestine. There is no grey area, there are no two equal sides at war. The Palestinian masses are resisting oppression.

Only solidarity between the oppressed people of Palestine and the working classes of the world can end the occupation. We call on the international anarchist movement and all working-class rebels to join us in denouncing the Israeli occupation of Palestine and supporting resistance to it.

Touch one, touch all.

In solidarity and resistance,

The undersigned anarchist-communist organisations of Oceania:

Anarchist Communists Meanjin

Black Flag Sydney

Geelong Anarchist Communists

Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group

RedBlackNotes.com

Tāmaki Makaurau Anarchists

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