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By a guest author
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Israel: the genocidal thrust of imperialism today

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What we have seen since October in Gaza and the West Bank is the execution of the long-standing plan nurtured by Zionist ideology to liquidate or expel the entire Arab population and take over all of Palestine as Israel's territory. These aims have been exposed to the light of day and without reservation. So are the brutal methods, applied without any restraint. No one can say they don't know, don't see or don't believe.

Israel's actions, however, are not just those of Israel alone and an extreme and accidental Zionist clique. They reflect the nature of today's imperialism and the methods it uses without hesitation.

An indispensable agent

Western leaders know what ideas guide Israeli leaders; they know their political aims; they hear their terrorist declarations; they see their practical actions. The moral condemnations of these actions they might make can be seen only as a cover to hide their bloody hands and obscure their role in Israel's crimes, because, despite having the means to stop the killing, they don't use them.

It is for these unabashed criminals that the U.S. and the European Union, followed by an entourage of weak-willed states like ours [Portugal], recognize the right of "self defense," using the pretext of the October 7 military attack. They turn logic upside down. In reality,

it is the Palestinians who, in light of all the criteria, have the right to defend themselves against Israel, by whatever means are necessary.

This behavior by the West gives us a forewarning of the methods that imperialism in its decadence will be quick to apply: genocidal war, the elimination or displacement of people by the millions, the cataclysmic destruction of entire regions, whether by subcontracting or, if necessary, by direct action.

The behavior of the United States, the European Union and Europe in general shows beyond doubt that Israel's war against the Palestinians is part of a general war by the imperialist West against the peoples of the Middle East.

The fact that counts above all else is well known: U.S.-led imperialism absolutely must maintain the bridgehead that Israel has always been in the Middle East. It needs Israel in order to perpetuate imperialist domination in a crucial region of the world for capitalist business. For this domination to persist, imperialism prevents the Arab and Muslim peoples from uniting. The classes that lead these peoples must not even dream of defending national interests. Preserving this rule is the role of the Zionist state.

Because it knows its key role perfectly well, Israel can afford to take the bit in its teeth and carry out all the acts of daily violence, genocide and ethnic cleansing that it deems useful for its role as guardian of Western imperialism. This role has earned it protection, benefits and impunity for the 75 years of its life. Now, it's as if the hired assassin, aware of his own interests, has decided to charge a higher price for services.

Specter of U.S. decadence haunts Israel

This apparent turning of the spell against the sorcerer has its own basis in these times. U.S. imperialism's decline puts Israel's ruling classes, and indeed Israeli society as a whole, on notice. They know that they can only survive under Washington's protective wing.

What will be Israel's fate when U.S. military support is no longer sufficient, and generous funding risks drying up? What place will it have in a Middle East leaning towards the BRICS, seeking to use its resources according to criteria of national interest and no longer at the behest of the U.S. or Europe? [BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, whose meetings facilitate economic cooperation.]

In this closer sense, too, apart from all the known historical issues, there is no Palestinian problem to resolve, but instead an Israeli problem exists that has no solution.

By unleashing a war of extermination, Israel is desperately trying to safeguard its future. The most extreme Zionism feeds the illusion of turning Israel into a regional power

capable of playing the role of boss of the Middle East on its own, even (or above all) in the face of a weakened U.S. imperialism.

Eliminating the resilient Palestinian resistance would mean not only that Israel would no longer have an “internal” problem but also could convince the neighboring Arab regimes that they should coexist peacefully with the Zionist state.

In this fantasy, Israel would not only be the agent of U.S. imperialism, but also its partner with a larger share of the wealth, a kind of regional sub-imperialism. Its mission would be, in addition to the division it has always caused in the Arab world, to rally the so-called “moderates” around it, tying them to U.S. interests — isolating Iran and avenging the defeats imperialism suffered in Syria and Iraq.

Specter of popular war haunts imperialism

This objective seemed on the way to being fulfilled with the long siege of Gaza, the dismantling of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, the spread of the settlements there, the liquidation of the idea of two states and, finally, with the so-called Abraham agreements almost reached with Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, etc.



Worldwide movement against genocide in Gaza targets U.S. for its role backing Israel. White House, Jan. 5, 2024.

On a symbolic level, too, this maneuver was being carried out with the connivance of the U.S. and the silence of the EU: Jerusalem was declared the capital of Israel, with Trump’s full support and Biden’s hands off, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of Islam’s greatest landmarks, was the subject of a campaign aimed at nothing less than its demolition.

October 7 turned the tide. Popular resistance revived the seemingly dead determination to liberate Palestine, no longer with stones and knives but with military weapons. Only a popular upsurge could produce such an effect.

An apparent mystery remains. We know how Israel's response is discrediting the West itself in the eyes of the rest of the world. One can see the duplicity of the U.S. and the EU when it comes to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza. Why, then, doesn't the U.S., as Israel's main mentor — and subsidiarily the EU — put a stop to the Netanyahu cabal's excesses?

The imperialist West knows that the October 7 attack on Israeli barracks and settlements was an act of popular war. And that's what it wants to eliminate by snuffing boldness at its birth.

Unconditional support (as U.S. leaders are keen to stress) for Israel is the real backbone of U.S. diplomacy, not the pious vows to "spare the civilians," an aside made off the cuff. That level of support is intended to prevent the people's war from spreading and gaining supporters; the aside is intended to neutralize public opinion.

Signs that the people's war might actually spread come from the West Bank, where Hamas' popularity has soared, showing that Palestinians are fed up with the Palestinian Authority's capitulation. And they also come from the active solidarity — a lesson in practical internationalism — manifesting itself in Lebanon (Hezbollah) and Yemen (Houthis), as well as in Iraq and Syria through various anti-imperialist resistance groups that have put U.S. bases under fire.

'Terrorists' with broad popular support

Imperialism insists on disqualifying Hamas, Hezbollah or the Houthis as "terrorists," trying to equate them with groups of evildoers. The obvious aim is to get Western public opinion to accept the acts of war by Israel or the U.S.



Lisbon, Portugal, Jan. 13, 2024. Sign reads: ‘End the occupation.’

Credit: Avante

But the West faces a popular resistance that is broadening its base of support in the masses — crossing national borders, gaining confidence in its own capabilities, gradually shattering illusions about political moderation. All this points to the form that the anti-imperialist struggle is tending to take these days.

To argue that all these protagonists are agents incited by Iran (the West sees everything in its image) is to completely ignore the popular base that all these movements have in their respective countries and to ignore the strength of Arab and Muslim solidarity directed against imperialism.

The West therefore has ample motive to support Israel unconditionally in its terrorist onslaught. At the same time, the West makes efforts to keep the so-called moderate regimes in its orbit, since they have been a complement to its life insurance in the region.

Nothing will be as it was

The West’s tolerance of Nazi-Zionism may succeed in the short run (and, so far, it has) in keeping Netanyahu’s supporters in power and thereby stem the decline of U.S. and EU influence in the Middle East. But it’s not the calculations of the West that determine the evolution of events. The rest of the world sees things through a different prism. That’s what counts for the next few years.

The parallel between the extreme oppression of the Palestinians and the oppression to which the other Arab and Muslim peoples are subjected, and all those whom imperialism has subjected — this parallel is striking.

For these peoples, the domination of European and North American imperialism is not a figure of political rhetoric — it has been a tangible fact of their lives for decades, evidenced in the lack of freedoms, in exploitation, misery, violence and the imposition of tyrannical regimes. It's no wonder that a legitimate hatred of the West fuels the political actions of large sectors of these populations and mobilizes them to fight. This is reflected in the huge demonstrations in support of Palestine that are taking to the streets all over the world, especially in the dependent world.

In the near future, the imperialist West will suffer the consequences of its political choices. No matter how much imperialism holds up its democracies as examples of freedom and progress (which today is not even an argument), the facts prove, for the oppressed peoples, that these regimes are the origin and vehicles of the oppression they suffer. What does it matter to them that U.S. or European voters choose their regimes “freely,” if these regimes are the agents of the wars and plundering practiced outside Europe and the U.S.? What is this “freedom” that serves to legitimize all kinds of dictatorships that suit the West?

The martyrdom of the Palestinians will surely cause other shockwaves. The so-called “moderate” Arab regimes will tend to be seen by their populations more clearly and definitively as accomplices to the crimes of Israel and the West and as the obvious cause of their misery.

The ethnic and confessional divisions fostered by the West can be overcome in the name of a political unity that defends the majority interests of the populations. Such political unity will tend to be built from the bottom up, from the popular masses, based on class solidarity and not on confessional or ethnic criteria.

The mass uprisings of the so-called Arab Spring in 2011, regardless of the practical results that remained, gave the signal that such political unity is feasible and can bear fruit. The demonstrations in support of Palestine, from Morocco to Pakistan to Indonesia, are the sign today not only of a moral solidarity but, above all, of an identity of interests rooted in a common material situation.

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