



Youth lead Palestinian revolt

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In the last month, Israeli security forces have murdered 60 Palestinians, 15 of them under 18. One of the most notable victims, Dania Irshaid, a 17 year old student on her way home from school, was shot while holding her hands in the air. Israeli sources claimed that she had been 'carrying a knife'.

Nine Israelis have also been killed in the same period, while Israeli security forces and civilians have themselves attacked other Israelis and, in one incident, shot and lynched an Eritrean refugee, after mistaking them for Palestinians.

Over 800 Palestinians have been arrested in the last month, and more than 1,300 were shot in the eleven days to 15 October. Israel has demolished 450 Palestinian homes in this year alone. Alongside this day-to-day brutality in the Occupied Territories, there is the ongoing brutality of the siege of Gaza, where Israel's tight control of even the most basic necessities causes premeditated suffering for the 1.8 million Palestinians effectively imprisoned there.

Popular Palestinian resistance to this state violence, optimistically dubbed a 'new intifada' by some, has seen militant demonstrations at checkpoints, led as ever by Palestinian youth, as well as protests directed at the racist 'separation barrier' that Israel has built in order to gobble up the land around its illegal settlements in what is left of Palestinian territory.

Amongst these youth there is widespread disaffection with the Palestinian Authority, PA, which they rightly see as being complicit in Israel's occupation. The PA's leaders have grown all too comfortable with their position as Israel's partner in an endless and intermittent 'peace process'. Since the US-brokered Oslo accords of 1993, the Fatah-led PA has committed itself to a path of 'diplomacy' in the course of which they have made concessions after concessions that have rendered even their stated goal of a 'two-state solution' practically impossible.

Now, popular pressure has revealed cracks in this policy of collaboration. PA security forces, who usually police demonstrations and work with the Israeli army, are now often seen to be standing aside, ostensibly in accordance with the, until now purely symbolic, vote to 'suspend security cooperation' passed by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in March.

Meanwhile, Israel's politicians are whipping up racism and hatred to prepare their public for the violence necessary to continue the 1967 occupation indefinitely. Israel's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu went so far as to give a speech claiming that Hitler had not wanted to exterminate the Jews until persuaded to by Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, a major figure in Palestinian politics under the British Mandate in the 1930s and 1940s.

This false and apparently bizarre claim, which would be punishable as holocaust denial in many Western countries, in fact serves a perfectly logical purpose: to blame the Palestinians for their own misfortune, and to justify future acts designed to further displace them from their own country. Promoting this narrative will become all the more important for Israel's ruling class since Netanyahu made clear on 26 October that he rejected both a binational state and any separate Palestinian state in the 1967 territories 'for the foreseeable future', saying that Israel would 'need to control all of the territory' and, if necessary, will have to 'forever live by the sword' to enforce this.

Everyone deserves the right to live with full civil and political rights in their own country. Most Jewish-Israelis (about 70 per cent) were born in Israel and many families have been there for generations but then so have the Palestinians,

both within Israel's borders and in the Occupied Territories, not to mention those forced to flee as refugees. Netanyahu's proposed 'solution', in which one national group has political rights and a state, while the other remains without either individual citizenship or a country of their own, has a name: apartheid.

The longer that Israel continues with it, the clearer it is that the 'binational state', which Israel's right and left alike fear so much, is the only alternative to the project of Zionist colonisation on which Israel was built.

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