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Israel devastates Gaza

The war against Hamas in Gaza was well scripted. Israel knew that after the cease fire was over, Hamas would send rockets over the border into southern Israel and this would give them the rationalisation which they wanted to occupy and devastate the Gaza strip which is part of Palestine. They, after all would be considered the defenders of their country against a "terrorist organisation" namely Hamas who are the elected government of the Gaza area.

What they "forget" though in their "analysis" is that more Palestinians die from the enforced blockade, enforced in association with President Mubarek of Egypt than who died from the bombing of Israel. Do they give the Gaza Palestinians the right to defend themselves against the barbaric blockade? Of course not!

So for twenty one days the Israelis moved in the troops and the tanks and conducted aerial bombardment. Now the fruits of their labour are clear for all to see. Gaza is a devastated country. More than a thousand have been killed, most of whom are civilians and many of which are children. There is a desperate lack of hospital beds and medical which important part of Gazan infrastructure has been destroyed as have schools which were used as refuge for homeless civilians. Many civilian homes have been destroyed. Many civilians were killed in the process.

When the battle was in progress, Israel rationalised much of the destruction by blaming Hamas. For example, when Israel destroyed a school, under UN control, housing refugees, they claimed that they were responding, in their defence to shooting which came from that direction, either from the building or the one next door. Effectively they were accusing Hamas of using the residents as human shields.

Now that the devastation has been exposed as immense, "arguments" such as this hold little weight. It is not just the occasional school blitzed but whole areas. There is no excuse whatsoever for using the extremely dangerous white phosphorous as a weapon in built up areas.

The UN is angry and Israel faces being charged with international war crimes. Irrespective of whether Israel is found guilty or otherwise, the penalties imposed will mean little. They have the Palestinians right where they want them. The Palestinians are both politically and physically divided. The militants of Hamas are in a sardine can on the Gaza strip. Woe betide if you attack us because if you do we will destroy civilians and infrastructure is their message. The Gaza militants find themselves from an Arab world which has effectively betrayed. This includes the PFLP leadership on the West Bank. It especially includes the Mubarek regime of Egypt who do Israel's dirty work by enforcing a reactionary blockade.

Israel is concerned that guns will be smuggled into Gaza. According to Israeli logic it is an act of aggression if the Gaza Palestinians have guns. But they reserve the right to possess nuclear weapons as "defence". The Gaza people are also deprived of basic requirements such as medicines.

The Israelis say that their state has international legality whereas Hamas does not. This "legality" shows that the United Nations backs imperialism. Israel was created by US and British imperialism to defend the interests of imperialism. The Palestinians were expendable. It has taken decades of fighting to get even this token state. The Palestinian mini state is hardly a satisfactory solution to the national question so the militants of Hamas fight on.

For the Israelis the establishment of Israel has meant permanent war. They have aggressively invaded Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, as well as of course the Palestinians. They believe in

pre-emptive defence which means their right to attack before the Arabs do. In 2006 they blitzed Lebanon, because Hezbollah captured a couple of its soldier. The whole of Lebanon suffered including areas where there was no Hezbollah presence.

Israel has been fighting for decades but their propaganda has changed. They used to deny that there was a valid Palestinian nation. They argued that the Palestinians were really Jordanian and Jordan should accommodate them. Now they dangle a Palestinian ministate and claim Hamas is preventing it from happening. Once they blamed the late Yasser Arafat for everything including the acts of extremists, now they argue that the PFLP is a decent organisation, not responsible for extremists. This propaganda change is aimed at dividing the Palestinian community and to a large extent it has been successful. America does not necessarily endorse every Israeli act. But the Israelis know that they have American backing and America. Though it might criticise in extreme circumstances will never desert them. America backs them financially and militarily. America knows that Israel is strategically key to imperialist ripping the oil from the Arab people. Israel has a very strong lobby and many politicians Democrat and Republican find it convenient to hitch a ride on the Israeli band wagon.

Revolutionary communists are on the side of the Palestinian people. We give military support to Hamas, Hezbollah, or whoever is fighting the Israelis. Of course, we are critical of both their Muslim beliefs and their political programme. Yes we would like to transcend nationalism through a proletarian party with a revolutionary programme. But we take a stand in the current struggle — on the side of the Palestinians. And we don't equivocate!

Some have argued that a Palestinian victory would "reverse the terms of oppression." This is a possibility if somehow, the Palestinians got imperialist sponsorship. At the moment, they don't and imperialist sponsorship is unlikely. At the moment Israel has a nation with imperialist sponsorship and the Palestinians do not. So we are clearly on the side of the Palestinians.

Could there be a proletarian upsurge, in Israel by Jewish workers? Yes there could be such an upsurge. But we don't desert the Palestinians for this possibility. Any Jewish worker uprising must support the just cause of meaningful Palestinian self-determination. The task of the workers movement and class conscious proletarians in this country and internationally is to be unconditionally on the side of the Palestinian people!

Meaningful self-determination for Palestine!

This means taking a side in this war. Military victory to Hamas!

This means not just making paper resolutions, it means action!

Workers action against Israeli aggression!

It is of no surprise that the Rudd government has thrown in its lot with Israel, claiming that the aggression is all the fault of Hamas. Rudd believes in the US alliance. The new Secretary of State in the Obama Government, Ms Hillary Clinton stated that in no way could there be negotiations with Hamas given that it doesn't believe in the state of Israel. She did though promise to be flexible. Hamas are a democratically elected government and there can be no solution with their participation in negotiations. We think Obama will be a bit more pragmatic.

But in no way will Obama permit a solution which is against US imperialist interests. We are confident that this war will continue and along with it barbaric attacks by Israel on the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians of Gaza need active support from proletarians of Australia

Rudd and Obama: spend big but make the workers pay!

Rudd and Obama are men of similar philosophies. Everyone knows there is a massive worldwide recession. Everyone knows something has to be done urgently. Both Rudd and Obama think big spending is the answer. Rudd has just announced another forty two billion dollars. Obama has announced a one point three trillion dollar bailout.

Millions are going to the US car industry, to the multinationals. No-one appears to be happy about this. The car manufacturers are in trouble, not just because of the recession but because of bad decisions by the companies themselves. But US imperialism can't afford to lose the car industry so the government must pay up.

One of the conditions for this bail out is that the workers lose. They must suffer both pay cuts and loss of conditions. Car making is hard sweated labour for which workers deserve to be highly paid... The workers were not responsible for either the global recession or the bad decisions of their bosses. They will also suffer from inflation caused by the recession and some may lose their homes. Do workers deserve to suffer? No they don't! workers must fight against these conditions and make the bosses pay.

Kevin Rudd wants the workers to suffer also. Despite gifts of money which are more favourable towards poorer people than the gifts offered by many other governments, he is committed to fight industrial action.

Late last year miners announced a campaign for higher pay. The bosses protested claiming that jobs would be lost. Rudd backed the bosses. Of course jobs were lost anyway. Mines were closed and thousands forced out the gate. The unions put up minimal resistance. Of course if they did fight the sack through occupations and by demanding a shorter working week Rudd would have opposed that too.

The ACTU is demanding a summit to meet the crisis. This summit would include all involved including governments, bosses and the unions themselves. We had one of these before. What emerged is that unions, on workers behalf, "agreed" to make workers suffer for the sake of the economy and indeed they did. Bosses will only accept consensus if it is in their favour. Such a summit will be worse than useless.

While hundreds of thousands of jobs stand to be lost, the ACTU offers nothing except to advise governments on how to run the system better. The unions want protection for Australian jobs. Former bureaucrat and now Rudd Government minister George Campbell has told the unions that this is not on. So this leaves the unions bankrupt.

Revolutionary leadership in the unions must be built. Every attack must be fought. No worker should be forced out the gate. Wages and conditions must be defended. A shorter working week must be fought for so that everyone can be employed

Rudd keeps work for the dole

The Liberals are cynical. They think that despite rhetoric, the Rudd government has a secret agenda to undermine work for the dole. They have evidence. Firstly, Rudd has reduced the amount spent on each work for the dole placement and secondly a statement from Centreline urging job network agencies to go soft on work for the dole breaches. Well last year in parliament, the government was challenged by the Liberals and gave firm assurance that work for the dole would continue and there would be no further reduction in spending. Unfortunately we believe them.

It has been much more difficult to get information on work for the dole under Rudd. Work for the dole placements are no longer placed on the internet. But some agencies do place their offerings. Job Futures on the North Coast of New South Wales offer similar jobs that were offered under Howard. These include painting, carpentry, concreting, and shop assistant. They are all jobs which should be paid for at proper award rates. The Pole Depot agency in the St George district of Sydney offer similar projects. In short; the slavery continues.

Work for the dole is a serious attack on wages, conditions, unionisation and the unemployed themselves. It is slavery. The dole is not going up despite rampant inflation and neither is payment for work for the dole. which remains at fifteen dollars on top of dole payments? The unemployed, nor workers for the dole have received nothing from Rudd's handouts.

Unemployment, the attacks on unemployed such as breaching and work for the dole are part of the government' offensive against unions and the working class in general. If community groups can get unemployed labour to work for next to nothing then why employ at proper award rates? Work for the dole is a disincentive to employ it is not an employment programme. The Rudd government itself acknowledges that very few jobs are achieved by this oppressive scheme.

It is up to the union movement to fight against work for the dole and all cheap labour/ scab labour schemes. A job with a full wage and conditions should be a right.

The government has just announced that those facing penalties for overpayment will now be able to pay off their penalties by doing physical labour. This is reactionary also.

The government has announced that in the first month one hundred previously working on the CDEP are now doing work for the dole.

Communist Left does not want the return of CDEP. We want all workers. black and white to get full pay and conditions.

Morales a reactionary constitution for capitalism

Evo Morales president of Bolivia is one of the most left wing political leaders in the capitalist world. He is the first indigenous president in Bolivian history. There is no denying his concern for the oppressed. He is loved by the poor and he is hated by the rich, This new constitution moved to head off civil war does have many benefits for poor people. For example it now makes sacking workers unconstitutional. But fundamentally this is a reactionary constitution. What it does is institutionalise capitalism!

It talks about a "plural economy". This means guaranteeing the rights of not just Bolivian but foreign companies which have "acquired rights" This includes that of the multinational Glencore which is owned by international speculator Max Rich. Effectively Morales is guaranteeing multinational control over the country with some restrictions. Prohibited under the new constitution is the right to sack workers. We don't think this is the way to stop capitalists and we doubt if this measure will be enforced. It will be interesting to see what happen f a sacked worker attempts to enforce his or her constitutional right. The constitution also defends the right of privately owned land holdings up to 5,000 hectares.

Effectively what Morales has done is to make socialism, even if voted for by a parliamentary majority. illegal and unconstitutional. This is reactionary and a barrier to those fighting. for a new social system in that country. Morales must be opposed both h Bolivia and internationally. A communist alternative must be built.

Sri Lanka: Tamil tigers face defeat

For twenty four years the Tigers of Tamil Ealem have been fighting a guerrilla war against the Sri Lankan government. Recently the Tamils have lost not just their capital but every town and city they previously held. The Army is on the offensive and the Tigers are losing. For the Tigers regaining the lost ground will be extremely difficult. The origins of this war stem from British imperialism. Tamil workers were brought in to work on tea plantations in the island then known as Ceylon. When Ceylon was given independence, power was given to a Sinhala bourgeois elite who persecuted the Tamils. The country's name was changed to Sri Lanka

The Tamils first fought for their rights peacefully. Then they took up arms. The Tamil Tigers have a Stalinist heritage. After the demise of the Soviet Union they became simply bourgeois nationalists. Irrespective, they have been fighting for a progressive demand—the right to self determination for Tamils in Sri Lanka, This means the right to form an independent Tamil state. in fiat until recently they have almost achieved that demand. Their state had until recently. its own capital and own legislature. There are clear areas in the Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka when Tamils are the overwhelming majority Such a state is indeed viable. Tamils should have the right to such a state if they want it --irrespective of the Tamil Tigers. In fact the Tigers are the product of the failure of Sri Lanka to give Tamils that right. In Colombo, Sinhala people are happy. Chauvinism is rampant They blame the Tigers for creating a division between Tamils and other Sri Lankans. Actually it was Sinhala bourgeois governments which created this division. Revolutionary communists, that is Trotskyists agree with neither their methods (guerrilla warfare) nor their bourgeois programme which does not transcend capitalism. Nevertheless we must take up the banner of an independent Tamil stale within Sri Lanka, irrespective of the state of play concerning the war between Tigers and Sri Lankan government. The cause of an independent Tamil state is just one!

Communist Left of Australia stands for...

building a revolutionary alternative to Labor

political power to poor and exploited through a revolutionary small farmers' government

revolutionary expropriation of capitalist industry

(as opposed to bourgeois nationalisation) a Sliding Scale of hours and wages

occupations against sackings

organising the unemployed

for rent control

a programme of useful public works

For womens and gay rights. Free abortion on demand. Socialise housework & child care. opposition to all immigration controls

Self-determination to the black people of Australia, koors and Murriss people of Australia. and Torres Strait isianders

class unity with workers of Asia, the Pacific and elsewhere. No to tahits and protection. Defend jobs everywhere!
No to import controls

opposition to Australian intervention in PNG, Bougainvilla, Indonesi::: ccr, the Pacific, in the Middle East end elsewhere. Workers' action against Australia's particpation in the US imperialist war drive (including under the banner of theUnited Nations).

a new revolutionary communist international

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