The Israeli offensive against Gaza must stop immediately!

War is a barbaric, deeply immoral, reactionary phenomenon, contrary to the interests of the people

(Rosa Luxemburg)

Once again, the Israeli State, with the support of almost all its political elites and a majority of its population (at least according to the polls) has decided on aggression against the Palestinian people.

Repeating the same strategy used in Lebanon in 2006, the Israeli Air Force attacked so-called "strategic" targets, knowing its actions would kill a large proportion of civilians, under the false pretext of "eradicating" a "terrorist movement."

The Israeli Airforce destroyed, like in Lebanon, civilian community facilities that will take years to be rebuilt, and which will only make the situation of the Palestinians even more catastrophic. From the first night of the ground offensive, on January 3rd 2009, the electricity infrastructures were destroyed, depriving the inhabitants of any light, except from the buildings and fuel depots on fire.

The Israeli armed forces are deliberately starving the population, hoping that the Palestinians will turn against the Hamas, a stupid and cynical calculation. The few humanitarian convoys entering Gaza are useless because people can’t leave their homes and go to the food distribution points. The water supply is virtually stopped.

This murderous strategy is presented as an act of "legitimate self defense" by the CRIF (Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France). On the 4th January 2009, at the end of a demonstration in support of the State of Israel, one of its representatives referred to the victims of Hamas rockets (less than a dozen dead until now) while ignoring the 500 dead and 2500 wounded Palestinians after the IDF bombings.

Much more than a "disproportionate" response, this is a new premeditated war crime of the Israeli State. This is explained by the Israeli militants who are in favor of direct negotiations between Israel and the Hamas and the immediate cessation of the embargo against Gaza, as basic first steps. This bloody attack was also due to the cynical calculations of the Israeli political elites: on the one hand, they wanted to take advantage of the interregnum between Bush and Obama in order to oblige the United States to accept a foregone situation; and secondly they are preparing the February 2009 elections.

"One does not build an electoral campaign on the corpses of dead children! All government ministers are war criminals!" shouted the demonstrators in Tel Aviv on January 3rd 2009. They also denounced the "6-seat War" because the Labor Party, according to polls, is expected to gain 6 new MPs thanks to its position in favour of the « Cast Lead » operation.

Whilst the Israeli bombardments are barbaric, we should not label Israeli troops or governments with terms such as "zionazis" which flourish on the Net and can be heard in demonstrations. Our justified emotion and anger against this war should in no way lead us into the same field as those who equate Zionism with Nazism.

As regards the concept of genocide, one can’t put on the same level the genocide of the Jews, the Armenians and the Tutsis, on one side, and the massacres of Palestinians during Israeli bombings.
Such a use of this term eliminates its very specific meaning - systematic extermination of a people - and can only create political confusion.

It should be recalled that the war of Algeria caused a million deaths among the Algerian people. There is no need to invoke the Judeocide and to return it against the Israeli governments, or worse, against the Israeli people, to condemn the barbarity of the IDF troops.

From our socialist, secular and internationalist point of view, the Israeli and Palestinian workers have to choose the political system under which they want to live tomorrow: one common secular state or two secular states. The Israeli and Palestinian workers have also to choose if they want to go farther: not just fight for equal democratic and social rights, but also call into question the capitalist system that oppresses them in Israel and Palestine.

We do not believe that Israeli nationalism (Zionism) and Palestinian nationalism (the variety defended by the Palestinian Authority or its more religious form defended by the Hamas) offer any common perspective to both peoples and to the exploited masses of the region. By its permanent aggressions and territorial expansion the state of Israel feeds the hatred not only against its own citizens but also against the Jewish religion, the values of which it claims to defend. To justify its colonial policy the Israeli state mixes the terrible consequences of the Judeocide and Nazi barbarity with the need for Israelis to defend themselves against neighboring States, and with biblical references. The Israeli State nurtured the nationalism of the PLO yesterday, and today nurtures the nationalism of the Hamas, a movement which, like most currents of Zionism, does not differentiate between political and religious issues.

We know that religious wars always end in a bloodbath (as France has experienced it with Protestants) and leads to partition, exile and massacres (the separation between India and Pakistan being the last large-scale example).

If one wants to achieve peace agreements, it’s important to put aside religion, its symbols, its "divine commandments" and its reactionary principles.

There will be no peace:
- if Israel and Hamas do not agree to start negotiations (which have already taken place on several occasions);
- Without an end to the blockade of Gaza;
- Without a radical and egalitarian redistribution of territories and resources between Israelis and Palestinians;
- Without equal democratic rights for all in the future two States or in the future Israeli-Palestinian federation that could be created;
- Without a radical separation between religions and the State or States.

Our international solidarity must aim at an immediate halt to this escalating war. Yet we must not yield to the logic of competing communities. To present the situation as a confrontation between those who support the Israeli government and those who support Hamas would be a deeply misleading caricature. We don’t support either of the two belligerents, and even if we may differ about what each one represents, we are in the camp of the interests of the overwhelming majority : in
the camp of the workers, whatever national label was randomly attributed to them. It is the task of the working class movement to organize the struggle against the war.

This is why we are fighting for a just peace in the Middle East, without ever hiding our democratic, antistatist, egalitarian, libertarian and socialist positions.

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