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Palestine is a Mirror into the Contemporary World Struggle Against Imperialism, and its Contradictions (/palestine-mirror-contemporary-world-struggle-against-imperialism-and-its-contradictions)

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Palestine is a Mirror into the Contemporary World Struggle Against Imperialism, and its Contradictions

One cannot logically support the liberation of Palestine while simultaneously advocating regime change in Syria and Venezuela and obscene funding for the US military.

"Palestinians deserve full solidarity in their ongoing struggle to liberate themselves and their land."

Unity among the people of colonized Palestine has engendered a violent response from the Israeli colonial regime. Scores of Palestinian men, women, and children have been killed (<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/maureen-clare-murphy/gantz-admits-no-one-gaza-safe-israels-terror>) by Israeli military forces and tens of thousands more rendered homeless. In a bid to hide its atrocities, Israel has targeted buildings providing residence to Palestinian media (<https://theintercept.com/2021/05/18/gaza-journalists-israel-palestine-attacks/>) and international media organizations (<https://newrepublic.com/article/162416/israel-ap-al-jazeera-bomb-propaganda-press-gaza>) such as Al Jazeera and the Associated Press (AP).

Millions have taken to the streets across the world in protest of Israel's latest assault on Palestine, and rightfully so. Israel's seventy-plus year colonial project is a rolling war crime that violates each and every tenet of international law. But the plight of the Palestinian people is about much more than suffering. The Palestine question is a mirror into the present-day world struggle against imperialism.

The relative silence on this fact exposes a contradiction which has emerged from the Palestine solidarity movement in the United States in recent years. On the one hand, great progress has been made in raising popular consciousness of Israel's Apartheid State and its crimes against the Palestinian people over the last several decades. On the other, there is also a strong tendency to view Palestine as an exception, rather than the rule, to the Euro-American imperialist order led by the United States.



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"It's a seventy-plus year colonial project is a rolling war crime that violates each and every tenet of international law."
No mistake, Palestinians deserve full solidarity in their ongoing struggle to liberate themselves and their land. They deserve the unconditional support of those whose governments are complicit in propping up Israel's settler colonial project. However, the dominant practice of addressing the Palestine question outside of the world historic struggle against imperialism has provided an opening for the imperialists themselves to sow ideological rupture and confusion in the movement.

This can be seen most clearly in how certain elements of the Palestine solidarity movement have approached Syria. In 2014, the U.S. was deep into its war on Syria (<https://gowans.blog/2016/10/22/the-revolutionary-distemper-in-syria-that-wasnt/>) when the Obama administration pledged full support to the Israeli regime's violent military assault on Gaza, Operation Protective Edge (<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/watch-killing-gaza>). Many in the so-called socialist and pro-Palestine movement opposed Israel's mass murder of Palestinians but gave ideological cover to the United States' weaponization of "human rights" in Syria. It was clear that a good number of the most vocal Palestine solidarity activists shared the U.S. State Department's view that Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad was a butcher, with some groups going so far as to compare the Syrian government to Israel. (<https://palestinesolidarityalliance.weebly.com/palestinian-syrian-solidarity-together-in-the-struggle.html>)

"Many in the so-called socialist and pro-Palestine movement gave ideological cover to the United States' weaponization of 'human rights' in Syria."

This monumental error is in danger of being repeated in relation to China. The U.S. is engaged in an aggressive New Cold War which includes the intense weaponization of "human rights" issues, particularly in reference to China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. China is accused of committing "genocide" against the Uyghur ethnic minority. Whether made by Uyghur separatist groups (<https://thegrayzone.com/2020/03/05/world-uyghur-congress-us-far-right-regime-change-network-fall-china/>) or "scholars" such as Adrian Zenz (<https://thegrayzone.com/2021/02/18/us-media-reports-chinese-genocide-relied-on-fraudulent-far-right-researcher/>), these claims can be traced back to CIA cutouts such as the National Endowment for Democracy and the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation.

The U.S. propaganda war against Syria and China are deeply connected. Scores of Uyghur separatists have taken up arms to fight for regime change in Syria (<https://apnews.com/article/syria-ap-top-news-riots-international-news-china-79d6a427b26f4eeab226571956dd256e>). The Newlines Institute, author of a fraudulent report claiming "genocide" in Xinjiang, is heavily staffed (<https://thegrayzone.com/2021/03/17/report-uyghur-genocide-sham-university-neocon-punish-china/>) by fanatical supporters of regime change in Syria. In many ways, the propaganda war has worked. The same activists who attempted to draw a connection between Zionist colonial violence toward Palestine and support for regime change in Syria have expressed support for Uyghur separatism and its Al-Qaeda affiliated leadership, the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) (now known as the Turkish Islamic Party) by bringing the blue crescent flag to demonstrations. (<https://twitter.com/SpiritofHo/status/1392308663788969991?s=20>)

"Scores of Uyghur separatists have taken up arms to fight for regime change in Syria."

The U.S. Left is no stranger to state infiltration. From the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) (<https://libcom.org/files/WATP.pdf>) to the CIA's role in the formation of the Ford Foundation and the Congress for Cultural Freedom (<https://www.lahaine.org/petras/b2-img/CIAcultCW.pdf>), U.S. government agencies have exercised immense influence over the development and repression of all forms of anti-establishment resistance in the U.S. This is especially true for those activities which take aim at the U.S.'s imperialist role in world affairs. Cold War sectarian squabbles that emerged out of the U.S.'s crusade against communism have taken new form in the 21st century, with majorities of left groups adopting the U.S.'s "humanitarian interventionist" positions on Syria and China while simultaneously claiming support for Palestinian resistance.

This explains why the NED-funded Uyghur American Association (UAA) can hurl racist epithets (<https://thegrayzone.com/2021/03/31/china-uyghur-gun-soldiers-empire/>) at an anti-Asian racism rally in Washington D.C. yet the flag they wave can be simultaneously tolerated at Palestine solidarity rallies. The political doctrine remains unwritten but is spelled out clearly in practice: Palestine is a worthy single-issue cause that should not be exposed to the real "savages" of the Global South such as Syria, China, Iran, etc. Elements of the movement are thus given the political space to embrace the right-wing regalia of colonialism and imperialist destabilization. The existence of this contradiction only strengthens American exceptionalism's role as the ideological negation of solidarity and anti-imperialism.

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For Black Agenda Report, the more important it becomes for the movement to understand that Palestine is no single-issue cause. The U.S. funds Israel's settler colonial military to the tune of 3.8 billion dollars annually (https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/israel-bombing-gaza-). Such support not only denotes U.S. alignment with the genocide of Palestinians but also the destruction of the broader region. Israel and the U.S. are partners in the economic strangulation of Iran, the dirty war in Syria, and the destabilization of the Middle East and North Africa over the last three decades. Stephan Gowans calls Israel a "beachhead in the Middle East" (https://blackagenda.com/israel-indispensable-service-oil-thieves-and-empire) precisely because U.S. and Western support for Zionism has always been based on a global agenda to destroy Arab and indigenous resistance to imperialism in the region. Palestinian resistance forces understand this, which is why several of their organizations in recent weeks met with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad (https://twitter.com/LinaArabii/status/1395434662969937920) and thanked Iran (https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2021/05/17/653901/Khamenei-Iran-Palestine-letters-groups-movements-resistance) for its concrete support to the movement.

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Furthermore, the U.S. provides material support to more than seventy percent (https://truthout.org/articles/us-provides-military-assistance-to-73-percent-of-world-s-dictatorships/) of the world's "dictatorships." Israel is perhaps the most influential of them all on U.S. domestic and foreign policy. U.S. President Joe Biden identifies as a Zionist (https://www.arabamericannews.com/2020/03/18/zionist-biden-in-his-own-words-my-name-is-joe-biden-and-everybody-knows-i-love-israel/). Every single U.S. politician and official in Washington is duty bound to serve the interests of the Israeli regime or face the wrath of its powerful lobby (https://electronicintifada.net/content/watch-film-israel-lobby-didnt-want-you-see/25876). U.S. police departments train in Israel (https://www.amnestyusa.org/with-whom-are-many-u-s-police-departments-training-with-a-chronic-human-rights-violator-israel/) only to return more equipped to terrorize Black and indigenous people within the U.S.'s colonial borders. Furthermore, the U.S. props up "the Israel of Latin America" in Colombia, a government with a long reputation as most dangerous place in the world to be an activist. (https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Colombia-The-Most-Dangerous-Environment-for-Trade-Unions-20180107-0016.html)

"U.S. police departments train in Israel."

This merely scratches the surface of Palestine's intimate relationship with the larger struggle against U.S. imperialism. Palestine helps point the way forward for the solidarity movement residing in the belly of the beast. Two critical demands must be raised by the solidarity movement in the United States and the Western world. One is the complete withdrawal of all U.S. aid to Israel. The second is a massive reduction in the U.S. military budget, which not only props up Israel but also fuels endless war and destabilization across the Global South.

While simple, these demands support the broader call for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) of Israel—a movement which has faced significant repression from the U.S. government (https://inthesetimes.com/article/israel-palestine-bds-marco-rubio-repression-colonization-occupation) in recent years. They also compel a debate on the contradictions which threaten to imperil the progress of the Palestine solidarity movement in the United States and the West. The U.S., Israel, and their allies have attempted to smash the mirror that Palestine places on the U.S.-led system of imperialism by carving up the solidarity movement into contending political factions in the same manner that they carve up the world for their exclusive benefit. A world free of apartheid states therefore requires that solidarity with Palestine include a vigilant struggle against any effort to isolate Palestinian resistance from the larger movement to disarm the U.S. empire.

Danny Haiphong is a contributing editor to Black Agenda Report and co-author of the book "American Exceptionalism and American Innocence: A People's History of Fake News- From the Revolutionary War to the War on Terror." Follow his work on Twitter @SpiritofHo and on YouTube as co-host with Margaret Kimberley of Black Agenda Report Present's: The Left Lens. You can support Danny at www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong (http://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong.%C2%A0)

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