

Incredibly Difficult Incredibly Complex



THE RESPONSE of the Labour leadership to the war being waged in Gaza, along with many others, is to insist upon the complexity, and intractability, of the situation. It is, of course, true that there are many aspects of the war in Gaza, on the West Bank, and at Israel's northern border, which are labyrinthine.

In complete contrast the simplification favoured by many on the left is to pitch the rights of the oppressed against those of the oppressor. From this standpoint, colonialism, apartheid, genocide, imperialism, and the right of the oppressed to use any means, any means at all, in their struggle for liberation, is not merely justified but is worthy of international support. Consequently, irrelevant and meaningless political concepts are routinely deployed against Israel. The truth is simply brushed aside in order to heap opprobrium and shame upon Israel and all its works.

One could, of course, traipse through the left's list of assertions revealing their irrelevance, their inappropriateness, or their simple wrongheadedness. For instance, the vast growth of Palestinian populations, over recent decades, on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, rather contradicts the idea that Israel is committing *genocide* by seeking to murder the entire Palestinian population. The fact that a fifth of Israel's population is composed of Arabs is also widely ignored by those arguing that the Jews are committed to wiping out Palestinians.

The Zionist enterprise was always, from the get-go a 'colonial' project. This is undoubtedly true, but is the ancient and substantial Jewish community of Jerusalem, or the settlement of large parts of Mandate Palestine during the 1920s and '30s really a 'colonial' land grab? Is the organised settlement of Jews in the territory, up to and including the establishment of the State of Israel, really comparably to the British occupation of Gold Coast, of Nigeria, of Rhodesia, of Kenya, or of British and French colonies in the Caribbean? Do comparisons of this sort have anything other than rhetorical intention? I think not. The Palestine Solidarity account of Jewish colonialism lacks all historical cogency or coherence, but it does tie in rather nicely to the anti-imperialist chanting of the left.

Similarly, with descriptions of Israel as an "apartheid state". If Israel is an 'apartheid' state it is a very peculiar one in which the Arab citizens of Israel have the vote, and Arab Israelis sit in the Knesset and in Israel's Supreme Court. In complete contrast, actually existing Apartheid, was the arrangement pioneered by the British in South Africa, which was formalised by the National Party in 1948. These laws decreed where black, Asian, and 'coloured' people could live, and denied black people the vote. It was designed to aid the super-exploitation of the black population. Nothing like this exists within Israel. Nothing of the sort is applied to Israel's 2m Arab

citizens. Calling Israel an apartheid state is a lazy rhetorical device employed to demonise Israel.

In fact, Israel is a multi-racial state in which half the Jewish population are descended from families, who were robbed, and driven out of their ancestral homes in North Africa and other Arab states in the nineteen forties and early fifties. It is not a 'white' country any more than Lebanon, Jordan, or Egypt.

Descriptions of Israel as an 'imperialist' state are no doubt supported by the way in which trillions of US dollars are supplied to Israel by Washington for the defence of the Jewish state. What is never mentioned, however, by the enemies of Israel are the trillions of dollars paid to Palestinian agencies over the years. For example, between 2012 and 2019 – a seven-year period – the Americans paid \$2,554 million in aid to the Palestinians.

And so, it goes on amongst the Israel haters: lies, falsehoods, and omissions, all in the service of demonising the Jewish state and trashing Jewish nationalism. The left has even succeeded in mislaying the Hamas Charter of 1988 in which the organisation makes abundantly clear its commitment to killing Jews and destroying Israel.

Moreover, if the links have been distant from each other and if obstacles, placed by those who are the lackeys of Zionism in the way of the fighters obstructed the continuation of the struggle, the Islamic Resistance Movement aspires to the realisation of Allah's promise, no matter how long that should take. The Prophet, Allah bless him and grant him salvation, has said:

"The Day of Judgement will not come about until Moslems fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say O Moslems, O Abdulla, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him. Only the Gharkad tree, (evidently a

certain kind of tree) would not do that because it is one of the trees of the Jews." (related by al-Bukhari and Moslem).

[From Article 7, Hamas Charter 1988]

The Hamas Charter of 2017 does not replace the Charter of 1988, but it is designed to appeal to Western liberal supporters of Palestinian Solidarity. Consequently, it has softened its stance on killing Jews while making it clear that Zionists are fair game. In any event the intention to destroy Israel from the River to the Sea is spelled forcefully out:

Palestine, with its historical known borders from Jordan's river in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, from Ras Al Nakora in the north to Om Al Rashrash in the south, this land is Palestinian and a united regional unit. Displacing Palestinians and creating a Zionist entity does not cancel the right of Palestinians to their entire land, and does not validate the Zionist entity to violate this land.

[From article 2, Hamas Charter 2017]

Hamas is a strange bedfellow for many on the left, committed as it is to the promulgation of religious government and authority. It declares every Muslim death to be "martyrdom" and shows no interest in protecting the lives of those over whom it rules. This is why there are miles upon miles of tunnels dug for their fighters to use throughout Gaza, but not a single civilian air-raid shelter. This is why it embeds its armed forces within civilian housing, schools, clinics and hospitals, because it believes that all deaths (martyrdoms) are to be welcomed in the struggle against the Jews. This is why Hamas makes no arrangements for the safety of men, women, or children, and has no regard for public welfare when it engages in its apocalyptic struggle with the Jews.

The United Nations partitioned Mandate Palestine between Jews and Arabs in 1947. The Jews accepted the terms of the partition and the Arabs rejected it. The armies of Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt, together with Palestinian militia, attacked the Jews in a sustained attempt to destroy the fledgling state declared by David Ben-Gurion on May 14th 1948. Since then, despite Arab defeat in this war, and the signing of an armistice in 1949, the Palestinians have never accepted the legitimacy of the Jewish state. All Palestinian efforts have been aimed at reversing the results of their initial defeat seventy-five years ago. This includes the insistence on the 'right of return' of the descendants of those Arabs who fled, or were driven out by Israeli forces in 1948. This is, in effect, a rejection of Israeli statehood and an insistence that "Palestine will be free from the River to the Sea.

Recently, Jeremy Corbyn has said that "The Palestinian Cause will never go away." But one has to ask, what is the "Palestinian Cause"? If it is the struggle for a two-state solution it must be based upon accepting the legitimacy of the Jewish state and upon rejection of the right of 'return'.

This is the simple, uncomplicated, issue at the heart of the present struggle – the acceptance of the right of Israel to exist. It is not confusing or difficult to understand.

Now, Hamas is explicitly committed to killing Zionists and destroying the Jewish state in its entirety. Other Palestinian positions finesse ideas of accepting a two-state solution while all the time seeking to overwhelm the Jews by insisting upon the 'right of return'. Whichever it is, the result pursued is the same, "From the River to the Sea Palestine will be Free".

The fact that so many well-intentioned people cannot (or choose not to), see this, can only be attributed to the antisemitic idea that Jewish nationalism is, uniquely, the only nationalism which cannot be allowed. For some reason all the peoples on earth may assert their national identity or insist upon their right to independence except the Jews.