

10 Anarchist Theses on Palestine Solidarity in the United States

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The strategy of solidarity reached its limits long ago. Solidarity today is an industry of conferences, lectures, book talks, and ritualistic protests—symbolic solidarity. The war on Gaza has exposed the clear limits on solidarity movements in the United States. Palestine solidarity is an extreme case in point in a much larger development of solidarity activism and politics.

The lesson of George Floyd uprising and other anti police struggles over the past decade tells us two things: that the Black movement over the course of a decade developed more militant forms of struggle based on the failures of reform. And second, new groups of people entered the fight against the police based on their immiseration and willingness to act. The twin dynamics of the evolving Black liberation struggle and capitalist immiseration created the conditions for the George Floyd uprising.

Materialist solidarity occurred historically under unique circumstances where people in the United States were compelled to act in new ways. As bad as the conditions in Palestine have gotten, they have not affected conditions in ways that force broader segments of oppressed and exploited people here in the United States to act.

We have no definite answers about what to do in this moment. But we believe that anarchists must be having honest and serious conversations about what this moment means for us. In many ways, our theses seek to provoke questions among anarchists and our fellow travelers about how we intervene in broader social struggles beyond parroting the dominant narrative and actions of the activist Left.

The theses below map the contours of the struggle today. If we find ourselves in a valley, at least we know where we are, and begin a climb from the low point of symbolic solidarity. Perhaps some comrades will be insulted by what we have said, but our guide is the Palestinian resistance to Israel. We stand with them.

1. The ongoing genocide in Palestine cannot be stopped by more parades, speeches and marches to nowhere. While people may feel empowered by chanting in the streets and making speeches, for many of us who understand these protests to be useless ritual, it is just another example of our weakness as revolutionaries in the United States as we witness another Nakba unfold.

2. The social conflict around Anti-Zionism seems to have been mostly contained to college campuses. It has not spread into a revolt against broader society. Unlike the George Floyd uprising (which continues to be our main reference point as anarchists who desire social revolution), most oppressed and exploited people continue to go about their day to day lives. When the protests spread to the streets, we do see a broader composition of people, families for example. But these are hardly revolts but the public show of frustration and symbolic support. Does this mean that American proletarians care little to fight against the genocide in Palestine? What are we to do then?
3. Black and Palestinian Liberation struggles are often held up as being in solidarity. This claim must be re-examined for us to move forwards. Beyond that moment in 2014 where Palestinians tweeted out support to Ferguson protesters, it does not seem that solidarity exists between these communities beyond individual activists from those backgrounds (Black and Palestinian) knowing one another. Rhetorical claims of solidarity during speeches or on Instagram infographics is not material solidarity. It is dishonest to make such claims when a material solidarity does not exist. Anarchists who fight alongside the Black liberation struggle must be critical of the idea of solidarity based upon such dubious claims as we ourselves see solidarity as material actions you take. While we see similarities between the Palestinian youth who fight the IOF in Gaza and the Black youth in American ghettos who fight the police, we are not sure if this is solidarity.
4. In a more positive note, the non-violent direct actions by Jewish groups such as IfNotNow and Jewish Voices for Peace are a step ahead of the ritualistic protests, but also a ritual themselves. While it is inspiring to see Jewish comrades stand up to the warmongers and Zionists, these actions do not meet the needed requirements to stop the war on Gaza either.
5. Multiple comrades who attended the pro-Palestine parades in American cities have talked about how many of the cars in the demonstrations were expensive. This indicates something about the broader class character of the movement. As a comrade has said: Non-Black middle class Muslims are similar to the white middle class, absorbed in consumerism and careers. They worship a god: the U.S. Dollar. Their class contradictions prevent them from doing anything meaningful regarding Palestine. If the class character of the leaders of the Pro-Palestine movement in the United States is petty-bourgeois, what is the place of anarchists within it? Should we even be involved? It is critical to understand that historically anti-colonial struggles are not only the domain of the working classes and anti-capitalist revolutionaries. This seems to be the case in our contemporary setting as well. Fanon teaches us that often the national bourgeoisie or right wing elements of the petit bourgeois often take part in anti colonial struggles while forsaking the class struggle. As anarchists, we may share repulsion and outrage at the genocide in Gaza but we probably share little else with the leaders of these protests in terms of our view of the world. This is an uncomfortable reality we must come to terms with.
6. Anti-colonialism has long been the domain of the POC Left in the United States. POC Leftists read Fanon, tweet about Haiti and wax poetic about armed struggle. Despite this, we have yet to see any militancy from these POC leftists. Instead they live vicariously through the resistance of the Palestinians in Gaza people while lacking any of that bravery

themselves. They chant intifada revolution in the street on megaphones and then go home. Meanwhile, anarchist comrades in Palestine train the youth in Black bloc tactics and fight the Israeli occupiers in the streets of East Jerusalem.

7. To anarchist militants with an interest in fighting alongside anti-colonial struggles, there is a question that has arisen for us witnessing and attending these demonstrations in American cities. The question is about why these demonstrations have not been more confrontational with the American police. If we understand the reality that the IOF has trained American police, shouldn't the American police be the immediate enemy for these demonstrations? This is complicated by how there have been photos of Arab cops with Palestinian flags in Chicago. Even more embarrassingly, after a Zionist pepper sprayed a cop in Skokie, Palestinian solidarity activists helped him wash his eyes. The whole Black liberation solidarity rhetoric continues to ring hollow with these actions of support for police. However encouragingly, in Bay Ridge Brooklyn, crowds clashed and taunted the NYPD for their connections to the IOF. However to our knowledge, this remains an outlier. Unsurprisingly, these demonstrations are also filled with many authoritarian leftist cowards who seek to recruit more young people to their cults. When these protests are the only option to engage in an "action" for Palestine, it feels unfortunate for anarchists. Perhaps more reason for anarchists and other anti-colonial forces to organize autonomously.
8. It is clear that Islamophobia is on the rise again. The tragic murder of Wadea Al Fayoume by a Zionist Trump supporting landlord is indicative of this. The far right continues to label anyone who supports Palestine as a terrorist. The attacks on various Black and Arab activists who have been Pro-Palestine speaks to this. What is the anarchist intervention against Islamophobia? At the same time the fight against antisemitism cannot be dropped either. We have already seen fascists attack Zionists in a Palestine solidarity demonstration in Raleigh. Our stand must always be clear, we are against both antisemitism and Islamophobia. How we position ourselves in this context is difficult, but matters. Finally, we must prevent the polarization to become one of Jews versus Muslims. This has no horizon of emancipation.
9. The ability of the Al-Asqa Flood operation to overwhelm and overextend (if only for a moment) the Israeli State shows that the imperialist powers are not all powerful. The breaking of the Gaza wall is reminiscent of the destruction of the 3rd Precinct in Minneapolis. The struggle in Palestine should be a constant inspiration for us here in the United States. In the United States, the first step for Palestine Solidarity is to make its position clear on Black liberation. A rudimentary starting point is to chants expressing support for Black liberation and Palestinian liberation as well as condemnation of police to become commonplace at demonstrations. There are many other ways to do this but for us it begins with honesty about material solidarity as opposed to rhetorical. This will only be a first step as plenty of Black people have good reasons to distrust Arabs and Muslims in the context of a white supremacist America. But this is where it all must begin.
10. Ultimately, our main task as revolutionaries in the United States remains to be the unmaking of the American empire. Anarchists are for solidarity with Palestine. But the solidarity of tweets, or a few activists, is pretty thin compared to the shared solidarity of struggling

together in large numbers. We have not seen this in the United States. We are for solidarity, but cannot prop up false or razor thin claims either. From this honest starting point we can ask why there is so little material solidarity and what can be done about it. We cannot let our emotional attachments to a movement that has lead to no advancements in our struggle here let alone providing any relief or aid for Palestinians fighting settler-colonialism in Gaza and the West Bank to distract from the real mission.

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This essay was sent to us by way of a friend of the collective, we feel the moment we are currently in requires no further explanation. As always a zine version is available here: haters.noblogs.org/zines.

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