

International Pressure on Israel May Bring Policy Change on Palestine



The renewed surge of violence between Israelis and Palestinians is reaching a boiling point. On October 7 a video was captured during clashes between Ramallah and the Beit El settlement. It shows Israeli undercover officers shooting an unarmed Palestinian youth in the leg at point-blank range, while other undercover officers hold him down. Incredibly, now Jerusalem's mayor is urging Israelis to carry firearms at all times.

Anybody can see the Israeli government is actually stoking the flames by making no effort to address the causes, but is simply using punitive measures.

There was a press conference last week with the prime minister and the minister of defense. All they had to say to the public is that they're going to use more arrests, more house demolitions, more shootings in order to attack Palestinians.

The problem is that when a people lives under military occupation, these punitive measures lose their effectiveness.

Now, the Israeli government is trying to push technological solutions. They're using drones, they're using armored cars, and concentrated tear gas canisters in the hope that that would somehow control the resistance and stop it. And when the mayor calls on civilians to join in the fray by taking up arms, that shows the desperation of the Israeli authorities. They have no answer. And their only solution is to use violence with the hopes that Palestinians will be cowed into submission.

Now let's not be naive! The mayor, of course, was referring to the Jewish residents of Jerusalem. And when he took up an assault rifle and went to walk in a Palestinian neighborhood inside Jerusalem he was sending a clear signal. This is a war between people, an ethnic war. And as a mayor of Jerusalem he actually only considers himself to be the mayor of the Jewish residents of Jerusalem, and the Palestinians he considers to be his enemies.

What should people be focusing on if they really want to quell the violence and the frustration of the Palestinian people? What needs to happen?

The easy answer would be to satisfy the demands of the Palestinians to be free and equal. They don't want to live under occupation. They want to have political rights and freedom to move wherever they want. And once they have that, they have no reason to rebel, and no reason to cry out.

But that's the easy answer. The more difficult answer is to understand that the whole regime of Israel is built on apartheid. It's built on the idea of racial segregation. And on the concept of the Jewish state doesn't give any room for equality for non-Jews.

The Israeli government is putting together the cutting edge of technology of repression. Sophisticated security cameras. In fact, the old city of Jerusalem is maybe the most security monitored area in the world. It's like a maximum security prison, basically, with cameras at every corner.

And so if that technology wins, if it's possible to use technological means to repress people completely, like prisoners, that would be a very bad omen for the rest of the human race, because that is the kind of technology that Israel exports all over the world. However, if Palestinians are able to continue their resistance this would be a big failing grade for the Israeli military technology. It would affect Israel's arms exports, it would affect the whole model of the Israeli government that they can somehow manage the conflict without actually making political compromise.

It is up to the international community to make sure that there are means for Palestinians to use that kind of pressure. As long as Palestinians feel isolated diplomatically, as long as Israel receives international support, the conflict becomes more and more violent.

But the more Palestinians know that they have international solidarity, and there's pressure on Israel like the boycott movement, then the Israeli government feels the pressure much more strongly. They know they cannot answer this kind of international pressure with violence and house demolitions. And that could bring real change.

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