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**Communist Party
of Great Britain
(Marxist-Leninist)**



Palestine is a British working class issue!

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Not just a humanitarian question

Karl Marx, commenting on the relationship between Britain and Ireland, famously wrote that *"the nation that oppresses another nation forges its own chains"*. By this, he meant that, so long as the British working class continued its complicity in the exploitation and subjugation of the Irish people, so long as they continued to benefit economically from Ireland's labour and resources, its objective role would be to *strengthen* British capital, and consequently delay its overthrow.

The same principle applies today: so long as the British working class goes along with the actions of British imperialism for the sake of the few crumbs that it gets by way of payment for this complicity, it will remain impotent in the struggle against British capitalism and for socialism. This simple truth, seemingly obvious, is widely misunderstood or ignored in the British 'left'. However, to continue to ignore it is to forever submit ourselves to the mercy of capital.

British imperialism has always been a key supporter of the Zionist project. The concept of Israel, obscure and lacking in historical legitimacy, got enthusiastic support from Britain only because a Jewish state in the heart of the Middle East offered the perfect antidote to the rising Arab nationalist movement.

European colonialists had long been plundering the Arab lands, taking huge amounts of oil and paying a pittance for it. Arab nationalism was emerging as a significant threat to this cosy arrangement. A Jewish state, set up to collaborate with imperialism in the region, promised to be a bastion of colonial reactionary interest, *"an Ulster"* in the Middle East, ready to act quickly against any Arab popular movement that threatened the profits of the major oil, armaments and other monopolies. This fact is amply proven by the Israeli invasion of Egypt following the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1957. Although the US has become the dominant sponsor of Israel, Britain continues to supply money, arms and political support.

The relative strengths of British imperialism and the British working class are, by definition, inversely proportional: the weaker British imperialism, the stronger the British working class, and vice versa. British imperialism is weakened by Palestinian liberation, and, consequently, the British working class is duty-bound to support the struggle for the liberation of Palestine. This duty is borne not merely out of humanitarian considerations, but primarily as part of our own ongoing struggle against British capital.

Hamas victory a wake-up call for Israel

Hamas's election victory marks a momentous sea-change for the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. It demonstrates very clearly that the Palestinians have had enough of the never-ending cycle of negotiations and Israeli provocations; that they have come to realise that Israel is not a 'partner for peace'. Particularly since the death of Arafat, the 'peace process' has come to mean Palestinians being forced into making more and more concessions whilst the Israelis continue to hold them in a fascist occupation, denying them the right to move from one town to another, the right to work, the right to govern themselves, the right to live without Israeli tanks on their streets. In electing Hamas to lead the new Palestinian parliament, the people of Gaza and the West Bank have shown that they will not put up with this status quo any longer.

In all likelihood, Hamas's election will prove a boon for the Palestinian struggle. Whilst stating that they are more than willing to accept the idea of a long-term truce with Israel based on

a full Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 borders, Hamas leaders have already floated the idea of a Palestinian army based on a united front of all the armed factions. Furthermore, Hamas have been pushing for a governmental alliance with Fatah, about which talks are currently taking place. If the different political groups are able to present a joint political and military front, this will be a crucial development. There is no need for communists and socialists to despair that the Palestinians have elected a religious party to lead them - Hamas received the votes because of their position on, and record in, the struggle against Israel. We should wish the new Palestinian government every success in leading and uniting the Palestinian people in a firm struggle against the fascist Israeli state.

Israel must face the inevitable

Ultimately, the question of whether the Intifada will continue lies with Israel. Palestinians have demonstrated time and time again that they are willing to make what is objectively a quite extraordinary compromise in order to gain freedom from occupation and a Palestinian state. The demands that are almost universally accepted amongst the Palestinian population are: complete Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian territories and full Palestinian statehood based on the territories held before the 1967 war - ie, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip (21 percent of historic Palestine) and East Jerusalem, with the right for refugees to return to their homes in Israel/Palestine.

This compromise has proven not to be enough for the Israelis. They understand that an independent, secular Palestine next to their fascist little US puppet of a state would spell very tough times, since its primary effect would be to bring to the fore the intense class contradictions within Israeli society itself.

Furthermore, the creation of a Palestinian state under any circumstances would be seen across the world, and rightly so, as a resounding victory for a people who were chosen by imperialism to be historical victims of the quest for oil and domination of the Middle East, but who were able to regroup, gather their strength and wage a successful struggle against a vicious nuclear power on the US payroll. Such a David and Goliath struggle gives courage to the billions of oppressed worldwide, but makes the imperialists shudder in their shoes.

However, despite all this, the fact is that over 1,000 Israelis have now been killed since the beginning of the second Intifada, and this is prompting the Israeli people to be increasingly unwilling to accept the fascist actions of their state. The solution is clear for all to see - withdraw from Palestinian territories and everyone lives in peace; continue the illegal, unjust, imperialist occupation and your war will find its way to your your bars, your buses, your homes, your sons and your daughters.

Play your part!

The British working class must do everything within its power to support the cause of Palestinian liberation.

We must join with the Palestinian people in demanding an immediate end to the occupation of all land stolen since 1967; the establishment of a viable Palestinian state on the whole of Gaza and the West Bank, with East Jerusalem as its capital; equal rights for Palestinians within Israel; the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes; destruction of the 'green line wall'; release of all political prisoners; an end to all settlements in Gaza and the West Bank; and an end to the despicable Jerusalem land grab that is currently taking place.

Victory to the Intifada!