

A critical comment on the orientation of the Palestinian Solidarity Movement

Slogans such as "Free Palestine" are not enough.

A long-term perspective on the war for public opinion requires the ability to give people a clear understanding on what victory for the Palestinian people looks like.

This includes the elimination of Apartheid and equal political and democratic rights for Arabs and Jews within the entire boundaries of historic Palestine--from the river to the sea.

And this requires a public domain information platform built on the recognition of how truth can puncture lies and liberate humanity in our century of information war.

Ben Seattle -- May 2025 -- <http://communism.org/node/4051>

Hi everybody,

This is an open letter to activists in the solidarity movement concerning **what needs to be done** in order for the **movement** to **grow** and become more **powerful**.

(1) I have made some recent observations of weaknesses and confusion in the local movement (in particular, in relation to understanding what to do about the negative role that has been played by Hamas). I make some comments about that below.

(2) I have also outlined here some rough ideas concerning how to encourage the **self-organization** of **media teams** (and the **digital infrastructure** these teams will need) which aim to bring the truth about the Palestinian people to the world.

The war for public opinion will be decisive

The movement in solidarity with the Palestinian people faces a long road ahead. Repression is increasing. The key to the development of

a powerful movement, in my humble opinion, is to understand and overcome our internal weaknesses.

We need to be able to give people a clear understanding of what victory for the Palestinian struggle looks like, as well as the class nature of the struggle against reaction here at home. The **war for public opinion** here, in the colonizing country, is likely to be **decisive** in a similar way as was the war for public opinion in Britain, France and the U.S. during the wars in Ireland, Algeria and Vietnam.

Who speaks for the Palestinians?

No single organization has earned universal recognition as the representative of the Palestinian people. There were elections in 2006 which gave *Hamas* a majority in Gaza and the corrupt *Palestinian Authority* a majority in the West Bank. Neither of these two undemocratic organizations, nor Israel, nor Israel's colonial motherland, the United States, nor any of the corrupt Arab monarchies, want the Palestinians to have meaningful elections--or the right to choose their own leadership--or any democratic rights at all.

The colony and the colonizer, Israel and US imperialism respectively, would like to appoint an obedient puppet to speak for the Palestinians. But their efforts to do this, over the decades, have not worked out. The history of anti-colonial struggles tells us that the Palestinian people will eventually win the right to determine their own leadership.

No need to make excuses for the crimes of Hamas

Hamas is an organization based, many believe, on the goal of national liberation for Palestinians--but there are different kinds of such organizations--and Hamas is organized in a particularly reactionary way.

Many activists, I have observed, are hesitant to say anything negative about Hamas. The reason for this appears to be that Hamas is the only well known Palestinian organization which has not capitulated to Israel. (The main Palestinian organization on the West Bank, the notoriously corrupt "Palestinian Authority", has become a Zionist lapdog.) And there have been countless memes on social media equating denunciation of Hamas with capitulation.

But the background here is that rival Palestinian trends have been **suppressed**. Secular and democratic Palestinian activists (as well as trade union activists) are routinely imprisoned or murdered--in Gaza by Hamas, in the West Bank by the Palestinian Authority, and by Israel in the territory it controls directly.

Israel assisted the development of Hamas at several stages, giving it money initially (in an effort to create a counterweight to secular Palestinian trends) and also in the period before the October 7 attacks (as part of a defacto alliance with Netanyahu).

The deliberate murder of civilians by Hamas on October 7 represents a **betrayal** of the Palestinian struggle and has damaged it in a way that Israel never could. More concretely, these crimes have given political cover to the most fascist elements in Israeli ruling circles in their intensified campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Gaza and the West Bank. Estimates of the dead in Gaza range up to half a million. Hamas does not have clean hands and **there is no need to be silent about this**. We have no need to defend the indefensible.

Efforts to justify the murder of civilians has weakened the solidarity movement here in the U.S. because it **undermines efforts** to mobilize support by **bringing the truth** about the Palestinian struggle to the largest possible number of people in **public forums**.

Public forums are a matter of life and death

The problems that have emerged in the **moderation of public social media forums** are the **tip of the iceberg** of denial. **Moderation should not be so difficult**. However, moderation in a public forum will always be an **impossible task** if the aim of the forum is to make excuses for Hamas. Our **only weapon** is the truth. We will **never** be able to bring the truth to people if we cannot make use of **public forums**. Democratic public forums will allow the truth to escape confinement.

One of the guiding principles of our century of information war is simple: **the indefensible cannot be defended** in any **democratic forum** open to people who have knowledge and the ability to use it. **Remember this principle**. In the decades ahead, this principle will lead us to victory.

As long as the Palestinian cause can be identified with the cause of the reactionary Hamas--the war for public opinion will be reduced to a shadow fight about body counts and historical timelines in a land that most people cannot find on the map. Our ruling class will work with all its media platforms and talking heads to equate Hamas with the Palestinian people no matter what we do--but we do not have to allow such an **obvious fraud** to go **unchallenged**.

The heart of the matter is that the **elimination of Apartheid** and the achievement of **equal democratic rights for everyone** within the entire boundaries of historic Palestine ("from the river to the sea") requires **confidence** that human rights and the safety and security of all people will be respected. Period.

The **working class** will never align with a movement that tolerates the deliberate murder of civilian non-combatants. Thousands of years of human conflict, murderous wars and genocide have made clear that reprisals against civilians are **war crimes** which must be condemned. This fundamental principle must be part of the foundation for any movement aimed at liberation.

No one can be free until Palestine is free

The working class in a country such as the U.S. is faced with the monumental task of **overthrowing the rule of capital** in the heartland of U.S. imperialism. **Trump's fascist ambitions** are being **enabled** by the Weimar Democrats, and their institutional flunkies, while they all frolic together in Palestinian blood.

And this helps us understand that these two great struggles, proletarian and Palestinian, are **bound together**. Make no mistake--our fate is bound up with the fate of our Palestinian brothers and sisters. The fires in Gaza are casting light on what we may eventually face here at home. **No one can be free until Palestine is free**. The **war of ideas** will be **central** to this task. We need to take it seriously.

We need our own public domain information platform

The organization of the war of ideas will require a **common public information platform** which can be used by activists to:

- (1) deepen their ability to **understand** events,
- (2) carry out all necessary public **debate**,
- (3) help **organize** their struggles, and
- (4) **bring the truth to everyone** who wants and needs it.

Of course (it can be argued) a great many public information platforms already exist, which are being used by millions, on a daily basis, to tell the truth about Palestine. But we need something at a **higher level** than what we now have. Most current social media platforms, for example, are based on opaque and highly manipulative algorithms which routinely censor and throttle our posts, and deactivate or shadowban our accounts.

We can do better than this. We are living in the **century of information war**. Advances in software are making new things possible. **Tech workers** who support Palestine are willing to help us create the platforms we need. Their sacrifices are shown by the actions this past week here in Seattle, in which several lost their jobs for disrupting Microsoft's Build Conference, and made front page news locally and internationally, under the slogan "**No Azure for Apartheid**".

Let us consider what features will be required for a common public domain information platform with this **mission**:

The Mission:
**bring the truth about Palestine,
and everything important, to
the working class and oppressed,
in every corner of the online world.**

Here are my thoughts on some of what is needed:

- We need a secure **public domain repository** where **activists** (and eventually **larger circles of people**) can **deposit permanent public notes** (containing markup text, links, graphics and/or PDF's). This

public domain repository will be **permanently accessible** by anyone via **open source software** that anyone can modify--and backed up using a variety of methods, including **massively redundant immutable distributed storage**--as is becoming common on the blockchain.

- Such a platform could **eventually grow** to become a **public utility** for activist journalists, a type of **digital infrastructure** that is (1) **open to everyone**, (2) has minimal need for (or dependency on) either money or self-interested bureaucracy, and is (3) **beyond the control** of greedy corporations, repressive governments, or messianic cults.

- Such a platform could eventually function as the **database backbone** for a **universal social media platform** freed from the constraints of **commodity production**--freed from servitude to **imperialist politics**--and freed from platform **enshittification**. Such a platform would be to BlueSky what BlueSky is to Twitter: **universal in its reach and unreachable by its enemies**.



Supporters of the mission may be known as the "Palestinian Media Army"

- How will such a platform be used? Such a platform will be used by anyone interested in helping with the mission outlined above. Those who work, on their own, or in concert with others, may be known, unofficially, as volunteer members of a **hypothetical "open source"** and **democratic organization** I call the "Palestinian Media Army".

- How will the **volunteers** who want to assist in this mission make use of this **common information platform**?

The answer to this question depends on the **stage of development** of this platform. As this platform grows, the number of people who will use it will increase, and it will be able to do more things.

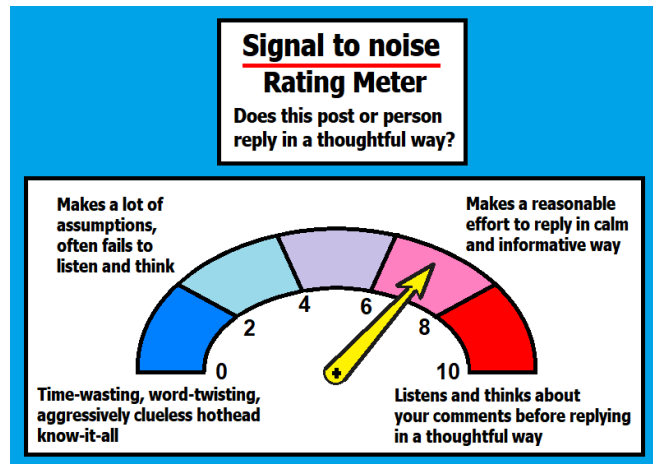
In its **early stages**, it would be useful to have a place with:

(1) Networks of correspondence

► Someone like me could **post letters such as this one**, and (without too much technical difficulty) find and reply to thoughtful criticism or questions from people who are willing to do their homework.

(2) Database of articles and concise reliable summaries

► We could **archive useful articles** (including "**markup**" such as **underlining** and **margin notes**) from the bourgeois press that are useful for analysis or fact-checking. A **database** of such articles, for example, along with **concise** and **reliable summaries** by knowledgeable people and **quotable quotes** that are **highlighted**--would help an emerging generation of **amateur journalists** come up to speed quickly on many topics.



(3) Tags, filters and trust networks

► A key feature (**necessary** in order to be genuinely useful) would be the ability for users to add **#tags** (or **#ratings**) which could be attached as a **public reply to any note**. Such tags could then be used by people in **trust networks** to filter out notes written by anyone with a reputation for being a **#time-wasting-idiot**, **#putin-apologist** or **#hamas-apologist**, etc. If, for example, I trust your judgement--then I will be able to **leverage your tags** to either **filter out crap** or find the **essential analysis**.

On a **longer timeline**, the platform I describe above would enable work **at scale** that will pull together, refine, amplify and broadcast the essential light and consciousness that will bring knowledge to the proletariat of its **historic mission** and **destiny**.

Our **century of information war** will have a hero. This hero will be the **Palestinian Media Army**.

Our ruling class, like the sorcerer's apprentice, has **conjured up forces** beyond their control. They can broadcast news of their omnipotence, their ability to slaughter and starve hundreds of thousands with impunity--but they have given us the **digital technology** to equip an **army** of millions of young journalists and propagandists in the **war of ideas**, and a **reason** to do so. The proletariat will supply the muscle for this army. The Palestinians will supply the courage.

Next steps?

I have been on one or two chat-style lists--but it was impossible for me to follow anything or engage anyone. It was like attempting to drink from a firehose. I attempted, at one point, to set up a public email list to discuss these kinds of things--but it drew no interest. If any of this is of interest to you--I would be interested in your thoughts. If you believe this letter might be of interest to anyone in your circles--I would appreciate it if you passed it forward.

Problems do not go away by themselves. We throw ourselves against them again and again--until finally there is no turning back.

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I am currently a writer with 3 or 4 regular readers. I have written and distributed a few leaflets addressed to activists in the solidarity movement--archived here: <http://communism.org/node/4037>.