**War crimes**

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The Israeli invasion of Palestine is an act of aggression of such gravity that it is almost impossible for me to speak of anything else. When the population of six cities and many villages is tortured daily in front of the whole world, and when those perpetrating these crimes are granted total immunity, then we have to stop and speak up because new standards are being established as to what is permissible internationally, which put us all in danger.

My first point, then, is that we have to oppose this aggression, these Israeli war crimes, in any way we can and there is a lot we can do since it is our money that pays for them. Without the United States Israel could not even function as an economy, much less have tanks to occupy every street in Palestine.

At the same time, we should not make the mistake of thinking that the situation in Palestine is unique. Palestine today is the image of what, in different ways, is occurring across the world.

The Israeli invasion of Palestine is a classic example of colonial conquest. In fact, the very creation of the state of Israel was part of the British colonization of the Middle East. This was acknowledged by Sharon when he told the president of France, Chirac, three weeks ago that: Palestine is our Algeria, with the difference (he added) that we are going to stay.

Over the last two decades the same colonial relations have been re-imposed by Europe and the US on every part of the former colonial world, this time in the name of the debt crisis, globalization or the war on drugs” and, more recently, the war on terrorism. The slogans change but the objectives and the consequences are the same: uprooting the local populations, turning them into refugees, into cheap labor for the global market, appropriating their resources, their lands, their assets, their oil, their waters, their labor, either by the use of tanks and bombings or through trade agreements, structural adjustment programs, currency devaluations, all means of waging war on the people and the lands.

Not surprisingly, the same destructive policies that Israel is implementing in Palestine, with the use of deadly force through land expropriation, the expansion of settlements, the theft of water, and now the systematic destruction of every infrastructure (like water pipes, roads, power plants, sewers, schools, houses) are also being implemented, with the same results, in Africa, Asia, Latin America.

What in Israel is destroyed by the IDF, in many African countries is destroyed by the World Bank, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). In Palestine it is the Israeli tanks that bulldoze schools and houses. In Africa, it is structural adjustment, the defunding of the public sector, currency devaluation, but the effects are the same. In Palestine the sick, the wounded, the women giving birth cannot go to the hospitals because the Israelis shoot them. In Africa people cannot go to the hospitals, even without the Israeli bullets – although Israel has played havoc in Africa too, propping every dictator, from Mobuto to the white South African apartheid regime. In both cases, the results are populations of refugees, the transfer of lands from the local people to the new colonial powers, forwarding and protecting the interests of international capital.

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