

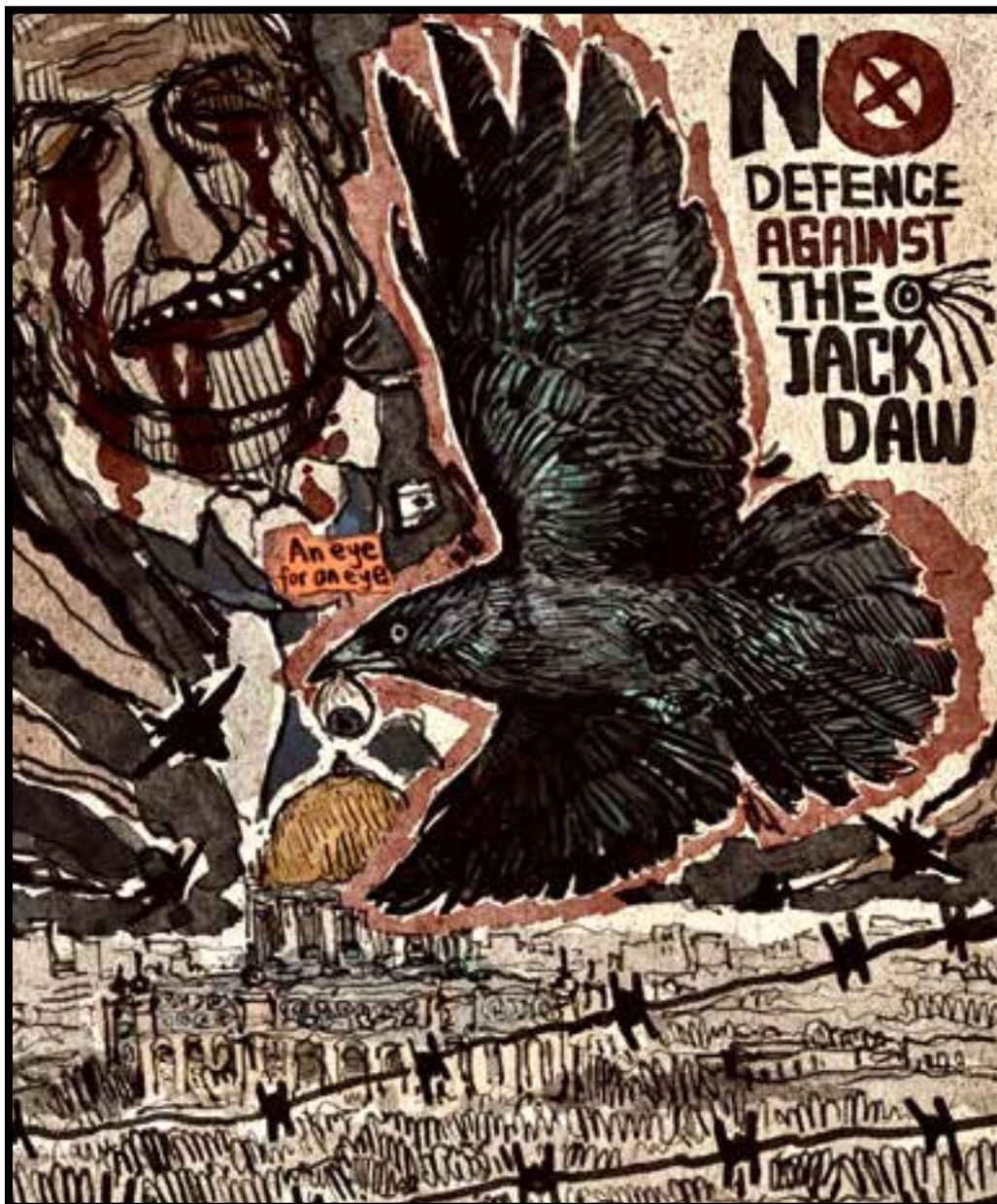
# JACKDAW

FOR REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISM

**BACK OUT ON  
THE STREETS!**

ISSUE No 21 **FREE**

# ANTIMILITARIST **PALESTINE** SPECIAL



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**VOICE OF THE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP**



# No statist solutions in Israel and Palestine

be accompanied by anti-Semitic resentment and attacks on the non-combatant population. We must reject this. Similarly, in other countries, sympathy for the plight of ordinary Palestinians and opposition to the Israeli State's attacks on them

can sometimes attract anti-Semitic fellow travellers, or slogans such as 'We are all Hamas.' These elements must be shunned.

We reject the Two State solution, backed even by some socialists, where there would be an Israeli and a Palestinian state co-existing. This would mean a few shabby Palestinian enclaves, with those Palestinians still living in Israel living as at the best second class citizens, and those living in Jordan, Lebanon and other Middle East countries abandoned altogether.

A One State Solution would produce a constant struggle over which bourgeoisie would control the State apparatus. The two sides distrust each other so much there would be no peace.

For us, all nation states should be rejected. As our comrades of the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group have written: "The

liberation of the Palestinian people, without merely reversing the terms of oppression, can only come about through a workers' revolution to abolish capitalism completely, to make the land and all social resources the common property of all, abolishing inequality and all forms of oppression. Given the present situation in Israel/Palestine, this is not on the immediate agenda, but it does not deny the necessity of the solution. In practical circumstances, the initiative will have to come from the outside, through workers' revolution in the surrounding Arab countries, most importantly Egypt, which has a large working class already. It is essential, however, for those workers' revolutions to transcend the nationalism of the countries in which they occur, since it is only internationalism which will allow the workers to defeat their own capitalist rulers; it is only internationalism which will allow Arab workers to

reach out in friendship to the workers of Israel; and only internationalism which can break the Israeli working class from its Zionist rulers. The task before the workers of Palestine and Israel is thus no different from the task here. It is only to be conducted in more difficult circumstances. We must build a working class movement, based on liberty, equality and solidarity, and fight for a revolution which will re-make society on the same principles. We must abolish capitalism and its State, and we must recognise the folly of building another State in its wake. We must build Libertarian Communism."

Together with the Russian-Ukraine war, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, and the growing tensions of China, Taiwan, and the US in the Pacific, this most recent conflict in Israel-Palestine feeds into the threat to accelerate into a world war.

The USA and its allies, including in the UK, with the Labour Party, are openly backing Israel. Trump has followed Biden in giving carte blanche to Israel for its siege and attacks on Gaza. Netanyahu, leader of a coalition government that includes far right parties in Israel, threatens to turn Gaza into "a deserted island."

The attacks by Hamas resulting in many hundreds of dead have created a feeling of national unity and has temporarily shored up the weak position of the Netanyahu government. This had faced nine months of agitation, including a general strike, over unpopular judicial reforms. Similarly, Hamas

only had minority support in the Gaza Strip, but the recent events have boosted this.

This escalation of the conflict in which Israel is the dominant aggressor requires international solidarity with the resistance of the Palestinian working class. It must also be acknowledged by all who strive for the freedom of the Palestinian working class that Hamas, being a reactionary Islamist organisation (suppressors of workers struggle in Gaza and in league with repressive governments in the region such as Iran) will never be able to ensure their liberation. As libertarian communists, we are opposed to the Israeli state as we are also opposed to Hamas as both are entities that ultimately stand in the way of the liberation of the Palestinian working class and the class unity of all workers in the region.

The working class of Gaza, and Palestine more generally, occupy a unique position in the political economy of Israel. As colonial subjects who are racialised and dehumanised by the state of Israel (driven by the ethno-religious-nationalist ideology of Zionism) in order to justify its presence in the land to which they are indigenous, they represent the most oppressed section of the working class. This status is used as a corollary to their exploitation by the capitalist class of Israel, which is reliant upon the devaluation of their labour in order to obtain profits, and keep the Israeli proletariat invested in the Israeli state. There is a long history of industrial action by Palestinian Arabs. Most significantly there is strong



political awareness among the Palestinian working class. A feature of the 2021 demonstrations were that they were: An extraordinary feature of the demonstrations is that they are primarily "organized not by political parties or figures, but by young Palestinian activists, neighbourhood committees, and grassroots collectives". (From +972 Magazine: <https://www.972mag.com/sheikh-jarrah-palestinian-youth/>).

However, this potential was crushed by the violence of the Israeli state, which in attacking Gaza attacked a population which has a median age of 18, with the overwhelming majority suffering from PTSD or other mental-health conditions. These conditions are caused by the history of Israeli occupation, which sees Palestinian Arabs as a population which is inconvenient and undesirable to its aim of maintaining the Israeli state.

Trade unions within Israel have traditionally excluded Palestinian workers, with the main trade union centre Histadrut excluding Arab workers and contributing to their exploitation as a method of improving the material advancement of the Israeli workers they represent. There is thus a hierarchy within the Israeli Jewish/Palestinian-Arab working



The solution to the conflict can ultimately only be a common, classless and stateless society in which people of different religious (and non-religious) and ethnic backgrounds can coexist peacefully. The way to achieve this can only be through class struggle, with workers uniting on both sides to improve their situation and thereby overcoming long-held resentments. It is the task of the libertarian communist movement to push for exactly this.

On both sides of the conflict there are actors who see things fundamentally differently, who either want to see one side eradicated from the area or pushed back by the settlement policy and are prepared to sacrifice the lives of non-combatants in the fight for their own interests. We reject both, as it is at the expense of the proletarians and only serves to deepen the divisions within the class. Resistance is needed against both the Israeli state and the Palestinian leadership.

Resistance against the Israeli settlement policy is necessary and justified, but this can often





class in which the racialised Palestinian Arab working-class occupy the lowest position. This racialisation is also played out within Israeli Jewish society, with Mizrahi (those of Middle-Eastern, North African or West and Central Asian ancestry; this label being created with the state of Israel) Jews generally being markedly poorer than their Ashkenazi counterparts, a factor which has led to them comprising a large proportion of the lifestyle settlers – those receiving economic inducements to settle on Palestinian land. This racialisation enacted by the Israeli state which functions in order to stratify the working class with the aim of preventing its unity is a prime example of how colonial ideology both perpetuates and relies upon capitalism. Furthermore, it signifies the limits of nationalism and trade-unionism, demonstrating that the nation state necessarily relies upon the exclusion and exploitation of certain groups in the working class.

We thus see support of the resistance of the Palestinian working class to the Israeli state as a prerequisite to a revolutionary movement in the region and believe that

such a movement will require the Israeli working class to reject an alignment with the Israeli state in favour of class solidarity with Palestinians and the working classes of surrounding nations. However, currently this is unlikely due to the chauvinism of the Israeli Jewish working class, which arises from its materially privileged status over the Palestinian working class. In complicity with this dynamic the Israeli Jewish working-class are shamefully complicit with the oppression of the Palestinian proletariat, with whom in reality they have far more in common than their Israeli bosses.

The organisation of Hamas operates in the context of terror and repression enforced on the Palestinian working class by the state of Israel. Their rise in popularity speaks to the suppression of working class Palestinian organisation, both by Israel and Hamas itself. The situation in Gaza is one of material deprivation and political and state violence resulting in extreme fear and heightened emotion: a climate in which reactionary groups such as Hamas can spread their influence and authority. This must be stated clearly in order to understand that the



context of the conflict which is occurring today is a manifestation of the level of violence to which the population of Gaza has been historically subject to by the

Israeli state. This allows us to understand that the cessation, not an escalation of violence by the Israeli state, is required in order to create the conditions under which Hamas can lose influence.

We affirm the right and necessity of the Palestinian working class to resist the Israeli state, including through the method of revolutionary struggle. The priority is the building of a revolutionary workers movement which can distinguish itself from the nationalist forces. This affirmation exists alongside a condemnation of a deliberate targeting of civilians by Hamas, which obscures the terms of resistance and does not advance the struggle. We believe that any proposed solutions which rest upon the existence of a state or states will ultimately perpetuate oppressive class societies. It is for this reason that we reject the idea of liberation under a national banner and thus call upon the international working class to organise in support and defence of their Palestinian counterparts.

We see thousands slaughtered. These horrendous scenes that we see in the media may just be an appalling opener to even worse bloodshed and destruction.

Against the barbarism of capitalism and the march towards world war we call for working class unity, internationalism and preparation for mass movements that can implement social revolution and create libertarian communism.

**NO WAR BUT THE CLASS WAR!**

# Israeli Conscientious Objectors

According to Israeli law, every citizen aged 18 or older who is Jewish, Circassian or Druze is required to serve in the military. Men are expected to serve for a minimum of 32 months, while women are expected to serve for 2 years. Military service is considered a fundamental part of Israeli national identity.

But since the 1980s and the Lebanon War, numbers of conscientious objectors are growing and according to Israeli Refuser Solidarity Network (refuser.org) war-time refusal in Israel at this scale is rare, unseen in decades. In the month of January alone, 130 open letters were published by army reservist threatening to refuse military service. These threats are felt by the Israeli Government and ministers are calling for the letter's signatories to be jailed immediately. Refuser.org states: "As our collective movement grows, the Israeli state knows that it holds the potential to grow and cripple the military by force, and it is now responding. Since the letter's release, nearly 35 more Israeli soldiers have come forth and joined the valiant call to refuse service". Numbers of young conscription refusers is also rapidly growing. Many of



them don't go public or are so called grey refuseniks – people who claim to have mental health or general health issues to avoid being drafted and the possibility of serving jail time. But some went public and are using their high profile to bring attention to the cause of conscientious objectors and war refusers. Among them are:

Tal Mitnick (then 18 years old), sentenced in 2023 to 30 days in prison for refusing to serve in the army in protest "against the war in Gaza." He was the first Israeli conscientious objector to be

imprisoned since the war against Hamas began. He served a total of 185 days in prison.

Itamar Greenberg (18) sentenced in total to 195 days in prison for refusing to take part in the occupation and massacre. Since his release he continued with his anti-war activism. Iddo Elam and Soul Tsalik (18)

sentenced to 30 days were inspired by Tal Mitnick. Neta Lannes Arbela was sentenced to 30 days. Sofia Orr (18) spent 85 days in jail for refusing mandatory military service in protest of the war in Gaza. Ben Arand who refused in April 2024 and was released after 95 days. Yuval Moav and Orian Mueller who refused alongside Greenberg; Mueller was released after 60 days, while Moav served sentence of 125 days.

The latest public refuser is Ella Kaidar (18) sentenced in March to 30 days in prison which yet could be extended.





There is a solidarity campaign for her at [dezerter.org](http://dezerter.org). As [refuser.org](http://refuser.org) says: "The Israeli military's daily operations depend on



reservists. They are the fighter pilots that drop American bombs on the Gaza Strip, the intelligence and logistics that make it all possible behind the scenes. The Israeli military cannot carry out its wars without them. That is why our movement is so potent:

war refusal can bring the country to a standstill, no less. Historically, this is how wars are stopped in Israel."

There are also growing numbers of regular anti-war and anti-government street protests in Israel with tens of thousands of people attending including protests outside prisons demanding the release of all imprisoned conscientious refusers.

*Sources: [refuser.org](http://refuser.org) and [dezerter.org](http://dezerter.org)*

# Palestine Action

Not a month goes by without another **Palestine Action** activist in the dock in some court or other around the country, usually facing serious time in prison, usually for involvement in direct actions but also for statements made which have been construed as support for Hamas.

Palestine Action are an organisation committed to 'strategic, sustained and focused **direct action**' against Israel's military-industrial complex. They do not see any point in attempting to convince politicians or to bear witness to the ongoing atrocities in Palestine through protest or civil disobedience, but rather focus on making a financial impact. They want to make supplying Israel with weaponry and military-logistical support simply too expensive for UK-based

companies; particularly Elbit Systems, Israel's largest military manufacturer.

Accepting that sacrifice is inevitable, they do not embrace arrest and imprisonment but try to avoid it whilst understanding that in many circumstances it is extremely likely. Palestine Action do not see their activities as symbolic, but rather geared towards material change. There have been some victories. Barclays PLC, following an 11-month long campaign which involved 54 actions against Barclays premises UK-wide, decided last year to sell all



of its shareholdings in Elbit Systems. Similarly, mega-transport firm Kuehne+Nagel ended all ties with Elbit following direct actions against their Leicester offices. These are probably the highest profile of a number of victories.

Whilst these victories have not stopped the slaughter of people in Gaza, they do show that direct action can be impactful, even when undertaken by relatively small numbers of people. Ultimately, it is direct action on a mass scale that holds the key to resisting war and to tearing out the roots of war: capitalism and the state.

**Support Palestine Action defendants:**

<https://palestineaction.org/trials/>

**Support their prisoners:** <https://palestineaction.org/prisoners/>

# Interview with Israeli Anarchist Ilan Shalif

*Born in 1937, Shalif can be described as the living history of anarchism in Israel. He was a member of the Israeli socialist organisation Matzpen (1962-1983) – a collective that resembled in spirit other important and influential revolutionary collectives of the time, such as Socialisme ou Barbarie (SoB) in France, and London Solidarity (LS).*

*There were also ties that connected all three of these initiatives, most notably Akiva Orr, who was a member of both Matzpen and LS while working with Castoriadis of SoB. Matzpen offered Israeli society a break with Stalinism, blind loyalty to the Soviet Union and Zionism, promoting instead a non-dogmatic libertarian vision. Matzpen introduced radically new ideas both as a collective and as an individual. Akiva Orr translated Castoriadis's essay "The Greek City and the Making of Democracy" into Hebrew, while Ilan Shalif translated Bookchin's book "Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Gap."*

*After Matzpen disbanded, Shalif continued his activity, participating in other initiatives in Israel, such as Anarchists Against the Wall and the now defunct anarchist federation Ahdut [Unity].*

*Despite his advanced age, he remains firm in his political ideas and continues his activism today, participating in solidarity actions with the Palestinian people, as well as in the continuous demonstrations against Netanyahu with other*

*anarchists, in addition to actively participating in the editorial team of A-Infos.*

*He is the author of numerous articles on direct democracy, counter-power, and psychology. He is also the author of the novel "Glimpses of the Year 2100 (50 Years After the Revolution)" – a story about life in a future directly democratic society.*

**Verbatim: Let's start with what is happening in Gaza today. The world is witnessing the massacre of the population of an entire region, while the major powers of the Middle East are, as many fear, on the verge of starting a generalised war (mainly Israel and Iran, but also Turkey and Saudi Arabia, under the benevolent gaze of Russia and the United States). What is your assessment of the situation?**

Ilan Shalif: Israel continues to terrorise and massacre the population of the Gaza Strip. It still hopes to force more people to leave Gaza, but in reality he is simply dragging out the time by avoiding the moment when he will admit defeat, when he will have to release Palestinian prisoners in exchange for Israeli hostages, and when he will allow a new administration that is not in direct opposition to the Palestinian administration of the West Bank to run the Gaza Strip.

The brink of a third world war is nothing but an exaggeration. Israel cannot start such a war, not even a major confrontation,

without the consent of the United States. Low-intensity wars between Turkey and the Kurds, between Hezbollah (used by Iran) and Israel, and Israel acting on behalf of US interests seeking to expel Russian military forces from Syria, are not prerequisites for the outbreak of a world war.

**Verbatim: What can be the solution to this sad situation?**

What was the initial proposal of the Jewish left for Palestine? I.S.: Until 1948, Hashomer Hatzair, the main left-wing Zionist force at the time, said they were in favour of a binational state, but on the condition that it be dominated by Jews. So we cannot speak of true equality. After '48, they supported the grabbing of lands abandoned by displaced Palestinians to create more kibbutzim. Their leftism was more about deceiving young Israelis born in the country, who tended to the left, to keep them within the Zionist framework. And the truth is that they succeeded for a while.

**Verbatim: And then comes Matzpen...**

I.S.: Matzpen is something else entirely. It began as a small tendency within the Communist Party of Israel that opposed the party's dominant Zionist-Marxist orientation and its unequivocal support for the Soviet Union and Stalinism. Because of these disagreements, the people who formed this tendency were expelled from the party



and created Matzpen as an anti-Zionist and anti-capitalist organisation.

In the following years, due to the lack of other anti-Zionist organisations, Matzpen was joined by other anti-Zionist Jews from different tendencies: Trotskyists, Maoists, anarchists. Thus, our organisation acquired a completely different and autonomous political character, which would later lead to the split of some of the Fourth International, Trotskyists and Maoists of Matzpen. But even after the split, there were still some Trotskyists who would remain in the organisation along with the rest of the left and anarchists. Matzpen was the most radical left-wing and anti-Zionist revolutionary organisation in Israel during its existence.

**Verbatim: What was the alternative proposed by Matzpen to replace the other narrative? Some kind of confederal alternative based on autonomous communes that federate with each other?**

I.S.: We proposed a revolution of the region (not limited within national borders) and after this revolution the communities, without any government or national entity, would organise the society from the bottom up. We insisted that there is no place for national entities. The only viable alternative is a society for the Palestinians and Jews (and other minorities) without confederated national entities.

Personally, however, I prefer to use a different term than confederalism, because when we talk about federations we often misunderstand and mean associations of nation-



states or independent entities that are not part of a binding whole. I have already made it clear that I reject the first, but I also have a problem with the second, because it implies a free way of organising the world.

But a society cannot be organised in a relaxed way. It needs to be organised with a real and coherent libertarian-communist direct democracy with various levels of committees, which coordinate things, while the decision-making process always remains in the assemblies of the base communities.

This is my idea of an alternative to the current order, not because I have experienced it inside the kibbutzim, but because it can be done.

**Verbatim: At Verbatim we study the direct democracy project in a similar way to you, but we believe confederalism is a useful term, although we agree that it has been used in various, often conflicting, ways. That is, on the one hand we have nation-states that have understood this terminology so that they can refer to their centralised bureaucracies as**

**federations (which means nothing other than the supposedly "federal" United States or Russia). On the other hand, it is used by some "lifestyle anarchists," who use the term confederation as a voluntary network, where decisions are never binding.**

I.S.: Take climate change and how it is caused by a divided and competitive capitalist class. To solve such a crisis, you cannot have such an organisation. We need a cohesive and directly democratic system of equality to prevent the destruction of our world. It is no coincidence that in my novel I chose for the revolution to occur when the world was on the brink of a climate catastrophe.

Faced with this danger, people were faced with the need to organise themselves directly democratically to save the world. It is not this or that group that organises itself in this way and forms weak bonds with each other.

But let us reduce the scale of such planetary threats and take as an example any city of modest size: it has a sewage system, an electricity system and other critical public infrastructure. You cannot manage them roughly. You will definitely need direct democracy at multiple levels of the city community.

**Verbatim: Were there any collaborations between Matzpen and socialist groups composed of Palestinian Arabs?**

I.S.: There were some Arab activists who worked with Matzpen. They were attracted by our anti-Zionist orientation. In response, the Communist Party tried to frame us as

traitors and intelligence agents. We had collaborations with Arabs who were loosely associated with the Al-Ard movement, a movement that revolved around the idea of Palestinians, Jews and other ethnic groups living in a secular, democratic country. These were the kind of Arab activists we were in contact with.

We also worked a lot with village communities. At the time, there was a village, called Tira, which has since evolved into a city. And the locals joked that if Tira ever became a city, they would elect me mayor, because we went there very often to organise political events and sell copies of the magazine Matzpen, which was written partly in Hebrew and partly in Arabic. The Arabs in these communities accepted us as political friends.

When one of our members was arrested, they helped us collect signatures for his release. They helped us and had good relations with us because they accepted us as comrades in the fight against Zionism.

**Verbatim: After the dissolution of Matzpen, what other autonomous and libertarian organisations were created?**

I.S.: Throughout these years there were small groups of "lifestyle anarchists". They were mainly organised around animal rights and the Anonymous movement. In the early 2000s, the Anarchists Against the Wall initiative was formed around animal rights and social anarchists, which was active until the end of 2010. There was also, for a time during the 2010s, an anarchist federation called Ahdut (Unity), founded by Jews of

Russian origin. There was also some Palestinians (one or two) who participated, but we have to keep in mind that it was very dangerous for Arabs to engage in such activities, so even though there were others who were generally interested, they avoided organising in Ahdut. Unfortunately, it only worked for 6 or 7 years and then it dissolved. When they first contacted me, I told them that I would only be interested if it was a serious organisation that regularly held meetings. After some time they started organising more seriously, and so I became a member. Unfortunately, after some time it gradually started to dissolve. At the moment there is an active anarchist group, again mainly composed of Russian Jews, called Kompass. But it is a relatively young team...

**Verbatim: You also participated in the Anarchists Against the Wall...**

I.S.: Yes, in the past I was also actively involved in the Anarchists Against the Wall. Although there were anarchist activists in it (many of whom were not of the kind of social and pro-organisational anarchism that I adhere to), in its nature it was not an anarchist initiative. It was born from a series of joint actions of Jewish activists (some of them anarchists) and Palestinian Arabs against the occupation. One of these actions was organised under the slogan "Anarchists against the Wall". This got a lot of publicity and so they decided to keep the name because,

before that, every action was called with a different slogan. So it was, first of all, an anti-Zionist initiative, rather than anarchist. But as time went by, some of the non-anarchist participants of Anarchists against the Wall became more receptive to libertarian ideas, some even started to call themselves anarchists.

**Verbatim: Do you know of any anarchist groups in the West Bank or Gaza?**

I.S.: I know that there are some Palestinians who follow anarchism, but they are afraid to organise because it is too dangerous for them on both sides of the wall. When the Ahdut anarchist federation was still active, we met some Palestinian activists in some villages in the occupied territories who saw our activity positively. When we printed (and translated) our opinion on the conflict in the region and gave copies to activists in the Palestinian village of Bil'in and to activists of the common struggle in other places, almost all of them expressed their agreement with our anarchist communist position.

In general, I think that most Palestinians throughout the region (Gaza, the West Bank and Israel) agree with some form of coexistence with the





Jews, not because they like us too much or anything, but because this is the reality now. I do not agree with the radical Islamists' proposal to expel all Jews.

There was a poll in Gaza before the October attack that showed that about a third of its residents favoured a society, with the Jews remaining in it. There is, however, a "Palestinian" group that pretends to be anarchists: Fauda. But they are not anarchists. They talk, for example, about God. And they are not even Palestinians. They are frauds. It is a group that pretends to be both Palestinian and anarchist.\*\* There are too many signs pointing in this direction. I do not know if it is just a group of crazy people from abroad or if it is a creation of the secret services. I honestly do not know.

**Verbatim: What about the ongoing mass protests against the Netanyahu government that started already last year? Do you see the potential for more than just a demand to replace one politician with another?**

I.S.: The ongoing mass demonstrations express the more moderate social democratic Zionism against the more right-wing Zionism, which has a more chauvinistic and even fascist character and is a champion of extreme neoliberal capitalism. Nevertheless, anti-authoritarian perspectives can emerge from any mass demonstration and direct action, and that is why, yes, we participate in the demonstrations. The main Zionist side of the protests is used to us and rarely engages in bickering with us.

There were a few hundred people from the radical left at these demonstrations who opposed the occupation. At the beginning I personally counted 20-30 anarchists, but they participated in a disorganised way. I started walking around with a big black and red flag at these demonstrations alone for about a year. Little by little, young Russian Jews followed me, and some of the young Russian activists from Kompass also came with their banners. As a result, at the May Day demonstration this year we again had an anarchist blockade for the first time since the dissolution of Ahdut.

**Verbatim: And what are your thoughts on the Hamas rule over Gaza until the October massacre?**

I.S.: Of course, I think it cannot get worse. It is not a lie, of course, that Israel in turn facilitated the rise to power of radical Orthodox Muslims in the Gaza Strip, helping to create Hamas in its internal policy against the Palestinian Authority.

**Verbatim: What do you think of "Democratic Confederalism" - the political project developed in theory and practice by the Kurdish liberation movement and the communities of Rojava? What, in your opinion, are its prospects in the Middle East region?**

I.S.: The struggle of Rojava began as a struggle of self-defence against ISIS, spearheaded by the Kurdish PKK with the new council ideology of Öcalan. It is a struggle for autonomy with feminist and socialist characteristics. It is a good thing, something like the Zapatista Chiapas, which can

serve as an educational tool against capitalism and fascism. But as far as its possible practical prospects in the broader Middle East region, I am not so optimistic. In this multidimensional conflict this experiment has been able to survive thanks to the partial support of the United States (as an effective force against ISIS) and the tolerance of Assad, as they have not joined forces with the hose who wanted to overthrow his regime. In my opinion, there is no possibility of extending this program to other countries in the region, not even to the Kurdish region of Iraq.

**Verbatim: Now let's change the subject. You lived on a kibbutz. Can you tell us more about life on the kibbutz?**

I.S.: Keep in mind that kibbutzim were subsidised by the capitalist Jewish elite because they were the cheapest way to colonise Palestine. But within the kibbutz communities there was, in fact, a level of direct democracy - from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. They usually operated without wage labourers until 1948. But today there are few who, even after the privatisation of the kibbutzim, continue to adhere to the old way of organising them.

**Verbatim: When did the decline of the kibbutz begin?**

I.S.: You see, in 1948 the economy changed. There were many options to exploit cheap migrant labour, and some kibbutz communities benefited from this.

After 1977, when the leftist Mapai party (dominant in the Zionist project for many years: from before the creation of Israel in 1948 until 1977)

lost parliamentary power, the capitalists began to push most kibbutzim to become more and more dependent on foreign capital. Most of the kibbutzim were active in agriculture and did not do very well because their subsidies were stopped. It was a new era, very different from that of 1948, when about 75% of the economy was owned by cooperatives and socialised enterprises.

**Verbatim: So, in a way, this was one of the limitations of the kibbutzim - that they were too small and isolated from each other, so that they were overly dependent on state capital and resources? Because of this they could not create their own system?**

I.S.: The problem is that from the very beginning they were subsidised by the Zionist system. A few of them prospered economically, but most operated on the verge of bankruptcy. In the kibbutzim, the left identified themselves as Zionist-Marxist (but in reality they were more Zionist than Marxist), while a few adhered to the ideas of libertarian communism. You see, in the 1950s there was a split in the Communist Party, which was part of the Zionist establishment that built Israel because of the establishment's choice to align itself with the United States in the Korean War. So, there was a tendency of Marxist-Leninists leaving the mainstream Communist Zionist-Marxist Party. Because of this, a mass expulsion of Marxist-Leninists from the kibbutz followed.

Probably several hundred were expelled. People who worked and lived for many years on these kibbutzim were expelled mercilessly, simply because

they refused to conform to Zionism. I was probably one of the last to be expelled from a kibbutz because I had very radical leftist views and anti-Zionist activities. But because of the political environment at the time and the continuous persecution of political dissidents in Russia, it became unpopular to expel people based on their views. So there were several months of fighting inside the kibbutz between those who wanted to expel me and those who did not want to do so.

Although the rest of us did not like my libertarian-communist ideas, I was one of the hardest farm workers and was elected three times as head of the Political Committee for Foreign Affairs of our kibbutz. But in the end the Zionist-Marxist side prevailed, with 60% of the community residents voting in favour of my expulsion, so the kibbutz had to pay me compensation. But I think that after me no one has been expelled from a kibbutz because the compensations increased and created problems for the kibbutz budgets.

**Verbatim: Were there any disagreements within the kibbutz about the inclusion of**

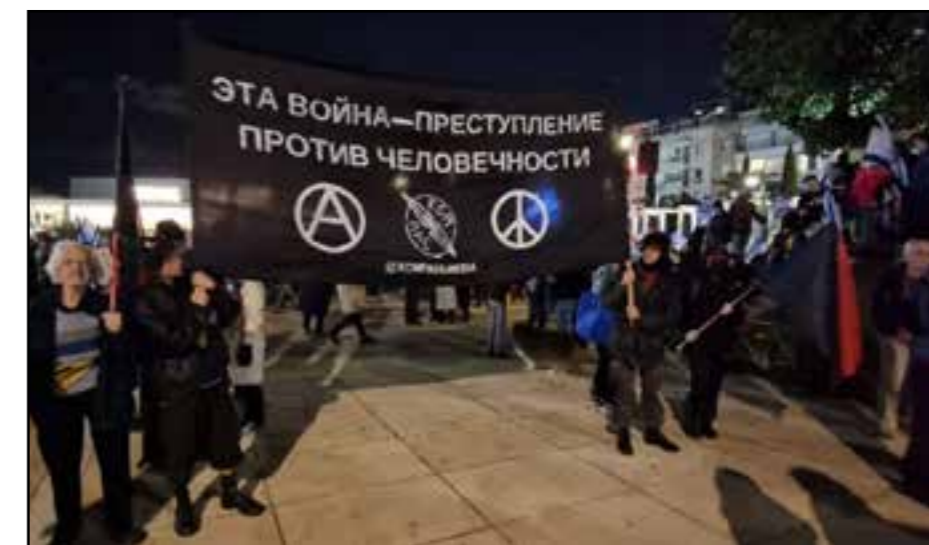
**Palestinian Arabs?**

I.S.: The kibbutz, being aligned with the Zionist system from the beginning, almost never accepted Arab members, even the most left-wing kibbutzim. There was a tendency of the Arabs to accept Zionism and some of them even lived inside the kibbutz, not as members, but as trainees. And as soon as their training was over, they were denied membership. No one gave them land or part of the budget.

In conclusion, we can say that, despite all these flaws, the kibbutz was a laboratory where certain libertarian ideas and practices were indeed tested, but to a limited extent and time.

**Verbatim.: Thank you very much for your time!**

\*Verbatim is a libertarian digital space that started its activity in the fall of 2019. Since then, it continues to run the website of the same name with libertarian material and articles. <https://aftoleksi.gr/taytotita/>  
\*\*The website of the Russian anarchist group Autonomous Action published an article with similar conclusions on Fauda.







## Anarchist Communist Group

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[www.anarchistcommunism.org](http://www.anarchistcommunism.org)

### WHO WE ARE...

The Anarchist Communist Group (ACG) is a revolutionary anarchist communist organisation which is dedicated to seeking a complete transformation of society, and the creation of anarchist communism.

This will mean the working class overthrowing capitalism, abolishing the State, getting rid of exploitation, hierarchies and oppressions, and halting the destruction of the environment.

To do this, we believe it is important to be organised.

We are committed to building an effective organisation that works towards the common goal of anarchist communism, in cooperation with other working class organisations and in grass roots campaigns.

We strive to base all our current actions on the principles that will be the basis of the future society: mutual aid, solidarity, collective responsibility, individual freedom and autonomy, free association and federalism.

If you want to join the ACG, then look first at our Aims & Principles on our website

[www.anarchistcommunism.org](http://www.anarchistcommunism.org)

You can also drop us a line at [info@anarchistcommunism.org](mailto:info@anarchistcommunism.org)

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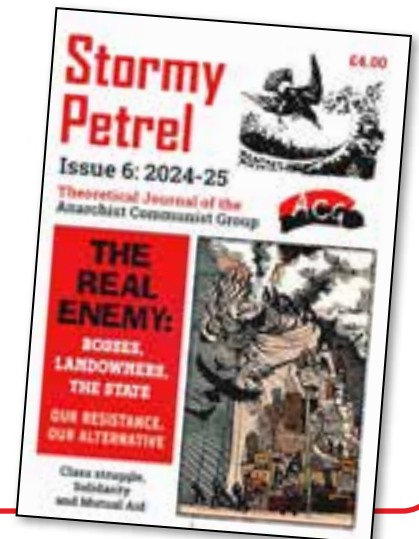
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