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What would Che Guevara do?

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As there is a growing trend among the Left to sway away from openly supporting Resistance groups, leftists need to pause and ask themselves what the figures they cherish would do.



An illustration showing Ernesto Che Guevara, a Palestinian freedom fighter, and the destruction in Gaza caused by Israeli strikes. Illustration: Mahdi Rtail, Al Mayadeen English

To say that the Israeli genocide against Palestinians has been ongoing for six months is inaccurate, as it started in 1948, 76 years ago. Over the past 76 years, Palestinians have exhibited magnificent strength and determination in facing their oppressor, defending themselves against the Israeli occupation, and fighting for

their own liberation and freedom. Their resistance has worn several shapes and forms, from a simple rock thrown at an Israeli Merkava to meticulous, groundbreaking operations carried out by Resistance groups.

Ever since local resistance movements emerged, many people have stood up against them for reasons that vary from pure Western propaganda to just simply being pro-imperialist. The saddening stance, however, is the one taken by several leftists around the world who do want a free Palestine but do not support resistance groups.

The very same people praise revolutionaries like Ernesto Che Guevara, who dedicated his life to fighting imperialism through armed struggle, making imperialists fear him even after it gruesomely killed him. Che Guevara showed the world the importance of fighting imperialism through guerilla warfare rather than mere protests. He spread important ideas through statements and actions that, to this day, inspire many people, most of whom are to the left of the political spectrum.

A very famous video for Che Guevara shows him giving a speech at the United Nations. He ends his speech by saying, “Homeland or death.” This has been [embodied by Palestinians](#) from the moment they are born to the moment they leave the world, often with their blood on the hands of Israeli occupation forces.

“Homeland or death,” if taken in the context of Palestine, strictly means that one should do everything they can to fight for a free Palestine, from the river to the sea. It means that leftists around the world should not promote or even accept a “two-state solution,” nor should they accept the demonization of Resistance groups by the Israeli occupation and its allies or even hesitate to support the Resistance.

Che Guevara is still alive

Following the Israeli attack that deliberately targeted and killed Al Mayadeen correspondent Farah Omar, videographer Rabih Me’mari, and Hussein Akil on

November 20, Che Guevara's daughter, Aleida, visited Lebanon to attend the memorial service of the martyrs.



Aleida Guevara also took a detour to Saida, a city in South Lebanon, and met with the Popular Democratic Party, a leftist group. As I was present in the meeting and had the honor to meet Che's own flesh and blood, and heard her share many stories about her father and experiences from her own struggle against imperialism, I was curious to know what she believes Che would think amid the increasing leftist diversion from armed resistance.

So I asked, "We notice today that many people within the left, who raise pictures of Che and idolize him, have a negative stance toward several Resistance groups standing against Western imperialism, from Hamas to Hezbollah and the Yemeni Armed Forces. If Che was here today, what would his opinion be, and what can we do to unite fronts?"

She started her reply by saying that it was indeed a difficult mission to unite these fronts, but "I always say, based on my father's thinking, we should always look for the common ground. We should begin by specifying our goals and then look for what unites us or what common goals we have."

"For example in some countries, free healthcare, education, respectable and decent

shelters for our people... our right to work in our own homeland. We can always look for common goals and work towards them," she elaborated.

"But if someone has been [deprived of their own homeland](#), to begin with, how would they be able to think of all these things? What do you expect from them? How do you expect them to have free healthcare, for example, if they do not even have their basic rights over their own homeland?"

"Some people do not support armed resistance. To these people, I ask: Can you tell us what your alternative is? What do you suggest since you are against armed resistance? Because this problem was not born [on October 7]. The war has been going on for many long years."

She further said that many attempts were made by Palestinians, using a number of different methods, to urge the world to even listen to their struggles, emphasizing, "How many more Palestinian children, women, and elderly still have to die, and how much further should their homes get destroyed for people to acknowledge the Palestinian cause and support it?"

Aleida Guevara then shared a personal incident that happened during an interview, where she was asked what she thinks about "Islamist terrorism." She answered by saying that her opinion was exactly the same as that one on "Christian terrorism," stating, "Terrorism is terrorism." However, she told the interviewer that if they were targeting the Resistance with this statement, then "how do you expect Palestinians to take back their land if not by armed resistance?"

"The Palestinian people are aiming towards achieving their own freedom and liberation. How can I ask them to not use armed resistance?" Guevara stressed.

She highlighted that the Palestinians do not even have tanks to fight off Israeli tanks, "But at least they can bomb these tanks or destroy them; would I dare to tell

them ‘do not blow these tanks up, let them run you over instead?’ What right do I have to say this to Palestinians?”

“I am not living through this reality like Palestinians are, and because of this specific reason, I have no right to condemn or criticize anyone who commits such acts of resistance. Certain principles can never be crossed.”

“When any population decides to defend itself in the way it sees fit, I support it without even thinking twice about it, and if someone does not understand this or accept it then they are nowhere near being a leftist.”

‘Bodies fall, but ideas endure’

Ghassan Kanafani, a prominent revolutionary Palestinian author, once said, “Bodies fall, but ideas endure,” and this applies to Ernesto Che Guevara and every other revolutionary, including Kanafani himself. The ideas brought by Che Guevara have faced a trend of neglect by many who admire him. However, they are still alive through his daughter and every other leftist who supports armed resistance.

It is not hard to understand why a free Palestine can only be achieved through armed resistance, especially amid the recent events with South Africa taking “Israel” to court, and not just any court but the most important one under international law, the International Court of Justice. And what was the result? [The ICJ did not order a ceasefire](#) but rather ordered “Israel” to take all measures to prevent genocide acts in Gaza, ensure its forces do not commit genocide, and take measures to improve the humanitarian situation. “Israel” did not only fail to do that, but it also even committed further illegal and inhumane acts in its genocide against Gaza with the [US’ John Kirby still claiming](#) that the occupation is not violating International Humanitarian Law.

Put simply, if you are a leftist and you are still not sure of the importance and value

of armed resistance, just ask yourself, “What would Che Guevara do?”

Source: [Al Mayadeen](#)

