

New for 2016

ELECTIONS

So far in the presidential transition (we're writing this Nov 19th), what we've seen is not good in terms of either appointments or hints as to policy priorities (largely, there has been a near total refusal to walk back any of the most terrifyingly racist and sexist campaign promises). We have a lot of work to do building an even stronger movement for justice in Israel/Palestine and at home for our basic values: justice, equality, and dignity.

With help from other leaders in many movements, here are the key messages and perspectives we've assembled so far:

WE SHOULD TAKE TRUMP AT HIS WORD.

We should believe the administration will try to enforce many of the harmful, violent and racist policies that have been promised. This is not a time for business as usual, and we can't afford to normalize the dangerous onslaught that's coming. We commit to challenging Trump, his administration, and the hate he has emboldened alongside our allies in the streets, in Congress, in the courts and in the press.

TRUMP'S AMERICA AND NETANYAHU'S ISRAEL GO HAND IN HAND.

The racist and violent policies promised by a Trump presidency mirror what has been happening in Israel/Palestine for decades. In both places we are seeing plans to continue the building of militarized walls, deporting refugees and asylum seekers, religious discrimination, and the consolidation of power in the hands of those who want to implement policies that infringe on civil liberties and basic rights. The xenophobic nationalism that shapes Israel's domination of Palestinians and the white nationalism of many of Trump's advisers and supporters are a danger to all of us.

Also, we need to acknowledge that the problems in both societies don't begin or end with those leaders. There's a lot to say and reflect on the role of corporations, the relative weakness of justice movements, and the way the political center has moved distinctly to the right over the last generation. We have to have a vision for justice here that is bigger than fighting Trump, and for Israel/Palestine we know that even if Netanyahu stepped down today, things would still be extremely difficult.

WHAT WILL A TRUMP PRESIDENCY MEAN FOR ISRAEL/PALESTINE?

Probably not much good. It is likely that Israel will be able to act with even more impunity to seize land and violate Palestinian rights. It is unlikely that Trump will take steps to hold Israel accountable to international law and its human rights abuses. Under the new administration, legislative efforts to curb the growing nonviolent boycott, divestment and sanctions movement will probably accelerate, as will efforts to undo the diplomacy of the Iran deal, to expand military aid to Israel even further, and to block efforts by the international community and the United Nations to take action. All of these steps were also likely under a possible Clinton presidency as well. In this context, the grassroots, nonviolent movement for Palestinian rights is more important than ever.

TRUMP'S APPOINTMENTS

It is unconscionable that some Jewish institutions have chosen to prioritize defending the indefensible policies of the Israeli government, cozying up to the Trump administration and refraining to speak out against white supremacist Stephen Bannon. Many supporters of Israeli policies that have obsessively accused the movement for Palestinian rights of antisemitism are now indefensibly silent in the face of antisemitism within the Trump Team. This is one more sign that we are going to need to reframe how we think about this struggle not as a conflict with two sides, but a struggle over respecting basic values, where what we fight for is determined by our beliefs, not our identities.

WHAT WILL A TRUMP PRESIDENCY MEAN FOR OUR WORK AS JVP?

We know how to fight this, we've seen it before. In Israel we've seen fascism creeping into policies and the rising xenophobia in society. The same racism, anti-Muslim bigotry and nationalism that we have been fighting in Israel has come into power in the United States. We have to fight it both here and there.

THIS IS A SCARY TIME. IT'S ALSO AN EXCITING TIME.

There are going to be some really big fights ahead against racist policies, and a lot of work to be done now against hate and bigotry. But this moment of political upheaval is also an opportunity. People are polarized, angry, sad, and more ready than usual to be organized into movements for justice.

There are tons of ways to get active right now -they're all great!