Internationally renowned conductor Daniel Barenboim speaks out in sympathy with the Palestinians

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Amidst the chauvinist hysteria being whipped up in Israel and the lies and propaganda from media outlets that support the Zionist state, one prominent voice has spoken out courageously against the latest Israeli onslaught on Gaza, which has already taken the lives of more than 1,000 Palestinians, including hundreds of women and children.

Daniel Barenboim, the world-famous Israeli conductor and pianist, who has for many years opposed the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, issued a brief but heartfelt statement, "Both Israelis and Palestinians are losers in this conflict," which was published in the British *Guardian* newspaper.

The very first sentence of Barenboim's statement strikes an unusual and crucial note: "I am writing these words as someone who holds two passports—Israeli and Palestinian."

This Jewish musician, who was born in Argentina and arrived with his family in Israel when he was ten years old, defies the right-wing Zionists, indeed, the whole Zionist establishment, by daring to speak as a Palestinian as well as an Israeli. He writes of his "deep sympathy for the fear with which my fellow Israelis live today," but then adds, "I have profound compassion with the plight of my fellow Palestinians in Gaza, who live in terror and mourn such devastating losses on a daily basis."

"[T]here is no military solution," writes Barenboim, opposing the murderous assaults made regularly by the Israeli military against Gaza in recent years.

Barenboim reflects the opinions of many Israelis whose voices are being drowned out in the campaign to mobilize public opinion behind the latest invasion. Thousands have protested, and many more have begun to see the dead end of the militarization of Israeli society and the whipping up of the kind of social backwardness that led to the recent revenge killing of a Palestinian youth.

At a time when fascistic elements are mobilizing inside Israel with the slogan, "Death to Arabs," Barenboim's sympathy for both ordinary Israelis and Palestinians makes him a target for hatred and even threats of violence from these reactionary forces.

It is precisely because Barenboim speaks for many Jews in Israel and around the world that the two leading newspapers of the American ruling establishment, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, have entirely ignored his statement. Instead, the *Times* in its July 27 edition devotes nearly a full page to a report on the popularity of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and the alleged unanimity of Israeli public opinion in favor of war.

The *Times* refers to "the anti-Semitic tinge of pro-Palestinian demonstrations around the world." This outrageous smear is aimed at the millions of people who oppose the oppression of the Palestinian people and call, like Barenboim, for the unity of Israelis and Arabs. The *Times* produces no evidence for its lie, apparently assuming that its readers will simply accept that protests involving people of Middle Eastern background are the equivalent of anti-Semitism.

In the case of Ukraine, it is worth noting, the actual fascist and anti-Semitic elements who spearheaded the putsch last February and are in the forefront of the attacks on pro-Russian separatists are ignored by these same media supporters of Zionism.

Barenboim is a sincere humanist, in the tradition of the late violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin and of

Albert Einstein. He is especially well known for his work with the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, founded 15 years ago by him and his close friend Edward Said, the late Palestinian-American scholar. This orchestra, in which young Arab and Jewish musicians collaborate, has performed around the world to growing acclaim.

Barenboim's forthright and brave stand in opposition to war and the oppression of the Palestinian people deserves the full support of all workers and socialists everywhere.

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