

Starmer's choice: to facilitate an apartheid state, o...

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I wrote this on Twitter yesterday in response to the International Court of Justice decision on Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian Territories:



Richard Murphy  @RichardJMurphy · 14h

There are occasional moments in this mad world when I believe sanity prevails. The International Court of Justice ruling on Israel has provided one such moment. Israel is an occupying force practicing apartheid, as anyone with eyes to see and ears to hear has known for decades.

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It is not easy on occasion to hang on in quiet desperation, believing that there is a sane alternative to the madness through which we are living. Then something like this decision comes along to remind us that we are not alone in thinking that to be the case.

I heard some of this decision as it was read out.

Israel is an illegal occupying force.

It is imposing an apartheid regime.

It is acting in contravention to international law.

And then I had to remind my self that this is a non-binding decision, however persuasive it is.

Labour has to decide whether to comply.

In fairness to David Lammy as Foreign Secretary, he has decided to restart funding for UNRWA, which is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. This was established as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations General Assembly in 1949. It is one of the largest United Nations programmes and works to relieve poverty in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israeli allegations of its involvement in the 7 October attacks were some time ago found to be without evidential support, but

the Tories denied finding, nonetheless.

Now Lammy has to go further. He has to withdraw the Tory objection made by the UK, acting as the US's stooge since it is not a member of the ICC, to oppose a warrant for war crimes issued by the International Court of Justice against Benjamin Netanyahu.

If that happens and the UK backs the ICC decision (because does it have a choice?) then we will know we are on a new path with Israel. If we do not do both then we, or rather Starmer, becomes as much a facilitator of apartheid as Thatcher ever was. It will be his choice.