

76 years after the Palestinian catastrophe, the Nakba – Protest Israel's U.S.-backed war on Gaza!

May 15 is the day of commemoration for the Palestinian Nakba, or catastrophe. During it zionist gangs drove over 750,000 Palestinians from their homes, murdered thousands more, and grabbed 78% of the territory of Palestine in order to establish the Jewish theocratic state of Israel in 1948. Now, 76 years later, the Palestinian people are going through another catastrophe. In the Gaza Strip, in revenge for Hamas's murderous October raid into Israel, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have driven an estimated 1.7 million people from their homes. They've killed some 35,000 people, most of them civilians and 70% of them women and children. 10,000 people are missing, most of them buried in the rubble. What is more, while Hamas's October 7 atrocity was carried out from the Gaza Strip, not the West Bank, apartheid Israel has seized the opportunity to radically step up Jewish settlement of the West Bank. In the process, more than 469 Palestinians have been killed (mainly by the IDF), including at least 112 children.

None of this is going unchallenged. Around the world, the pro-Palestinian demonstrations have sometimes been huge, and there are many other forms of action taking place as well. And these have been an important factor in why Canada, the Netherlands, Japan, Spain, and Belgium have suspended arms sales to Israel, and in why Ireland's Senate has unanimously called for sanctions against Israel, including an international arms embargo and prevention of U.S. weapons to Israel passing through Irish airspace and seaports. Indeed, the Israeli state

has never been so politically isolated in the world. Still, the Palestinian solidarity movement must obviously persist...and it is.

Support and defend the student protests!

Pro-Palestinian protests in the form of university encampments have rapidly sprung up across the country. At last count there were 130 in the U.S., plus dozens of others in France, England, Scotland and elsewhere, including one in Tunisia. Their demands are that universities divest funds from Israel or from companies doing business with Israel, plus they call for a ceasefire and an end to repression of pro-Palestinian protesters. And while it remains to be seen whether the administrations will follow through with their promises, at some universities the students have already won some of their demands.

But the students are going up against a lot and they need support. For example:

* Even though the protest camps have been completely peaceful, numerous universities have called in the police to smash them. Thus, the cops have entered campuses with guns drawn, they've fired rubber bullets and chemical weapons, and they've arrested 2,400 people so far, often brutally. Moreover, where faculty members have come to the aid of the students (which they almost always have) they've met the same fate. Indeed, the cops have brutally thrown some professors who are senior citizens to the ground. Additionally, at UCLA the police stood aside for three hours as a large gang of masked counter-demonstrators

armed with clubs, pepper-spray and fireworks attacked the student encampment.

* Propaganda in the bourgeois news media that the protesting students are a bunch of antisemites and/or Hamas supporters. (The same media has sometimes also accurately reported that groups like Jewish Voice for Peace and Jewish individuals are involved in the Palestinian solidarity movement. And while a few students may support Hamas, which is wrong and should be repudiated, this is not what the movement is about and the news media know it.)

* Not just propaganda by university presidents, police spokespeople or mayors, but also by Trump, Biden and most of the Democratic Party office-holders. Trump: "To every college president, I say remove the encampments, immediately. Vanquish the radicals, and take back our campuses for all of the normal students..." Biden: "There's the right to protest, but not the right to cause chaos." ... "Vandalism, trespassing, breaking windows, shutting down campuses, forcing the cancellation of classes and graduation — none of this is a peaceful protest. Threatening people, intimidating people, instilling fear in people is not a peaceful protest."

Well, among the pro-Israel students there may be some who fear they'll be beaten up, but that simply is not happening. If it were, it would be all over the news. What these students fear is the growth of the progressive mass movement in support of the Palestinian people. Additionally, the administrators of the recalcitrant universities fear they will be unable to invest their funds where they can gain the most financially and politically. Moreover, Trump, Biden and the entire ruling class fear

the student protests will become another factor that upsets their policy in the Middle East.

Imperialism

Despite national polls consistently showing that about two-thirds of Americans support the call for an immediate ceasefire, Biden, supported by the Republicans, continues to arm Israel and give it diplomatic support. This is because Israel is one of their junior partners in enforcing imperialist order in the oil and gas rich and strategically located Middle East, and, thereby, defends the U.S. sphere of influence there. And in the immediate sense, this means defending against regional imperialist Iran's struggle to expand its sphere of influence. Meanwhile, Turkey is struggling to expand its sphere of influence in the region, as are even bigger powers.

As we write this, the IDF has ordered over 100,000 Palestinians to leave eastern Rafah, a city where hundreds of thousands of people have been driven to from the rest of the Strip. The IDF has also blocked the Rafah gate to Egypt, begun bombing parts of the city, and is moving up tanks. Thus, the Palestinians need our help. Indeed, they constantly call out for it, and many Palestinians with access to social media, which is rare, have been thanking and praising the student protesters and others in this country for their solidarity.

No more aid to Israel!

Detroit/ Seattle Workers' Voice email list

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Demonstrate on Nakba Day, Saturday, May 11!
Westlake Park (4th and Pine) at 2:00 pm

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