

“We need the unity of workers to stop war everywhere”

Thousands demonstrate in Chicago to oppose Israeli slaughter in Gaza

Our reporters
23 May 2021

Thousands of workers and young people marched in downtown Chicago on Friday evening to oppose the brutal US-backed Israeli onslaught against the population of Gaza. Over the weekend, hundreds of thousands protested the actions of the Israel government across the globe from London to Paris to Australia.

The protest in Chicago was organized by the Chicago Coalition for Justice in Palestine. Reporters from the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to those attending.

Anwari, a young Palestinian American, came to the rally with his friends in Chicago to support his friends and family who are struggling against the Israeli occupation of Palestine. “It’s not the Jewish people that are the problem,” he said. “It’s not about religion. It’s the government. There are also Jewish people in Palestine who are going through this, living side by side with Palestinians.

“They didn’t just split the land 50-50. The Israeli government took the land, then gave Palestinians land with no transportation, and now they’re waging wars to get more and more. I’ve been to Palestine and I’ve seen firsthand the way the conditions are, by design. The military comes into the towns and flash bangs them.

“It’s like Jim Crow laws in Palestine right now. They don’t get water; they don’t get electricity more than once a week. They’re not getting education. Children are being killed. The Israeli government claims it’s fighting back. What are they talking about? They’re the ones going into the towns and killing people.”

He said that he agreed that workers and young people should unite worldwide to expose and oppose the war crimes being carried out by Israel with the aid of the

imperialist powers.

“The media is very one-sided. It doesn’t show what Israeli is really doing. They aren’t bombing places where they claim Hamas is; they’re bombing schools, hospitals. We just want the world to know what we’re going through.”

Kulsoom attended the rally with her friends. She said, “There’s just so much to say about this. What’s happening in Palestine is inhumane. The US gives so much money to Israel, and it needs to stop. Without this money from the US, they wouldn’t be able to have these wars.”

When asked what she thought of the US providing billions of dollars for wars around the world each year, but no money for higher wages, free education, or any real efforts to stop the global pandemic, she said, “That’s a really valid point and I’ve been thinking about that for a while.

“I never really looked into socialism or talked about it with anyone outside of my friends and family, but I think it’s the way that I’ve been thinking about these things.”

A paralegal worker in Chicago came to the rally with her family to voice her opposition to the war crimes of the Israeli government and the Biden administration’s full-throated support for them.

“I just think it’s so unfair that the Palestinians in Israel are being treated the way they are, and that Israel thinks it can go in and take whatever land it wants. I disagree with the US supporting Israel in committing these crimes against the Palestinian people.

“It’s pathetic! It shows what their priorities are,” she added, in response to the fact that the ruling class has endless money for war, but no money for legitimate

efforts to contain the global pandemic.

“I’m a socialist, but I don’t know about the groups like the Democratic Socialists of America,” she continued. “It’s hard to call yourself a socialist when you support a capitalist party like the Democrats. I hate the Democrats as much as I hate the Republicans.”

Kleiber, a Venezuelan immigrant, said “We’re here to support every kid who was killed, and all the kids who don’t have water. We’re from Venezuela, where there are a lot of Palestinians. ... This is something people need to see and open their eyes. People are dying, especially kids, and kids are losing their parents. We want to show our respect for Gazans.” He agreed that internationalism is the way to fight back.

An Arab-American student who did not want to give their name said: “The US has funded billions to Israel’s government to oppress the Palestinian people. They have displaced thousands unfairly. Protests are a way to shed light on this for the whole world. People are getting knowledge and we will keep protesting. Many people are now aware of how the Nazis were oppressing the Jewish people, [and now] Zionists are the ones doing the oppressing. Palestine has had many ethnicities and religions. Anybody can coexist. Everybody has the right to live together. ... [Protesting] in America is crucial to the freedom of Palestinians because America is Israel’s strongest ally. People could still continue with protests. The ceasefire [brokered] with Egypt is just a way for them to stop right now, but over 200 people have been killed [in Gaza]. ... The Democratic Party is no exception. They [the US and Israeli governments] rely on each other since Israel formed, and we’ve yet to see a [US] president who has been pro-Palestine.”

“The US must end its funding of Israel” one demonstrator remarked, “The US wants to keep its stronghold in the Middle East.”

A group of young demonstrators told our reporter, “What is happening is unjust. Palestinian land has been stolen. Israel has just taken over a Palestinian neighborhood. During one of the holiest nights, they have attacked mosques.”

The young men continued, “We want to voice our opinion here in the West where we can. We don’t want people to be scared to face the US government.”

When asked their thoughts on the general strike by Palestinians, they strongly supported it, saying, “A

strike forces you to take action. This is a political issue, so there has to be a political solution.”

Speaking on the rally itself and all over the world, the demonstrators said, “It’s great to see international support. You don’t have to be Palestinian to support their struggle. This is a human issue; at the end of the day, we are all people.”

Noor, a logistics worker, said, “I’m from Bethany in Palestine. I have a lot of family back home and I’m doing this to free them. It’s time to see my family be able to do what they want and have real human rights. It’s time. It’s been enough. My family—everybody in the world—deserves human rights.”

On the role of US imperialism’s support for Israel, she added, “It’s absolutely horrible. My dad came here to give us a better life. It’s hurtful. If I can stop it any way I could, I will. I’m going to do what I can.”

Noor scoffed at the Democrats and said: “Us people are going to get them free. I don’t think our government is going to get them free. [The Israeli government] knows what they are doing. We all need to come together to stop this. Everybody deserves to be free. There shouldn’t be any [country] taking over another country.”

Francesca, a licensed aesthetician, said: “My sign says, ‘President Biden, the blood of Palestinian children is on your hands!’ Our tax money for \$735 million went to Israel. We just want peace and freedom. I’m not even Palestinian. I’m Mexican. My husband is Palestinian. He was born over there. He came over here when he was seven years old. My in-laws live over there. They can’t do anything.

“We want our tax money to stop going there. It shouldn’t even be a side where you pick and choose. The world should come together as one. In unity. What is going on is inhumane. It’s not just the \$735 million ... the Iron Dome was given to them by the US. It’s very sad. This is to support a war. You shouldn’t supply bombs and missiles and rockets like this. We need unity [of workers] to stop war everywhere. Not just Palestinians. All across the world.”



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