

Protests against Israeli genocide held across the UK this weekend

Our reporters

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Protests against Israel’s genocidal war on Gaza took place across the UK this weekend. The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) joined the demonstrations, discussing with protesters, distributing leaflets advertising upcoming public meetings in London and Inverness, and selling literature, including the pamphlet *Stop Israeli Genocide!*

Although no national demonstration in the capital was called this Saturday—another is scheduled for November 11—tens of thousands still took part in a rally in London’s Trafalgar Square.

We spoke to spoke to **Abood**, who is from Gaza.

Amina, a graduate student, explained, “We have come to a few protests over Palestine over the past few years, now the problems in Palestine are getting worldwide recognition and it is impossible to ignore the truth now.

Her friend **Minaal**, in her final year at university, added, “Due to social media, the mass killings, the images of hospitals bombed, children dying, are now before the world to see. It’s crazy that world leaders are denying the genocide taking place. Any person with a social consciousness must show up and protest.”

“There has been censorship in the mass media,” continued Amina. “They scorch the numbers and pretend many people aren’t here, but they are. What are they scared of? What sort of democracy is this when you censor mass opinion?”

“I think the call of the Palestinian unions for a general strike [internationally to stop Israel war machine from receiving the material it needs] should be supported, it is more impactful than just protest. This will hurt governments and companies in their pockets. I heard that this has happened in an arms factory in the US yesterday on social media, which is really positive.”

Minaal pointed out that, “The war against Palestine is

showing to people that there are a lot of issues with the system. That the capitalist structure of society is showing how corporations are making money from war and killing people.”

While the rally was being held in Trafalgar, sit-in protests were taking place in Charing Cross train station, following similar protests earlier in the week at Liverpool Street and London St Pancras.

In Sheffield, hundreds gathered outside the Town Hall. **Talal**, a student, said, “I have come here and to other protests to say no to the genocide.

“People are asking to stop the genocide and for a ceasefire. I don’t know what is wrong with this government; we now have more than 4,000 children killed in Gaza.

“Everyone needs to do what they can to stop the genocide. There should be action by workers to stop governments arming Israel. It is important what the workers in Belgium have done to stop their government sending weapons. This is a great step, each union all over the world in industries supplying military supplies to Israel should be having actions.

“We are here today because action is always from the bottom to the top. The leaders won’t take any action unless there is pressure from the streets.”

Andrew, a lecturer, described the situation as “A genocide, it is terrible thing unimaginable horrors. We must show our solidarity and stop our government supporting these crimes.

“It goes without saying that [Prime Minister Rishi] Sunak and [Labour Party leader Sir Keir] Starmer are fully complicit, there has been no serious denouncing of anything.

“I am fully in support of the call from Palestinians unions for workers to stop the shipment of arms to Israel and everyone else should be as well. All unions

should be doing everything they can to put pressure on the arms companies, to stop them and prevent these war crimes.

“I’ve just seen something about action to stop a military supply ship in the US. I’ve seen nothing like that here, that needs to be happening.”

Trainee teacher **Obada** explained, “I am Palestinian myself and obviously seeing what is happening with ethnic cleansing and genocide we need to oppose this, to pressure the government to call a ceasefire in Gaza.

“Fifty percent of the population in Gaza are kids. They are saying they are targeting Hamas but it’s civilians being killed and Israel are firing rockets at Syria and Lebanon as well. It is quite clear they do not want to target Hamas; they want all of Palestine, for Israel to ethnically cleanse us and take us out. The people of Gaza will not be able to return when they go to Egypt.

“If no one speaks up the Israeli government will keep on doing what it is doing, but if they see people from loads of cultures and backgrounds, especially with protests of Jewish people and in America and people here, it shows there is a force that can get this to stop. When the British and American government are providing the weapons they are complicit—money for bombing hospitals.

At a protest in Keighley held Sunday, SEP members spoke with **Shabnam** and **Taz**.

On Saturday a rally was held in nearby Leeds, and a sit-in protest at Leeds railway station.

At the demonstration in Inverness, **Susan** said, “I think the BBC’s coverage of this has been extremely biased, I think its dreadful. Why aren’t governments doing more? Its appalling.”

“There’s children being killed. It has to stop. In Ukraine, when the Russians went in, my god, our governments were sending all sorts, but our government does nothing here? Why? They are absolutely culpable for this genocide.

“I’m not anti-Israeli, I want to make that clear. There are so many Israeli people utterly appalled by what’s happening. When I was at the rally in Edinburgh there was a guy speaking there from Israel who said that this was not in his name. I’m anti-Zionist.”

“The Palestinian people did nothing wrong, yet the Zionists are punishing them. They are cutting down olive trees and stopping harvests, blocking supplies!”

“To organise this [the rally] is great, lets hope the broad response gets stronger!”

Speaking about the uniform support for Israel from the world’s imperialist governments, Susan continued, “I’m not surprised at all. They’re really complicit in this. I’ve long lost faith in a lot of these governments.

“On the news they make out that people are anti-Israeli and anti-Jew. That’s not the case. It is an insidious poison they’re spreading. And it’s really worrying because it seems all the governments are getting more right-wing. The people aren’t though, but the governments don’t listen. Rishi Sunak does not care what people think.”



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