Powerful protests at Port of Tacoma and Missouri Boeing bomb plant stall war materiel to Israel

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A protest by residents of Tacoma, Washington, at the Port of Tacoma prevented the *MV Cape Orlando* from being supplied with military equipment ultimately bound for Israel for several hours on Monday. The action, which began before sunrise on Monday morning, has been followed closely by thousands around the world as resistance to Israel's genocidal campaign against Gaza continues to develop.

However, just before 5 p.m. local time, protesters reported that action was being shut down and they were told to go home. Unlike the "block the boat" action that took place on Friday, Monday's action was promoted by the local chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America.

The *Cape Orlando* is part of the US Ready Reserve fleet, all of which are operated by the Department of Transportation in support of US military actions worldwide. The *Cape Orlando* has been used to ferry materiel for US military efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Numerous appeals have been made on social media to "block the boat" and prevent it from joining the Israeli war effort.

Two other protests of a similar nature broke out Monday, the first at the Boeing bomb plant in St. Charles, Missouri, and the second among longshoremen in Barcelona, Spain. The protest in St. Charles has since been broken up by local authorities, while dockworkers in Barcelona continue to refuse to load or unload ships bound for Israel.

The protest at the St. Charles Boeing Plant Monday morning lasted for hours as demonstrators used their bodies to block vehicles from entering the parking lot.

"There's an ongoing genocide in Gaza that the United States is directly funding with no red lines," Hoda Kadetia, a protester, told the local Fox affiliate. "So as all of us living in the United States paying taxes to support this genocide, we are saying it is not in our name."

The St. Charles Boeing Plant is located just a few miles from Ferguson, Missouri, the home of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager who was murdered by police in 2014. Brown's murder ignited a series of nightly protests that culminated in Democratic Missouri Governor Jay Nixon, with the support of President Barack Obama, deploying the Missouri National Guard against protesters.

The militant actions by protesters in America are a continuation of the protest held in Oakland, California, the previous berth of the *Cape Orlando*, which saw some of the protesters board the vessel in order to stop it from leaving. Unconfirmed social media reports indicate that at least one worker walked off the job in solidarity with the protests and the plight of the Palestinians.

The vessel was originally scheduled to arrive in Tacoma on Sunday afternoon, but was delayed for more than 14 hours, no doubt on orders from the Biden administration in an attempt to avoid further delays caused by pro-Palestinian protests.

Monday's protest lasted more than 13 hours and included kayaks and other small boats which blocked the *Cape Orlando* from leaving. Hundreds of protesters were supported by large numbers of other sympathetic residents who have donated food, weather-resistant clothing and tarps to help sustain those marching.

While there have been no reports of protesters again boarding the vessel, there were reports of at least two workers who have refused to handle materiel headed to

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Israel in solidarity with the protests.

At the same time, multiple police vans have arrived on the scene with officers equipped with riot gear. In addition, multiple webcams that provide a public view of Husky Terminal 7, where the protest is happening, are currently down, a further indication of an imminent mobilization of the state to shut down the protest and allow materiel from nearby Ft. Lewis to be loaded onto the *Cape Orlando.*

BreakThrough News has also announced on social media that the docks are looking to use military personnel to load the vessel instead of dockworkers. The outlet shared a message from a worker that they are refusing to work during a "health and safety hazard" and that they "can't cross a picket line," a further expression of the hostility of workers toward the ongoing onslaught against Gaza.

The ILWU has made no statement about the calls for workers to refuse to handle goods. On the contrary, last night they explicitly called for workers to handle cargo for the *Cape Orlando*, supporting the Israeli-US war drive in Gaza. The ILWU has not responded to the October 16 call from the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions Gaza (PGFTU) and 31 other unions, which appealed to workers around the world to "End All Complicity, Stop Arming Israel." Nor has it answered the statement of Belgian airport ground crew unions, which declared their "refusal to transport military materiel destined for war in Palestine."

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