

For an all-out mobilization of the working class on November 9 against the imperialist-backed genocide in Gaza

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The *World Socialist Web Site* calls for the widest support for and participation in the protest demonstrations that have been called throughout the world for Thursday, November 9, in opposition to Israel's genocide in the Gaza Strip. Significantly, the organizers of "Shut It Down for Palestine," including Workers in Palestine, the Students for Justice in Palestine and the Palestinian Youth Movement, are urging workers to engage in walkouts and work stoppages.

There is overwhelming international working class opposition to the genocide, and support for industrial action to halt the supply of weapons and financial assistance to the Israeli military and state. This includes resolutions by the trade unions in Belgium and Spain to refuse to handle Israeli military cargo, as well as open letters and resolutions being circulated among workers themselves.

The scale of the protests that have erupted worldwide reflect the wave of working class militancy that has been sweeping the globe, from the United States to Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. The fight in Gaza is not simply against what is being done by the criminals in the Israeli government; it's a fight that has to be waged against the ruling classes of every country.

It is critical for workers and youth who are opposed to Israel's actions to understand the fundamental issues behind the assault on Gaza, in order that this movement can be guided by a strategy to stop it.

The response of the Israeli military to the global protests, the largest anti-war demonstrations in a generation, which have already involved tens of millions of people, has been to escalate its genocidal actions. The confirmed death toll in the Gaza Strip has now exceeded 10,000, nearly half of them children. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have laid siege to Gaza City in preparation for a bloody ground invasion. Across Gaza, a massive humanitarian crisis is taking hold as the entire population has been virtually cut off from fuel, food and clean water for a month, while the IDF deliberately targets hospitals and other civilian buildings.

Within the Israeli regime, there is increasingly open talk about its plans for mass murder and ethnic cleansing, including a statement by far-right Heritage Minister Amihai Eliyahu that nuclear weapons are an option against Gaza, with the survivors dispersed "to Ireland or deserts," and that the Palestinian people "shouldn't continue living on the face of the Earth."

But Israel is not an independent actor. It is functioning, as it has

from its founding in 1948, as an instrument of world imperialism. The United States has made clear that it has no "red lines" for Israel, a phrase repeated Tuesday by National Security Council spokesman John Kirby. American imperialism is encircling the entire Middle East with dozens of warships and a surge in military personnel to back Israel's actions.

The United States, together with the other powers in the US-NATO axis, see the assault on Gaza as merely one front in an emerging Third World War, which they are deliberately inciting.

The United States supports the genocide because it is bound up with its increasingly open preparations for war with Iran. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's provocative trip to Iraq last week, coupled with the deployment of an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine capable of destroying every major city in Iran, makes clear that the Palestinian people are being sacrificed to Washington's bid for unchallenged domination of the Middle East.

Another major front in World War III is the war in Ukraine, whose population the US and NATO are using as cannon fodder against Russia. The US-NATO support for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza shows that the real aims of that war have nothing to do with the sovereignty of Ukraine or concern for "human rights," but rather the domination of the Eurasian landmass and the destruction of its main strategic rivals. And even as the fires burn in Gaza, a third front is being actively prepared in Asia against China, centered around the island of Taiwan.

War is the response of the ruling class to the most severe crisis of American and world capitalism since the outbreak of World War II in 1939. President Biden explained the strategic motivations of the global eruption of American militarism most bluntly when he said recently, "We were in a postwar period for 50 years where it worked pretty well, but that's sort of run out of steam. It needs a new world order in a sense, like that was a world order."

But a new "world order," as with the old one erected after World War II, can only be established in one way: through massive military conflict. In the era of nuclear weapons, this threatens the lives of every person on the planet. Nothing could show more starkly that the capitalist system, with its endless national conflicts and imperialist struggles for domination of the world's resources, has not only become outmoded, but is the most dire threat to

human civilization.

The worldwide demonstrations in defense of Gaza are a critical development. But the power of these protests and their ability to stop the genocide is in direct ratio to the scale of the mobilization of the working class and its emergence as the leading social and political force in the fight against the Israeli regime and its imperialist paymasters.

Therefore, it is essential that the fight against war be rooted in the working class and acquire a distinctly anti-capitalist and international socialist character. The interests of the global working class are bound up with the interests of the Palestinian people, not only from the standpoint of a moral imperative, but of its struggle against the capitalist system and for the socialist reorganization of the planet.

The emerging Third World War has the character of a global war against the working class, with a critical front being the home countries of all the imperialist powers. Capitalism is bleeding workers dry in order to pay for the trillions of dollars needed for war, as well as to prop up the tottering financial system. The ruling class is also trying to whip up a war hysteria in order to criminalize all forms of social and political opposition, as demonstrated by measures to ban groups opposing Israel's genocide and blacklist individuals who speak out against Zionism.

The trade union apparatus, which has long supported imperialist war and CIA intrigues, plays an important role in enforcing "labor peace" on the home front, drawing together ever more openly with the government against the workers.

President Biden has been personally and directly involved in every major national labor contract over the last two years, from the refinery workers and the dockworkers to the railroaders, UPS workers and autoworkers. In every one of these struggles, the bureaucracy has worked deliberately to prevent or limit strikes and impose contracts that limit wage growth and pave the way for sweeping job losses.

While there is widespread sympathy in the working class for the Palestinians and opposition to war, the AFL-CIO issued a statement last month denouncing Palestinian "terrorism" and making clear its support for Israel. AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler issued a directive banning local union bodies from passing resolutions in support of Palestine.

Meanwhile, the bureaucracy has continued to allow weapons and equipment to flow to the Israeli war machine. The United Auto Workers, for example, has just rammed through a contract at defense contractor General Dynamics. In a recent speech, UAW President Shawn Fain called for a new "Arsenal of Democracy" (the euphemism for US weapons manufacturing during World War II) in support of the American war machine, falsely claiming this will mean more jobs and better wages for American workers.

The struggle against Israel's genocide in Gaza requires a fight by workers to liberate themselves from the pro-imperialist union bureaucracy. Will Lehman, a socialist autoworker who ran for UAW president last year on a platform of abolishing, not reforming, the union apparatus, has issued a statement calling for workers to take action to block the manufacture and shipment of equipment to Israel.

This is an international phenomenon: workers confront labor

bureaucracies that are "absolutely determined" to suppress any movement. In every country, the labor bureaucracies are aligned with their imperialist governments, from the TUC in the UK, to the CGT in France and IG Metall in Germany.

This fight must be based not on pressuring governments, but on struggle against them all.

While a crucial role must be played by workers in the United States and the other imperialist countries, in the Middle East itself the response of the various bourgeois regimes has been dominated by outright complicity.

The genocide not only exposes the historic bankruptcy of the Zionist perspective of an ethnically Jewish state, it also exposes the bankruptcy of the bourgeois nationalist regimes that have used the Palestinian people for decades as pawns in their unprincipled diplomatic maneuverings with imperialism.

Whatever their crocodile tears for the Palestinians now, all of these capitalist leaders in the Middle East are far more fearful of a mass movement developing in their own countries than they are opposed to Israel's criminal onslaught.

Opposition must also be built within the working class of Israel itself, which has one of the highest levels of inequality in the world and which is quickly becoming transformed openly into a police dictatorship. The perspective of such a movement must be the complete rejection of Zionism, the disarmament of the Israeli ruling class, and the establishment of a multinational state, with equal rights for Palestinians and Jews, as part of a socialist federation of the wider Middle East and the world.

The fate of humanity will be decided by the answer to the following question: Which will develop more quickly, the drive towards world war and nuclear annihilation or the socialist movement of the working class against war? The answer to that question will emerge from the active struggle to mobilize and develop the working class as an independent and internationally unified revolutionary force.



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