

Polls show mass opposition to Biden's support for Israel's genocide in Gaza among US workers and youth

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It has been 10 weeks since Israel, with the full support of the Biden administration, began its onslaught against the population of Gaza. Twenty thousand Palestinians have been confirmed dead, and another 7,000 are likely buried under the rubble. An entire population of 2.2 million people is being deliberately starved and denied medical care.

The genocide in Gaza is politically radicalizing an entire generation of workers and youth in the US and internationally.

This is partially reflected in a number of polls that have been published in recent days. According to one poll by the *New York Times* and Siena College reported on December 19 by the *Times*, 57 percent of registered voters in the US disapprove of President Biden's "handling of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

Among young people, this opposition is exceptionally pronounced, with nearly three-quarters opposed to the Biden administration's policy toward Israel and Gaza. Only 28 percent of voters ages 18-29 said that "Israel was seriously interested in a peaceful solution to the broader conflict; half of them said the Palestinians were," according to the *Times*.

US complicity in the genocide has contributed to a sharp drop in support for the Democratic Party. Biden's approval rating has hit a record low of 34 percent. Some 61 percent disapprove of the US president, up from 55 percent in September, according to a poll by Monmouth University.

Such polls are only a pale reflection of the depth of anti-war sentiment among broad sections of workers and young people. Demonstrations have taken place in nearly every country of the world, on every continent, in opposition to Israel's genocide. The largest, in London, with more than 800,000 people, was the most substantial mass protest in that city since the 2003 protests against the US invasion of Iraq.

The broad popular opposition is particularly notable given the universal support within the political establishment and the media for the US-Israeli war of annihilation in Gaza and their relentless pro-war propaganda offensive. The media

falsely equates anti-Zionism with antisemitism and seeks to condition the population to accept the mass murder of women and children that is taking place.

The media devotes less and less coverage to the daily massacres against the Palestinian population. The higher the death toll, the more widespread the starvation, the less the media reports. There is no examination of the historical, socioeconomic and geopolitical driving forces behind the genocide in Gaza and the real motivations of the US and NATO powers in backing it.

The opposition of young people and workers is fueled by the spread of objective information online and on social media, outside of the official channels of the state-controlled corporate media. Journalists in Gaza have shown hundreds of millions of people around the world the horrific reality of Israel's war against a defenseless population. For that reason, they have been systematically targeted by the Israel Defense Forces, and at least 64 have been killed since the start of the war on October 7.

The widespread opposition among workers and young people in the US and throughout the world is of immense objective significance. This mass outrage must be transformed into a movement capable of ending the slaughter, and that requires the development of an understanding of the deeper political, theoretical and historical issues underlying the crimes of Israel and US-NATO imperialism.

A major contribution to this work is the lecture published yesterday, "The Israeli state's fascist ideology and the genocide in Gaza," delivered by *World Socialist Web Site* International Editorial Board Chairman David North at Berlin's Humboldt University last week. It and two previous lectures ("Genocide in Gaza: Imperialism descends into the abyss," and "Socialist internationalism and the struggle against Zionism and imperialism") provide a comprehensive examination of the origins of Zionism and its relationship to imperialism.

The lectures demolish what North referred to in his Humboldt remarks as the “cynicism, hypocrisy, demagoguery and unrestrained lying that drive the campaign to discredit opposition to Israel’s onslaught against Gaza as ‘antisemitic.’” He notes that “the use of this slur has become a critical weapon in the efforts of Israel and its imperialist accomplices to intimidate and isolate all those who are protesting the genocide of Palestinians.”

Among those leveling the charge of antisemitism to delegitimize and criminalize opposition to Israel’s actions are far-right and fascist organizations and individuals, such as Republican Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, an advocate of the antisemitic “Great Replacement Theory.” Meanwhile, the US allies itself in its proxy war against Russia with Ukraine’s fascist Azov Battalion, many of whose members tattoo themselves with Nazi symbols.

The effort to redefine antisemitism to mean any opposition to Israel’s colonialist, apartheid policy toward the Palestinians is an example of what David North refers to as “semantic inversion,” in which “a word is utilized in a manner and within a context that is the exact opposite of its real and long-accepted meaning.” Thus, “a phenomenon [antisemitism] historically associated with the political right is transformed into a central attribute of the political left.”

This process of “semantic inversion” finds a particularly vile expression in the denunciation of Jewish workers and youth who oppose Israel’s actions as “self-hating Jews.” As North notes:

This diagnosis proceeds from the complete dissolution of Judaism as a specific religious identity into the Israeli state and the nationalist ideology of Zionism. An individual’s religious affiliation—which may, in the life of one or another Jewish person, be of limited or even no special importance—is endowed with a vast metaphysical significance.

The lecture reviews in detail the historical origins of contemporary Zionism, which, North explains, “represents the extreme counterrevolutionary antithesis and repudiation of the progressive, democratic and socialist tradition derived from Spinozist and, later, Marxist thought among generations of Jewish workers and intellectuals.”

North concludes the lecture by noting:

The ongoing war, for all its horrors, has made one significant political contribution. It has awakened the youth. It has opened the eyes of the world. It has

exposed the Zionist regime and its imperialist accomplices for the criminals they are. It has set into motion a tidal wave of outrage that is sweeping across the world and will sweep across those responsible for this genocide.

But outrage is not enough. What is needed is a perspective that directs mass opposition among workers and young people against the Biden administration and all governments and parties backing Israel’s mass murder and ethnic cleansing. North concludes:

The great challenge that confronts our movement is to imbue the outrage with a revolutionary socialist program that can unify the global working class in a common struggle against imperialist barbarism.

The millions who have taken to the streets in defense of the Palestinians must now turn to the working class, the only social force that can halt and defeat Israel’s offensive by making it impossible to wage it.

Stopping the genocide demands strikes and boycotts of arms companies, docks and airports to prevent the shipment of any items to Israel with a military use. The rising tide of workers’ struggles against austerity in the United States and throughout the world must break free from the stranglehold of the trade union bureaucracy and begin the systematic preparation for a political general strike against the war.

The Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee of the Fourth International are building the socialist and internationalist leadership needed to wage this struggle.



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