

Over 100,000 protest in Washington D.C. against the US-backed genocide of Gaza

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On Saturday, over 100,000 people protested in Washington D.C. against the US-backed genocide of the Palestinians by the Israeli military. Despite the immense size of the march, major news networks in the United States refused to report on it.

Saturday's protest marked 100 days of brutal Israeli-led slaughter and collective punishment. It was one of at least 120 protests in 45 different countries, an expression of the continuous outpouring of opposition among millions around the world.

Thousands of protesters were bused from cities across the country and braved cold January weather in order to register their opposition to "Genocide Joe" Biden.

A team of *World Socialist Web Site* reporters and supporters attended the rally and interviewed dozens of protesters. Will Lehman, a former United Auto Workers presidential candidate and socialist worker from Mack Trucks in Macungie, Pennsylvania, attended. Unlike current UAW president Shawn Fain, Lehman fully endorses the standing call by the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions for workers around the world to refuse to build or transport weapons for Israel.

Few protesters at Saturday's demonstration expressed support for the Democratic or Republican parties. When the subject of the capitalist system was discussed and the billions wasted on war and murder, a palpable feeling of hostility was expressed.

"We're morally obligated to stand here in the belly of the beast, in the heart of [the American] empire, given that this country consistently circumvents [international law] to send Israel more and more money to bomb Palestinians," said Hannah.

I feel like anyone with any human decency [has] the duty to ... say this is wrong and it is not what I want," said Evander. "Joe Biden is our president right now,

and he is out there selling weapons and committing the genocide. He's fueling this genocide."

"Watching these things unfolding before our eyes [in Gaza] are heartbreaking to me as a mom and as a human being. I don't understand how people can stand aside and watch this happen," said another protester.

The event, held directly adjacent to the White House, was the second largest protest held in the United States capital since the Israeli bombardment of Gaza began on October 7. It was held at the same time as a massive demonstration of over a half-million in London.

In response to the outpouring of global opposition to imperialist war, the Biden and Netanyahu governments have moved to expand the conflict into the war-ravaged country of Yemen and throughout the Middle East. This is part of a clear effort to target Iran and its allies. The expansion of war in the Middle East threatens a regional and global escalation of violence, potentially ending in a catastrophic clash between nuclear powers of the US, Russia and China.

Many in the crowd connected the violence which the US was supporting in Gaza to its broader imperialist violence in the Middle East and beyond.

"I am from an area called Baluchistan [a portion of Pakistan neighboring Iran], where the US Pentagon has given lots of arms, ammunition to the Pakistan military just like they have been giving to the Israeli military," said a protester who did not wish to identify themselves. "These weapons that the US supplies are creating death for people around the world."

Similarly, Michelle, who traveled to Washington D.C. from Pennsylvania, stated she came because "I'm tired of watching our tax dollars pay for the murder of people across the world."

"I won't vote in the next election," was a common sentiment expressed to *World Socialist Web Site*

reporters, who distributed thousands of statements on the recent United Nations decision to hear allegations against Israel for its crimes in Gaza.

While there was broad support for the lawsuit, many had doubts that it would be successful. “The ICJ [International Court of Justice] is still the colonizers’ court,” one protester said.

As the WSWs has written, while the South African delegation to the ICJ has gathered a compelling body of evidence of Israeli brutality, “To express any such illusions in the institutions of the United Nations would only be, at best, wishful thinking.”

Instead, the WSWs, the Socialist Equality Parties worldwide and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) have called for a turn to the international working class as the force capable of stopping both the Gaza genocide and the unfolding of world war.

In the US and around the world, protesters face an escalating attack on the right to protest and other fundamental democratic rights. This is most visible in the mounting two-party witch-hunt against so-called “antisemitism” among the anti-genocide protesters.

This mounting attack on democratic rights and slander against the people protesting has provoked defiance.

“I oppose the genocide that’s being conducted against the Palestinian people because I am Jewish,” explained Arlo. “That’s what causes me to oppose Israel. It’s a racist apartheid state, and it doesn’t speak for us.”

“I don’t think it’s antisemitic to care about other people [such as Palestinians],” said Heather. “I don’t want people to be killed, anyone, Jewish or Palestinian. I just want people to be people,” she reiterated.

Many younger protesters responded strongly to the calls for a political general strike to halt the war production which is fueling the genocide.

“I think it’s going to take people from all walks of life standing up and disrupting. It’s not enough to do one or two protests. We need to be disrupting the economy. We need to be disrupting business as usual,” explained Hannah, who gave her views without being prompted.

“I think it’s going to take something serious. I think it’s going to take disruption,” said Evander. “It’s a lot. It’s almost bigger than just Palestine and politics. This

is kind of a revolution of the people showing that we are going to be heard.”



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