

Finishing Palestinians, preventing “war”, bringing “peace”, Nikki Haley extends support for Taiwan

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On August 22, President of the Republic of China (hereinafter Taiwan) Lai Ching-te met with a US delegation led by Nikki Haley, who previously served as the US Ambassador to the United Nations under the Trump administration. She is one of the most ardent supporters of the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

Haley had stated the day before, “Taiwan is a place of courage, confidence, and unwavering resolve.” During the discussion with Lai in the Presidential Office, she emphasized, “Look at what happened with Russia and Ukraine, and with Hamas in Israel”, and that “we can’t wait to see if China invades Taiwan, and that we need to get in front of the situation now.” We should “strengthen our alliances” and come up with “a message to the world”.

Since the 1970s, Taiwan has been no stranger to aiding and abetting genocide perpetrated by US-backed far-right dictatorships or by the US itself. It is no aberration that Haley’s visit was warmly received by Taiwan’s sub-imperialist bourgeoisie.

Haley has enthused over the Gaza genocide, as one might recall. At least 45 Palestinians, mostly women and children, were slaughtered in an Israeli bombardment on May 26, 2024, when they were taking shelter in a tent camp in the southern city of Rafah, where 1.4 million Palestinians who had been displaced multiple times took refuge. At a press conference the following day, Haley declared, “I want Israelis to know you’re doing the right thing. Don’t let anybody make you feel wrong because Israel is not wrong in this.”

On May 28, 2024, Haley subsequently doubled down her support for the ongoing slaughter in Gaza by writing “Finish Them! America [loves] Israel. Always. Nikki Haley” on an artillery shell during a Memorial Day visit to the Israeli military near the border with Lebanon.

The US is by far Israel’s largest arms supplier, and that was where the bomb she signed originated. The Biden administration, with bipartisan support, provided Israel with a minimum of 14,000 MK-84 2,000-pound bombs, 6,500 500-pound bombs, 3,000 Hellfire precision-guided air-to-ground missiles, 1,000 bunker-buster bombs, and 2,600 air-dropped small-diameter bombs. Notably, the quantity of

2,000-pound bombs supplied to Israel exceeded that of all other “smaller” bombs, according to a *Reuters* report dated June 29, 2024.

Despite tactical differences among the US imperialist bourgeoisie over how best to proceed with the extermination, starvation, and the spread of infectious diseases among the Palestinians, Trump echoed Haley’s call to “Finish them!” during a presidential debate with Biden in June 2024. Trump accused Biden of being too “soft” on Hamas, saying he should “let [Israel] finish the job” in Gaza.

It is worth quoting at length a 2003 *Seattle Times* report entitled “Death from above: the 2,000-pound Mark-84 JDAM [Joint Direct Attack Munition]” in order to understand its true effects in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The same observations apply to Gaza.

As the Mark-84 JDAM strikes the ground, its fuse ignites a priming charge that detonates 945 pounds of Tritonal [a type of TNT].

The ensuing chemical reaction produces an expanding nucleus of hot gas that swells the Mark-84’s 14-inch-wide cast-steel casing to almost twice its size before the steel shears and fractures, showering a thousand pounds of white-hot steel fragments at 6,000 feet per second and driving a shock wave of several thousand pounds per square inch.

Instantaneously, a fireball lashes out at 8,500 degrees Fahrenheit [or 4,704.4 degrees Celsius], and the explosion gouges a 20-foot crater and hurls off 10,000 pounds of rock and dirt debris at supersonic speed.

[...]

The brutal shock wave smashes into and explodes lungs, colon, bowels, even the sinuses into the skull.

The overpressure can burst individual cells and rupture critical blood vessels, forcing air through them and on into the heart and brain, causing instant death.

As a result of the bombing, Palestinians were either shredded into pieces, incinerated, and/or charred beyond recognition. Those who survived the initial blast were unlikely to recover from injuries caused by waves of metal shards, debris and dirt that penetrated their flesh and bones and subsequently became “embedded in bodies”, which made infection control impossible. Indeed, “No amount of medical care could ever compensate for the damage being inflicted here”, as described by US trauma surgeon Feroze Sidhwa and US orthopedic surgeon Mark Perlmutter, who went into Gaza to save lives.

The United Nations Mine Action Service has estimated that Gaza is covered in about 37 million tons of rubble, including over 800,000 tons of asbestos, other pollutants, and unexploded ordnance, posing a significant risk of harm or death to Palestinians. *Bloomberg* put the amount of debris considerably higher on August 16, 2024, with the headline “Gaza Reduced to 42 Million Tonnes of Rubble.”

The aerial bombardment of Gaza brings to mind the Johnson and Nixon administrations’ bombing of Cambodia from 1965 to 1973. On December 9, 1970, then US President Richard Nixon complained to the then National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger that the US air force’s bombing of Cambodia was not “imaginative”. Nixon said, “I want everything that can fly to go in there and crack the hell out of [the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army]. There is no limitation on mileage and there is no limitation on budget.” The president added, “I want them to hit everything. I want them to use the big planes, the small planes, and let’s start giving them a little shock.” To be “imaginative”, Nixon even floated the idea that the bombing campaign be camouflaged as supply airlifts.

In response to Nixon’s request, Kissinger then implemented “a massive bombing campaign in Cambodia” involving “[a]nything that flies [sic] on anything that moves.”

As the record showed, the United States dropped 2.75 million tons of bombs on Cambodia, while the Allies dropped two million tons of bombs throughout WWII, including the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Despite this, the aerial bombardment of Cambodia pales in comparison with the bombing of Gaza.

According to Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, a Geneva-based independent organisation, 200 days into the Gaza genocide, Israel had rained down about 70,000 tons of bombs on Gaza, a territory of 365 square kilometres, or 1/495th of Cambodia’s territory of 181,035 square kilometres.

To put it another way, Palestinians in Gaza are the most intensively bombed population since World War Two, the very genocide that Nikki Haley has cheered on.

The aerial bombardment of Cambodia differs from the bombing of Gaza in that the White House and the executive branch no longer hide their genocidal intent and crimes from the Congress, as they did in the 1970s. The Congress is one of bastions of reaction in imposing the final solution to the question of Palestine as Israel continues in all its horrors.

As capital accumulation transforms into an unending series of political and social catastrophes, the struggle of the international working class against capital becomes inevitable. In response, the imperialist bourgeoisie normalizes genocide as a policy instrument while going to any lengths to intimidate and criminalize all speech, protest and resistance against barbaric crimes.

The Congress hailed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on July 24, 2024, during his speech to its joint session. Israel, he said, had been standing in Iran’s way. “When we’re fighting Hamas, we’re fighting Iran. When we’re fighting Hezbollah, we’re fighting Iran.” He claimed, “We’re not only protecting ourselves, we’re protecting you. Our enemies are your enemies, our fight is your fight, and our victory will be your victory.”

“Give us the tools faster and we will finish the job faster”, he requested. “The day after we defeat Hamas, a new Gaza can emerge.”

His speech showed that Israel had been acting as a proxy on behalf of the United States. On August 13, 2024, the US approved a \$20 billion arms sale to Israel in an attempt to expand the ongoing genocide in Gaza into a broader regional war involving Lebanon, Syria, and Iran in the Middle East.

There is a parallel between Netanyahu’s message that Israel is protecting US imperialism and the one that Haley and Lai Ching-te sent to the globe. Lai solemnly declared, being part of the first island chain, that Taiwan understood the intense threat posed by rising authoritarianism to global democracy, adding, “We will... stand alongside the democratic community to demonstrate the strength of deterrence and prevent war by preparing for war.”

He then praised Haley for calling on the “democratic community” to prevent “authoritarianism” from “jeopardizing global peace and stability”. “The people of Taiwan” strongly felt “the power of justice in her words”.



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