

In the face of police provocation, brutality and mass arrests

Thousands in New York City protest Netanyahu and the bombing of Lebanon

Sandy English
27 September 2024

Thousands of people in multiple demonstrations throughout New York City have protested the appearance of Israeli Prime Minister and war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu at the United Nations 79th General Assembly Friday and on previous days this week. New York Police Department (NYPD) cops have provoked, hospitalized and arrested large numbers of people throughout the week.

Protests against Netanyahu took place throughout Friday in the face of a massive deployment of police at the United Nations. There were also protests at multiple campuses, including one at Columbia University. On Thursday night cops rushed a march from Grand Central Station to the Loew's Regency hotel on Park Avenue where Netanyahu was staying in preparation for his speech at the UN and kept up constant provocation by driving into the mass of protesters with mopeds and bicycles.

The march, organized by the pro-Palestine group Within Our Lifetime (WOL), also raised the demand that Mayor Eric Adams, a former NYPD officer now indicted on corruption charges, resign. Adams is widely held by New Yorkers to be responsible for months of NYPD repression of protesters. Protesters chanted, "Netanyahu, we're gonna get you!"

One protester on X/Twitter noted the provocative role of the NYPD's anti-terrorism unit, the Strategic Response Group (SRG), which has been active in harassing demonstrators: "NYPD's strategic response group bicycle squad riding their bikes into protestors [sic] from behind. No orders or warnings have been given by police; they're just intermittently riding vehicles into people. First mopeds, now bikes."

At least one woman was knocked unconscious by

police. Police left it to protesters to call an ambulance. An estimated 50 protesters were arrested.

The New York Civil Liberties Union noted on its Twitter/X feed: "Last night's protest was peaceful before the NYPD—SRG escalated by driving their bikes + [sic] mopeds dangerously close to protesters. Officers shoved someone so hard she hit her head and lay unconscious on the ground for 20 mins. The SRG's chaotic + violent conduct endangers NYers."

On Tuesday, NYPD cops violently attacked protesters organized by WOL at another rally in Manhattan protesting Netanyahu's bombing of Lebanon. Police sent several protesters to the hospital and arrested at least 25 people. Among those hospitalized was Abdullah Akl, one of the leaders of Within Our Lifetime. He was arrested at his bedside after police refused to allow his lawyers to give him his prescribed medication. The District Attorney's office declined to pursue charges.

In a statement, WOL noted:

While [New York City Mayor] Adams undergoes investigation for corruption, his police force terrorizes us on our streets. The NYPD has spared no expense to expand its surveillance and policing capacity for the hoard of incoming leaders of a world complicit in the genocide of Palestine. The NYPD is deploying a fleet of armored SUVs, drones, helicopters, riot cops, and undercover cops. These events serve as a reminder of the shared technologies and tactics of oppression among colonial forces, from the NYPD to the IOF [Israel Occupation Forces].

Indeed, the NYPD has escalated its repression of protests systematically since October 7, in what is unquestionably its largest effort at political repression

since its Demographics Unit began systematic spying on and harassment of Muslims in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. WOL has documented nearly 20 incidents of egregious NYPD violence and surveillance against its protests since October.

Adams, a former NYPD officer, has played an active role in managing attempts to suppress the protests of both left-wing groups such as WOL and the campus protests at Columbia University, New York University, and the City University of New York, against the Israeli massacre of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and against its American facilitators. He does this with the full backing of the Democratic Party both locally and with the Biden Administration. It was widely understood that would be his modus-operandi when he received broad support in the party for his nomination for office in 2021.

Adams has largely fulfilled that role. In addition to the brutality against anti-genocide protesters for months, the NYPD has conducted an occupation of the New York subway system and a crackdown on so-called fare-beaters because of the near bankruptcy of the system. On September 15, cops perpetrated a mass shooting in a subway station in one of the poorest neighborhoods in the city when they confronted and shot a man who allegedly entered the subway station without paying his \$2.90 fare. Two bystanders were also shot, one critically.

Both the attacks on antiwar protesters as well as the poor who are unable to pay for the financial crisis of the largest transit system of the United States, are two sides of the same coin. The ruling class, particularly the section led by the Democratic Party, is preparing for a massive expansion of war in the Middle East, and against Russia and China as well as the austerity to pay for it.

Adams has been charged with corruption by federal authorities, primarily for taking campaign contributions from foreign nationals, and appeared in court Friday morning. While nearly the entire Democratic establishment in New York has called for his resignation, it is not because he has failed to implement attacks on workers and those protesting the escalation of war, but because his corruption is seen as a liability to carry forward this program.

In another attack on democratic rights, emanating

from the highest levels of the state, the House Ways and Means Committee formally asked the Internal Revenue Service to revoke the non-profit status of several organizations associated with protests against the Gaza genocide. Among these is the People's Forum, based in Manhattan, and associated with the Party for Socialism and Liberation.



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