

US protests erupt against imperialist war on Iran: “I’m 100 percent for a general strike”

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In the hours after President Donald Trump unilaterally and illegally ordered air and cruise missile strikes on three nuclear research sites in Iran, protests broke out across the US in opposition to the war.

While smaller than the massive “No Kings” demonstrations held the previous week against the Trump regime’s assault on democratic rights and looting of society’s resources for the oligarchy, thousands still protested in cities across the United States, including New York City; Dearborn, Michigan; Los Angeles, California; and Seattle, Washington.

Reporters for the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke with workers, students, and residents at the anti-war rallies and advanced a socialist perspective aimed at uniting the working class in a general strike to bring down the Trump government and halt the wars. This perspective was met with a warm response.

The protest in Los Angeles was held outside the Federal Building in downtown. Although the crowd was overwhelmingly peaceful, heavily armed U.S. Marines, California National Guard soldiers, California Highway Patrol officers, and Los Angeles Police Department cops deployed in force to monitor and intimidate protesters.

An Iranian-American from Long Beach told WSWS reporters she came to the rally because, “My generation does not want to go to war. I don’t want our sons to go to war. I have family members, friends—so many people in Iran—and I don’t want the destruction to go there.”

“There are people taking advantage of the fact that US has been in endless wars...it needs to stop.”

Keylyn, an English as a Second Language teacher for adult international students, said she came to the rally to “oppose the imperialist aggression against Iran that the United States is waging by bombing three of its nuclear facilities. That is an act of war, and it should be opposed.”

Keylyn noted the role of the Democrats in supporting war.

“I saw Hakeem Jeffries’ post,” Keylyn said, “and he’s just wholesale on board with Trump and that is so disgraceful. It really shows how fake the Democratic Party is. They claim to stand for progressive values, but if they are getting money from AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee, a pro-Zionist lobbying group) or if they are aligned with any imperialist aggression in any way, they will be on board with the warhawks.”

Asked for her thoughts on uniting the working class in a general strike against the war, Keylyn said, “It sounds like it would be really hard to organize, but it’s definitely something we ought to do.”

Dariush, an Iranian-American student studying educational arts at Cal State University, San Bernardino, told the WSWS:

“My father and I are here today because of the unprovoked attacks, the unjust attacks on Iran and it’s also very personal and dear to us because we have family in Iran who had to actually evacuate from Tehran in fear of losing their home, in fear of losing their lives. This escalation is devastating not only for Iranians but for Americans as well, for working class people who may not understand the implications of previous wars that the US has waged abroad and how it’s impacted the lives of working class people.”

Dariush observed that, “working class people are going to be the most affected by this. While politicians and billionaires continue to push for a war on Iran, it’s going to be working class people who go to fight this war and working class people in Iran who die.”

He continued: “Of course, there is a very large working class in Iran. So far most of the people who have been killed in these attacks have been working class people, civilians. The president of the truckers union from Hamadan was killed not too long ago, last week. He was on the road with his truck, and he was shot by Israel and

killed. And this is affecting working class people the most.”

Dariush commented on the treacherous role of the Arab bourgeoisie throughout the region, “Most of the leaders of the Arab countries and Muslim countries that have historically been vocal in defense of Palestine, they turn their backs when it comes to action. They’ve not paid attention to the suffering and genocide of hundreds of thousands of people.”

Asked for his thoughts on a general strike to stop the war Dariush responded enthusiastically.

“That’s absolutely what we need. We need a mass movement, a general strike to actually bring some disruption to the financial institutions of this country, to say not only with our voice that we stand against this war but with our actions. And we’re not going to be complicit. We’re going to make sure that we do everything to make this war impossible for them to continue.

“I’m 100 percent for a general strike, and I would like to see that happen in this country. Absolutely.”

At a smaller anti-war rally in Detroit, WSWs reporters spoke with William who used to labor in the steel and aluminum industry. William said, “Iran had the right to defend itself in the way that it needed to for its own country. Trump did an injustice to this country by assaulting them without any warning or verbal interaction with Iran. He just assaulted them, and I believe that was really wrong.”

WSWS reporters also spoke with Teresa from the General Strike Downriver Detroit chapter. She explained that in addition to protesting the war her group was hosting an event called “Feeding the Fight.”

“We know a lot of people are struggling right now,” Teresa explained. “So we have a free store here... it’s all by donation, clothes, perishables, toiletries, take as you need. We fed people today too. We had hot dogs and the grill and pasta.

She explained, “It’s a community event just to get people to get word out there about the general strike. We truly feel that’s the only way to change course in this country. We hold the power and our labor in our pocketbooks. So we want to start organizing for that. And part of the organization of that is having mutual aid, building community, creating these safety nets and these resources for people so they can feel confident to have a general

strike when the time comes.”

Asked to comment on the response of the Democrats to ongoing genocide in Gaza and bombing of Iran, Teresa said, “The response has been terrible. A lot of our politicians, they’re bought and sold by AIPAC, by lobbyists. So they don’t speak for the people, they speak for the people that are paying them.”

She continued: “I don’t agree with the response of either party. I personally believe both parties are here to serve the corporate interests, not the people. I believe we need a real working class party for the working class.”

Teresa noted that in many trade unions and “a lot of these units, they’ve been silent about what’s going on.”

She added, “So it’s good to think outside of that, to look for other groups, organizations that are doing the work and that want to work towards freeing everybody, like freeing all the oppressed and making sure the working class has a say in what’s going on and having a better life for everybody.

“Everybody wants the same things. We all deserve a livable wage. We all deserve health care. A lot of us want the same things.”

Shannon, a private music instructor in Detroit, told the WSWs, “The working class doesn’t want war. I think that ultimately people don’t want their money to get money and resources wasted on war. I do think that people want peace and protection elsewhere as well.”

Shannon said she thought a general strike is “a great idea, and that might be the only way to get things done.”



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