

“We have more in common with the Iranian people than we do with billionaires”: American workers denounce attack on Iran

Our reporters
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Workers and young people across the United States have responded with overwhelming anger to the illegal war against Iran launched by the Trump administration and Israel.

“It’s disgusting,” one refinery worker from Indiana told the WSWS. “Raining terror on the world indiscriminately at will, while covering up a global ring of sex trafficking. Meanwhile, nobody can get to a doctor or dentist without deciding if they want the lights on or a filling fixed.”

The Trump administration launched the assault in the dead of night, when most Americans were sleeping, demonstrating its total contempt for public opinion. It made no attempt to justify the unprovoked attack and the assassination of Iran’s top civilian and military leadership, except through the language of open conquest.

The level of opposition at the outset of this war is unprecedented in modern US history. A Reuters poll conducted Saturday found that only 27 percent of Americans approved of the strikes. Even among registered Republicans, only 55 percent expressed support.

This is far below the most unpopular wars in US history. By comparison, support for the invasion of Iraq in early 2003 ranged between 52 and 59 percent, according to a review by the Brookings Institution. Months after the first deployment of combat troops in Vietnam in 1965, public support stood at 64 percent according to one Gallup poll.

“This is why I retired from the military in July,” a nurse and former Army reservist said. “I knew this was coming and I had no intentions of being a part of it ... I knew there would be a major conflict under this administration. They believe they are untouchable.”

Countless wars have been launched in the name of “democracy” and “freedom,” including the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. This has rendered broad sections of the public deeply hostile to assertions that Washington is fighting for “freedom” for Iranians.

Instead, many recognize the war for what it is: an imperialist crime aimed at seizing the country’s oil resources and diverting attention from a deep internal political crisis in the United States.

“If they’re gonna plunge us into war, they can send their families in to fight it,” A UPS worker declared. “We aren’t interested in their fights.”

“They think they can get away with it”

“We must fight this with positive actions,” one school support worker from Minneapolis told the WSWS. “His escalation to murder on a global scale is his next step towards complete fascist Christian nationalist authoritarianism. ... The actions Trump has taken against Venezuela, Cuba, and now Iran lay bare his total willingness to kill in order to further his own interests, be they financial or criminal or both.”

“He did not seek approval from Congress as is required by law. So that in and of itself is impeachable, and any deaths caused by strikes that his regime authorized are war crimes. Meanwhile he creates a \$10 billion dollar slush fund for his ‘board of peace,’ which is headed by the world’s worst despots.

“Few Democrats have been vocal in opposition to all that Trump has been doing because they want the same powers,” the worker concluded. “I hope this unites the

masses. The sentiment I've seen from my social acquaintances across all the political spectrum is at least displeasure with this unjust war ... If this isn't dealt with in an official government capacity then the people need to march on DC."

At a protest in New York City on Saturday, a university worker told the WSWS: "US imperialism and the Zionists are going to war against Iran because the US has been involved there as far back as overthrowing the Mosaddegh government in 1953. The British were there before, and like the US kept the oil profits.

"They don't care about American lives or Iranian lives. This is typical of American imperialism. They go back to the overthrow of the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954. Earlier in the 1950s was the Korean War where the level of destruction and death brought about by US aerial bombing of the urban centers, especially Pyongyang, is never talked about. Then later in the 1950s and 1960s came Vietnam. They never talk about how many people were murdered by US imperialism in the name of democracy and freedom."

He continued: "This war is for Donald Trump and his lackeys like Jeff Bezos. It is illegal according to the Constitution, but the checks and balances aren't working because the Democrats never impeached Trump. The Democrats won't arrest Trump. It is illegal under the Nuremberg convictions of the Nazis, but nobody charged the US for Hiroshima, Nagasaki or Dresden.

"I do think this could end up as a thermo-nuclear war. The capitalists like Trump, Bezos and Musk, all have bunkers where they can get away from this. They don't care, and they think they can get away from it.

"The Democrats are worse than useless. They won't do anything. I agree with you and would say the Gaza demonstrations should not have been directed to the Democrats and Republicans. They need to turn to the working class."

Autoworkers speak out

Several Michigan autoworkers spoke with the WSWS. A Ford worker at the Dearborn Truck Plant near Detroit called the attack on Iran "one of the greatest and most blatant betrayals of the American people. Ever since Trump's first campaign, he has exploited the fears people have about going to war.

"They voted for him in order for this to not happen at all. The attack on Venezuela and now on Iran have led to an even greater divide between the billionaires and the working class as a whole.

"The working class are the taxpayers that are paying for the war, while these billionaires hide behind unfair tax laws. When it comes to the betterment of working class life, we are the only ones that will fight for our interests. The ones that have never actually worked a day in their life will never fight for us because they have never felt the type of pain that we go through."

A Stellantis autoworker from Detroit said: "Trump is claiming he is bombing Iran because of the protests. But he is killing the people who are protesting here. Don't tell us you give a damn about the people over there protesting."

He continued: "I am upset too with the Democrats and media right now. These are really historic times in terms of history repeating itself. They should every day be running correlations between what was said in the 30s and the 20s and what is being said now. It should be run constantly so people can see that what has happened can happen again."

Trump "has a cabinet full of billionaires," he said. "And you have a huge percentage of Congress that are millionaires and rich people who have no connection with working class people. They don't know the pain that people experience when they go to the supermarket or fill their cars up with gas or pay rent."

He concluded by pointing to the role of social media in countering war propaganda and mobilizing opposition. "Workers all over the world are all connected by the single fact that somebody has a little piece of information about the system. And if everybody just connected, you could do a whole lot of stuff. We have more in common with the Iranian people than we do with the billionaires."

Opposition to the war must be grounded in the working class. As WSWS International Editorial Board Chairman David North concluded in a statement published on Saturday: "Call meetings in your factories, workplaces, schools and neighborhoods demanding the immediate end of this war. The world must know that the American people oppose this war and want no part of it."



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