

## Israel Out of Gaza, the West Bank and Golan – U.S. Imperialists Out of the Middle East!



Eyad Baba / AFP

Palestinian women returning to demolished residential area of Khan Younis, Gaza, on June 20.

### For International Workers Action to Defend Palestinians, Defeat U.S./Israel Slaughter

AUGUST 10 – Day after day, people around the world see photos and videos of harrowing scenes from the Israeli invasion and gruesome war on the Palestinian Arab population of the Gaza Strip. What is happening, and what millions are witnessing, is an actual genocide unfolding, aiming at the destruction of an entire population. The Zionist militarists are waging a one-sided war to drive out and decimate the 2.3 million

Palestinians in Gaza – who for decades have been locked up in the tiny enclave on the shores of the Mediterranean – while preparing a possible sequel in the occupied West Bank. And in carrying out this slaughter, the Israeli forces are dropping monster bombs, manufactured and supplied by the United States, from fighter jets built and supplied by the U.S. *Without the U.S. armaments, it would be impossible for Israel to carry out*

*mass murder on this scale.*

The Internationalist Group and League for the Fourth International have called from the outset (10 October 2023) to “Defend the Palestinians Against U.S./Israel Genocidal War on Gaza!” (*The Internationalist* No. 71, June-October 2023). We underlined that the U.S. role in the war goes beyond complicity, that Biden’s vow that “Israel has a right to defend itself” and the huge U.S. supply of arms mean “giving the Zionist state a ‘license to kill’ Palestinians.” It’s not just “Genocide Joe,” as he is now widely (and rightly) known. His vice

president and replacement as Democratic presidential candidate, Kamala Harris, is co-responsible, no matter how much she piously says she will “not remain silent” about the plight of the Palestinians. Her opponent, Donald Trump, would, if anything, step up the pace of killing. And the overwhelming majority of Democrats and Republicans in Congress voted to provide the weaponry of mass extermination to Israel.

*This is genocide made in U.S.A.*

The bloodbath is taking place before our eyes, and has been for months. Images *continued on page 6*

## For a Class-Struggle Workers Party

# Break with the Democrats, Republicans and All Capitalist Parties

AUGUST 20 – From the beginning of July, the world’s interest suddenly shifted from the horror show of the genocidal U.S./Israel war on Gaza, and the continuing U.S./NATO war against Russia over Ukraine, to focus on the upcoming elections in the United States. The Gaza solidarity encampments which arose on over 100 campuses across the country were shut down by a wave of police repression, with some 3,100 protesters arrested nationwide. And then the school year ended.

The first presidential candidates’ debate, between Democratic president Joe Biden, now known as “Genocide Joe” because

of his “iron-clad” support for Israel in the Gaza slaughter, and Republican ex-president Trump, the all-around bigot and would-be strongman, was held on June 27. The outcome of the face-off sent shock waves around the world. Biden’s faltering, almost paralyzed performance threw Democrats into a panic. Party bigwigs publicly declared it a “disaster” and a “catastrophe.”

Already that weekend, pundits and major liberal media were calling to replace Biden at the head of the Democratic ticket. Major donors and Hollywood celebrities called for the aging president to pull out.

Congressional leaders held conclaves as the Biden family hunkered down, hoping to tough it out. Biden gave an arranged ABC NEWS TV interview in which, with unmatched personal hubris and imperialist arrogance, he declared he could do it, after all, “not only am I campaigning, but I’m running the world.... we are the essential nation of the world.”

But Operation “Dump Biden” kept at it. Interestingly, the reputed progressives – Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez – were Biden’s last-ditch defenders while the right-wing

“centrists” around Barack Obama, Bill and Hillary Clinton and Nancy Pelosi did him in. In the end, faced with unbearable pressure from billionaire financiers of what is now called “the donor class” and from Democratic Party grandees, with opinion polls showing that he had no chance of winning, on July 21 Biden withdrew from the race.

A half hour after announcing his capitulation, he issued an endorsement of his vice president, Kamala Harris, to be the Democratic candidate for president. Harris, who had a whole operation going behind the *continued on page 2*

# Democrats...

continued from page 1

scenes, quickly took charge, and within 48 hours nailed down the nomination.

Various liberals, and even would-be leftists in Latin America, complained of a coup, calling for rapid-fire primaries or an open convention. (Donald Trump also chimed in.) Revolutionary Marxists, however, have no stake in how a capitalist party picks its candidates. Primary elections are hardly democratic, as campaign war chests are the decisive factor: money talks, loudly.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump picked a hardline MAGA (Make America Great Again, the slogan of the Trumper Republicans) vice-presidential running mate, Ohio senator JD Vance. Whereas Trump is an egomaniac spewing out racist and misogynist venom, Vance is an actual fascistic ideologue, who at Yale University, according to a roommate, professed admiration for Hitler. In interviews, Vance declared that the key thing is to get (and hold onto) power, at all costs.

Trump declared some months ago that he would be a “dictator” on Day One of a new administration, and that if his power grab to block non-existent “election fraud” is unconstitutional, perhaps it would be necessary to “terminate” all rules against it, “even those found in the Constitution.” Meanwhile he announced plans to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, whom he labeled “monsters,” and to use military force to put down whatever he decided were “riots.”

The Democratic convention, which started yesterday, is a gushing coronation of Harris, a former prosecutor and California’s “top cop” (state attorney general), whose supporters say she has brought back “joy” to the election. Plus the political marketeers have

now picked a high school football coach with Midwest rural credentials, Minnesota governor Tim Walz, as her veep. The Democrats want to ride a wave of enthusiasm, staying vague about their policies. Oh, and she would be the first woman president in U.S. history.

As liberals breathed a sigh of relief that perhaps all is not lost, some young people may be swept up in the election enthusiasm. Yet despite the full-court press of feel-good rhetoric, Harris is co-responsible along with Biden for the funding and arming of the on-going genocide in Gaza (see “Genocide Made in USA.,” on page 1 of this issue), and for the U.S./NATO war against Russia over Ukraine that is part of the war drive to subjugate and bring about counterrevolution in China, the world’s largest bureaucratically deformed workers state.

The Internationalist Group calls to defend Russia and China against the U.S. imperialist war drive, and to defend the Palestinians and defeat the Israeli mass murderers in Gaza.

So in November, U.S. voters will have the “choice” between immigrant-bashing fascistic Republicans preparing to introduce police state measures, and a Democratic ticket that smears pro-Palestinian protesters as “antisemitic” and is careening toward a thermonuclear World War III. “Pick your poison” is no answer. We say no



In May Day 2024 march in New York City, the Internationalist Group centrally called for workers action against the U.S./Israel war on Gaza, and to break with the Democratic Party.

vote to any capitalist party or politicians.

Meanwhile, various liberals and leftists cobbled together an “Abandon Biden Convention” that met in Chicago on August 18, and has now called to “Abandon Harris” as well. What is their alternative? Basically, the Green Party, a minor capitalist party which is running Jill Stein for president, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and supporters of rad-lib standard-bearer Cornel West have banded together in a mutual-aid alliance, in which they all support each other’s candidates.

This is a miniature “popular front” of class collaboration, tying the left and labor to bourgeois parties. Bringing up the rear is the Spartacist League, which has now openly renounced the revolutionary Trotskyist program it once espoused, and is calling to vote for the PSL, making it an appendage of this mini-pop-front lash-up.

*The entire situation calls out for the political independence of the working class – to break with the bosses’ parties and forge a workers party that fights for a workers government.*

We reprint below a resolution presented by Class Struggle Workers – Portland (CSWP), which seeks to have it adopted by unions in the Portland area and beyond. The Internationalist Group politically supports the struggles of the CSWP and joins it in urging labor organizations to seize the opportunity to take a stand for unchaining workers’ power by adopting this resolution.

WHEREAS the Democratic and Republican parties, which have shared and alternated in power for over a century and a half, have led U.S. society into a deep social and political crisis that poses existential threats to workers and oppressed people here and around the world; and

WHEREAS the Democrats and Republicans are both capitalist parties defending and promoting the interests of the employing class; and

WHEREAS it’s high time for the labor movement to ditch the endless parade of billionaire-backed capitalist politicians who keep promising “change” while things keep getting worse for the working class; and

WHEREAS “Genocide Joe” Biden’s VP Kamala Harris fully shares responsibility for his administration’s warmongering from the Middle East and Far East to Ukraine; the strikebreaking legislation

against rail workers that they and the Democratic Congress rammed through in 2022 while claiming to be “pro-union”; and competing with the Republicans in targeting immigrants; and

WHEREAS Biden’s replacement as presidential candidate, the former prosecutor and California attorney general Harris, is and always has been part of the same Democratic Party machine that did nothing to prevent the elimination of the constitutional right to abortion; and

WHEREAS Republican demagogue Donald Trump stokes all-sided bigotry and threatens authoritarian measures, feeding off frustration with declining living standards and job losses that Democrats have presided over for decades, and his VP pick JD Vance, a far-right frontman for Silicon Valley plutocrats, insultingly pretends to speak for the working class while seeking to divide and conquer it with poisonous prejudices; and

WHEREAS despite the protests by millions in 2020, racist police terror, repression and mass incarceration have continued under Democrats and Republicans, nationally and locally; and

WHEREAS history in the U.S. and internationally has repeatedly shown that you can’t fight threats to the basic rights of workers and oppressed people if our power is chained to the employers’ parties and politicians; and

WHEREAS unchaining the power of the working class is more urgent than ever facing the growing threat of a third world war against China and Russia that either a Democratic or Republican administration would continue to escalate; and

WHEREAS the bosses have two big parties to represent their class interests while the millions-strong working class has none; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that since labor’s continued subordination to the bosses’ parties will only deepen the threats facing the working people here and around the world, the [name of union] will not endorse or support the Democrats, Republicans, or any capitalist party in the elections; and be it further

RESOLVED that we call on the labor movement to break from the bosses’ parties and politicians and build a class-struggle workers party to lead the struggles of the working people and all those ground down by capitalism. ■



Above: On 4 June 2017, IUPAT (Painters) Local 10 in Portland, Oregon along with Class-Struggle Workers – Portland (CSWP) and several area unions mobilized 300 trade-union supporters against a fascist provocation. The year before, Local 10 passed a resolution, initiated by CSWP, calling to break with all bosses’ parties and to build a class-struggle workers party.

Visit the League for the Fourth International/  
Internationalist Group on the Internet  
<https://www.internationalist.org>

## The Internationalist

A Journal of Revolutionary Marxism  
for the Reforging of the Fourth International

Publication of the Internationalist Group,  
section of the League for the Fourth International

EDITORIAL BOARD: Jan Norden (editor), Fred Bergen, Mark Lazarus, Tristán Mirabal (pamphlets), Abram Negrete, Jay Wood, Ines Young

The Internationalist (ISSN 1091-2843) is published 5 times a year by Mundial Publications, P.O. Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A.  
Telephone: (212) 460-0983 Fax: (212) 614-8711 E-mail: [internationalistgroup@msn.com](mailto:internationalistgroup@msn.com)  
Subscriptions: US\$10 for five issues.

No. 73



June-August 2024

# Mobilize Workers Action Against U.S./Israel Genocide in Gaza!

## “BDS” Dead End: Liberal Divestment Schemes No Road to Liberation of the Palestinian People

Calls for “boycott, divestment and sanctions” (BDS) against Israel were a main demand of just about all of the 100+ encampments that sprang up on college campuses across the United States this spring to protest the genocidal war on Gaza. The encampments served to keep antiwar protests going and even, in a certain sense, represented a step up from the innumerable marches calling for a ceasefire, which did not diminish the relentless slaughter. Many in the Gaza solidarity encampments were desperately looking for some way to take action against Israel’s oppression of the Palestinians. But the liberal “divestment” call, while it provided a “hook” to raise demands on local authorities, diverted attention from the most immediate issue: *the role of the United States in jointly carrying out, together with the Israeli warmongers, a monstrous genocide in Gaza.* And it does not point to a way forward in liberating the Palestinian people from Zionist domination.

*The fundamental issue is what force to look to: the rulers of U.S. imperialism who liberals think can be pressured into being a force for good, or the power of the international working class.*

“Disclose, divest, we will not stop, we will not rest,” was a common chant in student protests in solidarity with the embattled Palestinian people. At Columbia University in New York, the site of the first and most prominent encampment, the lead demand of the coalition backing the protest was: “Divest all of Columbia’s finances, including the endowment, from companies and institutions that profit from Israeli apartheid, genocide and occupation in Palestine.”<sup>1</sup> The response of university president Nemat Shafik was to bring in the police. Baroness Shafik, the first Arab, Muslim and woman president of Columbia, a former top official of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Bank of England, and a member of Britain’s House of Lords, had long before suspended Stu-

<sup>1</sup> Columbia University Apartheid Divest: Demands: <https://cuapartheiddivest.org/demands>



Palestinian solidarity encampment at Northwestern University, April 26. Campus protests kept issue of Gaza war in public eye, but calls for “boycott, divestment and sanctions” are a diversion, looking to the imperialists, the biggest mass murderers of all, to keep their Zionist ally in line. The main focus should be on U.S. responsibility for genocide, made possible by Pentagon-supplied arms. Trotskyists call to mobilize workers action against U.S. / Israel genocidal war.

dents for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace.

On the other side of the country, following a brutal attack by armed counter-protesters and police storming a Gaza solidarity encampment at the University of California at Los Angeles on April 30/ May 1, the union representing student employees and researchers in the UC system, UAW (United Auto Workers) Local 4811, called a strike protesting the repression and calling on UC to negotiate on amnesty for student protesters, free speech on campus and “Divestment from UC’s known investments in weapons manufacturers, military contractors, and companies profiting from Israel’s war on Gaza.”<sup>2</sup> The UCLA administration, which allowed the attack by Zi-

<sup>2</sup> The actual demands of the strike are much narrower, charging the university with unfair labor practices by unilaterally changing protest rules, disciplining students and employees for exercising their free speech rights, etc.



Gaza solidarity encampment at the University of California at Los Angeles was assaulted by LAPD cops (above) after being attacked by squads of Zionist thugs from April 30 to May 2.

genuinely antisemitic tropes about “Jewish bankers” pulling the strings.

Yet the solid wall of rejection that protesters’ calls for divestment have faced is not just due to the Israel Lobby (which has donated to every sitting U.S. senator) buying influence, it also reflects a ruling-class consensus that maintaining a militarily dominant Israel is a linchpin to U.S. imperialist hegemony in the Middle East. “Genocide Joe” Biden may be the most emphatic in asserting this, repeatedly saying, from 1986 to today, that “Were there not an Israel, the United States of America would have to invent an Israel to protect her interests in the region.” Yet no one in official Washington questions the basic policy. There may be tactical disagreements with some Israeli policies, but whether Democrats or Republicans are holding the reins, they are all determined to ensure that Zionist militarists can intimidate any potential challenger in the region.

### BDS Didn’t Bring Down South African Apartheid

So, for starters, divestment from Israel is not going to happen so long as U.S. imperialist domination is not broken, in the Middle East and worldwide. One of the main arguments put forward by “BDS” proponents today is that this supposedly “worked” to bring down the white-supremacist apartheid regime in South Africa. This is a liberal myth. For one thing, Zionist Israel is not the same as apartheid South Africa, in several key aspects. Both are viciously repressive regimes, but in different ways. We have explained elsewhere that “the denial of political rights to the African peoples under the apartheid system in South Africa was designed to perpetuate the superexploitation of black labor” which continues today under black capitalist neopapartheid rule:

*“The goal of Zionism is fundamentally different.... [T]he Zionists’ founding and present-day goal is not to superexploit Palestinians – their aim has always been to expel the indigenous population (euphemistically termed ‘transfer’) or destroy them.... The logic of Zionism is not apartheid but ‘ethnic cleansing’ by forced population transfer leading to what we are now seeing before our eyes: genocide.”* [emphasis in original] –“Genocide Defenders Slander Anti-Zionists as ‘Antisemitic’,” *The Internationalist*, May 2024

Moreover, the geopolitical position of Israel today differs from that of South Africa in the 1980s. At that time, as the massacres of black residents of Soweto and other townships horrified world public opinion, the imperialist rulers worried that the white-supremacist regime had become a liability in the anti-Soviet Cold War II. If anti-apartheid protesters were able to convince some universities to divest holdings in South Africa, it was because U.S. rulers



What had imperialist rulers worried was the explosive rise of a militant black workers movement in South Africa. Above: workers of the BTR Sarmcol tire plant struck in 1985, led by the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) a predecessor of today's National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA). All 970 workers were fired and four members of the shop stewards committee were abducted and shot (one survived).

were divided. In 1986, Congress, controlled by the Democrats, passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, and when Republican Ronald Reagan vetoed the mostly cosmetic sanctions, Congress overrode his veto. Nothing even remotely like that exists today, when both the Democratic and Republican parties of U.S. imperialism back Zionist Israel to the hilt.

Secondly, even at that time, the "BDS" campaign against apartheid South Africa, pushed by liberal Democrats and the Congressional Black Caucus, did not bring about or even substantially contribute to the downfall of the white-supremacist regime. The Congressional investment ban excluded strategic minerals, all that really mattered to the U.S. As underlined in a 1985 speech by Marjorie Stamberg, candidate of the then-revolutionary Spartacist League for mayor of New York City that year and later a leader of the Internationalist Group and League for the Fourth International who died recently:<sup>3</sup>

"[T]he whole liberal strategy of pressuring Washington and Wall Street to pressure their junior partners in Pretoria and Johannesburg will not help the struggle for the South African revolution one whit. In the last month we have seen 'divestment' on a billion-dollar scale. Reagan has decreed sanctions, which was the program of the Democrats. You have seen just about as much imperialist pressure on the apartheid regime as you're going to get, and the regime has dug in. And while divestment hasn't helped South African blacks one bit, it has helped Chase Manhattan's bottom line. Right now, with the South African economy in trouble, divestment is good business....

"Real solidarity with our South African brothers and sisters heroically struggling against apartheid means class struggle at home. We say: from Detroit to Durban, workers to power!"

—"Soweto to Harlem: Smash Racist Terror!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 388, 4 October 1985

What really worried imperialist rulers was the rise of a militant black working class in South Africa, in the mines, auto and elsewhere. The purpose of the divestment campaign was, as we wrote then, "to attempt to give a democratic façade to U.S. imperialism":

"For us, progressive divestment is when the oppressed South African toilers, who have created this wealth, 'divest' their

own ruling class and the imperialists of Britain, Germany and especially this country of that wealth."

—"Divestment and Imperialist Hypocrisy," in the article "Black Labor Can Break Apartheid Chains," *Workers Vanguard* No. 407, 4 July 1986<sup>4</sup>

The white-supremacist regime was ultimately replaced by black "majority rule" in 1994 in a deal negotiated with ANC leader Nelson Mandela in order to preserve South African capitalism. A major factor facilitating that deal was the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. For the imperialists, this meant that the Moscow-linked South African Communist Party, which had strong influence in the unions, was no longer deemed a potential danger.

### BDS Campaigns Built on Illusions in Universities

More broadly, over South Africa in the 1980s (when a student blockade of Columbia's Hamilton Hall led the university to become the first of a number of schools that sold their stocks in companies doing business in South Africa) and on Gaza today (when a blockade of Hamilton Hall led to over 100 arrests and a refusal by the university to divest from companies doing business in Israel), the divestment campaign is built on multiple illusions. A key one is that the university is supposedly a "community" that should reflect the values of educators and students. In reality, universities are businesses and they reflect the values of the capitalist rulers. They are part of the system of production for profit, tasked with preparing new generations for the workforce and new leaders for corporations, government and other pillars of bourgeois society.

This has always been true of institutions of higher education under capitalism. It is now notorious that almost all the elite Ivy League universities were originally financed by profits from slavery. In private universities, like Columbia, Harvard, Yale, M.I.T., etc., the connection between capital and educational "mission" is direct, as

<sup>4</sup> At the time, *WV* was the leading voice of revolutionary Trotskyism.

they are financed with huge endowments (Harvard, \$50 billion; Yale, \$40 billion; Columbia, \$13 billion) with investment portfolios from which they draw profit to fund things like scholarships. In public universities the connection is often indirect, through boards of trustees representing the interests of leading capitalist sectors (at the City University of New York: real estate and Wall Street banks), and the capitalist politicians who control the purse strings.<sup>5</sup> But even state-owned schools have investments, often managed by outside professionals (at CUNY: Meketa Investment Group).

So the sense of many supporters of "BDS" that somehow the university is investing "their" money, over which they should have some say, is an inversion of reality. This goes together with illusory calls on university authorities to condemn the war on Gaza, as if those authorities were somehow allies or representatives of a common academic mission, when in fact they are agents of the capitalist state which, together with Israel, is jointly waging the war of extermination in Gaza. Along with the caps and gowns, it seems that many have imbibed the medieval notion that universities are a "community of scholars." In reality, the citadels of higher education are cogs in a giant "military-academic complex," which from the Vietnam War to today is an integral part of U.S. imperialism's "mission" of world domination. (And even in the Middle Ages, universities only existed by the leave of princes and bishops.)

Another illusion is that dumping shares in all Israel-connected companies would somehow contribute to liberating the Palestinians from the yoke of Zionist domination. Of course, we had nothing against Columbia selling off holdings in American Express, Chevron, Ford and Coca-Cola as it did in the 1980s in the name of divesting from South Africa (at a profit, of course), any more than we would object to this training facility for imperialist rulers (e.g., Barack Obama) pulling money out of Alphabet (parent company of Google), Amazon and Microsoft, which Columbia divestment advocates have identified today. Pointing out how those corporations provide software services for Israeli police and prisons, cloud computing for the Israeli military and surveillance of Palestinians is all to the good. But if Columbia sells off its stock holdings, some other capitalist

<sup>5</sup> See "Look Who's Trusteeing at CUNY," *Revolution* No. 5, September 2008.

### The 20 wealthiest colleges

The top nine spots went to the same institutions last year

Rank	University	FY2023 endowment market value (in thousands)	Endowment market value per full time student
1	Harvard University	\$49,495,108	\$2,032,820
2	University of Texas System	\$44,967,186	\$233,214
3	Yale University	\$40,746,900	\$2,781,928
4	Stanford University	\$36,495,000	\$2,103,579
5	Princeton University	\$34,058,774	\$3,832,426
6	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	\$23,453,446	\$2,004,054
7	University of Pennsylvania	\$20,962,965	\$834,978
8	Texas A&M University*	\$19,285,472	\$156,335
9	University of Michigan	\$17,875,691	\$301,420
10	University of California	\$17,689,324	\$60,105
11	University of Notre Dame	\$16,616,524	\$1,287,304
12	Northwestern University	\$13,699,895	\$666,240
13	Columbia University	\$13,642,667	\$447,066
14	Duke University	\$13,237,963	\$745,885
15	Washington University	\$11,467,279	\$743,518
16	Johns Hopkins University	\$10,538,865	\$468,811
17	Emory University	\$10,239,776	\$682,015
18	Cornell University	\$10,035,558	\$368,616
19	University of Chicago	\$9,869,725	\$532,836
20	University of Virginia	\$9,799,870	n/a

\*And related foundations

Source: NACUBO/Commonfund Institute

investor will buy.

Students may demand with full justification that universities pull funding from the military-industrial complex (at CUNY: Boeing, General Electric, Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, Raytheon, Motorola, Caterpillar and others<sup>6</sup>) and information technology giants (at CUNY: Dell, IBM, HP, Lenovo, Cisco and BMC Software<sup>7</sup>) that are involved with Israel. But it should be clear that these are above all *mainstays of U.S. imperialism*, the greatest exploiter and oppressor of the peoples of the world, including working people and oppressed sectors in the United States. And it should be equally clear that universities disinvesting from these capitalist giants would not relieve the horrendous devastation of the people of Gaza, or change much of anything at all.

Moreover, these days, as a number of analysts have pointed out, many universities, public and private, have much of their holdings in hedge funds which often don't even tell their investors (e.g., universities) where their money is parked, and are hardly about to inform student protesters. So as a practical matter, divesting Israel-connected investments would be very difficult. And to what end? Sanitizing a campus from connections to Israel may heighten illusions that "the academy" can be an Ivory Tower of morality, conferring a kind of Good Housekeeping Seal of cleanliness for the institution, but this would be totally phony, and do nothing to aid Palestinians or weaken the Zionist state.

But if divestment would have little real effect, a BDS supporter might ask, why do the Zionists and university authorities resist it so fiercely? For the same reason they have reacted so harshly to the campus encampments, which contrary to the claims of the authorities are neither violent, nor do they disturb the functioning of the university or threaten Jewish students (many of whom are in the encampments). The Zionists and their patrons – not only in the U.S. – insist that there must be *universal* backing of Israel in the West against any who would challenge, much less rise up against its "right" to dominate the land "between the [Jordan] river and the [Mediterranean] sea." Why? Because without unconditional imperialist military support, Israel's isolated position could become untenable. And they are now facing the prospect of a new generation identifying with the oppressed Palestinians rather than with the Zionist oppressors.

### Academic Boycotts?

What about academic boycotts? A particular program might be especially objectionable, if for example it had a connection to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF, i.e., the Zionist military machine that is laying waste to Gaza). If Israeli academics were to hold an event supporting the criminal Zionist war on the Palestinians that should certainly be protested. But calling on the universities to impose bans, or calling for "no free speech for Zionists," only plays into the hands of the powerful forces who would prohibit pro-Palestinian protests and events. In the same way, calling for the authorities to ban fascists (or fascist symbols, or speech) will inevitably be used with far greater effect against anti-fascist leftists.

Defenders of Palestinian rights should not be for a blanket ban on any ties with Israeli educational institutions or academics.

<sup>6</sup> "CUNY MUST DIVEST: On the Recent History of the Struggle for BDS at CUNY," Graduate Center *Advocate*, 24 March.

<sup>7</sup> CUNY 5 Demands for Palestine

# Israel: Not Just a “Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier” for the U.S.

The reformist Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) quotes Alexander Haig, Ronald Reagan’s secretary of state in 1981-82, saying, “Israel is the largest American aircraft carrier in the world that cannot be sunk” (Joyce Chediak, “Why Washington is responsible for every death in Gaza,” *Liberation*, 1 December 2023). For the PSL, heirs of the late Sam Marcy who broke from Trotskyism in the direction of the Maoist variant of Stalinism, “Israel is not really an independent nation. It is a strategic outpost of Western and especially U.S. imperialism.”

In an interview with the rad-lib journalist Ben Norton, economist Michael Hudson says that, “Israel is a landed aircraft carrier in the Near East. Israel is the takeoff point for America to control the Near East.... The United States has always viewed Israel as just our foreign military base” (“Israel as a Landed Aircraft Carrier,” michael-hudson.com, 13 November 2023). Hudson notes that this is also how some in the U.S. military see it. He recounts that once when he was traveling with an Israeli colleague, Uzi Arad, who has been Israeli prime minister Netanyahu’s national security advisor in recent years, in an airport encounter, a U.S. general “came over and slapped Uzi on the back and said, you’re our landed

aircraft carrier over there. We love you.”

Journalist Diana Johnstone (“The Myth of Israel as ‘US Aircraft Carrier’ in Middle East,” Consortium News, 6 March) and political scientist John Mearsheimer (co-author of the definitive analysis *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* [2007]) take issue with the view that Israel is simply an outpost of U.S. imperialism. That view is indeed a potentially lethal illusion, for it ignores the extent to which Zionists will go to carry out their genocidal, and potentially suicidal, nationalist policies. But both Johnstone and Mearsheimer base themselves on the idea that the “national interest” of the United States does not coincide with that of Israel, which can often be an obstacle to forging an alliance with Arab rulers (for example, in the 2003+ U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, when the U.S. pointedly didn’t include Israel in its “coalition of the willing”).

For the liberal journalist and the “realist” political scientist, U.S. “iron-clad” backing of Israel (in Democratic president Biden’s words, but also in Republican ex-president Trump’s policies) is irrational, and can only be due to the outsized influence of the Zionist lobby. They want to argue that the U.S. could and should drop its unconditional support to Israel, and bring it to heel. But this misreads the interests of

the U.S. imperialist ruling class frantically seeking to shore up its declining global hegemony. As the economic and military strength of the United States is sapped, it must rely on surrogates and allies. And in the volatile politics of the Middle East, for Washington, having rabid militarist allies with the wherewithal to carry out bloody massacres can be useful to keep other regional potentates in line. Until, that is, the mad dogs slip the leash.

Interestingly, both the pseudo-Marxist proponents of the Israel-as-an-unsinkable-U.S.-aircraft-carrier and the liberal/realist nay-sayers are united in arguing that Israel is an apartheid state and calling for “boycotts, divestment and sanctions.” In the first case, this is based on the idea that the U.S. could/would simply issue orders and Israel would comply or disappear, and in the second, on the premise that the U.S. could/would abandon Israel, which will have no choice but to cease and desist. Genuine Marxists, Trotskyists, in contrast, understand that for the liberation of the Palestinian people and the survival of the Hebrew-speaking people in the region, U.S. imperialism must be defeated and the imperialist world order brought down by international socialist revolution. ■

tarian aid to the embattled enclave:

“The movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Against Israel arose in response to a 2005 call by a number of Palestinian ‘civil society organizations.’ Pressed to the wall by relentless Zionist repression, many in occupied Palestine desperately call for any and all solidarity action. In the imperialist countries, particularly on university campuses, campaigns for ‘BDS’ have sometimes become a referendum on opposition to vs. support for Zionist Israel and its crimes.<sup>8</sup> The boycott campaign in the West is an expression of moral outrage, but at bottom it is aimed at enlisting imperialist rulers. ...

“BDS’ implies that the supposedly democratic imperialist countries are less culpable than Zionist Israel. Yet the victims of U.S. imperialism number in the many millions (3-4 million dead in Korea, 2-3 million in Indochina, close to 1 million killed in Iraq, Afghanistan and counting), vastly outnumbering the numbers slaughtered by the Israeli military and paramilitary settlers in Palestine. So why not refuse to buy any products made in the United States, refuse to hire American faculty, call for U.N. and European Union sanctions against the U.S., etc.? ‘BDS’ also implies that a ‘mass movement’ could pressure the imperialists into defending the Palestinian Arab people. This is an illusion, particularly in the case of the United States, whose alliance with Israel is strategic. Israel is a key element in Western domination of the Middle East, including vital oil supplies and trade routes, which also benefit the European imperialists. No amount of popular pressure will change that.

“If Washington pushes Tel Aviv to lighten up on the repression, it will only be a slight modification at most. The Palestinians will still be caught in a Zionist vise. Consumer boycotts notoriously have little effect – and who buys Israeli matzo or chocolate anyway? Moreover, anyone who thinks the Pentagon will stop buying Israeli software for its computers or stop hiring Israeli mercenaries to train its paramilitary death squads in Latin America is dreaming. Getting a few pension funds and imperialist corporations not to invest in Israel won’t starve Israeli businesses of funds. But even if by some miracle they did, and Israel became an international pariah, this won’t stop the Zionist butchers. They are junior partners and allies of imperialism, but Israel’s capitalist rulers have their own reactionary interests and agenda. They are perfectly capable of turning on their patrons in Washington, like when Israeli jets and gunboats napped and torpedoed the U.S.S. *Liberty*, evidently out of pique over U.S. neutrality in the 1967 war.”

–“Israel’s Gaza Flotilla Massacre: Bloody War Provocation,” *The Internationalist* No. 31, Summer 2010

Israel is not simply a “terrestrial aircraft carrier”

*continued on page 19*

<sup>8</sup> We added in a footnote: “At the University of California-Berkeley this past April [2010] there was a hotly contested vote by the student senate to override an executive veto of a student body resolution calling for divestment of UC funds from General Electric and United Technologies. Although a large majority of the student senate supported the resolution, both the right-wing Zionist American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the liberal Zionist J Street lobby teamed up to defeat the measure by getting a few student senators to change their vote. In such a situation, particularly as the targets were two U.S. military contractors, it would have been correct to critically support the divestment motion.”

Tomer Neuberger / Flash90



**Palestinian student at Tel Aviv University arrested ahead of Nakba Day, 15 May 2022. Instead of blanket academic boycotts there should be solidarity protests against anti-Palestinian repression on Israeli campuses.**

Are joint degree programs such as those of Columbia and Rutgers with Tel Aviv University (where 12-16% of the students are Palestinians) worse than New York University’s Abu Dhabi campus, which was built with virtual slave labor? And what about the 25 professors at the University of Haifa (where 40% of the students are Palestinian citizens of Israel), including both Jewish and Palestinian Arab faculty members, who protested the university’s expulsion of Arab students for allegedly posting pro-Hamas comments on social media? Should they not be allowed to come to a U.S. university? Instead, of boycotts, there should be solidarity protests against anti-Palestinian repression on campuses in Israel.

The absurdity of calls for all-inclusive boycott of Israeli academics was brought

out during the recent (May 31-June 2) Historical Materialism/Institute for the Radical Imagination conference at Long Island University in New York where a number of panelists withdrew and a letter was written protesting the inclusion of someone they described as “an Israeli Zionist” in a plenary discussion on Palestine. Even after he was dropped from the plenary event, protesters opposed his inclusion in the program at all and demanded a formal apology by conference organizers for inviting him. Yet the person in question, a well-known Israeli film maker, calls for a binational state in Israel-Palestine, “from the river to the sea,” described October 7 as “an uprising of the hopeless,” has condemned Israeli genocide in Gaza, and even supports the “boycott, divestment, sanctions” strategy! Go figure.

The Internationalist Group and League for the Fourth International stand for an Arab/Hebrew Palestinian workers state in a socialist federation of the Middle East. Since the very first days of the Zionist military destroying Gaza and massacring its Palestinian population, we have underscored that this is a *joint U.S./Israel genocidal war*. We have called from the outset to mobilize the power of the working class internationally, in particular by labor actions to stop arms shipments to Israel, to defeat that war and defend the Palestinian people. And we have sought to turn that call into action from Italy to the U.S. West Coast and Australia.

## **BDS Appeals to U.S. Imperialism, the Biggest Mass Murderers of All**

In contrast, BDS appeals to U.S. corporations and the government (via sanctions) to put the squeeze on the Israeli Zionists. That is, it calls on the warmongers in the White House and the Pentagon, the biggest mass murderers on the planet, to transmogrify themselves into allies of the Palestinian masses, who are being slaughtered en masse today by U.S.-supplied bombs. This is a losing strategy. Since 2001, more than a million people have been killed in U.S. wars in the Middle East. Moreover, since 7 October 2023, the U.S. has sent to Israel more than 10,000 2,000-pound bombs. *Without this U.S.-supplied ordnance, dropped from U.S.-built war planes, the Zionist military would not have been able to destroy more than half of all the housing in Gaza and massacre almost 50,000 of its people.* This is what should be the focus of protest and what every effort should be made to stop. As we wrote back in 2010, at the time of the Israeli seizure of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla and massacre of activists bringing humani-

# Genocide...

continued from page 1

of endless destruction as Israeli bombs flatten building after building, sometimes an entire neighborhood. We see relatives and neighbors desperately searching through the rubble for any survivors. There are the photos of hundreds of thousands trudging on dusty paths, forced out of their homes with only what they can carry. Ordered by the Israelis to leave northern Gaza, “for your own safety,” they are fired on by Israeli troops during their trek and subjected to more terror bombing when they arrive in the south, only to be forced back to the north. We see a mass grave in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, with over 100 bodies in blue tarps, brought from the north, where there was no place to bury them. Or the anguish of a young woman mourning her brothers and sisters lined up in white shrouds. We see Palestinian men rounded up and stripped to the waist to be transported to Israeli torture centers. With most housing destroyed, now they’re bombing tents. And on and on.

## Israeli Leaders Call for Genocide

The attack of last October 7 (2023) shocked Israeli society to the core. It laid bare the bankruptcy of the government of rightist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had long encouraged funding of Hamas (Arabic acronym of Islamic Resistance Movement) by the Persian Gulf oil sheikdom of Qatar to the tune of over \$1 billion over the last decade. He sought to build up the Islamists<sup>1</sup> so as to block the formation of a Palestinian state by the secular Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its Palestinian Authority (PA). This has been a policy of the Israeli right going back to the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> It turned out that Israeli officials had known of the plans to attack for more than a year, and even had a detailed blueprint, but were supremely confident Hamas didn’t have the capacity to carry it out.<sup>3</sup> And the Netanyahu cabinet, with its several fascist ministers, was so invested in backing up fascist settlers that it pulled army units from the Gaza border on the eve of the attack to send them to the occupied West Bank.

The stunning attack by Hamas’ military wing, the Al-Qassam Brigades, dubbed “Al Aqsa Flood” (after the Jerusalem mosque), not only blew open and leapfrogged over the formidable high-tech barrier fence surrounding Gaza, it also knocked out Israeli military surveillance and communications systems and overpowered the headquarters of the Gaza division of the Israeli army. But beyond taking out the jailers of Israel’s giant “open air prison,” several thousand Hamas fighters and other Gaza residents poured

<sup>1</sup> Islamism, sometimes referred to as “political Islam,” is a doctrine that holds that society should be governed by Islamic law (the *sharia*). It is not identical with Islam, the Muslim religious faith. Islamism covers a broad range of movements, including Sunni Islamists (e.g., the Muslim Brotherhood, the Taliban in Afghanistan, Saudi Wahabism), Shiite Islamists (e.g., supporters of the Islamic Republic of Iran), Salafi Islamist revivalists and others. Hamas in Palestine has its roots in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which has opposed secular regimes for over a century.

<sup>2</sup> “The Origins of Hamas,” *The Internationalist* No. 71, June-October 2023.

<sup>3</sup> “Israelis Saw Plan for Hamas Attack Over a Year Ago,” *New York Times*, 1 December 2023.



**Ghoulish Israeli leaders, prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and “defense” minister Yoav Gallant called for genocidal war on the Palestinian people of Gaza on October 9, and since then have proceeded to carry it out.**

through some 30 openings in the supposedly “impenetrable” barrier and fanned out to attack surrounding communities and attendees at the “Supernova” rave music festival. The imperialists and Zionists quickly decreed that everyone must emphatically condemn the October 7 Hamas attack *in toto* or be declared beyond the pale. Some leftists performed the requisite genuflection.<sup>4</sup> The Internationalist Group and League for the Fourth International instead explained how Hamas’ random terror hurts the Palestinian cause and is fundamentally counterposed to any struggle for liberation of the oppressed:

“Any real blow against the Zionist state by Palestinian forces, even by reactionary Islamists, is in the interests of the workers and oppressed of the world. But along with striking at the Israeli military, Hamas fighters carried out an indiscriminate terror attack, killing some hundreds of Israeli party-goers, residents of kibbutz communities and apartment dwellers in southern cities. This is not striking at the Zionist occupation machine but a random assault on Israelis that undermines the defense of the Palestinian people. Such a *jihād* (holy war) is the method of right-wing nationalists and religious zealots, such as the Islamists of Hamas ... and of Zionist militarists of all political stripes. Now the misnamed Israel Defense Force (IDF) is doing the same on a far larger scale, against the entire population of Gaza. The toll will quickly surpass the hundreds of Palestinians the IDF murdered in its 2021 attack on Gaza.”

–“Defend the Palestinians Against U.S./Israel Genocidal War on Gaza!” (10 October 2023)

Some 815 civilians were killed in the October 7 attack, as well as 324 military, police and security personnel, according to figures cross-referenced by AFP (Agence France-Presse) and cited by Human Rights Watch.<sup>5</sup> There are increasingly explicit reports that the Zionist military command is-

<sup>4</sup> These include the reborn International Communist League, which issued a *Spartacist* supplement (10 October 2023) with a super-head, “Only Death and Defeat with Hamas.” In Berlin, furious Palestinian nationalists – not Islamists – denounced this leaflet as Zionist propaganda.

<sup>5</sup> See HRW, “I can’t erase all the blood from my mind’ Palestinian armed groups’ October 7 assault on Israel,” July 2024. In addition, according to Israel’s Channel 12 TV, the IDF reports that 1,609 Palestinian attackers were killed on October 7 (N12, 27 February 2024).

sued “*Hannibal Directive*” instructions to shoot at anyone heading to Gaza, including if they had Israeli hostages, and that they ordered air strikes against their own base to prevent soldiers being taken hostage. There are admissions by Israeli helicopter gunship pilots that they fired indiscriminately, along the border and in the area of the music festival. Add to this testimony by survivors that an IDF tank fired on a residence in Kibbutz Beeri, killing over a dozen Israeli hostages. And there is the photographic evidence from IDF drone footage of at least 150 incinerated cars clearly attacked from the air. All this indicates a significant number of the Israeli civilian dead were in fact killed by the Israeli military on October 7; how many is unknown, at least to the public.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, the large number of civilian casualties in the October 7 attack on surrounding communities, as well as photographic, video and forensic evidence make clear that these were not “collateral damage” but were intended by the attackers. But these indefensible actions against random Israelis by victims of three-quarters of a century of Zionist oppression do

<sup>6</sup> The “Hannibal Protocol,” or directive, was first issued by the IDF in 1986, to stop the taking of hostages “even at the price of striking and harming our own forces.” See Yaniv Kubovich, “IDF Ordered Hannibal Directive on October 7 to Prevent Hamas Taking Soldiers Captive,” *Haaretz*, 7 July; Amos Harel, “Failures Leading Up to the Hamas Attack That Changed Israel Forever,” *Haaretz*, 20 October 2023; RT, 6 November 2023; “Israeli Apache helicopters killed own soldiers, civilians on 7 October: Report,” *The Cradle*, 9 November 2023.



**Hannibal Directive: More than 150 incinerated cars from music festival, clearly attacked from the air by Israeli helicopters.**

not in any way or degree justify or excuse the mass slaughter of the Palestinians by the Israeli military juggernaut that is trying to finish off the people it has sought to drive out, and ultimately exterminate. This is what Israel has done in the last ten months, and as a top United Nations official wrote in leaving his post last October, accusing the U.N. of failing to stop the carnage, it is “a text-book case of genocide.”

Almost immediately, the most rabid Zionists who today govern Israel demanded vengeance, baying for Palestinian blood. In our 10 October 2023 statement we quoted Israeli defense chief Yoav Gallant’s October 9 announcement that he had “removed every restriction” on Israeli forces and imposed a “complete siege” of Gaza – “no electricity, no food, no water, no fuel” – spitting out that “we are fighting human animals.” This statement was a “vile *declaration of intent to commit genocide*” we wrote, adding that Gallant is a reputed “moderate” in the hard-right government. That same day, the Israeli army coordinator for Gaza and the West Bank (COGAT) issued a video statement in Arabic that “Human animals are dealt with accordingly.... You wanted hell, you will get hell.” Israeli president Isaac Herzog was no less bloodthirsty, making it clear that all Palestinians were targeted: “It’s an entire nation out there that is responsible....”

Israeli prime minister Netanyahu, head of this government of psychopathic mass murderers, declared the attack on Gaza a “battle of civilization against barbarism.” He cited from the book of Deuteronomy in the Judeo-Christian bible the story of the Israelites’ annihilation of Amalek (a mythological tribe said to have inhabited the Sinai and Negev deserts), saying: “remember what Amalek has done to you.” The biblical passage says that in response to an attack by Amalek, the Israelites should “go, attack Amalek.... Spare no one, but kill alike men and women, infants and sucklings.” The fascist ministers of Netanyahu’s cabinet were blunter: national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir (of the Jewish Power [Otzma Yehudit] party) declared that any who celebrate or support Hamas are “all terrorists, and they should also be destroyed.” Heritage minister Amichai Eliyahu, another fascist, opined that dropping a nuclear bomb on Gaza was “one way” to deal with the Palestinian population.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps the most explicit was Major General (ret.) Giora Eiland, former head of

<sup>7</sup> After this call to nuke Gaza caused an uproar, Netanyahu declared that Eliyahu was “suspended” from the cabinet. However, a few hours later he participated in a poll of the cabinet.

Abir Sultan / Pool photo

Screen shot from video by IDF drone

Israel's National Security Council and now top advisor of the defense minister. On October 7, Eiland said the people of Gaza "people should be told that they have two choices; to stay and to starve, or to leave." On October 8, he amplified, saying "Israel has no interest in the Gaza Strip being rehabilitated." The next day he added that, since water in Gaza comes from wells with undrinkable salt water: "They have water treatment plants, Israel should hit those plants." On October 10, Eiland said "It's either us or them," that "the State of Israel has no choice but to make Gaza a place that is temporarily, or permanently, impossible to live in." And on October 12, this architect of the war declared: "Israel needs to create a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, compelling tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands to seek refuge in Egypt or the Gulf... Gaza will become an area where people cannot live."<sup>8</sup>

The incitement to genocide became increasingly explicit further down the chain of command. An IDF colonel, deputy head of COGAT, said of northern Gaza in a video broadcast on Israeli television (4 November 2023), "Whoever returns here, if they return here after, will find scorched earth. No houses, no agriculture, no nothing. They have no future." A fellow colonel said in the same video: "Vengeance is a great value. There is vengeance over what they did to us ... This place will be a fallow land. They will not be able to live here." Various members of the Knesset (Israel's parliament) called for Gaza to be "wiped out," to "erase" the entire territory and its inhabitants, saying "there are no uninvolved" and "there are no innocents in Gaza." Israeli officials trotted out a 95-year-old participant in the 1948 Deir Yassin massacre (when over 100 Palestinians were murdered by the ultra-rightist Irgun Zionist terrorists) who was driven around in an army vehicle in army fatigues giving a "motivational speech" to mobilized reservists:

"Be triumphant and finish them off and don't leave anyone behind. Erase the memory of them. Erase them, their families, mothers and children. These animals can no longer live.... Every Jew with a weapon should go out and kill them. If you have an Arab neighbor, don't wait, go to his home and shoot him.... With all of our forces, complete destruction, enter and destroy.... Let them drop bombs on them and erase them."

These genocidal appeals are pervasive. Former members of the Knesset called for a level of destruction of Gaza like that of the firebombing of Dresden, Germany, and the atom-bombing of Hiroshima, Japan – heinous war crimes by the victorious "democratic" imperialists in World War II. The head of a local government in northern Israel called to make Gaza "resemble the Auschwitz concentration camp," the Nazi extermination camp in Poland. A former Knesset member called for the entire Palestinian population of Gaza to be killed: "I tell you, in Gaza without exception, they are all terrorists, sons of dogs. They must be exterminated, all of them killed. We will flatten Gaza, turn them to dust, and

<sup>8</sup> These and following quotations come from multiple sources, but they are conveniently brought together in the application by South Africa to the International Court of Justice accusing Israel of perpetrating genocide in Gaza. Available at: <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192/institution-proceedings> (Section D., pp. 59-67).

the army will cleanse the area." And Israeli soldiers in uniform have been filmed (5 December 2023) dancing, chanting and singing "May their village burn, may Gaza be erased."

There is no mistaking: *Israel has been seized by genocidal hysteria*. But note also that *many of those who are hell-bent on exterminating the Palestinian population also see themselves at war with a substantial part of the Hebrew-speaking population*. In particular, their hatred is directed at the relatives of the hostages, who have been demanding a ceasefire in order to get their loved ones back. Netanyahu has repeatedly blocked movement toward a ceasefire, and is backed in this by his hard-right Zionist Likud party, while the fascists of the Jewish Power and Religious Zionist parties have vowed to bring down the government if a ceasefire with Hamas is agreed to. Ultra-Zionists have harassed large demonstrations of hostage relatives, and recently invaded two army bases where IDF soldiers were being interrogated about abusing and raping Palestinian prisoners. There is rampant talk of "state breakdown" and "civil war" in Israel – but it appears that liberal Zionists would rather emigrate than fight.

## Planned Genocide: Option Gimmel and Plan Dalet

As the mass slaughter of the Gaza Palestinian population by the Zionist army was unfolding, a professor of Holocaust studies at Brown University wrote an article, "What I Believe as a Historian of Genocide," in the *New York Times* (10 November) quoting several of the above statements by Israeli government, military, parliamentary and opinion leaders, concluding that they "could easily be construed as indicating a genocidal intent. But is genocide actually occurring?" It might "only" be "ethnic cleansing," he opined, seeking to "remove a population from a territory" rather than to destroy it. He worried, of course, that "there is genocidal intent, which can easily tip into genocidal action." This specious reasoning only serves as a cover for the Zionist slaughter. The destruction of the Palestinian people in Gaza has been underway ever since October 7, it is planned, and the origin of those plans goes back to the founding of the Zionist state.

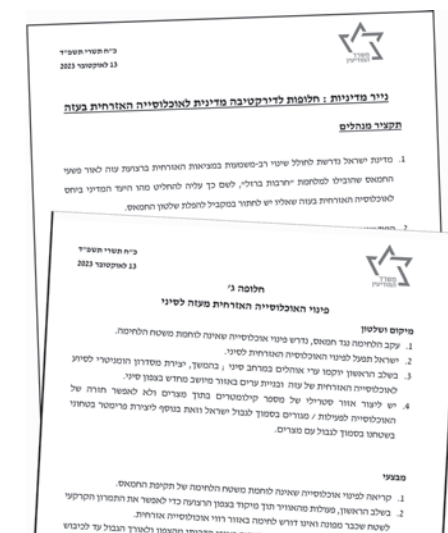
Already on October 14, the veteran investigative journalist Seymour Hersh reported on his Substack site on "The Plan to Wipe Out Hamas." Hersh was told by an "Israeli insider" that Israel was trying to get Egypt and Qatar to set up "a tent city for the million or more refugees." There was talk of placing it in "a long abandoned chunk of land in northern part of the Sinai Peninsula, near the border crossing from Gaza." The idea was for the Israeli air force to "destroy the remaining structures" in northern Gaza with heavy "bunker buster" dumb bombs equipped with JDAM guidance kits,<sup>9</sup> forcing civilians out to create a free-fire zone, a "concept" going back to the (failed) U.S. plans for "strategic hamlets" in the Vietnam War. But a "former European intelligence official" with many years in the

<sup>9</sup> Joint Direct Attack Munition: Pentagon-speak for attachments which, fastened to unguided bombs, equip them with Global Positioning System (GPS) guidance, converting them to (more or less) precision bombs.

Middle East said Egypt "would only do the minimum," while Hamas expects Israel to turn Gaza into rubble: "They're waiting for this."

The insider account was confirmed and spelled out in detail a couple of weeks later when a document from the Israeli Intelligence Ministry Policy Department was leaked to the left/liberal publication +972 Magazine (972 is Israel's international dialing code) and its Hebrew-language counterpart, *Local Call*. The document is titled "Options for a Policy Regarding Gaza's Civilian Population," and is dated October 13, the day before Hersh published his latest scoop. It lays out three options: Option A is the Palestinian Authority coming in, which is dismissed as presaging "an unprecedented victory for the Palestinian national movement," by uniting Gaza and the West Bank. Option B is to have a "local Arab authority" take over administering the territory after a period of Israeli military rule. This is dismissed, since "an entire generation that has been educated under the influence of Hamas' ideology and now will also experience Israeli military occupation" would at most produce "new, possibly even more extreme, Islamist movements."

That leaves Option C, the "preferred option," namely to "evacuate the civilian population to Sinai," as the document put it. In other words, to push 2 million-plus Palestinian civilians into the desert. Nice word, "evacuate." Fascist finance minister Bezalel Smotrich – who is also responsible for "security" in the West Bank, including arming the ultra-Zionist "hilltop youth" who are beating and murdering Palestinians – calls for "voluntary emigration" of the entire Gaza population. When "Genocide Joe" Biden and his secretary of state Antony Blinken talk of this, they refer to "humanitarian corridors." It would actually be *ethnic cleansing* on a massive scale. At one point Biden proposed that Israel take a four-hour pause of bombing every day, for people to leave the north. Bernhard of the Moon of Alabama website put



"Option Gimmel" (C) of Israeli intelligence ministry: "evacuate civilian population to Sinai."

it succinctly: they'll have 20 hours a day of genocide and then take a break for four hours of ethnic cleansing.

When challenged, Israeli officials (who confirmed the authenticity of the Intelligence Ministry document) said it was just a "concept paper." How very innocent sounding. But when you look at the details of Option C, it spells out exactly what Israel has been doing: It reads: "Call for the evacuation of the non-combatant population from the combat zone," then "in the first stage, operations from the air with a focus on the north of Gaza to allow a ground

invasion." This would be followed by "the second stage, a gradual ground invasion of the territory in the north and along the border until the occupation of the entire Strip and cleansing of the underground bunkers of Hamas fighters." It emphasized the need to "leave the travel routes to the south open to enable the evacuation of the civilian population toward Rafah," etc. And cut off all electricity, food, fuel and water. The "concept" is being translated into reality as the Zionist state has deliberately sought to cause mass starvation.

Where has this been done before? That's right, it's what the Nazis did to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943, when the left-wing Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB) rose up against the SS police who were seeking to send them to death camps.<sup>10</sup> The Zionists get upset when people refer to Gaza as the new Warsaw Ghetto, as we in the LFI and others have done for years. And where have such statements of "genocidal intent" been seen before? At the Wannsee Conference in Berlin in January 1942 where Reinhard Heydrich, head of the SS, called together officials from different ministries to plan what they were going to do about the "Jewish problem."<sup>11</sup> Most accounts of the Holocaust say that this meeting decided on the extermination of the Jewish people, which in effect it did. But the actual minutes never mentioned that, instead calling for "deportation" of Jews from German-held areas. Just as the Israeli "concept paper" calls for "evacuation" of Palestinian Arabs from Gaza. These are in fact code words for genocide, and it isn't just "intent," it's being carried out now.

The liberal media in the West, and in Israel, generally portray Netanyahu as an opportunist, willing to do anything to prevent the fall of his government, which could lead to him being jailed on corruption charges. This misreads Benjamin Netanyahu, who is a hard right-wing Zionist. His father, Benzion Netanyahu (Nathan Mileikowsky), was a close associate of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, leader of fascistic Revisionist Zionism, who called for an "Iron Wall" to push the Arab population out of Palestine. That is what the Israeli prime minister and his ultra-Zionist and fascist allies are now attempting to do, first in Gaza and then in the West Bank. But such plans are not limited to the Zionist right. Today we have "Option C" (or Option Gimmel, for the third letter in the Hebrew

<sup>10</sup> After the German invasion of Poland in 1940, the Nazis concentrated close to half a million Jews in what were traditionally Jewish districts in central Warsaw, constructing a high wall surrounding this ghetto. After a massive raid in 1942 sent about 250,000 Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to the death camp of Treblinka (under the guise of "resettlement to the east"), the Nazis sought to finish off the remainder. The SS jailers first proposed "voluntary evacuation" from the Ghetto, and when that was refused they decided on military action to round up all the Jews. But when Waffen SS troops approached in April 1943, they were met with resistance by the ŻOB, with the pistols and grenades that they had smuggled across the wall. The Jewish fighters fought from underground bunkers, and when the Germans succeeded in smashing the revolt, the Nazi commandant ordered the Ghetto to be destroyed, block by block. See Marek Edelman, *The Ghetto Fights, Warsaw 1943-1945* [1946].

<sup>11</sup> The Wannsee villa in Berlin where the plan to exterminate European Jews was elaborated is now a Holocaust remembrance site, where one can see the actual minutes of the proceedings.

alphabet); in 1948 the “Labor” Zionists had “Plan D,” or “Plan Dalet” (the fourth letter), calling called for conquering Arab villages and towns on the borders of the areas of the “Yishuv” (the Jewish community) which became the Israeli state, and to expel the population from those areas.<sup>12</sup>

As for the outright fascist ministers in the present hard-right government, almost all are from the fascistic settler movement that has seized large swaths of the West Bank. The Israeli population of these settlements has swollen to over 700,000 and all (even bedroom communities around East Jerusalem) are blatantly illegal under the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention (concerning areas under occupation), for what that’s worth. In 2021, Smotrich, now the overlord of the West Bank, published his “*Decisive Plan*,” calling to annex the West Bank and present its 3 million Arabs there with the “choice” of abandoning any national aspirations and living in an inferior status in Israel, or “emigration” abroad. Any who seek to stay and resist would be classed as “terrorists” and the Israeli army would set about “killing those who need to be killed.”<sup>13</sup> Asked if this would include killing women, children and whole families, Smotrich replied, “In war as in war.” Today, the annexation of the West Bank is underway.

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## Automated Genocide: Gospel, Lavender and “Where’s Daddy?” AI Systems

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To carry out the planned genocide, Zionist Israel has proceeded with a thoroughness and precision reminiscent of the Nazi planners of the Holocaust. Looking at the hellscape of Gaza today, most people would only see a jumble of rubble. But as spelled out in an investigation by +972, based on conversations with current and former Israeli intelligence personnel, including those directly involved in targeting and in air force operations, “Nothing happens by accident.” One source said, “When a 3-year-old girl is killed in a home in Gaza, it’s because someone in the army decided it wasn’t a big deal for her to be killed — that it was a price worth paying in order to hit [another] target.... These are not random rockets. Everything is intentional. We know exactly how much collateral damage there is in every home.”<sup>14</sup> The Israeli military has detailed information on the vast majority of potential targets, “which stipulate[s] the number of civilians who are likely to be killed in an attack on a particular target.”

In other words, in hitting apartment buildings with heavy bombs that will flatten the whole structure, killing everyone inside, the IDF is engaging in mass murder in full knowledge of how many people will be killed as “collateral damage.” Not only that, the number of civilian dead permitted (by the IDF command) in striking at a senior Hamas leader was increased from

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<sup>12</sup> See Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (2006), Chapter 5: “The Blueprint for Ethnic Cleansing: Plan Dalet.”

<sup>13</sup> Bezalel Smotrich, “Israel’s Decisive Plan” (2017), published by Hashiloach, the flagship publication of the U.S.-based religious Zionist Tikvah Fund.

<sup>14</sup> Yuval Abraham, “‘A mass assassination factory’: Inside Israel’s calculated bombing of Gaza,” +972, 30 November 2023.

“dozens” to “hundreds,” and since October 7 even the lowest-level Hamas supporter or any Gaza government employee could be targeted. In addition, the army has vastly increased the number of “power targets” to be hit, including high-rises, public facilities, universities and the like, whose destruction would cause a shock to the civilian population. In reality, “the damage to Hamas’ military infrastructure in northern Gaza during the first days of the war appears to have been very minimal,” +972 wrote, while their intelligence sources confirmed that classifying buildings as a military target has “previously been used many times as a fig leaf for harming the civilian population.”

The focus on destroying prominent buildings and whole neighborhoods is an outgrowth of another Israeli military protocol, the “*Dahiya Doctrine*,” dating back to the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006. This consists of “causing mass devastation to civilian areas for strategic purposes” to cause “deterrence” in fighting guerrilla forces. The author of this doctrine was former IDF chief of staff Gadi Eizenkot, until recently part of the Israeli war cabinet along with Benny Gantz, who carried out indiscriminate slaughter of Palestinians in Gaza as chief of general staff in 2012 and 2014 and as defense minister in 2021. Yet these certified butchers have been marketed to the public as “moderate” Zionists, even as they signed off on all the terror bombing of Gaza in the current war. Their main reason for supporting a ceasefire was to prepare to expand the war to Lebanon. Meanwhile, the destruction in Gaza has gone beyond particular “power targets” or homes to wholesale destruction of all buildings.

Most significant has been the introduction of a system of targeting called “Habsora” (The Gospel), which is “largely based on artificial intelligence.” By feeding in vast amounts of data, including real-time surveillance, this system can generate huge numbers of targets almost automatically. As one former intelligence officer described it, Habsora created a “mass assassination factory.” It has turned Gaza from a vast *Konzentrationslager* (concentration camp) into a *Vernichtungslager* (extermination camp), in the language of the Zionist militarists’ genocidal predecessors. Now they annihilate whole neighborhoods alleged to be “terror nests for Hamas.” Destroying 1,000 “power targets” in five days — i.e., bringing down more than 200 major buildings a day — is the Dahiya Doctrine on steroids. A source who worked in the Targets Administrative Division told +972 that “It really is like a factory. We work quickly” and their performance is “judged according to how many targets we manage to generate.”

But that’s not all, not by any means. Yet another investigation by the +972/*Local Call* team, published in April, revealed that “the Israeli army has developed an artificial intelligence-based program known as ‘Lavender’” for “the use of AI to generate targets for assassination.”<sup>15</sup> Drawing on a half dozen sources, all of whom worked in army intelligence during the war and had “first-hand involvement” with the automated assassination program, the article states that “Lavender has played a central role in the unprecedented bombing of Palestinians.” One of the sources said that “human

<sup>15</sup> Yuval Abraham, “‘Lavender’: The AI machine directing Israel’s bombing spree in Gaza,” +972 Magazine, 3 April 2024.

personnel often served only as a ‘rubber stamp’ for the machine’s decisions,” devoting “only about ‘20 seconds’ to each target before authorizing a bombing — just to make sure the Lavender-marked target is male.” It works together with the previously mentioned AI system: “whereas The Gospel marks buildings and structures that the army claims militants operate from, Lavender marks people — and puts them on a kill list.”

The Gospel and Lavender, in turn, work with a third automated system, grotesquely named “Where’s Daddy,” to track targeted individuals for the purpose of bombing them when they have entered their family’s residence. “A., an intelligence officer, told +972 and *Local Call* ... ‘the IDF bombed them in homes without hesitation, as a first option. It’s much easier to bomb a family’s home.’” Moreover, low-level militants were generally hit with unguided bombs (like MK-84s), which destroy entire buildings and all their occupants, because “You don’t want to waste expensive [“smart”] bombs on unimportant people.” According to several of the sources, Lavender “has marked some 37,000 Palestinians as suspected ‘Hamas militants,’ most of them junior, for assassination.” As a result, “thousands of Palestinians — most of them women and children or people who were not involved in the fighting — were wiped out by Israeli airstrikes ... because of the AI program’s decisions.”

Behind the use of these automated systems was the change in IDF criteria to classify any member of Hamas’ military wing as a human target. “Once you go automatic, target generation goes crazy,” said B. This “senior source” said the use of the AI-aided systems was more accurate than human selection, even though early in the war it was determined that only 90% of the AI designations were accurate. Another source said “that they had personally authorized the bombing of ‘hundreds’ of private homes of alleged junior operatives marked by Lavender.” One might think that the revelation of mass AI-assisted, machine-generated assassinations of thousands of people would be so explosive that Israeli authorities would seek to shut down an independent media outlet like +972 *Magazine* / *Local Call*. But that does not appear to be the case. The authorities may even want to have this information out there, as a sign of Israeli prowess. But in any case, there has been almost zero reporting of this in the imperialist “mainstream” media.

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## 2023: Planned Genocide Underway

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Almost immediately after the Israeli bombing of Gaza commenced on 7 October 2023, it was evident, as *The Internationalist* wrote on October 10, that Gaza would be subject to “a racist, genocidal siege,” and that a ground invasion “can only be a genocidal slaughter of Palestinians.” By the end of October, it was estimated that Israel was dropping 6,000 bombs a day on Gaza. By mid-November, a statement of 15 United Nations special rapporteurs warned of “a genocide in the making” in Gaza, that the level of destruction of “housing units, as well as hospitals, schools, mosques, bakeries, water pipes, sewage and electricity networks . . . threatens to make the continuation of Palestinian life in Gaza impossible.” The use of “pow-

erful weaponry with inherently indiscriminate impacts” had resulted in “a colossal death toll and destruction of life-sustaining infrastructure,” it stressed. In addition to flattening thousands of apartment buildings, Israel cut water supplies by almost 80%, shutting lines to Gaza City and Khan Younis entirely.

With the Israeli ground invasion, which began on October 27, the invaders made hospitals and other health facilities primary targets. By the end of 2023, of the 36 hospitals serving Gaza before the invasion, 27 were destroyed by the Israeli military, including all in the north, while the rest were barely functioning. When 471 people seeking shelter on the grounds of the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital were killed on October 17 by an explosion, sparking worldwide condemnation, Israeli spokesmen blamed a Palestinian rocket gone astray and publicized an Al Jazeera video purportedly showing that. But online researchers quickly showed that the rocket was fired from Israel, from an area known to have an Iron Dome air defense system. A week later a visual investigation team from the *New York Times* (26 October), usually a channel for U.S. war propaganda, definitively proved that the rocket was fired from Israel.

On November 15, the IDF stormed the Al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza’s largest medical complex and central hospital for the enclave. Israeli troops were shooting inside the buildings, looking for proof of a Hamas presence. Hospital staff denied there was any, but Israel and the U.S. insisted they had “intelligence” of a Hamas command center underneath the hospital. How so? It seems Israel built such a facility when it controlled the Gaza Strip from 1967 to 2005. But the IDF troops found no command post, no evidence of military activity, no entrance to tunnels, no nothing.<sup>16</sup> After some days Israeli spokesmen led the media to film an entrance, “near” the hospital, to a small (180-foot-long) tunnel running under a corner of the complex. This proves nothing. If there had been no tunnels under Al-Shifa it would have been the only place in central Gaza City that wasn’t crisscrossed by underground passages, as Israeli military maps show.<sup>17</sup>

Although the enormity and depth of human misery caused by the Israeli bombardment and invasion of Gaza can’t be captured by the cold statistics of the number of dead, these tell us much about the nature of the slaughter. As of December 22, the number of recorded deaths reported by the Gaza Ministry of Health was 20,727, along with 54,036 seriously injured.<sup>18</sup> In addition to those officially reported as dead, there were almost 7,000 people unaccounted for, most buried under the rubble of bombed buildings. Equally telling are the figures on *who* was killed in the Israeli onslaught. Accord-

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<sup>16</sup> “The case of al-Shifa: Investigating the assault on Gaza’s largest hospital,” *Washington Post*, 21 December 2023.

<sup>17</sup> See “Map Shows Labyrinth of Tunnels Made by Hamas Under Gaza Identified by Israel,” *Wall Street Journal*, 19 October 2023.

<sup>18</sup> These figures were disputed by Israeli officials and U.S. president Biden even after the medical authorities published a list of thousands, complete with their official (Israeli) ID numbers. The media invariably refer to the ministry as “Hamas-controlled” to cast doubt on the figures accuracy, but a study by researchers at the School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore found that there was “No evidence of inflated mortality reporting from the Gaza Ministry of Health” (*The Lancet*, 6 December 2023).



ing to the Al Jazeera live tracker, of these more than 20,700 officially confirmed dead, at least 8,200 were children and infants, and at least 6,200 were women. In addition, the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor listed over 1,000 elderly people killed by the Israeli attackers. **So three-quarters of those killed in the first weeks of the Zionist military assault on Gaza were children, women and elderly.**

Such proportions are almost unheard of in wars between armies, where the majority of the dead are combatants on either side. In Gaza, the vast majority of the casualties are civilians. Why? Because they were killed in their homes by an automated murder machine destroying whole buildings and neighborhoods. In contrast, relatively few Palestinian fighters were killed. Why? Because they were mostly underground, waiting to engage the invaders. Contrary to Israeli psywar disinformation claims of Hamas soldiers surrendering in droves, the IDF's method is to round up and humiliate any men that they find.<sup>19</sup> On December 7-8, hundreds of men in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya were stripped to their underwear, blindfolded, their hands bound behind their backs, and dumped into trucks to be carted off for interrogation where they were held in the cold for days with hardly any food or water. One released detainee commented, "We were treated like cattle, they even wrote numbers on our hands."<sup>20</sup> Ever hear of that before?

Soon the executions began. Some were apparently random acts of vengeance, as when occupation forces stormed the residence of an elderly doctor and his wife, forcefully evicted and then shot them, leaving them to bleed to death in the street, and then set their home on fire.<sup>21</sup> Or when, as the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights in Occupied Palestinian Territory (OHCHR) confirmed, Israeli forces "summarily killed at least 11 unarmed Palestinian men in front of their family members in Al Remal neighbourhood, Gaza City."<sup>22</sup> The OHCHR alert demanded an independent investigation by Israel (!) and that "those responsible must be brought to justice." The chances of that happening are, of course, zero. Others were clearly targeted assassinations, such as the murder on December 6 of renowned poet and English professor Refaat Alareer, along with his brother, sister and her four children, in an Israeli airstrike on his sister's apartment.<sup>23</sup>

But humiliation and torture of detainees, assassinations and mass murder by bombing by the Israeli occupiers tell only

<sup>19</sup> Multiple photos and videos show scores of men without shirts or pants sitting on the street with their heads bowed. A video purportedly showed a paunchy middle-aged man depositing a rifle in front of the Israeli captors. But if they were supposedly Hamas, where were the guns of the dozens of other near-naked men lined up?

<sup>20</sup> "Hungry, thirsty and humiliated: Israel's mass arrest campaign sows fear in northern Gaza," AP, 8 December 2023.

<sup>21</sup> "Shocking testimonies reveal the execution of dozens of elderly people by Israeli army in the Gaza Strip," *Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor*, 22 December 2023.

<sup>22</sup> OHCHR, "Unlawful killings in Gaza City," 20 December 2023.

<sup>23</sup> This was a second attempt: days earlier, Refaat and his wife and children barely escaped as the Israelis bombed their building; after receiving specific death threats indicating that his presence sheltering at a U.N. school was known, he moved to his sister's home, which was then surgically targeted: only the second-floor apartment was hit.



**After one-week "ceasefire," Israel resumed bombing Gaza, 1 December 2023, using 2,000-lb. bombs supplied by the U.S. and dropped from U.S.-built warplanes.**

part of the story. In addition to the targeting of hospitals and schools, there are the attacks on mosques and churches, including destruction of the Great Omari Mosque, Gaza's oldest and largest; the destruction of the Gaza parliament; the destruction of the Gaza Zoo; the targeting of all four universities and killing of leading academics, and the obliteration of the Islamic University of Gaza by airstrikes destroying all of its central buildings. The fact that this institution, which had trained generations of physicians and engineers, was hit almost immediately (October 11) indicates how important it is to Israel's rulers to destroy Palestinian intellectual and cultural life. And then there are the attacks on U.N. personnel. Early on, the U.N. informed the Israeli military of the location of all their facilities, so they would not be hit by mistake. Immediately afterwards, Israeli war planes began bombing precisely those sites.

By late December, over half of all homes in Gaza had been reduced to rubble or heavily damaged. In the north, according to an assessment by geographers Corey Scher of the City University of New York Graduate Center and Jamon Van Den Hoek of Oregon State University, in Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahiya and Jabaliya over two-thirds of all buildings lay in ruins.<sup>24</sup> In Gaza City, up to 75% of all buildings were severely damaged or destroyed, with even higher levels of destruction in the city center, the refugee camps, the area around Al Shifa hospital and the port.<sup>25</sup> Beyond the hospitals, schools and universities, the list of what was bombed included piers for fishing boats, beachfront hotels and greenhouses, while orchards and much agricultural land including citrus groves were bulldozed. So there are almost no homes for the people of northern Gaza to go back to, and no way to feed themselves.

In short, **the Israeli invaders set out from the beginning to make Gaza uninhabitable.** Not only housing but any form of economic activity would have to be rebuilt from scratch. Readers should be aware that Gaza City was a modern metropolis of close to 700,000 people, almost 50% larger than Tel Aviv. It had huge areas of high-rise buildings, commercial districts, small and medium-sized enterprises

<sup>24</sup> Since commercial satellite companies (Planet Labs, Maxar) are now delaying making high resolution images available, including to major media and humanitarian organizations, the researchers developed a sophisticated technique using radar data from the Copernicus Sentinel-1 satellite to measure damage to structures. "Inside the Satellite Tech Revealing Gaza's Destruction," *Scientific American*, 1 December.

<sup>25</sup> "Visual analysis: the wastelands in Gaza's two biggest cities," *Financial Times*, 21 December 2023.

producing for the local market, a bourgeoisie and a working class, not just the densely packed warrens of the refugee camps shown in the media. All of that was wiped out by the genocidal Zionist mad bombers. The imperialists back this to the hilt, while tsk-tsking about being more careful with civilian casualties. How would they react if all of Tel Aviv and its suburbs were razed to the ground? **The destruction of Gaza is racist barbarism.**

As the South African case charging Israel with genocide (submitted on 29 December 2023) summarized:

"Israel has also laid waste to vast areas of Gaza, including entire neighbourhoods, and has damaged or destroyed in excess of 355,000 Palestinian homes, alongside extensive tracts of agricultural land, bakeries, schools, universities, businesses, places of worship, cemeteries, cultural and archaeological sites, municipal and court buildings, and critical infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities and electricity networks, while pursuing a relentless assault on the Palestinian medical and healthcare system. Israel has reduced and is continuing to reduce Gaza to rubble, killing, harming and destroying its people, and creating conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction as a group."

## 2024: Genocide Grinds On

From the start, the Israeli invaders were relentlessly carrying out Option C of the "concept paper" of the Israeli intelligence ministry. This included preparing to force huge numbers of people into the Sinai Desert, as Seymour Hersh had also reported. As the IDF proceeded down the Strip, forcing the population into smaller and smaller areas in the south, in early February 2024, Egypt cleared a large area just to the southwest of the border crossing at Rafah to set up a walled enclosure to serve as a holding pen for Palestinians should they pour out of Gaza in the face of the expected Israeli offensive.<sup>26</sup> The area would hold 100,000 people, with no water source and no structures, just sand. Although the Egyptian government denied any such preparations and Israeli defense minister Gallant denied any intent to "evacuate" (there's that euphemism again) Palestin-

<sup>26</sup> "Egypt Builds Walled Enclosure on Border as Israeli Push Looms," *Wall Street Journal*, 16 February 2024; "Satellite images show construction on Egypt's border," BBC, 16 February 2024.

ians, satellite images showed 7-foot-high concrete slabs stacked on the ground, and large numbers of tents had been delivered to the area, according to sources.

With half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million crammed into the area along the Egyptian border and Israeli leaders announcing an imminent offensive in Rafah, the stage was set to push huge numbers of Gazans into what would be a death camp in the Sinai. That this did not happen was likely due to the concatenation of a worldwide outcry against an attack on Rafah, pious calls by Biden to clean up the impending Rafah offensive (less big bombs destroying whole buildings and blocks) and the insistence of Egyptian strong man president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi that no Palestinian refugees would be allowed in. So instead, the IDF kept bombing Palestinians in their tent camps, including in areas that had been declared "humanitarian zones," while pushing hundreds of thousands back to the north.

The focus of the genocidal war switched to causing mass starvation. Even the pro-imperialist Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued a report, "Israel: Starvation Used as Weapon of War in Gaza" (18 December 2023), documenting how Israeli authorities were deliberately depriving the population of food, as they continued to do in succeeding months, and still are.

From December 2023 to February 2024, the number of people in Gaza in "catastrophic" levels of food insecurity (starving or on the verge of starvation), increased by 80%, to 677,000, while the entire population was suffering from "acute" food insecurity, according to the international agency that officially decrees when there is a famine.<sup>27</sup> From an average of 500 trucks entering the Gaza Strip daily prior to October 7 (150 of them carrying food), by the end of February the number of truckloads had fallen to 90 (with only 60 of these bringing food). Meanwhile, the Israeli government launched a campaign to smear the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), which runs U.N. programs in Gaza, claiming that 12 (!) of its 13,000 employees in Gaza were somehow connected to the Hamas attack. As a result, the U.S., Britain, Germany and most other imperialist countries stopped contributing to the UNRWA. In an effort to sideline the U.N. agency, Israel announced that it would bring in food.

With 85% of the population pushed from their homes and famine imminent, next came the "flour massacres" – a dozen of them – in which Israeli forces fired on Palestinians desperately trying to get bags of flour, killing over 200 people and injuring hundreds. In the first, on February 29, IDF spokesmen falsely claimed that the crowd was moving menacingly towards the soldiers and two tanks "protecting" the aid trucks, so they opened fire. But even Israeli video showed that the crowd was converging on the trucks with supplies, at some distance from the tanks. And after the crowd fled in panic, when some returned to get the remaining sacks, the soldiers fired on them again. On that day, there were 118 dead and 760 wounded. In a second massacre, on March 3, nine were killed and dozens injured when there was an attack on people going to an aid truck. In a third, on

<sup>27</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IFSPC), *Gaza Strip Acute Food Insecurity Brief*, February 2024.

March 14, at least 21 were killed and over 150 wounded. So to stop “looting,” Israeli troops murdered starving people desperately trying to get food.

This was followed by the World Central Kitchen incident on April 1, where an elite Israeli helicopter unit tracked a three-car convoy of the aid organization of the Spanish celebrity chef José Andrés and attacked the cars, killing all seven aid workers. This caused an international uproar, particularly as Andrés is a personal friend of U.S. president Biden. The Israeli high command declared it was “unintentional” and “mistakes” were made, but this is hardly believable as the delivery mission had been approved by the army, the convoy had been tracked for hours and the vehicles were clearly marked. Later it was revealed that one of two officers dismissed over the incident was the chief of staff of the Nahal Brigade, who is a religious nationalist living in a settlement in the occupied West Bank and who two months earlier had signed a letter, along with 130 other officers, calling on the war cabinet and the IDF command to “do everything in your power” not to allow “humanitarian supplies and the operation of hospitals inside Gaza City.”<sup>28</sup>

Such incidents demonstrate that, whether particular attacks were or were not authorized by the high command, the military forces carrying out the war on Gaza are driven by its genocidal aims and a determination to carry out Nazi-like “collective punishment” on the entire Palestinian population of Gaza for the events of October 7.

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## Biden/Harris, Democrats/Republicans, U.S./NATO Imperialists: Genocidal War Criminals All

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As we and others have shown, the Israeli Zionist state – not just the hard-right Netanyahu cabinet with its fascist ministers, but also the liberal Zionist “opposition” (which only yesterday was part of the war cabinet) and the entire Israeli military – is the material perpetrator of a genocide now underway. Meanwhile the murderous attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank multiply: 587 killed since 7 October 2023, 570 of them by the Israeli military. Following the maxim “never let a good crisis go to waste,” the most rabidly genocidal Zionist rulers figure that now is an opportunity to carry out the historic program to “transfer” all the Palestinian Arab population – or as much as they can – out of Israeli-held territory. Such mass “ethnic cleansing” would be wrenching at any time, but with the IDF in the field and the Israeli Jewish population in a frenzy, they figure they can bill it as payback for the Hamas attack. *Razing Gaza is only the start.*

It’s not true that the Israeli government has no program for Gaza for the “day after” the war. First, it intends to keep the war going indefinitely, for now. When Netanyahu recently went to Washington and was told by the Biden/Harris White House and by Trump in Mar-a-Lago to wrap up the war, pronto, he returned to Jerusalem and ordered the assassination of a Hezbollah leader in Beirut and of the political leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh (the main negotiator in ceasefire talks), in Tehran. So no

<sup>28</sup> “Top IDF commander in aid strike wanted to block humanitarian supplies into Gaza,” *Telegraph* (London), 11 April 2024.

truce, and the inevitable Iranian/Hezbollah response can be used as an excuse to further escalate into a regional war, which is what Netanyahu has wanted all along. In 2005 he quit the cabinet of Ariel Sharon, the butcher of Sabra and Shatila,<sup>29</sup> over Sharon’s move to pull Israeli troops and settlers out of Gaza. You think he would voluntarily leave Gaza now, on his watch? If not, what then? As the fascist head of West Bank “security” Smotrich remarked: “If there were 100,000-200,000 Arabs in the Strip and not two million, the whole conversation about the day after would be completely different.”<sup>30</sup>

*But the genocidal mass-murdering Zionist leaders have partners in this monstrous crime: the U.S. imperialists and their NATO allies.* As we have stated, *without the U.S. heavy bombs, and without the U.S.-supplied war planes to drop them, this genocide would not be possible.* Yes, the Israeli army with its Merkava tanks would still kill a lot of Palestinians, but with a total Jewish population of just over 7 million, Israel is “casualty averse,” reluctant to send troops into ground combat without heavy air cover. In any case, it would not have the military capacity to carry out mass annihilation and mass destruction on an industrial scale. But in the past ten months, the U.S., under the Democratic administration of Biden and Harris, has vastly expanded Israel’s arsenal to make possible the obliteration of the Palestinian Arab people of Gaza. And they are still doing it, providing the Zionist militarists with the arms to set off Armageddon in the Middle East by launching a war on Iran and Lebanon.

Israel has rained death and destruction on Gaza from the skies on a vast scale. According to an independent U.S. task force evaluating Israel’s compliance with “international humanitarian law,” “Within six months, U.S. sources informed a member of this Task Force that 300,000 munitions have been dropped on, or fired in, Gaza.”<sup>31</sup> In just the first month of the war, “1,900 heavy ammunition craters

<sup>29</sup> In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon aiming to finish off the Palestine Liberation Organization. After weeks of pitched battles in West Beirut, at the end of August the PLO withdrew under supervision by a U.S.-led Multinational Force. In mid-September the Israeli army decided to launch an offensive into West Beirut to ferret out remaining PLO militants while Israeli forces surrounded the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. Defense minister Sharon and IDF chief of staff Rafael Eitan instructed the Lebanese Forces, a right-wing Christian militia aided by Israel and led by the fascist Phalange (Kateb) party, to search and “mop up” the camps, which the Israeli cabinet ratified, saying the Phalangists would act “with their own methods.” In the ensuing massacre, upwards of 3,000 Palestinian and Lebanese Shiites were murdered.

<sup>30</sup> “Smotrich: Day after is different with only 200,000 Arabs in Gaza,” *Jerusalem Post*, 31 December 2023.

<sup>31</sup> “Report of the Independent Task Force on the Application of National Security Memorandum-20 to Israel,” 18 April. Faced with criticism of Israel’s massive destruction of Gaza and killing of civilians, on February 8 the Biden White House issued National Security Memorandum 20 (NSM-20), supposedly to “prevent arms transfers that risk facilitating ... violations of human rights or international humanitarian law.” A task force was formed to monitor Israel’s compliance with NSM-20, headed by Noura Erakat, a Palestinian American professor at Rutgers University, and Josh Paul, a top official in the State Department bureau overseeing U.S. international arms transfers who resigned on 18 October 2023 to protest the U.S.’ provision of weapons to Israel in the war on Gaza.

were visible through satellite imagery in Gaza, most of which in densely populated areas. Five hundred (500) of these craters were identified as greater than 40 feet in diameter, consistent with 2,000-pound bombs.” *This weaponry comes exclusively from the U.S., as Israel does not produce such heavy bombs.* This is also true of another of Israel’s weapons of choice in Gaza, the 250-pound GBU 39 “precision bomb.” And the 500-pound bombs, another IDF staple, come overwhelmingly from the U.S.<sup>32</sup>

The Biden administration has been extremely secretive about the weaponry it has sent to Israel. In many cases it has not even informed Congress, on the grounds that it was only fulfilling previously pending orders. But occasionally military officials and pro-Israel sources have provided a glimpse. Last year, the *Wall Street Journal* (1 December 2023) reported that “The U.S. has provided Israel with large bunker buster bombs, among tens of thousands of other weapons and artillery shells,” since October 7, “including roughly 15,000 bombs and 57,000 artillery shells.” The article noted how the U.S. is publicly urging Israel “to consider preventing large-scale civilian casualties while supplying many of the munitions deployed.” The quantities transferred to Israel include “more than 5,000 Mk82 unguided or ‘dumb’ bombs, more than 5,400 Mk84 2,000 pound warhead bombs, around 1,000 GBU-39 small diameter bombs, and approximately 3,000 JDAMs,<sup>33</sup> which turn unguided bombs into guided ‘smart’ bombs.”

Seven months later, Reuters (29 June) reported that the U.S. had sent “at least 14,000 of the 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, 2,600 air-dropped small-diameter bombs” and other munitions, according to officials “who were not authorized to speak publicly” (but were clearly authorized to “leak” the figures). While Biden talked of “red lines” and made a show of calling on Israel to rein in its Rafah offensive, even “pausing” a shipment of 1,800 MK-84 bombs in early May, he later released 1,700 500-pound MK-82 bombs from that batch (*New York Times*, 25 July). A breakdown by the Jewish Institute for National Security of America added that the U.S. has supplied over 120,000 rounds of artillery, cannon and tank munitions and 2 batteries of Iron Dome anti-missile systems (with undisclosed amounts of ammunition). *Without all this U.S.-supplied armament, Israel would have had to stop its bombardment of Gaza months ago.*

Back in 2021, after Israel’s previous slaughter in Gaza, liberal Congressional Democrats, including Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, demonstratively opposed inclusion of the \$1 billion Iron Dome system in an omnibus spending bill – but then two days voted for it in a separate bill (in exchange for more “humanitarian aid”), or in the case of AOC voted “present” rather than opposing it. More recently, in April, this media star of

<sup>32</sup> An accessible inventory of Israel’s arsenal can be found in the Wikipedia’s “List of equipment of the Israel Defense Forces.”

<sup>33</sup> Israel has its own equivalent, the SPICE (Smart, Precise Impact, Cost-Effective) guidance kits, also produced in the United States, which has made deliveries of them during the war.

the “Squad” of “progressive” Democrats co-signed a press release that supported strengthening Iron Dome, as a supposed “defense system.” Yet this rocket system is an integral part of Israel’s war on Gaza, and one of the Tamir missiles it fires may have killed the 12 children who died recently in the Druze town of Majdal Shams in Israel-occupied Golan. Note that the Iron Dome battery, Tamirs and other Israeli-developed (and U.S.-financed) weapons systems are mostly made in the United States, by companies like Raytheon, Boeing and the Israeli company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. In short, *Israel is utterly dependent on the U.S. for its advanced weaponry.*

One of the Israeli arguments for using massive 2,000-pound bombs in Gaza that this is in order to hit the Hamas fighters located underground in the vast tunnel system, which is estimated at 350-450 miles in length. But neither the MK-84, which can kill anything in a 400-yard radius, or the BLU-109 “bunker buster” hardened penetration bomb can even come close to hitting most of Gaza’s tunnels. The former can cause a crater of up to 11 meters (33 feet) depth, and the latter can penetrate 16 feet of reinforced concrete, but this would barely rattle the lightbulbs of much of the tunnel system, which is located 50 meters (165 feet) below ground, or even deeper. The reality is that these bombs, which really are “weapons of mass destruction” (the term U.S. war propaganda used for Saddam Hussein’s imagined nuclear arsenal to justify the 2003 invasion of Iraq), are good for only one thing in the Gaza context, namely what they are doing: *to destroy whole blocks of high-rise buildings, mainly apartment houses, and murder everyone in them.*

Furthermore, when the U.S. Congress voted to authorize sending such highly destructive weapons to Israel, long before the current war, any member who bothered to inform him or herself, or even think about it for a couple minutes, knew that these bombs would be used to kill thousands of Palestinians in Gaza (or West Bank cities and towns). Using them in rural areas would be a colossal waste of firepower. In other words, *the United States has knowingly, deliberately supplied weaponry to Israel that can only be used for mass murder ... and genocide.*

But that is not the only military hardware that the U.S. has been supplying the Zionist militarists with. Israel’s warplanes are all U.S.-made. Once upon a time Israel made a jet fighter-bomber, the Kfir (Hebrew for lion’s cub), an adaptation of the French Dassault Mirage 5. But the Kfir had a short range, a tendency to crash and were pretty much useless against anyone with weapons more powerful than an AK-47 rifle. So the Israelis sold off these lemons to countries like Colombia where they could be used (along with Israeli paramilitary “advisors”) to combat guerrillas. Today Israel’s attack aircraft consist exclusively of U.S.-built F-15s (75 planes), F-16s (343) and F-35 advanced fighter jets (50). That is, until recently. On March 30, it was announced that the U.S. would deliver an additional 25 F-35s, a 50% increase. Why now, as Israel has more than enough planes to bomb Gaza to oblivion? A clue: the long-range F-35 can reach Iranian targets without refueling, and its stealth technology could possibly

elude Iranian air defenses.<sup>34</sup>

As Israel already has a fleet of F-35s and experienced pilots trained in flying them, these top-of-the-line warplanes will be instantly operational. This means that Israel will have the second-largest fleet of F-35s in the world (Australia has 60, Britain has 29, Italy has 20, France and Germany have none, although the latter has had 35 on order for years).<sup>35</sup> In Israel's case, these planes have been on order since 2008, when the Democratic Obama administration authorized their sale, yet only now are they being delivered. Quite likely the delay in delivery has been due to concerns in the Pentagon that Israel could launch a first-strike attack on Iran. Meanwhile, the Biden administration announced it would send up to 50 F-15s to Israel, again substantially increasing Israel's fleet. The F-15 also has sufficient range to strike Iran, and while lacking the F-35's stealth technology, it can carry a lot more bombs and missiles.

So now, as the Biden administration admonishes against setting off a regional war and making mildly critical noises about Israel's terrorist attack on the Hamas leader in Tehran, clearly intended to provoke an Iranian counterattack, the U.S. is supplying Israel with the planes to "bomb, bomb Tehran" – as Zionist warmongers have long called for. It's a repeat of the U.S. crocodile tears over civilian casualties in Gaza while supplying the heavy bombs producing the tens of thousands of dead. It's all a charade to hoodwink a gullible public. With the U.S. elections fast approaching, the Democrats dumped "Genocide Joe" Biden as a liability, replacing him with his sidekick Kamala Harris, who says she "will not be silent" about Palestinian casualties. But she and her husband, an outspoken Zionist who led the Biden administration's campaign of "antisemitic"-baiting pro-Palestinian protesters, are solid supporters of Israel. Despite this, many critics of Israel's mad-bomber war (including the United Auto Workers) are all in for Kamala.

In many of the Gaza solidarity encampments this spring there were placards with the words and likeness of Refaat Alareer, the Palestinian poet and English professor assassinated last December with a precision rocket very likely supplied by the U.S. The placards quote Refaat's 2011 poem, recently circulated online: "If I must die, you must live to tell my story.... If I must die, let it bring hope, let it be a tale." Not so widely disseminated was another post by Alareer, two days before he was murdered. Responding to U.S. vice president Harris' statement that she and Biden, while fully backing Israel, held that international humanitarian law must be respected, Refaat wrote the truth on X (the former Twitter): "***The Democratic Party and Biden are responsible for the Gaza genocide perpetrated by Israel.***"

As for Trump & Co., their attitude was captured by the Republican ex-president's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who as a teenager had lent his bedroom to Netanyahu, who at the time was visiting his father, a

major donor to Israeli causes. Last March, in a conversation broadcast from Harvard University, Kushner said of Gaza that Israel should "move the people out and then clean it up." Kushner, who after being point man on Israel in Trump's White House has now returned to his real estate business, added: "Gaza's waterfront property, it could be very valuable."<sup>36</sup> Crude, but very telling.

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## From the Middle East to the Imperialist Centers, Bring Out Workers' Power Against the Genocidal Zionist / Imperialist War

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As noted at the beginning of this article, the League for the Fourth International emphasized from the outset that the Israeli onslaught against Gaza was a *genocidal war, jointly waged* by Zionist Israel and U.S. imperialism. We did so based on our Marxist understanding that, unlike colonial powers and many colonial settlers who sought to subjugate and exploit native populations, the Zionists sought instead to eliminate the Palestinians. (The United States, in its origins as a settler colony, did both, committing genocide against native Americans and bringing African slaves to work the land.) As the horror has unfolded before the eyes of millions worldwide, and the U.S. president announced his "iron-clad" defense of Israel, pro-Palestinian protesters and many others denounced the genocide. Many called for a ceasefire, and indeed, illusions of a possible ceasefire just around the corner have been used to keep Gaza solidarity protests from radicalizing.

We in the LFI have insisted instead that Israel get the hell out of Gaza, the occupied West Bank and Syrian Golan. We have also underlined that the Zionist/imperialist butchery in Gaza, like the U.S./NATO imperialist war on Russia over Ukraine, is a way station on the road to a third world war that can only be stopped by international socialist revolution.

We have sought to show in detail here that the charge of genocide is not some kind of wild exaggeration or fantastical construct, bandied about for shock value, as the Zionists claim, but rather that the slaughter is carrying out plans going back to the foundation of Israel. We have cited Israeli sources who exposed the workings of the automated and AI-assisted murder machine. The bourgeois "free but responsible" press, a/k/a "mainstream media," in contrast, almost universally toes the imperialist line, slanderously denouncing even "moderate" protesters (including thousands of Jews) as "antisemites" while fascistic right-wingers of the Donald Trump/JD Vance ilk howl for demonstrators' blood to flow. But many liberals, including U.N. and even U.S. officials along with numerous academic and other analysts, have dug up the facts reported here, in many cases suffering opprobrium or even expulsion and arrest for telling the truth.

So it is demonstrated, definitively, that ***Israel is waging a war against the Palestinian Arab population of Gaza as a whole; that this is mass murder on an industrial scale, that it is a war of extermination, and that it is a joint U.S./Israel genocidal war.*** Or more specifically, it is ***genocide made in U.S.A.***

<sup>36</sup> AP News, 19 March 2024.

Armed with overwhelming evidence, the issue is what to do about it. Almost all of the liberal critics appeal to "international humanitarian law" and "human rights," which the murderous U.S. government pays obeisance to while supplying Israel with the weapons to carry out the genocide. They cite Geneva Conventions, U.N. resolutions, verdicts of this or that international court. But neither the United States nor Israel will accept any verdict of these largely powerless pseudo-judicial bodies. The reality is there is no such thing as international law: the International Court of Justice recently (July 19) issued a statement declaring that Israel's continued occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem is totally illegal, and it must leave forthwith – to which the predictable response has been zero. In actuality, the present genocidal war in Gaza is definitive proof of the hypocrisy of "human rights imperialism." And as for the United Nations, it ordered the dismemberment of Palestine in 1948, after its predecessor, the League of Nations, subjugated Palestinians to the British colonial "mandate" after World War I. The U.N.'s hands drip with Palestinian blood.

Palestinian nationalism runs up against the hard realities of the strategic alliance of Israel with the U.S., NATO and *all* the imperialist powers. As we have written elsewhere, calls for "boycott, divestment, sanctions" are doomed to fail, as they are ultimately appeals to the imperialist rulers who are the guarantors of the Zionist state.<sup>37</sup> Talk of a "multipolar" world is a pipedream, as demonstrated by the failure of the so-called BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) countries to mount any real defense of Gaza. The stark reality is that defense of the Palestinian people falls to the international working class,<sup>38</sup> and ultimately to the struggle for international socialist revolution to smash imperialism. That is, of course, a tall order. But just as Israel is a central axis for the imperialist world order, the struggle to defend the Palestinians against Israel's depredations can be a linchpin of the struggle to bring down that order.

Unlike past genocides, recognized largely after the fact, we are witnessing this one in real time. There must be a struggle to *defeat the genocidal war on Gaza*. What's crucial is the program for that struggle. While the mass murder in Gaza may indeed "shock the world's conscience," the warmongers in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem have the guns and the bombs, including nuclear bombs, and as their terrorist assassinations show, they will ignore any taboo to use them. The Israeli garrison state must be defeated from within and without, breaking the Zionist grip on the Hebrew-speaking population and laying the basis for united struggle by Jewish and Arab workers. Today rabid rightists and fascists hold the whip hand as Israel lurches to the right. But hundreds of thousands of Israelis have angrily demonstrated against the government demanding a ceasefire so the hostages can be released. Surely many realize by now that what Netanyahu intends will get the hostages killed, and the liberal Zionists aren't about to stop him.

Let us be clear: Jews, who have been

<sup>37</sup> See "'BDS' Dead End: Liberal Divestment Schemes, No Road to Liberation of the Palestinian People," starting on page 3 of this issue..

<sup>38</sup> See our article "May Day 2024: For International Workers Action Against the Genocidal U.S./Israel War on Gaza!" *The Internationalist* No. 72, January-May 2024.

the victims of endless pogroms over centuries, and then of genocide by the Nazis in the 20th century, do not have and have not had a god-given right to dominate the land of Palestine. And let's be clear as well that Zionist Israel is not a state of all Jewish people, tens of thousands of whom are participating in Gaza solidarity actions. Zionism, whose whole history paved the way for today's genocidal war against the Palestinian people, has also meant ultimately condemning to death and destruction those who answered the call to "Aliyah" in "Eretz Israel."<sup>39</sup> A pseudo "Jewish state" in the Levant, this crossroads of civilizations, cannot endure by endlessly repressing and oppressing the Palestinian people.

If the Hebrew-speaking working people of Israel cannot make common cause with their Palestinian Arab class sisters and brothers against the capitalist rulers who exploit them all, then as the Bolshevik revolutionary leader of Ukrainian Jewish origin, Leon Trotsky, wrote in 1940:

"[M]ilitary events may turn Palestine into a bloody trap for several hundred thousand [now several million] Jews. Never was it so clear that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system."

To which we would add that it is no less clear that to win the struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people from the yoke of Zionist oppression requires a common struggle for socialist revolution.

A key force for such *internationalist* anti-Zionist struggle is the Palestinian Arab population of Israel, accounting for over 20% of the total and playing an important role in the economy. Israeli rulers' recognition of how explosive joint Arab/Hebrew protest against the war could be is reflected in the arrests of dozens of Israeli Arabs (Palestinians with Israeli citizenship) and leftists on charges including treason and "conspiracy to commit treason" for posting on social media against the war and the killing of civilians in Gaza. Another key factor would be revolutionary struggle in Egypt and Turkey, with their powerful proletariats, against their rulers' longstanding complicity with Zionist Israel. All through the past 16 years' siege of Gaza, Egypt has been part of the incarceration and impoverishment – and now starvation – of the Palestinian population by collaborating with Israel in keeping the border sealed, in exchange for billions in U.S. aid.

As for Turkey's president Tayyip Erdoğan, he has long had a relationship of off-and-on collaboration with Israel. Last September, Erdoğan met with Netanyahu in New York during the U.N. General Assembly. A few days later, he told Turkish media that he spoke with the Israeli premier about "what we can do together in international politics," and that he hoped to soon "start on energy cooperation with Israel, including drilling."<sup>40</sup> But after the Hamas attack, the Turkish leader changed his tune and loudly

<sup>39</sup> A key tenet of Zionism is that Jews should move, or go up (*aliyah* in Hebrew), to the Land of Israel (*Eretz Israel*), an inherently expansionist term meaning all the area on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea and south of Lebanon, west of the River Jordan and northeast of Egypt – i.e., "from the river to the sea." This includes the occupied West Bank, which all of official discourse in Israel refers to as Judea and Samaria. With their small Jewish population, Israel's Zionist rulers have from the start campaigned to get Jews to "make Aliyah" and move to Israel.

<sup>40</sup> *Times of Israel*, 22 September 2023.

# Marjorie Stamberg Protests Gag Order, Speaks Up for Palestinians

Marjorie Stamberg died on 29 May 2024 after a lifetime, cut short at age 79, of fighting for socialist revolution. She was a defender of the communism of Lenin and Trotsky, a key leader of the League for the Fourth International and its U.S. section, the Internationalist Group, a Marxist educator, a militant trade unionist and a champion of all the oppressed. In November 2023, when it was becoming more difficult for her to walk, Marjorie attended three Palestinian solidarity protests in one week.

On November 9 she made her way into a crowd of several thousand on the steps of the New York Public Library with a sign that said “Defend the Palestinians Against Genocidal U.S./Israel War.” On November 15 outside the United Federation of Teachers headquarters, while the official demands were for a ceasefire in Gaza, Marjorie’s sign called for “Israel Out of the West Bank and Gaza Now!” And on November 16, she spoke at a rally called by Class Struggle Education Workers on the steps of the New York Department of Education, denouncing a gag order intended to silence any support for Palestinians by teachers, students or staff.

Marjorie would not be silent. She was determined to speak out against the genocidal war on Gaza by Israel and the U.S., which furnishes all the bombs and planes that make the slaughter possible. A video of what she said is online at: <https://youtu.be/B7H6deSTuAA>.

Text of her remarks:

My name is Marjorie Stamberg, I’m a retired teacher in the Department of Education, and a very proud member of the UFT (the United Federation of Teachers). We have always said the UFT is not the leadership. The UFT is the teachers, it’s the paras (paraprofessionals), it’s the nurses, it’s the people who make up the body of the UFT. We’re always fighting with the Unity

leadership [the UFT bureaucracy caucus] that right now, in terms of health care, in terms of Palestine, I see them as working for [Mayor Eric] Adams. We’re working for the UFT.

Now, there is a lot of stuff going on, a lot of threats against teachers ... for teaching. Basically, as teachers, our job, in the classroom, is to talk with people about how for 75 years Gaza has been the world’s biggest open prison. We’re not allowed to show our personal preferences in the classroom. Alright, that’s something that’s been there for a while. But the letter from Chancellor Banks says teachers may not talk about their personal feelings about this issue anywhere on school grounds. That means not in the lunch room, not in your prep (preparation time), not before and not after. That’s point one. Point two is worse: you may not talk about your personal feelings on the issue outside of the school day.

So you know, you guys can come and get me, but I’m retired and I have tenure, so come on. But for many, many teachers who do not have tenure, their jobs could be on the line if they come into the forefront. Still, many people are doing it.

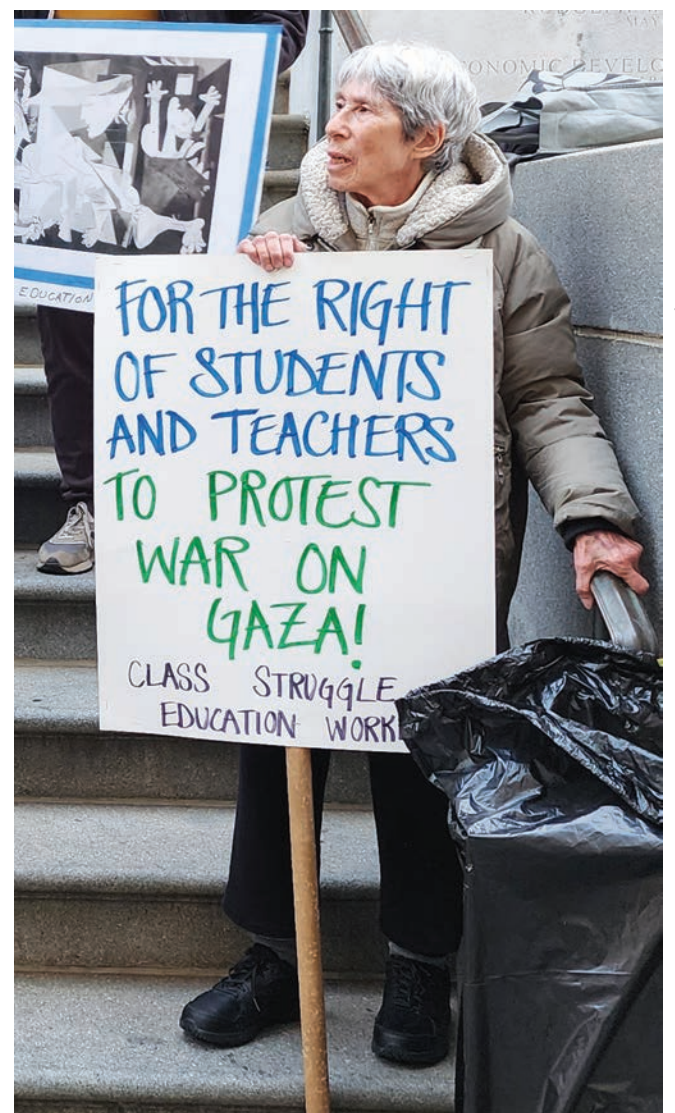
Yesterday we had about a hundred people down at the UFT to pass a motion for a ceasefire. It did not pass, but it split the body much deeper than I’ve ever seen anything go. Now we in my group, Class Struggle Education Workers, are not for the ceasefire, because that would mean stop right now, with Israeli troops in the hospitals, taking over half of Gaza, pushing the Gaza people into the desert, into the Sinai. We are for a Palestinian and Hebrew united workers struggle, because there are many contradictions in Israel as well, and people who do not want to be part of a Zionist state.

And I want to tell you, one of the big lies that is going on around here is that anybody who defends Palestine has got to be

an antisemite. They’re just trying to intimidate you. They are anti-Zionism. [Anti-]Zionism is not antisemitism. Jewish people throughout the world have been victims who are not, fundamentally, for the most part, committed to having a garrison state in the Middle East. Many of them were victims of the Holocaust, and they could not come to the United States, which forbid them to come in, also in many other countries in Europe, so they came to Israel.

The problem is, when you have two groups of people occupying the same land, you really can’t solve it unless you have socialism. Because if you have two states, which state is the stronger, which controls the fuel, which one controls the land, which one has the biggest army? So that idea [of a “two-state solution”] has gone down the way. And we see what we need is a revolution in Gaza, in Israel and throughout the Middle East. And we can’t forget the U.S. role.

Yesterday, at the demonstration at the UFT, the colleagues were saying “Michael Mulgrew, you can’t hide, you are funding genocide.” Well, I thought, we usually say “U.S., you can’t hide, you are funding genocide,” which is also true, but in



Internationalist photo

Marjorie at 16 November 2023 CSEW protest at D.O.E. headquarters against chancellor’s gag order.

fact, the UFT coffers are going into Israeli bonds and to support Israel. So we have a fight inside our union, for our students and for our teachers to have the right to express their own opinions and teach. That’s what they’re there for, and now they’re being threatened. Thank you very much. ■



Mati Milstein / NurPhoto

Israeli Palestinians demonstrate in Haifa during 18 May 2021 Palestinian general strike.

supported Hamas, equating Netanyahu with Hitler and musing that Turkey “might enter Israel” (!) like it did in fighting in Libya in 2020 and last year in support of Azerbaijan in the war over the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. Just now a scandal has erupted over a Turkish company, whose

owners are close to Erdoğan, which has been supplying power to the Israeli army right through the Gaza war!

While reformists and nationalists call on Egypt and Turkey to break relations with Israel, a cheap gesture which would not change much of anything, revolutionary

Marxists would seek to mobilize the millions-strong Egyptian and Turkish working class to bring down these capitalist regimes that have for decades been in alliance with U.S. imperialism. Revolutionary struggle throughout the region is vital to realizing the program for a binational Arab/Hebrew Palestinian workers state in a socialist federation of the Middle East. Most important of all for those in the West who have been fighting against the Gaza genocide is to mobilize the working class in the imperialist centers, from the U.S. to Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and all the NATO countries. As we have shown here, cutting off the supply of heavy-duty weaponry to the kill-crazed Zionist militarists could put an end to the genocidal war, which Israel, with its small population limited economic resources, could not sustain on its own.

In the first instance, this means fighting for the mass workers organizations, centrally trade unions, to *stop the flow of war cargo to Israel – and, in the midst of this genocidal war, to cut off all cargo and transport to Israel.* We in the LFI do not embrace the “strategy” of “boycott, divestment, sanctions” – at bottom an attempt to get U.S. imperialism, the biggest mass

murderer of all, to rein in its Israeli ally and client, which won’t happen.<sup>41</sup> But calling on the working class to use its power *against* the Zionists and imperialists is an entirely different matter. It is also necessary to fight for *strike action against the U.S./Israel war*, as some of the militant “rank-and-file” unions in Italy have undertaken.

Above all, the struggle is political. What’s needed is to break the working class from parties that are pillars of the imperialist system, including both wings of social democracy in Germany, the Labour Party in Britain, etc. In the U.S., as reformists unite to “take the demands of the people to the Democratic Party” convention, the Trotskyists of the Internationalist Group call to break with the Democratic Party of Gaza genocide and racist repression, and to build a class-struggle workers party to lead all the oppressed in the fight for workers revolution.

***Proletarian internationalism is key to the struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people – as well as anti-Zionist Jews and Arabs in Israel – from the death grip of Zionism and imperialism.*** ■

<sup>41</sup> See “‘BDS’ Dead End: Liberal Divestment Schemes, No Road to Liberation of the Palestinian People,” on page 3 of this issue.

# Marjorie Stamberg

(1944-2024)

## Revolutionary Trotskyist, Marxist Educator, A Leader of Struggles for All the Oppressed

Our comrade Marjorie Stamberg died on May 29 after a three-year battle with ovarian cancer. She was 79 and had been active in the New Left, was a pioneer of the fight for women's liberation, a Trotskyist activist and leader since her 20s, a teacher for the last quarter century, and a revolutionary all her adult life. Throughout, she fought tirelessly for the working class, for black people, women, immigrants and all the oppressed. In different arenas, she defended all those exploited and downtrodden by capitalism. Up to her last days, as a central leader of the Internationalist Group (IG), the U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International, Marjorie continued the struggle for equality, for public education and for international socialist revolution, which was her life. She never stepped back from that goal, continuing through her illness until her life was cut short by a disease that is seldom detected in time. Firm in her communist convictions, she was also a warm collaborator, mentor and friend of so many who worked with her. Her comrades and colleagues cherish her great contributions, which will continue to inspire us and hopefully many others in years to come.

Marjorie Stamberg grew up in Philadelphia in a family of East European Jewish heritage. Her grandfather fled from the Ukraine at the time of the 1904 Russo-Japanese war and antisemitic pogroms. She first became active in protesting the Vietnam War at the University of Michigan,



Photo courtesy of Ivan Rowe

Marjorie speaking at 24 November 2008 rally to defend educators in the Absent Teacher Reserve (ATR), demanding "Let teachers teach!"

participating in the first antiwar teach-in (1964). Marjorie moved to Washington, D.C. to become a full-time activist with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the radical wing of the civil rights movement, and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the main organization of the New Left.

Marjorie marched in the 26 March 1966 New York City peace parade on Fifth Avenue as part of the contingent of the Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. (See inset photo highlighting her.)

Already by that time Marjorie was part of the most radical wing of antiwar protesters, considering herself a revolutionary. She not only opposed U.S. foreign policy in Indochina but took a stand with the Vietnamese Communist forces (derisively referred to by the media as "Viet Cong") fighting against U.S. imperialism and its puppet regime in Saigon. Marjorie marched in the March 1966 Fifth Avenue Peace Parade in the dissident contingent calling

for victory to the Vietnam National Liberation Front (NLF) with its leader, Walter Teague, and with NLF flags flying, along with over two dozen supporters of Spartacist, which had been expelled by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). In November 1969 she marched in the Revolutionary Contingent in the Vietnam Moratorium march in Washington calling for "Victory to the Vietcong," which with its NLF flags was excluded by the reformist organizers (notably the ex-Trotskyist SWP) of what many radicals called "peace crawls." When in 1970 the Spartacist League carried the banner "All Indochina Must Go Communist," Marjorie strongly supported that call.

Living in an SDS-SNCC commune in D.C., she was part of the collective that produced the *Washington Free Press*, the first of the underground papers that spread across the U.S. Marjorie's article on the October 1967 March on the Pentagon against the Vietnam War was quoted in Norman Mailer's *Armies of the Night*. That march of tens of thousands who ringed the headquarters of the imperialist war machine had a large pacifist majority and a smaller Revolutionary Contingent of SDS and the Committee to Aid the NLF, which Marjorie supported. After the

pacifist leaders declared victory on the first day, her article, "Wedge!" described "the agony of those who sat and watched for hours" – held at bay by paratroopers from the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division – "who could not leave yet could not resist" as hundreds were arrested. Marjorie also covered the upheaval of black Washington following the 4 April 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King, when the police fled the city, and there was a brief period of 48 hours with "no state power, and no scarcity," as she put it, until the 101st Airborne Division and the National Guard were brought in to restore bourgeois "order."

Coming to New York, Marjorie became a staff writer for the *Guardian*,<sup>1</sup> and when the staff revolted, she wrote for the *Liberated Guardian*<sup>2</sup> and other movement papers. Rejecting the male chauvinism rampant

<sup>1</sup> The *National Guardian* was founded as the paper of the Progressive Party (PP), the Communist Party-led electoral vehicle for the 1948 presidential campaign of former U.S. vice president Henry Wallace. Under the blows of McCarthyite repression the PP disbanded in the mid-1950s, but the newspaper continued as the largest left paper in the U.S. As the New Left grew, in early 1968 the Stalinist popular-front editors stepped down and were replaced by a New Left team of writers who changed the name to the *Guardian* and invited Marjorie to join the staff.

<sup>2</sup> As the New Left *Guardian* settled into a reformist Mao-Stalinist line, and the editor Jack Smith acted in a high-handed way toward the collective that supposedly ran the paper, members of the staff staged a strike and then started up the *Liberated Guardian*, with a somewhat more radical (but still Stalinist-influenced) political line.



Marjorie marched in the 26 March 1966 New York City peace parade on Fifth Avenue as part of the contingent of the Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.



At the *Washington Free Press*, the first of the underground papers that swept the U.S. in the late 1960s, Marjorie wrote on the October 1967 antiwar march on the Pentagon.

**The new feminism**  
"You've come a long way, baby"

**Guardian**

By Marjorie Stamberg  
Five or six years ago, as in hundreds of places across the country, a new feminism was born. It was not a feminism of continuous oppression whose origin dates back to the 19th century. The new feminism groups have, ranging from rather political theoretical to militantly separatist, been born out of the oppression of women. The groups are forming that if a woman is oppressed, it is not because of her biology, but because of the system she lives in. It is a system of oppression, not because of her biology, but because of the system she lives in. It is a system of oppression, not because of her biology, but because of the system she lives in. It is a system of oppression, not because of her biology, but because of the system she lives in.

Marjorie's article series on "The New Feminism" in the *Guardian* was influential in breaking through New Left resistance to the women's liberation movement.

in the New Left, she became a pioneer of the modern women's liberation movement and of its left wing that sought a program fit to the radical tasks posed by the fight for emancipation. She was an early member of Redstockings,<sup>3</sup> a leading organization of what is now called "second wave feminism" in 1968-69. A three-part series on "The New Feminism" that she wrote in the *Guardian* in March/April 1969 was considered influential in breaking through resistance in the New Left to the women's liberation movement. Although posed in a feminist framework, Marjorie underlined issues of class and capitalism and referred to the Marxist analysis of Friedrich Engels. As she said later in a 2015 class on women's liberation that she gave to the New York Marxist study group of the IG:

"I was a member of Redstockings in New York for a few months while I was writing for the *Guardian*. Others have told me that I was always pushing from the left. In particular, I was concerned about the fact that the group was overwhelmingly petty-bourgeois and entirely white.... The group included many who become well-known writers, critics and professors and a number of Greenwich Village intellectuals. So while it may loom large in histories of feminism, it wasn't that influential among radical women activists who basically came from the New Left."  
—Marjorie Stamberg, "Women's Liberation and the Class Line" (29 October 2015)

Meanwhile, she added, "Redstockings and most of the women's groups consolidated

<sup>3</sup> A takeoff on "Bluestockings," a name used to disparage female intellectuals in past centuries.

around various gradations of anti-Marxist theory in order to justify a thoroughly pro-capitalist program."

Marjorie was at the SDS 1969 convention, where the main organization of the New Left split between competing Maoist wings, that of the Third-Worldist Revolutionary Youth Movement I and II, on one side, and the Worker-Student Alliance led by the Progressive Labor Party, on the other. She had been in close touch with what

would become the Weathermen faction of RYM since her days in Washington, although not entirely sharing their politics.

Moving to the West Coast, Marjorie was a founder of *Tooth and Nail*, a feminist journal that became the organ of Oakland Women's Liberation (O.W.L.). In her 2015 talk, Marjorie noted:

"We were not feminists first who were won to revolutionary communism. For a lot of us, we were revolutionaries first, who saw the need to fight for women's liberation and because of that were won to feminism — and then, for some of us, as we saw what it meant in practice, we went from feminism to genuine Marxism."

With the group's working-class orientation, Marjorie organized operators in the phone company (AT&T, which until the 1980s was a monopoly), many of them Black Panther women. But she saw through the defeatist sectoralism of feminism, notably when some operators scabbed on a strike by (white male) IBEW switchmen. As she recounted, that experience won her to the program of women's liberation through socialist revolution. The most conscious women in O.W.L. undertook what Marjorie called a "voyage of discovery" that led them to Friedrich Engels' 1885 work *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, and his "discovery that oppression of women and the patriarchy evolved out of the development of private property and its locus was the family, integral to the capitalist social and economic system." Actually, as Marjorie put it in her 2015 talk, it was a "re-discovery":

"This political work had been done before by an earlier generation of revolutionary women leading up to and after the Russian Revolution — Clara Zetkin, Alexandra Kollontai and others. But that work had been systematically buried by the Stalinists after the political counter-revolution in the Soviet Union and destruction of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. We had to find it again."

### Professional Revolutionary

In the Bay Area, Marjorie joined the Spartacist League (SL), which for three decades championed revolutionary Trotskyism against the betrayal of interna-



Marjorie Stamberg as Spartacist candidate for state assembly in 1978.

tionalist communism by Stalinism, the politics of the conservative nationalist bureaucracy that usurped political power in the Soviet workers state. She also helped build the Militant Action Caucus in phone, which was politically supported by the SL. A key question for her was the 1968 New York City teachers strike, which she had covered for the *Guardian*, opposing the walk-out by the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). She traveled to New York to speak with Spartacist leader Jim Robertson, who convinced her of the SL's position that the strike was a necessary action against the anti-labor drive of the liberal Republican mayor and the Ford Foundation, who were pushing "community control" in order to set black people against the union and to undercut the potential for ghetto rebellion by putting black militants on the payroll. But while defending the strike, the SL also denounced the UFT leadership under Albert Shanker for waging it in a way that stoked white racist attitudes instead of on a program to defend the impoverished black community. Robertson's crucial role in the fight to uphold the Trotskyist program over many years is an important part of our history and what we stand on today.

Transferring to New York in 1973 to help launch the SL's *Workers Vanguard* as a biweekly paper, Marjorie continued to work at the phone company, where she launched the New York branch of MAC and became the first female switchman in NYC. She was a staff writer and then member of the editorial board of *WV*, edited by Jan Norden, who was to be her companion through thick and thin for 50 years. Together they were at the core of a vibrant collective, often under fire internally, that put out *WV* as the premier publication of the

Spartacist tendency for 23 years and what many judged to be the finest left paper in the U.S. at the time. In 1985, the Pacifica Radio group's NYC station, WBAI, launched a "first annual 'Emma' Awards for the American left press," declaring *Workers Vanguard* the hands-down winner, describing it as "the craziest, most lively, most humorous, most nasty, most intelligent and most pig-headed of the left-sectarian organs." We, of course, took every word of that as a compliment.

Marjorie was also a main public spokesperson for the SL, a member of its central committee and its candidate for state assembly in 1978, running in the 64th A.D. encompassing downtown Manhattan's Greenwich Village, East and West. In opposition to social-democratic electoralism, where elected officials simply ignore their party's political positions, following Leninist practice Marjorie signed an undated resignation statement from her position, to be tendered should she fail to carry out the Spartacist program. Bolsheviks run in bourgeois elections primarily as a platform for their revolutionary program. Marjorie's campaign called for "A Socialist Fight to Save New York." At the time, large parts of the city looked like bombed-out war zones as landlords burned down their own buildings in order to collect insurance money.

No. 18 SPRING 1979

# Women and Revolution

Journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League

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## Stamberg: "Consistent Feminism Leads to... Strikebreaking"

[Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 218, 3 November 1978.]

On Tuesday, October 24, Marjorie Stamberg, the Spartacist Party candidate for New York state assembly in the 64th A.D., was interviewed and talked with listeners for approximately two hours on the "Round Midnight" radio show broadcast by WBAI. In response to a question on the Spartacist attitude toward feminism, from a listener who identified herself as a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, Stamberg answered:

We believe that the sex line is not the fundamental division in society—the class line is. We have forged our work in the women's movement by fighting against the strategy of feminism and to link the fight against the oppression of women to the workers movement. Let me give you some examples of this. You see I spent many years in the women's movement myself and I considered myself a feminist for many years, and part of my being won to a Trotskyist program had to do with my experiences trying to organize working-class women to a feminist strategy....

My experiences are similar to those of a number of people of my generation who went through various kinds of struggles in the New Left and the women's movement. I joined SDS in 1965 and was active in the New Left until approximately 1969. At that point I



New York City, 4:00 a.m.: 10 phone lines of radio station WBAI are jammed.

Interview with Marjorie in *Women and Revolution*, the journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League, No. 18 (Spring 1979), recounting her experience organizing women phone workers in Oakland, and the conclusions she drew from that.

**WORKERS VANGUARD** 25¢

No. 29 28 September 1973

# Workers, Leftists Face Massacre in Chile

The lives of thousands of labor leaders and rank-and-file militants, as well as revolutionaries from all over Latin America, are at stake in Chile today. We call on all workers organizations to mount militant protests against the reactionary junta, demanding the immediate release of the arrested militants and workers who are daily being tortured and murdered. It is an elementary duty of class solidarity to offer international proletarian aid to these victims of a military coup aimed at crushing the Chilean workers movement.

The international working class has offered a major defeat to the counter-revolutionary coup. For the Chilean workers the September 11 military takeover represents a decisive setback; recovery will take a matter of years. Internationally, the spectacle of the best organized, most conscious proletariat of Latin America suffering a bloody and ignominious defeat, lacking the capacity to launch a civil war in self-defense, can only demoralize millions of militants. Either the leadership of the labor movement or we shall pay the price of our blindness in blood—as is happening in Santiago today.

The Bloody End to "Popular Unity"

Allende's overthrow by the military was no accident. It had been prepared by overthrowing the Popular Unity (UP) coalition every day. But once did this supposedly "Marxist" government attempt to touch the "secret" armed

better preparation for a bloody massacre?

Moreover, the Popular Unity coalition consistently preached class faith in the supposed "neutrality" of the "democratic" military. In his "First Message to Congress" in December 1970 Allende proclaimed:

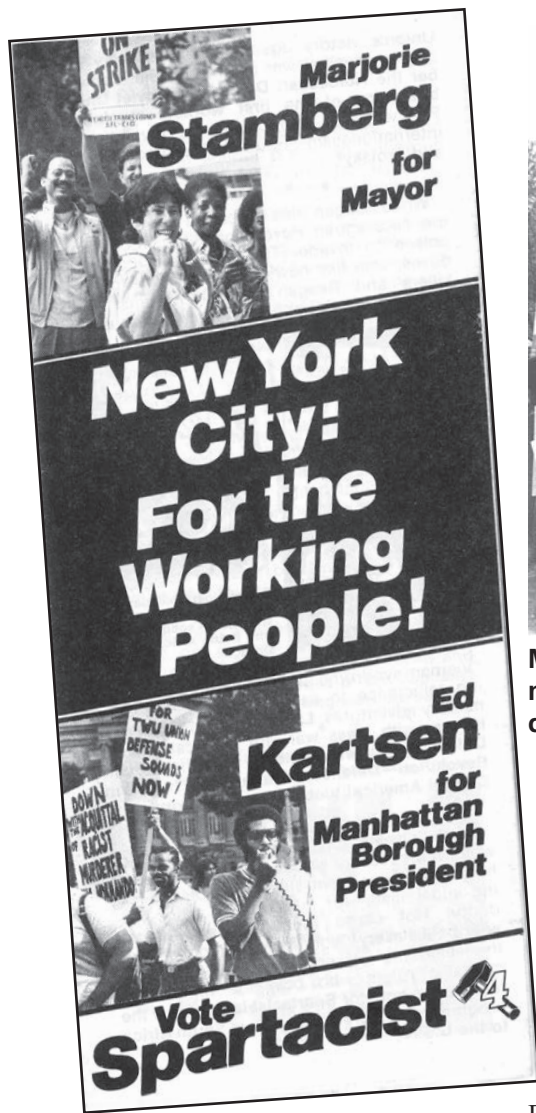
Chile is one more proof. The reformists actually approved legislation to permit the military to enter any armed in the hands of civilians. The law was of course, spiritless—opposed against the unions and workers parties, while the fascist built up a

Chile is one more proof. The reformists actually approved legislation to permit the military to enter any armed in the hands of civilians. The law was of course, spiritless—opposed against the unions and workers parties, while the fascist built up a

Popular Front

More than just believing in a con-

One of the first issues of *Workers Vanguard* that Marjorie worked on.



When Marjorie ran for mayor in 1985, the central campaign slogan was, "From Soweto to Harlem, smash racist terror!"

Marjorie got 3.2% of the vote, a good showing for a leftist candidate, and a lot of local press coverage highlighting her program.

Marjorie ran for office again in 1985, this time for New York City mayor against the racist Democrat Ed Koch. The central campaign slogan was, "From Soweto to Harlem: Smash Racist Terror!" This connected with the uprising in the impoverished townships of South Africa against the apartheid regime of white supremacy which denied black people any rights while



Marjorie pushed insistently for the Spartacist League's labor/black mobilization to stop the Ku Klux Klan in Washington, D.C., that brought 6,000 determined demonstrators into the streets to block the hooded nightriders.

superexploiting their labor. Meanwhile, in NYC the NYPD was on a murderous rampage against black people, enforcing "Koch's Killer Kuts," as a sign protesting the closing of a hospital in Harlem put it. In 1983, "Koch's cossacks" killed 25-year-old Michael Stewart for writing graffiti on a subway wall. In 1984 they killed a Bronx grandmother, Eleanor Bumpurs, in her apartment as she resisted eviction. Coming amid Ronald Reagan's anti-Soviet Cold War crusade, Marjorie's campaign proclaimed "We Are the Party of the Russian Revolution." Speaking on WLIB, the leading black radio station in New York, she declared "the KKK doesn't ride in Moscow."

Marjorie always emphasized the centrality of the fight against the racist oppression of black people. After the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis massacred leftists in Greensboro, NC, in 1979, she played a main role in sparking SL-led labor/black mass actions that kept the KKK out of the North for years. In 1980, when the KKK threatened to go to Detroit, she went there to help organize a mobilization of black workers under the watchword, "The Klan Won't Ride in Motor City." In 1982, after the hooded fascists announced

they were coming to the nation's capital, she fought for the party to initiate actions to stop them. When that was initially turned down, as the SL didn't have a local there, her tenacity overcame the initial objections. On 27 November 1982 the SL's "Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the KKK in Washington, D.C." brought out 6,000 determined demonstrators, including a Nat Turner Brigade of black shipyard and naval workers from the Norfolk, Virginia area, who took over the streets while the nightriders slunk off.

Marjorie fought against counterrevolution everywhere. In 1981, she demonstrated with the SL outside the offices of the UFT denouncing its role as a conduit for CIA funding of the nationalist, anti-Communist Solidarność

movement in Poland. As the overwhelming majority of the left proclaimed "solidarity with Solidarity," Marjorie gave a seminal talk titled "Hail Rosa Luxemburg," in which she analyzed "Poland's Communist Tradition." This was published in *Young Spartacus* (May and Summer 1982), the newspaper of the Spartacus Youth League. We will be republishing this important article. In 1985 Marjorie went to Nicaragua as part of our "Nicabucks" campaign to raise money to defend the besieged Central American country against the U.S.' proxy "Contra" (for counterrevolutionary) forces.

In early 1990, Marjorie went to the German Democratic Republic (DDR) in the all-out effort by our International Communist League (the name adopted by the international Spartacist tendency in 1989) against the annexation of the East German bureaucratically deformed workers state by imperialist West Germany. She returned to New York to put out *WV* while Norden edited our daily news bulletin in Berlin. The ICL's audacious mobilization was the first time Trotskyists had openly campaigned in a Stalinist-ruled state, and was a signal achievement of the Spartacist tendency. After the counterrevolution, Marjorie gave a talk in 1991 at the cultural center of the Leuna refinery, noting how East German women lost many rights due to capitalist reunification, and explaining, based on her own experience in the U.S., how feminism was counterposed to a real struggle against the oppression of women rooted in the family.

In 1993, Marjorie traveled to Cuba as the island was reeling from the cutoff of Soviet aid following counterrevolution in the USSR. Upon returning from that trip, she was asked as she walked in the door of the SL's offices if Cuba would resist counterrevolution. She responded that, from what she had seen, it would – which led to a campaign of accusations inside the SL of being "soft on Stalinism." A little later, party leader Robertson wanted *WV* to say that the Cuban deformed workers state would "sink under the warm waves of the Caribbean." Marjorie and Jan refused. Thirty years on, Cuba is still afloat, and the *gusano* counterrevolutionaries are still held at bay. But as Marjorie said in a forum she gave at Howard University in Washington on "Blacks and the Cuban Revolution," "Latin

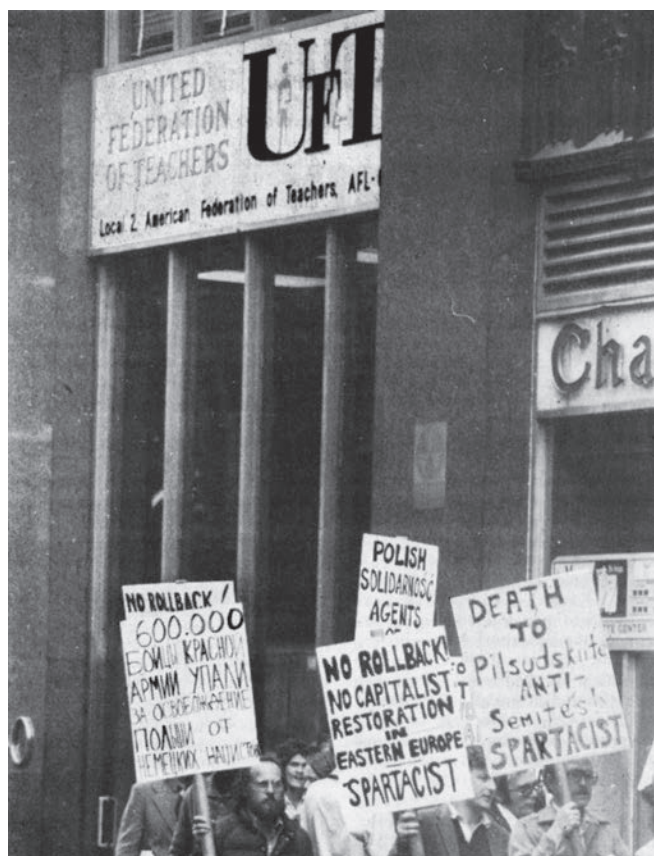
American anti-Yankee nationalism, or black nationalism, were not able to give a revolutionary answer to black struggle," and that "only through socialist revolution can black people be emancipated and fully integrated into an egalitarian society" by extending the struggle to the U.S.

The imperialist-led destruction of the Soviet Union, the first workers state in history – founded by the Bolsheviks led by Lenin and Trotsky, and betrayed by Stalin and his heirs – devastated much of the Western left. Many who had called themselves communists rebranded as socialists, erstwhile socialists became "progressive" union bureaucrats, and many organizations closed up shop. The Spartacist tendency, which fought against counterrevolution in the DDR and the USSR, was not immune to this defeatism, but it expressed itself differently, by a retreat from the class struggle. In 1995-96, there was a year-long internal fight against its drift toward abstentionism – posed sharply over the organization's work in Germany – which in June 1996 led to the ICL's desertion under fire in the struggle to oust the police from the municipal workers union in Brazil's "Steel City" of Volta Redonda. Earlier that month, Marjorie and Jan were expelled from the SL/ICL on trumped-up charges.

### Marxist Educator

After the bureaucratic expulsions, Marjorie didn't hesitate. She proposed the name "internationalist" for our new organization and publication, as it summed up our aims in a clear, simple, understandable way. Starting over from scratch at age 51 with a tiny group of four comrades (Marjorie, Jan, Socorro and Negrete) is not easy, but this was her life's work. She went to work at the New York University Medical Center to pay the tuition at the NYU Steinhardt school of education, and by 1999 she embarked on a second career as a teacher in New York City schools.

Now there were new challenges. Marjorie compared teaching to being on-stage in a Broadway play five days a week, with a run that goes on for nine months, and continues year after year, with a different script every day, and an audience that talks back. Plus, she and her colleagues had to deal with mind-numbing rubrics supposedly measuring teachers' effectiveness, which changed almost yearly, a stultifying bureaucracy in the NYC Department of Education (D.O.E.) and the exhausting work of teaching young people as they are going through the difficult time of becoming adults. Marjorie taught English as a Second Language, or ESL, now called ENL (English as a New Language) initially in high school and from 2008 on in a program for young adults ages 17 to 21. She also taught university-level English language courses at Hunter College



SL protest against United Federation of Teachers funneling CIA dollars to anti-Communist, Polish nationalist Solidarność movement, September 1981.



Excerpts from September 1993 forum by Marjorie on the history and situation of black people in Cuba.



**Becoming a teacher in the New York City schools, Marjorie taught young adults, ages 17-21, almost all new immigrants.**

and summers at NYU for a decade, and then later in adult ed in the D.O.E.

Soon after Marjorie started teaching, the IG began publishing articles on education. A 2001 article, "Defeat the Capitalist Onslaught Against Public Education!" spelled out how the Democratic Party, with Hillary Clinton in the forefront, embraced privatizing and corporatizing the public schools, pushing education "reform" to please Wall Street. It also explained the origins of the UFT leadership in the anti-communist social democracy of Max Shachtman, a renegade from Trotskyism who went over to imperialism. (UFT founder/leader Albert Shanker was a devotee of Shachtman, whose wife, Yetta Barsh, was Shanker's long-time assistant.)

A special supplement on *Marxism and the Battle Over Education* also included materials from the early Soviet republic when the Bolsheviks introduced a revolution in education, including replacing the dictatorship of school administrators and their capitalist bosses with teacher-student-worker-parent control of the schools. In addition to "On the Class School" by Anatoli Lunacharsky, the commissar of education from 1917 to 1929, two essays by Nadezhda Krupskaya on public education and socialist schools (explaining that it will take a socialist revolution to realize thoroughgoing educational reform), it included a report by John Dewey on a trip to the USSR in 1927 where he saw his program of "labor schools" connecting education with social life turned into reality, before they were squelched by Stalin.

In December 2001, Marjorie went to Hunter College to join in a united-front rally, initiated by the IG, to stop the "war purge" of undocumented immigrant students by raising their tuition that the City

University of New York tried to push through in the atmosphere of repressive hysteria following the 11 September 2001 attacks. In 2002, she leafleted the UFT Delegate Assembly with a resolution calling for teachers to show solidarity with a looming NYC transit strike by, among other things, encouraging teachers to "take their classes to TWU picket lines to provide students with education in the class struggle."

In 2003, as the U.S. invasion and occupation laid waste to Iraq, Marjorie wrote a paper on "Teaching English as a Second Language in a Climate of War," skewering the lying war propaganda (invented Iraqi weapons of mass destruction) being spewed out by the government and media, and denouncing the fear instilled by repressive laws like the U.S.A. PATRIOT Act. She presented the paper at the national TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) convention in Long Beach, California and later at the New York state TESOL convention. In 2005, she slammed the UFT contract with the D.O.E. that gave up the right of transfer by seniority when schools close in exchange for a salary hike, and wrote a leaflet denouncing the arrest of Muslim students by immigration cops.

On 14 June 2006, there was an explosion of sharp class struggle in the Mexican state of Oaxaca as teachers rose up in the face of a deadly cop attack on their *plantón* (encampment), in the state capital. The teachers sparked a semi-insurrectionary struggle backed by indigenous peoples and workers that drove the police, courts and all government authorities out of Oaxaca city, surrounded and shut down the state legislature, blockaded highways and the airport and cut off the state for five months. That same day, Marjorie and the Internationalist Group called a solidarity protest outside the Mexican consulate in New York. A few weeks later, she and comrades of the Grupo Internacionalista of Mexico traveled to Oaxaca, where strikers effusively thanked the teacher from New York who had played a key role in helping to spread the word of their struggle.

### Defending the ATRs

Back in the U.S., Marjorie had enjoyed teaching her immigrant students, most of them newly arrived, inspired by their excitement at seeing their first snowfall and amazed that they respected their teacher. ("They hadn't got the memo," she remarked.) It was challenging, with students ranging from some who had almost no formal education (and sometimes no written first language) to others with baccalaureate degrees in their home countries that are not recognized in the U.S. D.O.E. administrators soon saw that she was a superb teacher and asked her to become a mentor. So for a couple years she traveled to schools around Queens helping new teachers. Many stayed in touch over the years, saying how much they appreciated her support. But she felt it was a semi-management position – she even had to wear a suit – and she decided to return to teaching. "Who needs the suits?" – the D.O.E. bureaucrats – she would say. "We're the ones who do the educating. We



**Despite attempt by the union tops to divert people from the rally approved by the UFT Delegate Assembly, some 300 educators and supporters turned out on 24 November 2008 to demand that teachers be placed in permanent positions. Marjorie (barely visible, bottom center) was a lead organizer and speaker.**

should decide."

Marjorie returned to the classroom in spring 2007. She was hired at ASHS – Auxiliary Services for High School – just as the D.O.E. decided to dissolve this model program that prepared students for the high school equivalency exam. The chaotic reorganization of the alternative schools district, D79, "excessed" hundreds of teachers. Because of a clause in the 2005 contract, they couldn't be fired – so instead, more than 250 who couldn't find a principal to hire them were thrown into the "Absent Teacher Reserve" (ATR). Marjorie and the UFT ASHS chapter leader Roz Panepento launched a petition and media campaign to get them back in the classroom. When ASHS was replaced by "GED Plus," Marjorie ran for chapter leader, narrowly losing as the UFT Unity Caucus bureaucracy refused to give her a list of chapter members, or even of the 80 locations where they taught, until a day or so before the election.

By 2008, the excruciating situation of the "excessed" D79 educators worsened. By now there were 1,400 in the pool. Once more, Marjorie didn't give up. She put out a call for a citywide meeting of ATRs and again launched a petition drive calling on the union to demand they be placed, garnering hundreds of signatures from over 103 schools across the city. Together with other activists she initiated an Ad Hoc Committee to Support the ATRs and wrote a motion, which was actually passed by the Delegate Assembly, for a UFT "citywide rally ... calling on the NYC Department of Education to reduce class sizes and assign positions to all teachers in the Absent Teacher Reserve who want assignments before any new teachers are hired." This spooked the UFT and D.O.E. tops, so much that they hurriedly signed a side agreement the day before the November 24 rally. But instead of placing ATR teachers in permanent positions, it only created some financial incentives for principals to hire them.

The union then announced a wine and cheese party at the UFT offices at the same time as the rally to celebrate this empty agreement, and dispatched staffers to divert people from the protest. It didn't work. Some 300 teachers and supporters turned out to a united-front demonstration organized by the Ad Hoc Committee, the largest opposition showing in years. The crowd was electrified. Marjorie was a main speaker, as a UFT member and the main public spokesperson of the recently

formed Class Struggle Education Workers (CSEW). She insisted that the struggle for the ATRs continue, the UFT-D.O.E. agreement couldn't be trusted. But she didn't stop there.

Marjorie went on to denounce mayoral control, calling for teacher-student-parent-worker control of the schools. She excoriated the union bureaucrats as labor lieutenants of capital, in socialist Daniel De Leon's famous phrase, who act as a transmission belt for the bosses, particularly through the Democratic Party. She said that as the government was bailing out the banks (this was at the height of the 2007-08 Wall Street crisis), educators had big battles ahead and needed to ally with all of NYC labor and prepare to take on New York state's no-strike Taylor Law. She warned against illusions in newly elected president Barack Obama, who as a Democrat was going to continue the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq when what was needed was to defeat those wars. And she ended, "We need a workers party, we need a workers government."

Given the size and energy of the rally, as it was winding down Randi Weingarten showed up with a retinue to peddle their backroom deal. When Marjorie sought to answer her, the AFT/UFT chief refused to hand over the megaphone until people calling out "let Marjorie talk" forced her to relent. In fact, in the next several years as few as 16 ATR teachers were assigned positions as a result of the incentives in the side agreement. Instead, the ATR pool ballooned to close to 1,700 teachers by 2014. As the bosses' press (not only the teacher-bashing *Post* but also the *New York Times*) harped about ATRs as mooches sitting around "doing nothing," Marjorie kept agitating for union action to demand that they be placed. The ATR only ended with the pandemic-induced teacher shortage in 2021 when the D.O.E. finally let these qualified, experienced educators teach.

### What Kind of Opposition to the Bureaucracy?

Marjorie's criticism of Obama and the Democrats at the November 2008 ATR rally upset a number of reformists and liberals in the crowd. In the aftermath, there was a sharp struggle over what kind of opposition was needed. Speaking for the CSEW, Marjorie called for more united-front actions like on November 24, but insisted that to defeat the pro-capitalist Unity







Marjorie emphasized that to fight the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, what is needed is a class-struggle opposition that combats the capitalist system that is destroying public education. Shown here at April 2014 protest against invasion of charter schools, financed by Wall Street hedge funds.

caucus “we need *leadership based on a class-struggle program*, and that is what we need to build now.” Others wanted an all-inclusive opposition caucus bringing together all the different groupings despite their very real differences in program and strategy. Marjorie replied that a mega-caucus would only result in mega-confusion, and that it would have a lowest-common-denominator program that could only be simple trade-unionism:

“But simple trade unionism in this period where working people are under attack across the board, where every union gain is being taken away, is impossible. In this period of capitalist decay, reformism is a dead-end: if you are not prepared to fight the system as a whole, you are destined to fail....

“There has to be a serious discussion about the history and future of this union, from the ‘AFL-CIA’ ‘State Department socialist’ Albert Shanker, to his wannabe imitators of the fourth reincarnation.... As we fight on every issue of social justice, we need to understand their roots in and to struggle against the capitalist system as a whole. That’s why we call for a class-struggle workers party.”

–“After November 24...” (2 December 2008)

The one-big-caucus crowd went on to form the Grassroots Education Movement, which a few years later engendered the Movement of Rank-and-File Educators (M.O.R.E.).

The ATRs were only one of the issues Marjorie fought over. In the spring of 2009, as Obama was pushing “performance pay” for teachers, Weingarten tried to soft-soap it by proposing that if student test scores in a school rose, each teacher would get a \$3,000 bonus. Marjorie denounced this as a soft-core version of the union-busting agenda of “merit pay,” and she led the teachers of GED-Plus to vote it down. It’s no mean feat to get a majority of union members to reject a \$3,000 bribe, but she did. Ultimately that ploy went nowhere. When Marjorie ran for UFT delegate from GED-Plus that spring, she was elected with more votes than the Unity chapter leader, Michael Friedman. They clashed on different issues over the next decade, but they also collaborated, and he always spoke of her with respect.

### “Public Schools Are Where Race and Class Come Together”

2010 saw a full-scale teacher-bashing, anti-union offensive nationwide. Right-wingers produced a pseudo-“documentary,” *Waiting for Superman*, denouncing tenure for public school teachers. The next year, Columbia Pictures followed suit with *Bad Teacher*, starring Cameron Diaz. In New York, billionaire mayor Michael Bloomberg launched a campaign to close scores of “failing” schools and promote privately managed anti-union charter schools that siphoned off dollars (in addition to big bucks from Wall Street) and stole classroom space from public schools with disruptive “co-locations.” Marjorie and the CSEW fought this tooth and nail, calling to *occupy closing schools*. She put out leaflets detailing how charters were used by real estate operators and served as cash cows for hedge funds, their steady flow of state funds to be milked if their speculative “investments” went south (as they did in 2007-08).

Marjorie testified at hearings of Bloomberg’s PEP (known as the “Puppet Education Panel”) against the closing of Paul Robeson High School in Crown Heights and at Bronx Regional High School. She along with hundreds of educators, parents, students and supporters spoke at animated PEP hearings of several thousand people that went on for hours, after which the panel members dutifully rubber-stamped the closing of the latest batch of schools slated for destruction by Bloomberg and his schools chancellors Joel Klein and Cathy Black, imports from the corporate world who knew nothing of education. Black (who never attended a public school) set off a firestorm with her racist quip that the solution to classroom overcrowding was birth control! At a PEP meeting, Marjorie distributed

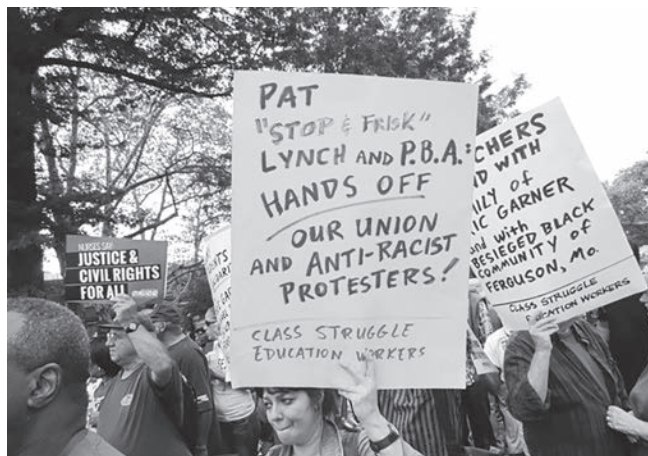
a hilarious “Pop Quiz for Cathy Black” written by her colleague and comrade Charlie Brover, whom she had worked with since the 1970s.

The UFT, the several dissident currents in the union, just about the entire left, community activists and many liberals came to the stormy PEP meetings, but what Marjorie had to say was distinctive in one important respect: she attacked Bloomberg’s schemes as *racist*. “Look at the zip codes where they are closing the schools, it’s not in Riverdale or the Upper East Side, it’s in the poor, black and Latino neighborhoods,” she said. The UFT and the reformist opposition consciously stayed away from the issue of race, but as Marjorie was walking down

De Kalb Avenue after a session at Brooklyn Tech, a prominent black activist from Bed-Stuy ran out of a deli to thank her for saying out loud the obvious truth that the others were tip-toeing around. She often noted that the fight against closing schools was key to overcoming the division between teachers and the black community that had lasted for 40 years since the 1968 UFT strike.

In 2013, the NYC school bus drivers and attendants, a largely Dominican and Haitian workforce whose crucial role in the school system was often ignored by both the UFT mainstream and dissident unionists, went on strike. On Day One, Marjorie was on the picket line in the rain at 6:30 a.m., expressing teacher solidarity with the strikers. The next day she put forward a motion at the UFT Delegate Assembly for the union to pledge its full support and call a mass rally of NYC labor to back the strike (it was not allowed to come to a vote, although it had a lot of support). The CSEW, which seeks to unite all education workers, not just professionals like the UFT, was on the picket line almost daily. M.O.R.E., as Marjorie put it, was “missing in action” (it had one token rally on the steps of D.O.E. headquarters).

The issue of what kind of opposition needs to be built against the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy came to a head with the



The acid test. While Class Struggle Education Workers marched in August 2014 protest in Staten Island against police murder of Eric Garner, the M.O.R.E. caucus, despite pretensions of “social justice unionism,” called for unity with the police and the fascistic police “union.” CSEW calls for cops out of the unions and out of the schools.



At 1 February 2011 meeting of billionaire mayor’s puppet Panel for Educational Policy, UFT D79 delegate Marjorie Stamberg denounced Bloomberg’s school closing program as racist, an obvious fact which other educators who spoke tiptoed around. The audience of hundreds cheered.

July 2014 police murder in Staten Island of Eric Garner, who was choked to death as he repeated eleven times, “I can’t breathe.” This crystallized outrage against racist cop repression throughout the city. Marjorie and the IG went to Garner’s funeral in Brooklyn, where they didn’t see anyone from the union. But when black Democrat Al Sharpton called a mass march in Staten Island in August, UFT leader Michael Mulgrew wised up and the union endorsed.

The Internationalist Group has many times denounced the role of Sharpton, who with his signature chant “No justice, no peace,” always seeks to divert protest into pressure on the bourgeois politicians. Still, the IG and CSEW marched in the Staten Island protest, which was in actuality a referendum on racism. *M.O.R.E. did not*. Why not? Partly because some of their members from Staten Island, where many teachers are married to police, were influenced by local pro-cop sentiment. But even worse, M.O.R.E. put out a grotesque statement against the union’s decision to participate in the march and calling for “the leaderships of the UFT and PBA, to find ways to work together and unite!” “Unity” with the fascistic organization protecting the racist killer cops of the NYPD?!

M.O.R.E. claims to stand for “social justice unionism.” But here we saw the program of simple trade-unionism in action, covering up for racist police murder. Marjorie put out a sharply worded “Open Letter to M.O.R.E.” (10 September 2014), saying: “Far from being our ‘brothers and sisters,’ the police are professional strike-breakers and enforcers of racist ‘law and order.’ That’s their job for the ruling class.” Its outrageous statement, she added, “flows directly from MORE’s basic premise of ‘uniting’ all and sundry against the Unity misleaders. It flows directly from its avoidance of all issues of race and class, the fundamental questions in this country.”

Marjorie emphasized over and over, “the public schools are where race and class come together.” She called for *cops out of the unions, and cops out of the schools*. And she stressed that in city after city, all across the country, *Democrats are the bosses of the racist killer cops*.



**After the 2016 teachers strike in Oaxaca had gone on for a month and a half, on 19 June 2016 the army and federal police massacred eleven indigenous people in Nochixtlán. At every town along the highway to the state capital the military faced tenacious resistance. Marjorie, in Oaxaca on sabbatical, supported our comrades of the Grupo Internacionalista, who were in the front lines of the battle (above, in Hacienda Blanca on the outskirts of Oaxaca city).**

### Teachers Lead Mass Revolt in Oaxaca

In 2016, Marjorie took a six-month sabbatical to go to Oaxaca, Mexico, where she had been several times before, to study indigenous education. She interviewed teachers in Zapotec, Mixtec and Mixe communities and gave some classes to grad students at the state university named after Benito Juárez, the indigenous president of Mexico who in the mid-1800s, after waging a civil war against clerical reactionaries and defeating a French invasion, launched a system of free, secular public education. After returning to New York she gave a presentation as a professional development day in her school, P2G, on “Language, Culture and Identity: An Investigation into Teaching and Learning in Oaxaca.” While she was in Oaxaca a new teachers strike broke out, that as in 2006, engulfed the entire state, lasting from May to September. Marjorie actively supported our comrades in the Grupo Internacionalista, who were in the front lines of battle.

All highways in and out of Oaxaca were cut off for several months. Soon, the only way in or out was on the teachers’ bus. The teachers had 37 major roadblocks across the state and check points at the state line where they inspected all vehicles. The teachers have their own FM and Internet radio, Radio Plantón, that the GI has a program on, Frecuencia Obrera Internacionalista. The Zapotec, Mixtec and Triqui indigenous areas were mobilized in support of the teachers, who often act as spokesmen and advocate for these impoverished communities. There were repeated demonstrations of tens of thousands, and on a couple of occasions, hundreds of thousands in the state capital. During the strike the GI had a film club that showed films every night in the street outside the headquarters of the teachers union, Sección XXII of the CNTE, a dissident union that had largely broken free from the stranglehold of the corporatist education workers “union” (SNTE), which was and is essentially a government agency for controlling teachers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Marjorie’s article “CNTE-SNTE, What’s the Diff? And Why It’s Important” (August 2016), on the CSEW site (edworkersunite.blogspot.com/2016/08/mexico-teachers-strike-cnte-snte-whats.html).

After the strike had gone on for about six weeks, in mid-June the army and federal police came in, killing eleven indigenous people and wounding over 100 in the town of Nochixtlán. As they proceeded to the state capital of Oaxaca, they met massive resistance at every town, with flaming barricades. Our comrades participated in the fighting, and the next day our health worker comrades went to the town clandestinely with a mobile surgery unit to treat the wounded. In New York, the CSEW organized solidarity protests. But even the murderous army and federal police attack didn’t break the strike, which continued three more months. That was a real lesson in the power of teachers’ struggles, not in defense of narrow professional goals but as a leader and champion of the working class and oppressed communities.

For the last 25 years in Mexico, the federal and Oaxaca state governments have sought to impose educational “reform” plans promoted by imperialist agencies like the World Bank and OECD. Because of the teachers’ resistance, they have been largely unable to implement these union-busting and privatizing plans. But neither have the teachers been able to win a resounding victory, as they have limited their struggle to one state, not bringing in the powerful industrial working class, and they have looked for salvation to the populist president Andrés Manuel López Obrador (who wants to reincorporate the dissident teachers, reasserting the chains of government control) rather than building a workers party. Mexico remains a capitalist state and Oaxaca is still an impoverished region. Nothing short of an international socialist revolution can change that. Marjorie’s experiences in 2006 and 2016 show the power of class-struggle unionism, and the need for revolutionary leadership.

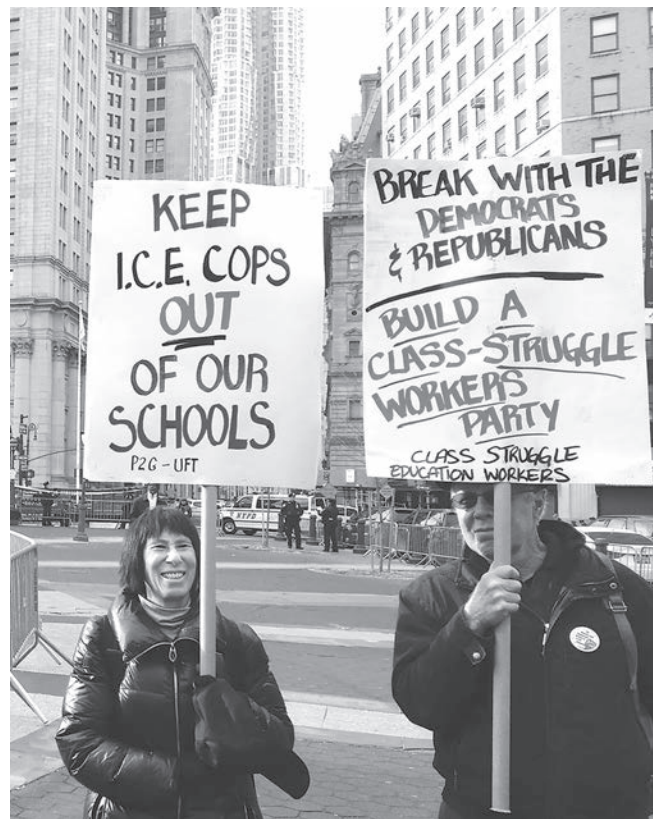
### Defending Immigrant Students

In early 2017 newly elected president Donald Trump launched an offensive against immigrants, beginning with the ban on travelers from seven predominantly Muslim countries. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) began raids around the country, including in New York City. I.C.E. agents showed up at schools looking for undocumented students. Marjorie and other Internationalists went to

JFK to protest the “Muslim ban,” and she launched a “UFT P2G Immigrant Students Support Committee” to defend immigrant rights and to keep I.C.E. out. This was not abstract. At her site in Manhattan, they located back doors for students to leave in case the immigration police showed up, and she contacted a nearby sanctuary church, bringing the priest to the school to meet officials.

Then, on May 15, the UFT sponsored an immigration forum, with AFT president Randi Weingarten as one of the featured speakers. They highlighted the chancellor’s instructions that I.C.E. agents were not to enter the schools without permission from the D.O.E. In the discussion, Marjorie got up to say that was not enough, that if the *migra* came, teachers and staff should line up outside to say that those are our students, you will not touch them, and if you try to go in, you will have to go through us. There was a lot of applause but no reaction from the panelists. But as the meeting was breaking up, Marjorie reported, Weingarten called out to say, essentially, “And Marjorie, if you form such a line, we will defend you.” That was all we needed. It was a green light. Marjorie never expected anything more from the union bureaucracy.

Marjorie did a lot more over the years. In 2007, she put out a leaflet defending Debbie Almontaser, a Yemeni American principal of what was slated to be the first Arabic-focused school, who was purged by Mayor Bloomberg, with the approval of the AFT/UFT’s Weingarten, after a months-long Muslim-bashing campaign by the virulently anti-teacher Zionist *New York Post*. As a delegate from 2009 to 2019, Marjorie put out a listserv, which people referred to as her blog, with her reports on the DA and other materials, which was circulated to several hundred teachers, mostly in P2G. In 2012, when Chicago teachers went on strike, as soon as she learned of it, Marjorie hopped on a 6 a.m. flight the next morning to go there to show solidarity from New York teachers. She voted against every UFT-D.O.E. contract, and in 2014 put out a sticker (with a union bug) which she distributed widely, saying “Don’t Blame Me – I Voted No.” She also fought insistently to integrate New York City schools, calling for free, equal, quality secular public education for all.



**Marjorie fought for union action to defend immigrant students and keep the I.C.E. police out of the schools.**

### “Retirement”

Marjorie retired on January 1, 2020. By February, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Suddenly schools were desperate for teachers. So at the age of 73, she learned how to teach remotely, familiarizing herself with different programs and apps. By the fall of 2020 she was teaching again. She taught remotely in regular school and adult education right up to the start of the week when she was rushed to the emergency room on 26 February 2022. She only made it there because, as she and Jan were desperately searching for a gastroenterologist on Friday afternoon of presidents’ week, when asked about her insurance, they answered “UFT” and no further questions were asked. If she had been on Medicare Advantage, as Mulgrew and the Municipal Labor Committee are trying to impose in order to save money for the (capitalist) city government, who knows what would have happened.

By the late spring of 2020, as many teachers unions, and the reformist internal oppositions like M.O.R.E. in New York and C.O.R.E. in Chicago, were calling to keep the schools closed, Marjorie insisted, and we wrote on placards, that “Remote education is an oxymoron.” All education is social, as Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky taught, and every teacher in New York learned in ed school. Marjorie and the CSEW called to use union power to make schools safe, to form committees of teachers, students, parents and school workers to inspect the buildings, to check out ventilation and make sure the new ventilators worked. The union did not need the administration’s permission, it could just do it and insist on compliance. And by involving the parents it could undercut the kind of anti-teacher backlash that the right wing predictably instigated. The CSEW called for this insistently but at the time, we did not have sufficient strength in the schools to wage this fight.

Marjorie went back to the university after retiring, thinking of getting another master’s degree in history from CUNY. Among the powerful papers she wrote “Interpretations of 1989 and the ‘Socialist Reform’ Currents in the German Democratic Republic” (DDR), taking apart the

Cold War ideology of Western anticommunist academics, who portray the struggles of 1989-92 in the Soviet bloc as “totalitarianism” vs. liberal democracy. In it she explained why the socialist reform movements of dissident intellectuals, isolated from the workers and lacking a revolutionary program could not fulfill their dream of an independent DDR cleansed of bureaucracy, existing between the Soviet and Western blocs. Another paper dealt with various modern-day “Interpretations of CLR James’ *The Black Jacobins*” who find the Haitian Revolution wanting for not conforming to current standards of “human rights” imperialism.



Marjorie and Jan in the 1980s. Jan wrote to her comrades the night she died: “She was the love of my life, my comrade in struggle, my compañera and girlfriend forever, who will continue to inspire me tomorrow as she did yesterday, and for years before.... I’m sure many other comrades feel this loss deeply as well.”

Marjorie received the best medical care available. After an emergency operation in February 2022, she was treated at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, the premier institution for this disease. It was a hard regimen, taking 13 pills multiple times a day, dealing with neuropathy and indignities. Then, when further chemotherapy was no longer possible, she received considerate attention at the only acute-care accredited end-of-life hospital for advanced cancer patients in the U.S. When they asked at intake if she was depressed, she said “yes – because I’m dying.” Marjorie had tremendous will power, as communists must have, but eventually her body gave out.

During the two years’ time won with chemotherapy Marjorie accomplished some important things. She gave a three-part talk on the 1968 New York teachers strike, about which much has been written and which is still sharply disputed today, dissecting the forces at work, and explaining how a leadership armed with the Bolshevik revolutionary program of educator-led teacher-student-parent-worker control of the schools could have cut through the community control vs. teachers rights standoff. She gave another talk during these months, on the counterrevolutionary role played by the Shachtmanite anti-communist leadership of the UFT and AFT, from the Pinochet coup in Chile to Polish Solidarność. The CSEW plans to publish these talks, together with others of her writings, in the next issue of *Marxism & Education*. Marjorie also mentored a group of young teachers starting out in this demanding job.

Marjorie’s life was not easy. One thing that helped her, both facing hostility in the SL and with the demanding schedule of teaching, was running. Her father, Bill Stamborg, had been a semi-pro basketball player and after getting cancer used to go on long walks every day. Marjorie watched the NBA finals every year, and was an avid runner. She ran eight New York City Marathons. She ran all through the pandemic, when people (including her) were afraid to go out. Later, after she fell ill with cancer, she had Parkinsonian symptoms and found it hard to walk. But after seven months of slowly recovering from surgery and little by little being able to walk again, she adopted a daily routine of walking two and a half miles. It was slow-going but she did

it. Then she had to negotiate 46 stairs to get up to her and Jan’s fourth-floor walk-up apartment.

It was a measure of Marjorie’s fortitude that in November 2023, when it was increasingly difficult for her to walk, she participated in three Gaza solidarity protests in one week. On November 9, she made her way into a crowd of several thousand on the steps of the New York Public Library main building in a National Shutdown for Palestine student walk-out. Her sign called to “Defend Palestinians Against Genocidal U.S./Israel War.” On November 15, she joined a rally at the UFT offices in downtown Manhattan with a sign declaring, “Israel Out of Gaza and the West Bank Now!” The next day, outside the D.O.E. headquarters, holding a sign calling “For the Right of Students and Teachers to Protest War on Gaza!” she spoke at a protest called by the CSEW against a gag order issued by NYC schools chancellor David Banks seeking to squelch any pro-Palestinian talk, even on their own time and out of school.

Marjorie was determined to show her opposition to the slaughter by the Israeli Zionists and U.S. imperialists, who furnish all the bombs and planes that make this mass murder possible; to refute the slander by the purveyors of genocide who equate anti-Zionism with antisemitism; to speak out on behalf of the Palestinian Arab people under attack, and to defend the rights of others to do so as well.

Having written for several left papers as she evolved politically, Marjorie Stamborg made the leap from being a New Leftist and pioneering women’s liberationist to the communism of Lenin and Trotsky, and then held fast. She was an editor of *Workers Vanguard* and *The Internationalist*, along with the CSEW journal *Marxism and Education*; she was a member of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League when it stood for revolutionary Trotskyism, and for the last 28 years a central leader of the Internationalist Group and of the League for the Fourth International. She was a professional agitator, and a very good one, able to appeal to a crowd, to explain clearly the essence of the issue at hand, and the need for a revolutionary answer. As one comrade who worked with her for decades commented, “She was hard as nails politically, and also kind, always there when you needed someone at your back.” Marjorie was respected



Internationalist contingent in New York City May Day 2024 march calls for workers action against U.S./Israel war.

## Divestment...

*continued from page 5*

carrier” for the U.S. as some on the left (and some supporters of Israel) claim. (See box, page 5.) It has its own kill-crazed capitalist ruling class, and sometimes differs from its U.S. imperialist patrons (e.g., both Netanyahu and “liberal” Zionists are seeking to launch a full-scale war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, which could unleash war with Iran). It no longer plays the role of gendarme and guarantor of the Suez Canal assigned to it by decaying British imperialism. But for the U.S. imperialists, Israel represents a strategic asset in the Middle East, a region that is vital to their fraying global hegemony, and one which they are not going to abandon. The idea that, under enough pressure, the U.S. would or even could tame the Zionist predators is doomed to failure. The Zionists would rather blow up the world, and they have the nuclear weapons that could provoke it – plus they are crazy enough to use them.

In sum, as we wrote in 2010:

“Trotskyists do not call for consumer boycotts, capitalist divestment and imperialist sanctions against Zionist Israel, nor did we against Pinochet’s dictatorship in Chile in the 1970s, apartheid South Africa in the ’80s or Haiti under the military junta in the ’90s, for the same reason we do not call today [2010] for U.S. aid to earthquake-ravaged Haiti: imperialism is not a policy but a system – it cannot be pressured into aiding the oppressed, it must be overthrown. We demand an end to the Israeli blockade of Gaza and defend efforts to break it. Likewise, we demand

an end to all U.S. aid to Israel, some \$7 million a day. We demand that the Israeli army (and U.S. military advisers) get out of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, that the Zionist settlements be dispersed, that all Palestinian refugees have the right to return, that Palestinian prisoners be released. But the key to freeing Palestinians from a century of Western imperialist and Zionist domination is to mobilize the international working class (including Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers in Israel) which alone has the power to sweep away the Zionist rulers and their imperialist overlords.”

–“Israel’s Gaza Flotilla Massacre,” *The Internationalist* No. 31

Israel is not a monolith. One-fifth of the population are Palestinian Arabs, and many in the Jewish population are not wedded to living in a theocratic garrison state facing endless wars and conflict with the predominantly Arab East. The Zionist fortress must be exploded from within, by its own Hebrew and Arab working class. Secular liberal democrats in Israel are doomed to political extinction unless they break with Zionism to ally with the oppressed Palestinian Arab people. That requires revolutionary class struggle throughout the region and centrally in the heart of U.S. imperialism. Rather than looking to the capitalists and imperialists to stop the Zionist mass murderers that the U.S. backs to the max, we in the League for the Fourth International look to the working people of the region – Arab, Hebrew, Kurdish, Iranian and others – and in the imperialist heartland to wage a common struggle for socialist revolution. ■

by pretty much everyone who knew her.

Over the half century of their life together, from *Workers Vanguard* and the Spartacist League/ICL to *The Internationalist* and the Internationalist Group/LFI, Marjorie and Jan collaborated politically so closely that they sometimes forgot who had said what. In the SL they were embroiled in many fights – to the point that when they walked in together to a Political Bureau meeting in the early 1990s, party leader Jim Robertson remarked, “Oh, here comes the alternative leadership.” They lost some fights, but probably won more and worked together effectively with others in the leadership for over two decades despite tensions. In the IG/LFI Marjorie continued to fight for the program that she was won to decades before, and that today is more urgent than ever. As Rosa Luxemburg stated, the choice before humanity is socialism or barba-

rism, and we’re getting a horrifying preview of that barbarism in the genocide in Gaza.

The leader of the East German Stalinist regime, Erich Honecker, had a fatuous slogan, “Vorwärts immer, rückwärts nimmer” (Always forward, never backward), which is absurd – it is sometimes necessary to fight rear-guard actions. As labor and left misleaders have capitulated before the imperialist offensive in recent decades, giving up union gains and acquiescing to – even joining – the drive to gut public education, Marjorie and her comrades have had to become adept at waging defensive struggles, but always preparing to go on the offensive. Yet Marjorie never gave up, or stepped back, she was always in the forefront, fighting for the oppressed. Her example, and the lessons she drew from those struggles, will help show the path of those who continue her struggle for a socialist world. ■

## Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

# Claudia Sheinbaum, Mexico's First Woman President

## New Face, Same Old Ploy of the Bourgeoisie

We print below a translation of an article from an upcoming issue of *Revolución Permanente*, the newspaper of the *Grupo Internacionalista*, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International.

The landslide victory of Claudia Sheinbaum, candidate of the National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) in the June 2 presidential elections, has generated enormous enthusiasm in vast sectors of the country. She obtained almost 60 percent of the vote and defeated by more than two to one her opponent Xóchitl Gálvez, of the coalition formed by the traditional bourgeois parties in Mexico – the clerical reactionary National Action Party (PAN), the former state party Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and what was left of the former “leftist” bourgeois Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) – who received only 27 percent of the total. Sheinbaum, the former head of government of Mexico City, won in every state except arch-conservative Aguascalientes, and in many southern states her vote exceeded 70 percent. Sheinbaum's victory has been widely described as a historic milestone for being the first woman to reach the presidency in the 200 years of the country's existence.

In a country of rampant *machismo* (male chauvinism), in which the oppression of women takes on blatant forms, the fact that a woman has been elected president represents, and reflects, an important social change. Sheinbaum's victory reflects, in part, the fact that millions of women are fed up with male-chauvinist violence, whose function is to perpetuate the subordination of women through their enslavement and confinement in the home, while in the streets and workplaces they walk in hostile territory. But Claudia Sheinbaum's landslide election victory also reflects that she is seen as the guarantor of the continuation of the policies of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (universally known by his initials, AMLO) and his bourgeois populist government, to which the MORENA candidate promised time and again to add a “second floor.” In particular, many low-income voters said they backed her as protector of the increases of the minimum wage and the welfare measures of AMLO's social programs.

Nevertheless, in the Mexican elections of June 2, the three candidates for the presidency all represented the capitalists. Their differences are at most tactical. Their common purpose is to maintain the system of exploitation of this semicolonial country, in the service of the imperialists. Thus the *Grupo Internacionalista*, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International, called for “Not one vote for the bosses’

parties: MORENA, PRI, PAN, PRD, MC,<sup>1</sup> etc. Whoever wins, the exploited and oppressed lose. Forge a revolutionary workers party!”

Sheinbaum's victory was hailed by women, working people and the poor. She is a scientist of Jewish descent, who has not disavowed her leftist activism in the university or her communist parents. But the top national bourgeoisie and their imperialist masters are also breathing a sigh of relief. AMLO kept his promise to maintain “social peace” between the exploited and the exploiters. Ever since the 1950s there have been repeated rebellions of dissident union movements against the iron state control exercised by the corporatist pseudo-unions.<sup>2</sup> The outbreaks of struggles by sectors of workers and the oppressed against the starvation measures of the PRI governments of Carlos Salinas and Ernesto Zedillo, the PAN governments of Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderón, and once again the PRI's Enrique Peña Nieto, worried the capitalists. Even so, the “independent” unions were politically subordinated to the bourgeoisie, at first via the bourgeois PRD founded by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, and then through MORENA. López Obrador in power has managed to limit as much as possible these outbreaks of class struggle through a project of re-corporatization of the unions that had partially broken the corporatist shackles.

Claudia Sheinbaum, too, presents herself as a pacifier of the struggles of the plebeian sectors. However, there is a contradiction between the hopes engendered by her electoral victory among the exploited and oppressed, and the realities of a semi-colonial capitalist country. In the first place, the welfare programs depend on public resources not being exhausted by a future fall in the prices of oil and other raw materials, as occurred with the Latin American populist governments of the “pink tide” of the first decade of the 2000s. More fundamentally, women's oppression is rooted

<sup>1</sup> Citizens Movement, a minor bourgeois liberal party.

<sup>2</sup> Corporatism consists in the *organic integration* of all types of organizations, in particular those claiming to represent workers, into the bourgeois state apparatus. This was the mechanism of social control that sustained the regime of the PRI-government during its seven decades of rule. It corresponded to a one-party system with a heavily state-owned capitalist economy. At its height, from the 1950s to the '70s, there was a revolving door for apparatchiks passing from the corporatist “unions” to management of state-owned enterprises and to the governing party. But in an increasingly privatized economy beginning in the late 1980s, the abundant wellspring of money that lubricated this machinery began to dry up and the system fell into crisis.

in the capitalist system. For millions of women in the country, oppressed by centuries-old domestic slavery, additional oppression is added by exploitation in the factory, and many are victimized by the ever-present anti-indigenous and anti-black racism – in addition to the appalling xenophobia that the bourgeoisie today whips up against migrants.

The victory of a candidate of a bosses party will not diminish in any way the burden of the double and even triple oppression of the women who work in the maquiladoras scattered throughout the country, for example. Their cheap and regimented labor will continue to be guaranteed by the corporatist pseudo-unions, since the “competitive advantage” of Mexican capitalism continues to be the super-exploitation of the working class. The fact that a worker in a seatbelt factory in Reynosa is paid a tenth of what her counterpart on the other side of the Rio Grande earns is precisely the attraction for the owners of the big “multinational” companies to move production to low-wage countries. The new industrialization boom is largely due to the “decoupling” of the U.S. economy from China for geopolitical reasons, but also because Chinese industrial wages have increased from \$1,127 dollars a year in 2000 to \$16,153 in 2023,<sup>3</sup> to the point that it is cheaper for Foxconn to produce iPhones in Ciudad Juarez than in Zhengzhou.

Moreover, during the six years of AMLO's government, the minimum wage increased by 280 percent and by 2024 it will be 9,475 Mexican pesos per month, which is equivalent to about \$491 U.S. dollars, or US\$5,892 per year. Just compare Mexico's wage figures with those of the bureaucratically deformed workers state of China. In Mexico City, the rent of an apartment for four people in a lower middle-class area on the east

<sup>3</sup> See “The East-West Wage Gap Not Nearly As Compelling As It Once Was,” *Forbes* (30 January 2023). Even taking inflation into account, this is a huge increase.



Facebook

MORENA candidate Claudia Sheinbaum, vows to continue the populist policies of her mentor, Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

side of the city would be about 5,000 pesos, plus 600 to 900 pesos per person per month for transportation. This means that, taking everything into account, including the increase in the minimum wage, paying for housing and services leaves very little money for food, education, health and entertainment. Nationally, of the 40 million people who receive revenues per employment, 28.7 million (71 percent of the total) earn less than US\$982 per month. In the maquiladora areas of the North, where the rent of an apartment would not be less than 3,000 pesos and the transportation costs substantially higher, almost all workers receive only the minimum wage. Do the math: *this is still poverty.*

### Bourgeois Feminists Euphoric

Sheinbaum's election victory caused enormous excitement in a large part of the feminist movement in Mexico, as well as in various Latin American countries, and even in the United States. Academics, journalists, politicians and feminist collectives of various kinds (including several that consider themselves “leftist” and even socialist), were ecstatic on election day when the media began to publish the results of the exit polls. After the announcement by the National Electoral Institute that she had won, Sheinbaum proclaimed in the Zócalo (Mexico City's main square, facing the presidential palace): “I didn't get here alone. We women all made it together.”

For the vast majority of feminist fig-

ures and collectives, the victory lies in the fact that it is a woman who has become president, regardless of whether her politics are “left-wing” or rightist. This was made perfectly clear before the elections under the claim that “whoever wins” (whether Claudia Sheinbaum and Xóchitl Gálvez) “it will be history in the making” with the first female president in North America. In March, journalist Yuriria Sierra published the book along these lines, titled *Presidenta: más de cien mujeres te escriben* (Madam President, Over 100 Women Are Writing to You), with women writers from across the bourgeois political spectrum: from former AMLO government ministers such as Olga Sánchez Cordero and Tatiana Clouthier to the liberal academic Denise Dresser and the openly racist writer and “señora bien” (proper lady) Guadalupe Loaeza, the latter two both staunch supporters of Gálvez.

The convergence of such diverse figures of feminism and bourgeois politics in a book like Sierra’s expresses the political nature of feminism: by considering that the main contradiction in our society is that which opposes men and women, feminism is in itself a bourgeois program that seeks to eliminate the obstacles that prevent women from assuming the privileged roles in society up to now held by men. Women’s advances are very often referred to as “breaking the glass ceiling,” an “invisible” barrier that prevents women from assuming leadership positions in the economy, politics, academic life, etc. Clearly, a woman worker who enters the factories at the minimum wage has not broken any “glass ceiling” when she is still subjected to domestic slavery, even if to do so she had to overcome a whole series of reactionary obstacles, starting with the family prohibiting her from leaving the home.

The feminist enthusiasm was palpable from the beginning of the campaigns. The fact that the two main presidential candidates were women was pointed to everywhere as a reason for congratulation. Television commentators, bourgeois press columnists and feminists stressed that, regardless of who won the elections, Mexico would have a woman president for the first time in its history. Thus the academic Marcela Lagarde expressed her “feminist joy” for a probable victory of Claudia Sheinbaum, “I am very happy that she could win, and that it will be Claudia, because she is a woman of the left, democratic” (*La Jornada*, March 6). Feminist journalist Sara Lovera, on the other hand, in a report on the “Pink Tide” demonstration (a reactionary rally in support of Gálvez)<sup>4</sup> on May 19 in Mexico City, enthusiastically stressed that “Xóchitl Gálvez Ruíz, candidate for the presidency of the Republic, recognized the feminist struggle against patriarchy” (*semexico.mx*, May 19).

Singer-songwriter Vivir Quintana, famous for having composed the song “Vivir sin miedo” (Living Without Fear) that became sort of a feminist anthem at the beginning of AMLO’s six-year term, said that beyond the differences between Gálvez and Sheinbaum, there will be “A woman compañera in the presidency who will tirelessly lead efforts to eradicate gender violence, who guarantees equal

<sup>4</sup> The rally’s color was chosen because it is used by the National Electoral Institute, hostile to López Obrador, as opposed to Morena’s purple.

access to opportunities and governs to improve the quality of life, in all stages of life, of every woman in this country, from the big cities to the most remote communities” (*Milenio*, May 25). That same night she presented to the public a new song, “Compañera presidenta.” In an interview with *Billboard* (May 29) she commented: “My 16-year-old niece can now dream of being a woman president”. But while she is dreaming the heretofore impossible dream, she will face the undiminished burdens and restraints of women’s oppression.

In Mexico, unlike in many countries, since the beginning of AMLO’s government, the bulk of organized feminists have allied themselves with the right, a fact that can be seen in the March 8 (International Women’s Day) marches. (It should be noted that López Obrador, an evangelical Christian, is not in favor of abortion rights.<sup>5</sup>) The feminist group linked to the PAN, Brujas del Mar (Sea Witches), which supported Xóchitl Gálvez in the elections, had reservations over the outcome: “We women are going to have to pick up with our hands the glass ceiling that was broken last night.” On the other hand, Marta Lamas, a traditional second-wave feminist, opined: “I believe that what Claudia managed to transmit was a level of congruence, discipline and efficiency, which are usually, wrongly, considered masculine virtues”. Feminist collectives claiming to be leftist also showed their enthusiasm. Thus, Rosas Rojas (Red Roses), a feminist organization linked to the pseudo-Marxist Grupo de Acción Revolucionaria (GAR – Revolutionary Action Group) wrote on its X account, formerly Twitter (June 3):

“Mexico has for the first time a woman president, and one who got the most votes in history. Undoubtedly [it is] a triumph for the political rights of all women, which we are pleased to see is accompanied by a high level of social support. Claudia’s victory cannot be explained without the history of struggle of mobilized women and the massive mobilizations in the streets we achieved in recent years.”

<sup>5</sup> Abortion was decriminalized in a September 2023 decision of Mexico’s Supreme Court, based on its September 2021 rulings declaring abortion bans unconstitutional, laying the basis for state-by-state challenges to anti-abortion laws. See “Mexican Trotskyists Call for Free Abortion On Demand,” *The Internationalist* No. 65, October-December 2021.



**Women workers on an assembly line in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico in 2018. Even after the minimum wage was tripled by AMLO’s government, they still are making poverty pay. It will take a socialist revolution to eliminate poverty in Mexico.**

## What does Sheinbaum’s Victory Mean for Women in Mexico?

Upon taking office, President Claudia Sheinbaum will be the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, the backbone of the capitalist state. She will be in charge of maintaining the peace required by capitalist business, even when this means resorting to repression. That she has the approval of the Mexican bourgeoisie and its imperialist bosses is evident. A few days after her election, she met with an imperial delegation sent by U.S. president Joe Biden, headed by Elizabeth Sherwood Randall, a White House “security” advisor, to promise the continuity of the “policy of friendship” between both governments that guarantees a “genuinely hemispheric approach to cooperation on immigration” (that is, militarily blocking migration to the north through deploying thousands of troops of Mexico’s National Guard on the borders). She also met with Kathryn McLay, CEO of the fiercely anti-union Walmart International, who “endorsed the company’s commitment to the country” (*Milenio*, June 11).

Various feminist groups are using Sheinbaum’s victory to sow illusions in the possibility of reforming capitalism to serve women. Their program is one of class collaboration, of support by the exploited and oppressed for women of the class that exploits and oppresses them. But the struggle for women’s liberation is not merely a democratic question. The oppression women suffer because they are women is the result of the private property on which the capitalist system of exploitation is based. And since the oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family, for full emancipation of women it is necessary to lay the material foundations to overcome this reactionary institution through socialization of the tasks it performs. Thus we fight for *free 24-hour day-care centers*, pointing to the institutions of a socialist society, as well as for *free abortion on demand* in the framework of a socialized health care system of the highest quality.

But even purely democratic demands such as these cannot be fully realized without a socialist revolution, since their implementation affects essential institutions of capitalist society, beginning with the family. This is also the case of violence against women. While the murder rate (deaths by violence) of men is ten times higher than

that of women,<sup>6</sup> and the sharp increase in homicides against women in recent years is rooted in the “war on drugs,” violence against women is omnipresent. Under the cry of “they are killing us,” many feminists call, implicitly or explicitly, for a greater deployment of military and police forces in the cities, endangering everyone. It would seem absurd, but necessary, to emphasize that the capitalist police are neither friends nor allies of women. But the daily violence against women in the home is a *machista* means of “keeping women in their place.” In other words, it reflects the oppression of women in the family, and it will take a revolution to eliminate it.

Such domestic violence and street harassment are indeed the product of the *machismo* that all must fight against. It also reflects in many cases the desperation of poor families, which has intensified in recent decades due to the destruction of the rural economy and the forced migration of millions of people to the impoverished areas surrounding the big cities, where they lack any economic security. To really advance the struggle for women’s liberation from the double or triple oppression they suffer, it is necessary to go to its root. This root is bourgeois private property whose fundamental unit is the institution of the family, both to transmit property to a new generation of capitalists, and to reproduce new generations of the exploited, both men and women, who generate the wealth that the bourgeoisie squeezes from them. The liberation of women is impossible without putting an end to the capitalist system of private ownership of the means of production.

## Fight for International Socialist Revolution!

The support that AMLO and Claudia Sheinbaum have received from working men and women, as well as among the rural and urban poor, is ultimately based on promises that no capitalist government can fulfill. The program of re-corporatization of the “independent” unions implemented by López Obrador is an attempt to return to the “golden” years of the PRI, which fostered a corporatized so-called “social pact” based on two pillars: the integration of workers and peasants organizations into the bourgeois state apparatus, and the granting of some basic democratic rights such as access to health and education. Public education grew greatly in the years 1940-1980 – with the enormous expansion of the National University and the creation of the Polytechnic Institute and the Teachers Training College – as did the public health sector, with social security institutes such as the IMSS and the ISSSTE.<sup>7</sup>

This was the “carrot” that softened the blows of the “stick” of the PRI-government that strongly repressed any who did not bow to the Bonapartist regime. The carrot was possible thanks to a highly nationalized bourgeois economy. With the “neoliberal” privatizations since the end of the 1980s, this basis no longer exists. So AMLO’s government has developed several social assistance programs for the most needy. The government reports that “five million people” will have been lifted out of poverty during AMLO’s six-year term, with 41.9 percent of the population living below the poverty line in 2018, falling to 36.3 percent in 2022 (the last year for which Coneval, the

<sup>6</sup> See “Italian Trotskyists on International Women’s Day,” *The Internationalist* No. 47, March-April 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Respectively, the Mexican Social Security Institute for private sector workers and the Social Security Institute for Public Workers..

government institution that measures poverty, has data). However, the number of those living in “extreme poverty” has increased. Capitalism “with a human face” is not possible, much less in a semicolonial country like Mexico.

AMLO’s populist measures that Sheinbaum promises to maintain and “deepen” do not at all represent putting an end to the policy of attacks on the working class known as “neoliberalism.” In fact, the welfare measures consisting of direct transfers of money to the poor are part of the playbook of the American “free marketeer” economists known as the Chicago Boys. In 1975, Milton Friedman himself, the dean of the Chicago Boys, called on the bloodthirsty Pinochet coup government in Chile to make such cash transfers to avoid social explosions among workers without secure jobs in various sectors. In Mexico under the government of López Obrador, “Benito Juárez scholarships” for children and adolescents in basic education were generalized. But even if they relieve a bit the most brutal effects of poverty, these measures are based on undermining and even effectively eliminating rights for the general population, as in public education and health.

As shown by the experience of Red October of 1917, it is essential that the exploited and oppressed have a vehicle for political struggle, an internationalist revolutionary workers party. It was the Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky that for the first time legalized abortion while seeking to introduce socialized institutions that would lay the foundations for a true liberation of women. The party that is needed must wage a hard fight for free abortion on demand within the framework of a socialized health system of the highest quality. It will also have to fight *machismo* in all its forms, defending the rights of gays, lesbians and trans people. In order to wage this fight, the touchstone is full and complete independence of the exploited and oppressed from capitalist parties and politicians, as well as their state.

The election of a woman president, while reflecting an important social change, does not change anything about the systematic oppression of women. To free women, as well as all the oppressed, it is necessary to break with all capitalist parties – from the PRI, PAN, PRD and Greens to MORENA and its satel-

lites – and forge a Leninist-Totskyist party of the proletarian vanguard. The emancipation of women can only be achieved through a socialist revolution, in which the working class, at the head of all the oppressed, fights for a workers and peasants government to reorganize society based on the “expropriation of the (capitalist) expropriators” and extends the socialist revolution internationally.

This is the program of the Grupo Internacionalista, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International. *Join with the GI and the LFI!* ■

## Sheinbaum...

*sigue de la página 24*

China por razones geopolíticas, pero también porque los salarios industriales chinos han aumentado de \$1,127 dólares anuales en 2000 a \$16,153 en 2023,<sup>2</sup> al punto que a la empresa taiwanesa Foxconn le resulta más barato producir iPhones en Ciudad Juárez que Zhengzhou.

Es más: durante los seis años del gobierno de AMLO el salario mínimo aumentó en un 280 por ciento y para 2024 será de 9,475 pesos mexicanos mensuales, lo que equivale a unos 491 dólares, o 5,892 dólares anuales. Compárese las cifras salariales de México con las del estado obrero burocráticamente deformado de China. En la Ciudad de México, la renta de un departamento para cuatro personas en una zona de clase media baja en el oriente de la ciudad sería de unos 5 mil pesos, más unos 600 a 900 pesos por mes en transporte *por persona*. Esto significa que, con todo y el aumento del salario mínimo, el pago de la vivienda y los servicios deja muy poco dinero para la alimentación, la educación, la salud y el entretenimiento. A nivel nacional, de los 40 millones de personas que reciben ingresos por empleo, 28.7 millones (71 por ciento del total) reciben entre uno y dos salarios mínimos. En las zonas maquiladoras del norte, donde la renta de un departamento no sería menos de 3 mil pesos, y el costo del transporte sustancialmente mayor, casi todas las trabajadoras reciben sólo un salario mínimo. *Haga las cuentas: esto sigue siendo pobreza.*

<sup>2</sup> Véase “The East-West Wage Gap Not Nearly As Compelling As It Once Was,” *Forbes* (30 de enero de 2023). Aun tomando en cuenta la inflación, se trata de un crecimiento enorme.

## El feminismo burgués eufórico

La victoria electoral de Sheinbaum concitó un enorme frenesí en buena parte del movimiento feminista en México, lo mismo que en diversos países de América Latina, y hasta en Estados Unidos. Académicas, periodistas, políticas y colectivas feministas de diversa índole (incluidas varias que se consideran de izquierda y hasta socialistas), se mostraron exultantes el día de la elección cuando los medios empezaron a publicar los resultados de las encuestas de salida. Después del anuncio por parte del Instituto Nacional Electoral de que había resultado triunfadora, Sheinbaum proclamó en el Zócalo: “No llego sola. Llegamos todas”.

Para la inmensa mayoría de las figuras y colectivas feministas, el triunfo radica en que sea una mujer quien ha llegado a la presidencia, sin importar si su política es de “izquierda” o derecha. Esto lo dejaron perfectamente en claro desde antes de las elecciones bajo la divisa de “gane quien gane”, en referencia a Claudia Sheinbaum y Xóchitl Gálvez, se “hará historia” con la primera presidenta en América del Norte. En marzo, la periodista Yuriria Sierra publicó el libro *Presidenta: más de cien mujeres te escriben*, sobre esta misma base, con escritoras de todo el abanico político burgués: desde exministras del gobierno de AMLO como Olga Sánchez Cordero y Tatiana Clouthier hasta la académica liberal Denise Dresser y la escritora abiertamente racista y “señora bien” Guadalupe Loaeza, acérrimas partidarias de Gálvez.

La confluencia de tan diversas figuras del feminismo y la política burguesa en un libro como el de Sierra expresa la naturaleza política del feminismo: al considerar que la principal contradicción en nuestra sociedad es la que opone a hombres y mujeres, el feminismo es de por sí un programa *burgués* que pretende eliminar los obstáculos que impiden a las mujeres asumir los roles privilegiados que en la sociedad ocupan los varones. Con mucha frecuencia se refieren a los avances de las mujeres como “romper el techo de cristal”, una barrera “invisible” que impide que las mujeres asuman cargos de dirección en la economía, la política, la vida académica, etc. Queda claro que una obrera que ingresa a trabajar en las fábricas percibiendo el salario mínimo no ha roto ningún “techo de cristal,” cuando sigue sometida a la esclavitud doméstica e incluso si para hacerlo tuvo que sortear toda una serie de obstáculos reaccionarios, comenzando con la prohibición familiar de salir del hogar.

El entusiasmo feminista se perfiló desde el inicio de las campañas. El hecho de que las dos principales candidatas presidenciales fueran mujeres fue señalado en todas partes como motivo de congratulación. Comentaristas de televisión, columnistas de la prensa burguesa y feministas resaltaron que, independientemente de quién triunfara en las elecciones, México tendría una presidenta por primera vez en su historia. Así la académica Marcela Lagarde expresó su “alegría feminista” por un muy probable triunfo de Claudia Sheinbaum, “Me da mucho gusto que pueda ganar, y que sea Claudia, porque es una mujer de izquierda, democrática” (*La Jornada*, 6 de marzo). La periodista feminista Sara Lovera, en cambio, en un reporte sobre la manifestación de la “Marea Rosa” (una reaccionaria movilización de apoyo a Gál-

vez)<sup>3</sup> del 19 de mayo en la Ciudad de México recaló con entusiasmo que “Xóchitl Gálvez Ruíz, candidata a la presidencia de la República reconoció la lucha feminista contra el patriarcado” (semmexico.mx, 19 de mayo).

La cantautora Vivir Quintana, famosa por haber compuesto la canción “Vivir sin miedo” que se convirtió en una suerte de himno feminista al principio del sexenio de AMLO, expresó que más allá de las diferencias entre Gálvez y Sheinbaum, habrá “Una mujer compañera en la presidencia que dirija incansablemente sus esfuerzos para erradicar la violencia de género, que garantice el acceso equitativo a oportunidades y gobierno para mejorar la calidad de vida, en todas las etapas de la vida, de cada mujer en este país, desde las grandes ciudades hasta las comunidades más apartadas” (*Milenio*, 25 de mayo). Esa misma noche presentó al público una nueva canción, “Compañera presidenta”. En una entrevista con *Billboard* (29 de mayo) comentó: “Mi sobrina de 16 años ahora puede soñar con ser una mujer presidenta”. Pero aunque sueñe algo que hasta ahora parecía imposible, seguirá llevando a cuestas los mismos pesados fardos y lastres que impone la opresión de la mujer.

En México, y a diferencia de muchos otros países, desde comienzos del gobierno de AMLO, el grueso de las feministas organizadas se ha aliado con la derecha, hecho que se vislumbra en las marchas del 8 de marzo. (Por cierto, López Obrador no está a favor del derecho al aborto.<sup>4</sup>) El grupo feminista vinculado al PAN, Brujas del Mar, que apoyó a Xóchitl Gálvez en los comicios, expresó sus reservas sobre el resultado: “A las mujeres nos va a tocar recoger con las manos los vidrios de ese techo de cristal que se rompió anoche”. En cambio, la feminista tradicional de la segunda ola Marta Lamas opinó: “creo que lo que Claudia logró transmitir fue un nivel de congruencia, de disciplina y de eficacia, que también suelen ser, de manera equivocada, consideradas virtudes masculinas.” Colectivas feministas que se reclaman de izquierda mostraron también su entusiasmo. Así, Rosas Rojas, organización feminista vinculada al seudomarxista Grupo de Acción Revolucionaria (GAR) escribió en su cuenta de X, antes Twitter (3 de junio):

“México tiene por primera vez una mujer presidenta, la más votada de la historia. Sin duda [es] un triunfo para los derechos políticos de todas las mujeres, que nos congratula que venga acompañado de un alto respaldo social. La victoria de Claudia no se explica sin la historia de lucha de las mujeres movilizadas y a la masividad que logramos en los últimos años en las calles.”

### ¿Qué representa el triunfo de Sheinbaum para las mujeres de México?

Tras su toma de posesión la presidenta Claudia Sheinbaum será la comandanta en jefa de las fuerzas armadas, la columna vertebral del estado capitalista. Tendrá a su cargo, mantener la paz que requieren los negocios

<sup>3</sup> El color de la movilización se escogió por ser el que utiliza el Instituto Nacional Electoral, hostil a López Obrador, a diferencia del morado de Morena.

<sup>4</sup> El aborto fue descriminalizado por la decisión de la Suprema Corte de Justicia en septiembre de 2023, basándose en sus dictámenes de septiembre de 2021 declarando la inconstitucionalidad de la prohibición del aborto, dando la base para impugnaciones estado por estado de las leyes antiaborto. Véase “Después del fallo seguimos exigiendo ¡aborto libre y gratuito!” *Revolución Permanente* n° 11, octubre-diciembre de 2021.

## The Internationalist



A Journal of Revolutionary Marxism for the Reforging of the Fourth International

Publication of the Internationalist Group, section of the League for the Fourth International

Annual subscription US\$10 for five issues.

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**En el inicio de la campaña de Claudia Sheinbaum, el Zócalo de la capital estuvo repleto. Con su gran popularidad y la de su mentor AMLO, el Morena es un partido capitalista que sirve a la patronal al disciplinar a los trabajadores.**

capitalistas, incluso cuando esto implica recurrir a la represión. Que cuenta con el beneplácito de la burguesía mexicana y sus patronos imperialistas ha quedado de manifiesto. A pocos días de su elección, se reunió con una delegación imperial enviada por el presidente estadounidense Joe Biden, encabezada por Elizabeth Sherwood Randall, asesora de la Casa Blanca en materia de “seguridad”, para prometer la continuidad de la “política de amistad” entre ambos gobiernos que garantiza un “auténtico enfoque hemisférico en materia de cooperación migratoria” (es decir, el de bloquear *manu militari* la migración al norte mediante el despliegue de miles de efectivos de la Guardia Nacional en las fronteras). También se reunió con Kathryn McLay, directora ejecutiva de la empresa ferozmente antisindical Walmart Internacional, quien le “refrendó el compromiso de la empresa con el país” (*Milenio*, 11 de junio).

Diversos grupos feministas están usando el triunfo de Sheinbaum para sembrar ilusiones en la posibilidad de reformar el capitalismo para que sirva a las mujeres. Su programa es el de la colaboración de clases, el del apoyo de la explotadas y oprimidas a *mujeres de la clase que las explota y oprime*. Pero la lucha por la liberación de la mujer *no* es una cuestión meramente democrática. La opresión que sufren las mujeres *por ser mujeres* es resultado de la *propiedad privada en que se asienta el sistema capitalista de explotación*. Dado que la opresión de la mujer tiene su raíz en la institución de la familia, para la plena emancipación de la mujer hay que sentar las bases materiales para superar esta reaccionaria institución mediante la socialización de las tareas que cumple. Luchamos así por *guarderías gratuitas disponibles las 24 horas*, que apuntan en la dirección de las instituciones de una sociedad socialista, así como como por *aborto gratuito a quien lo solicite* en el marco de un sistema de salud socializado de la más alta calidad.

Pero incluso reivindicaciones meramente democráticas como éstas no podrán ser una realidad plena sin una revolución socialista, toda vez que su implementación afecta instituciones esenciales de la sociedad capitalista, comenzando con la familia. También es el caso de la violencia que acecha a las mujeres. Si bien la tasa de asesinatos (muertes por vio-

lencia) de hombres es diez veces mayor que la de las mujeres,<sup>5</sup> y el auge reciente de homicidios contra mujeres tiene su raíz en la guerra contra el narcotráfico, la violencia contra mujeres es omnipresente. Bajo el grito de “nos están matando”, muchas feministas piden, implícita o explícitamente, un despliegue mucho mayor de las fuerzas militares y policíacas en las ciudades, haciendo esto peligrar a todos y todas. Parecería un poco absurdo, pero necesario, recalcar que la policía capitalista no es amiga ni aliada de las mujeres. Pero la cotidiana violencia contra las mujeres en el hogar es una modalidad machista para “mantener a la mujer en su lugar.” Es decir, refleja la opresión de la mujer en el seno de la familia, y hará falta una revolución para eliminarla.

Esa violencia doméstica y el acoso callejero sí son producto del machismo que incumbe a todos combatir, pero también reflejan en muchos casos la desesperación de familias pobres, que se ha intensificado en décadas recientes debido a la destrucción de la economía rural y la migración forzada de millones de personas a las zonas empobrecidas en torno a las grandes urbes, donde les falta toda seguridad económica. Para realmente hacer avanzar la lucha por la liberación de la mujer de la doble o triple opresión que sufre, es necesario ir a su raíz. Esta raíz es la propiedad privada burguesa que tiene en la institución de la familia su célula fundamental, tanto para transmitir la propiedad a una nueva generación de capitalistas, como para reproducir las nuevas generaciones de explotadas y explotados que generan la riqueza que la burguesía les expropia. La liberación de la mujer es imposible sin acabar con el sistema capitalista de propiedad privada de los medios de producción.

### ¡Luchar por la revolución socialista internacional!

El apoyo que AMLO y Claudia Sheinbaum han recibido entre los trabajadores, hombres y mujeres, lo mismo que entre los pobres del campo y la ciudad, se basa, en último término, en promesas que ningún gobierno capitalista puede cumplir. El programa de reincorporativización de los sindi-

<sup>5</sup> Véase “Lucha revolucionaria por la emancipación de la mujer, no feminismo del estado de bienestar (capitalista)”, *Revolución Permanente* n° 8, noviembre-diciembre de 2017.

catos “independientes” implementado por López Obrador es un intento de regresar a los años “dorados” del priato, que propició un supuesto “pacto social” corporativizado, basado en dos pilares: la integración de las organizaciones obreras y campesinas al aparato estatal burgués y el otorgamiento de algunos derechos democráticos elementales como el acceso a la salud y la educación. Creció en los años 1940-1980 la educación pública —con el enorme ensanchamiento de la Universidad Nacional y la creación del Instituto Politécnico y la Normal de Maestros— y de la salud, con los institutos de seguridad pública como el IMSS y el ISSSTE.

Esta fue la zanahoria que suavizaba el garrote del PRI-gobierno que reprimió fuertemente a todos los que no se plegaron al régimen bonapartista. Esta zanahoria era posible gracias a una economía burguesa altamente estatizada. Con las privatizaciones “neoliberales” desde finales de los años 1980, esta base no existe más. Por eso, el gobierno de AMLO ha desarrollado varios programas de asistencia social para los más necesitados. El gobierno reporta que “cinco millones de personas” habrían abandonado la pobreza durante el sexenio de AMLO, notando que del 41.9 por ciento de la población viviendo bajo la línea de pobreza en 2018, se habría pasado un 36.3 por ciento en 2022 (último año para el que tiene datos el Coneval, la institución gubernamental que mide la pobreza). Sin embargo, los que viven en “extrema pobreza”, o sea, la miseria, se han incrementado. No es posible un capitalismo “con rostro humano”, y mucho menos en un país semicolonial como México.

Las medidas populistas de AMLO que Sheinbaum promete mantener y “profundizar” no representan para nada el fin de la política de ataques contra la clase obrera conocida como “neoliberalismo”. De hecho, las medidas asistencialistas que consisten en transferencias directas de dinero a los pobres forman parte del recetario de los Chicago Boys, economistas norteamericanos aficionados del “libre mercado.” El propio Milton Friedman (decano de los Chicago Boys) recomendó al sanguinario gobierno golpista de Pinochet en 1975 que realizara tales transferencias de efectivo para evitar estallidos sociales entre los trabajadores precarizados de diversos sectores. En México bajo el gobierno de AMLO se generalizó por ejemplo el otorgamiento de las becas Benito Juárez para los niños y adolescentes en educación básica. Pero aún si alivian un poco los efectos más brutales de la miseria, estas medidas se basan en el socavamiento y hasta la eliminación efectiva de derechos para la población, como en materia de educación y salud pública.

Como muestra la experiencia del Octubre Rojo de 1917, es indispensable que los explotados y

oprimidos cuenten con un vehículo de lucha política, un *partido obrero revolucionario internacionalista*. Se trató del Partido Bolchevique bajo Lenin y Trotsky que por primera vez legalizó el aborto a la vez que buscó introducir instituciones socializadas que sentarían las bases para una verdadera liberación de la mujer. El partido que urge construir deberá luchar denodadamente por hacer realidad el derecho al aborto libre y gratuito en el marco de un sistema de salud socializado de la más alta calidad. Tendrá también que combatir el machismo en todas sus formas, defendiendo los derechos de gays, lesbianas y personas trans. Y al mismo tiempo, para librar esta lucha, la piedra de toque consiste en la más cabal independencia de los explotados y oprimidos con respecto a los partidos y políticos capitalistas, así como su estado.

La elección de una presidenta, aunque refleja un cambio social importante, no cambia nada de la sistemática opresión de la mujer. Para liberar a la mujer, así como a todos los oprimidos, hay que *romper con todos los partidos capitalistas*, desde el PRI, el PAN, el PRD, el Verde, hasta Morena y sus satélites, y *forjar un partido leninista-trotskista de la vanguardia del proletariado*. La emancipación de la mujer sólo podrá lograrse mediante una revolución socialista, en la que la clase obrera, a la cabeza de todos los oprimidos, luche por un gobierno obrero y campesino que reorganice la sociedad sobre la base de la expropiación de los expropiadores, al mismo tiempo que lucha por la extensión internacional de la revolución socialista.

Este es el programa del Grupo Internacionalista, sección mexicana de la Liga por la IV Internacional. *¡Únete al GI y la LIVI!* ■

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## ¡Liberación de la mujer mediante la revolución socialista!

# Claudia Sheinbaum presidenta: nueva cara, viejo truco de la burguesía

El arrollador triunfo de Claudia Sheinbaum, candidata del Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional (Morena) en las elecciones presidenciales del 2 de junio pasado, ha generado un enorme entusiasmo en vastos sectores del país. Obtuvo casi el 60 por ciento de los votos y derrotó por una proporción de más de dos a uno a Xóchitl Gálvez, su contrincante de la coalición formada por los partidos burgueses tradicionales en México —el clerical reaccionario Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), el otrora partido de estado Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) y lo que quedaba del ex “izquierdista” Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD)— quien recibió sólo un 27 por ciento del total de los votos. La ex jefa del gobierno de la Ciudad de México ganó en todos los estados menos en el archiconservador Aguascalientes, y en muchos estados del sur su votación superó el 70 por ciento. Aquí y allá, el triunfo de Sheinbaum ha sido calificado como un hito histórico por ser ella la primera mujer que llega a la presidencia en los 200 años de existencia del país.

En un país de machismo rampante en el que la opresión de la mujer asume formas descarnadas, el que una mujer sea electa presidenta sí representa, y a su vez refleja, un cambio social importante. El triunfo de Sheinbaum refleja, en parte, el hartazgo de millones de mujeres en contra de esta violencia machista, cuya función consiste en perpetuar la subordinación de la mujer mediante su esclavización y reclusión en el hogar, mientras andar en la calle y los centros de trabajo le son territorios hostiles. Pero la apabullante victoria electoral de Claudia Sheinbaum refleja también el que es vista como la garantía de continuidad de las políticas del presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador y su gobierno populista burgués, al que la candidata de Morena prometió una y otra vez añadir un “segundo piso”. En particular, muchos votantes de las capas “populares” expresaron que la favorecieron como protectora de los



Claudia Sheinbaum inicia su campaña en el Zócalo de CDMX, 1° de marzo.

incrementos al salario mínimo y las medidas asistencialistas de los programas sociales de AMLO.

*No obstante, en las elecciones del 2 de junio pasado, los tres candidatos a la presidencia representaban a los capitalistas. Sus diferencias son si acaso de orden táctico. Su propósito común es mantener el sistema de explotación de este país semicolonial, al servicio de los imperialistas. Por eso el Grupo Internacionalista se pronunció por “¡Ni un voto a los partidos patronales: Morena, PRI, PAN, PRD, MC, etc. Gane quien gane, los explotados y oprimidos pierden. ¡Forjar un partido obrero revolucionario!”*

El triunfo de Sheinbaum ha sido vitoreado por las mujeres, los trabajadores y los pobres. Ella es una científica de ascendencia judía, que no ha renegado de su activismo izquierdista en la universidad ni de sus padres comunistas. Pero la alta

burguesía nacional y sus amos imperialistas también respiran con alivio. AMLO cumplió su promesa de mantener la “paz social” entre explotados y explotadores. Desde los años 50 del siglo pasado hubo reiteradas rebeliones de movimientos sindicales disidentes contra el férreo control estatal ejercido por los seudosindicatos corporativistas.<sup>1</sup> Los estallidos de luchas de sectores de trabajadores y oprimidos en contra de las medidas hambreadoras de los gobiernos priistas de Carlos Salinas y Ernesto Zedillo, los panistas Vicente Fox y Felipe Calderón, y de regreso el priista Enrique Peña Nieto, inquietaron a los capitalistas. Aun así, los sindicatos “independientes” fueron subordinados *políticamente* a la burguesía a través primero del PRD burgués fundado por Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, y luego a través de Morena. López Obrador en el poder ha logrado limitar al máximo estos brotes de lucha de clase mediante un proyecto de recorporativización de los sindicatos que habían roto

<sup>1</sup> El corporativismo consiste en la *integración orgánica* de todo tipo de organizaciones, en particular de las que pretenden representar a los trabajadores, al aparato estatal burgués. Este fue el mecanismo de control social que sustentó el régimen del PRI-gobierno durante sus siete décadas de mando. Correspondía a un sistema de partido único con una economía capitalista altamente estatizada. En su apogeo, desde principios de los años 1950 hasta finales de los 70, hubo una circulación fluida de cuadros entre “sindicatos” corporativistas, empresas paraestatales y el elenco político del partido de estado. Pero con la creciente privatización de la economía bajo los preceptos del “neoliberalismo” a partir de finales de los 80, el cuantioso dinero que sirvió de lubricante para esta maquinaria escaseó, y el sistema cayó en crisis.

parcialmente el grillete corporativista.

Claudia Sheinbaum se presenta también como pacificadora de las luchas de los sectores plebeyos. Sin embargo, hay una contradicción entre las esperanzas que produce su triunfo electoral entre explotados y oprimidos, y las realidades de un país capitalista semicolonial. En primer lugar, los programas asistencialistas dependen de que los recursos públicos no se agoten con una caída futura en los precios del petróleo y otras materias primas, como pasó con los gobiernos populistas latinoamericanos de la “marea rosada” de la primera década de los años 2000. Y más profundamente, la opresión de la mujer está enraizada en el sistema capitalista. Para millones de mujeres en el país, oprimidas por la secular esclavitud doméstica, se agrega una opresión adicional por la explotación en la fábrica, además de que muchas son victimizadas por el sempiterno racismo antindígena y antinegro —además de la espantosa xenofobia que hoy la burguesía azuza contra los migrantes.

El triunfo de una candidata de un partido patronal no disminuirá en nada el fardo de la doble y hasta triple opresión de las mujeres que trabajan en las maquiladoras esparcidas por todo el país, por ejemplo. Su mano de obra barata y disciplinada seguirá siendo garantizada mediante los seudosindicatos corporativistas, toda vez que la “ventaja competitiva” del capitalismo mexicano seguirá siendo la sobreexplotación de la clase obrera. El que una trabajadora en una fábrica de cinturones en Reynosa reciba como pago la décima parte de lo que gana su homóloga al otro lado del Río Bravo es precisamente el atractivo que tienen los dueños de las grandes empresas “multinacionales” para mudar la producción a países de bajos salarios. El nuevo auge de la industrialización se debe en gran parte a la “desvinculación” de la economía norteamericana de

*sigue en la página 22*

Jueves  
30 de mayo  
16 hrs

Campamento CNTE  
Zócalo, CDMX

### FORO-DEBATE

**¡Ni un voto a los partidos patronales: Morena, PRI, PAN, PRD, MC, etc.!**  
**Gane quien gane, los explotados y oprimidos pierden**

*¡Forjar un partido obrero revolucionario!*



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**Cartel del Grupo Internacionalista para un foro-debate en el Zócalo capitalino sobre la contienda electoral.**



Para las trabajadoras en las maquiladoras, aún triplicando el salario mínimo, ganan una miseria.