

SOCIALIST ACTION



Vol. 42, No. 1, January, February, March, 2024

www.socialistaction.org

U.S. \$1 Canada \$2

STOP US-BACKED ISRAELI GENOCIDE OF PALESTINE!

By Jeff Mackler, National Secretary Socialist Action Oakland, CA

We are horrified to daily witness the monstrous deeds of a crisis-ridden world capitalism that knows no way out other than by inflicting new waves of catastrophe on the world's people. Today's US-backed and orchestrated Zionist genocide of the Palestinian people is but one more glaring example.

President Biden repeatedly sends to Tel Aviv his top imperial agents of doom – Secretary of “Defense” Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, General CQ Brown Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and National Security Council adviser, Jake Sullivan. They take turns in photo ops advising Israel's neo-fascist Zionist murderer, Benjamin Netanyahu, on how to prettify his army's ever-intensifying genocide in Gaza.

Before the corrupt corporate media they counsel the butcher Netanyahu to demonstrate a modicum of “restraint” while instantly replacing every 2,000 pound bunker-buster bomb and all other advanced weaponry Israel deploys to pulverize defenseless people.

Sullivan claimed last month that Israel would be “transitioning to another phase of the war focused on more precise ways of targeting the leadership of Hamas.” Netanyahu instantly denied Sullivan's assertion, emphatically repeating Israel's genocidal credo that all Palestinians are in the daily crosshairs of the Zionist killing machine.

That 80 percent of Gaza has already been obliterated/leveled and three quarters of its 2.3 million inhabitants made homeless does not factor into US calls for “restraint.” Neither does the fact that 70 percent of the Palestinian dead are women and children.

The genocide continues uninterrupted. 27,000+ innocent Palestinians were slaughtered before the January 27 International Court of Justice (ICJ) finding of “plausible” evidence of Zionist genocide. Another 900 were murdered in the week following the UN's indecisions. Multiple thousands more are buried beneath the rubble of a carpet-bombed obliterated Gaza. 81,500 more are wounded. The great majority is starving. Infectious disease is rampant. And now, the “final solution” is in active preparation as the Zionist murderers prepare to drive all of Gaza's remaining population into an Egyptian government-constructed Sinai desert tent-based concentration camp!

Not a day passes when new atrocities are registered including now the US bombing of Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Iran, all brutally punished for standing in solidarity with beleaguered Gaza.

Biden's UN representative cast the sole Security Council VETO blocking a UN call for a Ceasefire. The US followed up by voting “No” on the toothless UN General Assembly's 153-10 vote for a CEASEFIRE.

US imperialism knows no limits

Venezuela, Iran, Russia and Syria are apt examples of US imperialism's deadly logic. Fossil fuel exploitation and war are at its center. Today, US troops occupy almost one-third of Syria, the portion that includes Syria's rich fossil fuels and agricultural reserves.

Today's deepening youth radicalization

A broad youth radicalization in unfolding today, influenced by deep anti-racist sentiments of solidarity



with the oppressed in the US and worldwide.

Unprecedented mass mobilizations engaging tens of millions are the norm. On Saturday, January 13, 400,000 marched in Washington, D.C. to say NO! to the US-abetted Zionist genocide in Palestine. Tens of millions marched worldwide on the same day to damn Washington's aid to the Zionist slaughter.

In the US, originally expressed in the unprecedented anti-racist Black Lives Matter (BLM) mobilizations of a few years ago, today the movement has taken giant leaps forward with the almost daily youth-led and often massive and increasingly coordinated protests against US complicity with the ongoing Israeli genocide.

But unlike the BLM protests, that at one point saw five million in the streets protesting racist police murders of unarmed Blacks and exposing US capitalism's systemic racism, today's mobilizations, with a new, independent and ever broadening leadership, are not likely to be coopted into capitalist politics via the Democratic Party, as was the case with the almost instant demise of the largely Ford Foundation-funded BLM movement that was swept into the 2020 Biden campaign.

The roots of this new radicalization were evident a few years before BLM,

when repeated Pew Polls showed that the majority of youth today preferred socialism to capitalism, a reflection of the fact that today's youth see their future prospects as significantly dimmer than their parents in capitalist America. They see socialism, however it's defined, as a fundamentally more democratic, humane, anti-authoritarian society aimed at social equality and at advancing human rights and needs in all their manifestations.

Today's youth are deeply repelled by bi-partisan government, corporate and educational institution resort to mass arrests and threats of future employment exclusion aimed at enforcing the spurious charge that anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism.

Capitalism's past cooptation response to any youth and broader radicalization has been via its Democratic Party political appendages like the DSA or through the myriad of corporate-financed NGOs that plague a broad range of environmental and Black and Latino faith-based and social organizations. Today, the ongoing organization of independent, broadly-based, mass action-oriented united and democratic coalitions is critical to the new movement's capacity to stop the US war machine and simultaneously fight for social justice on all fronts. Join us in helping to build this movement! socialistaction.org

UN'S COP28 FAILS ON CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

By John Pottinger, Chicago Socialist Action

After nearly three decades of UN-sponsored deliberations over the oncoming and ever-accelerating climate crises, this year's COP28 (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), Nov. 30. – Dec. 13, once against registered zero progress, indeed a regression.

The Dubai, United Arab Emirates-based COP28 was chaired by UAE politician Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber, who also heads the UAE's National Oil Company (ADNOC). Al Jaber is also the UAE's special envoy for climate change. Prior to the conference he made clear his orientation when he publicly debunked as "fake science" the base findings of the world scientific community that absent a massive and immediate coordinated worldwide effort to eliminate all fossil fuel use in the next few decades, only catastrophic and irreversible consequences will result.

Replete with literally thousands of top representatives of the world's fossil fuel corporations, the conference once again failed to announce a single binding resolution limiting fossil fuel production!

Indeed, the facts demonstrate that every leading fossil fuel producer in the world, headed by the US and China, has significantly increased fossil fuel drilling and production!

The final, always non-binding, COP28 declaration vaguely called for "winding down" and transiting away" from deadly fossil fuels.

In 2023, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, our planet recorded its hottest year on record.

COP25's Paris goal to stay below

an increase of 1.5°C warming over pre-industrial levels – the worldwide temperature increase over which only deepening and irreversible climate catastrophe will inevitably result – has been essentially abandoned. With zero concrete implementation measures, the conference, as with all UN climate deliberations, left the field once again wide open to the world's corporate elite to pursue profits above all else, the world's people, as with imperialist war, be damned.

As always, the world's poorest nations are the hardest hit, with small island nations sinking, if not disappearing into ever-rising seas and devastated by murderous hurricanes, while imperialist-dominated continents in the "Global South" are subjected to capitalist-induced killer heat waves, unprecedented raging fires, deforestation, desertification, and massive pollution of vital water supplies.

Demise of COP

The COP process today has devolved into an annual stocktaking exercise, at best a review of what all nations contemplate they might do to mitigate climate catastrophe. In fact, "Global Stocktake" is the official name of COP's final empty declaration. With the adoption of the 2018 Paris Agreement – which abandoned the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and its so-called binding emission targets and timetables – the battle for any legally binding agreement on the international level has been tragically abandoned.

Once again, capitalism's inherent contradictions are fully operative. Ever-intensifying economic competition, over time, invariably reduces average profit rates, compelling all

the leading players to resort to endless horrific measures to survive. All these measures are focused on making working people pay and damning the environment.

While the European Union is said to have legally binding emission "targets," the U.S. has none and indeed is the world's number one polluter, not to mention the climate horrors it imposes on its virtual neo-colonies and poor nations the world over.

Heading toward irreversible climate disaster

The most recent UN assessment published in November 2023 sees "no credible pathway" to keep global warming below an 1.5° C increase unless drastic measures are taken to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by 43 percent by 2030 and by 60 percent by 2035, compared with 2019 levels. Reaching the UN's net zero CO2 emissions target by 2050 is similarly a pipedream. Not a single COP28 proposal moved one inch toward any of these deadlines, portending catastrophe for the world's people, if not all life on the planet!

To make matters worse, if that's pos-

sible, COP28 concluded with a photo of representatives of 22 nations posing under a banner with the pledge to triple producing energy via nuclear power, a doomsday promise guaranteed to further poison the earth and its ecosystems with deadly nuclear waste ever seeping into the world's lakes, streams, rivers and oceans, not to mention repeats of the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi power plant disaster in Japan.

Twelve years after Fukushima's triple reactor meltdown, Japan this year, for the first time, released unprecedented and massive amounts of "treated" radioactive wastewater into the ocean. And dealing with Fukushima's wastewater is considered qualitatively less difficult than decommissioning the plant itself. That process has barely begun; the removal of Fukushima's melted nuclear fuel, still requiring massive amounts of cooling seawater to be pumped daily into the destroyed reactor structures, hasn't even started!

The UN's COP28 will be once again marked as an abject failure. How could it be otherwise when the world's corporate elite determine its every decision?

NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL! ORIGINS OF US IMMIGRATION CRISIS

By Cristobal Cavesas, Socialist Action, Dupage, IL

US capitalism's endless bipartisan wars, its wanton environmental destruction, its economic rape of poor nations, its privatization of the lands of the poor, its punishing economic sanctions imposed on 40+ nations, and its endless substitution of high technology manufacturing for human labor, have combined to create a worldwide immigration crisis, wherein the world's poor are increasingly driven from their homelands in search of a better life elsewhere.

Former Democratic Party president Barack Obama became known as the "great deporter," only to be exceeded by Donald Trump and now Joseph Biden, who is currently proceeding to trash his 2020 immigration rights election pledges in return for Republican support for additional \$billions for the US proxy war against Ukraine and for Israel's genocide in Gaza.

When the beleaguered poor and persecuted do arrive, justifiably expecting fair treatment under US laws, if they are not instantly deported to the growing refugee camps and/or

detention centers in the US and around the world, they are systematically shunted into their new nation's lowest wage level jobs and living conditions. They are subjected to corporate media sponsored racist tirades aimed at characterizing them as stealing jobs and otherwise being responsible for the ever-deepening crises of failing capitalist societies.

Indeed, the ruling elite everywhere consciously use the plight of immigrants to fuel support for overtly racist and increasingly neo-fascist policies and parties, blaming capitalism's most oppressed victims for the ever-deepening assaults that a crisis-ridden capitalist system imposes on the broad working class.

There is no solution to these crises other than the elimination of the worldwide exploitative, warmongering capitalist-imperialist system at the hands of the world's great majority.

In the meantime we demand: Open the borders! Solidarity with oppressed people everywhere! No human being is illegal! End all deportations!

Join Socialist Action! Donate here: socialistaction.org

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! • Free Julian Assange! • Free All Political Prisoners! • Abolish the war budget! • For a trade union-based Labor Party based on independent fighting unions! • No support to capitalist or pro-capitalist parties! • End all racism, sexism, LGBTQI and transgender discrimination! • For socialism!

Contact: socialistaction@lmi.net





GOVERNMENT WITCHHUNT TARGETS ANTI-ZIONISTS

By Eleanor Sparing, Socialist Action, Washington, D.C.

Congressional efforts to pressure the firing of prestigious college presidents at Harvard, MIT, Rutgers and the University of Pennsylvania were highlighted with a Dec. 3 House of Representatives bipartisan resolution calling for the resignation of Harvard's president Dr. Claudia Gay. Gay's remarks before a congressional committee defending free speech for Harvard students protesting Israeli genocide in Gaza were deemed unacceptable. Drafted in advance in collaboration with prestigious attorneys expert on free speech, civil liberties and the Constitution's historic First Amendment protections, Gay defended the basic free speech rights of Harvard students' anti-Zionist protests. A chorus of would-be congressional witchhunters and the corporate media condemned her defense of free speech as too "lawyerly."

Legislation equates anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism

The congressional attacks on a handful of university presidents have been accompanied by reactionary state and national legislation equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. A December 5, bi-partisan House bill (H.R. 894) explicitly designated anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism. The vote was 311-14 with 92 members voting "Present." All but one Republican voted in favor. Nearly half of the Democrats followed suit. Most of the rest's "Present" vote, indicating their "declining to take a position," were Democrats, yet another affirmation that the Democratic Party has never been and never will be a bulwark against reaction.

Another recent bill (H.R. 6578) aimed at establishing the "Commis-

sion to Study Acts of Anti-Semitism in the United States," perhaps a modern-day version of the McCarthy-era, House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). The proposed bill authorizes the Commission to hold HUAC witchhunt-type hearings with the power to subpoena, and therefore, intimidate witnesses, including perhaps with threats of imprisonment levied against those subpoenaed who refuse, "to name names" of their political collaborators. Yesteryear's "Are you now or have you ever been member of the Communist Party?" may well be reformulated today to, "Are you now or have you ever been an anti-Zionist?"

America's mini-experiment with fascism

US capitalism's 1950s and 60s resort to McCarthy-era repression and imprisonment of political dissidents was considered by experienced activists at that time, the US ruling class's mini-experiment with fascism. It came at a time when the post-WWII mass revulsion against the just-defeated Nazis occupation of Europe, especially in France and Italy, focused on mass Communist Party-led mobilizations that extracted major concessions from the largely discredited post-war governments. These near working class rebellions extracted a broad range of unprecedented social democratic, wage, labor and employment security victories from these weakened capitalist states, whose wartime governments were Nazi collaborators. At that time the French, Italian and Greek Communist Parties were the largest in the country.

A fearful US ruling class, especially

in the context of the 1946 US strike wave that saw the largest number of workers on strike in US history, calculated that fascist-like repression in the US itself might be a pre-requisite to continued ruling class stability.

But, the post-WWII period essentially left US capitalism intact, with its wartime industrial infrastructure massively expanded, while its former European competitors' economies lay in ruins. This led the US elite to at least in part back off from implementing the more virulent forms of brutal fascist rule, but not before a frightened ruling class in the 1950's enacted a body of reactionary legislation aimed at essentially terrorizing, if not effectively outlawing Communist Party members and their associated organizations. The Constitutional protections of civil liberties were shredded. Free speech and association were subordinated to so-called US national security interests. This was codified in the US Supreme Court majority decisions authored by Chief Justice Felix Frankfurter wherein the First Amendment's rights had to be "balanced" against the "national security interests" of the US government. Subpoenaed HUAC witnesses who, citing the First Amendment, refused to "name names" or admit membership in the CP, were cited for "contempt of congress" and often jailed. The witchhunt was on.

Immediately prior to this period, the Stalinist-led US Communist Party led some one-third of the US labor movement organized in the powerful Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). "Peaceful co-existence" with capitalism was the CP credo. In 1945 the USSR's head of state, Joseph Stalin, the US wartime ally, appeared on the front page of the popular Life magazine and was endearingly referred to as "Uncle Joe." The CP itself proposed continuing its wartime patriotic, pro-employer "no strike pledge" into the postwar period, again, at the time of the largest strike wave in US history! This, in itself, helped to discredit the CP in the eyes of many workers. Further, on Stalin's orders, in 1946, under Earl Browder's leadership, in the name of "peaceful coexistence" with US imperialism, the CP itself was, for a time, formally dissolved!

Origins of the Cold War

None of this, however, convinced US imperialism to back off from its witchhunt. Rebuilding and re-arming European capitalism under the Marshall Plan and restoring its badly tarnished Nazi collaborationist image became US imperialism's major focus.

A "Cold War" was decreed; at its center was bringing down the "Iron Curtain," that is, the pro-Russian governments that were established across Eastern Europe following the USSR's Red Army victories that were centrally responsible for Hitler's defeats. With 90 percent of Hitler's armies on the Russian front, the USSR's losses, at 27 million dead, came close to exceeding the total losses of the entire world. Smashing Russia's credibility became US imperialism's central priority. The witchhunt was critical to this US objective. The US establishment of NATO in Europe aimed at challenging the Soviet-backed and established deformed workers' states in Eastern Europe that a few years after the end of WWII, abolished capitalism via the election of various indigenous Communist Parties that replaced the largely discredited parties that had collaborated with the Nazis occupation.

But with CPUSA's acquiescence at home, the ruling class saw no need for a US fascist repression of the Hitlerian type to defend its interests.

McCarthy himself, a rightwing Wisconsin US Senator, was quickly discredited. He was publically pilloried during the widely televised 1954 Army-McCarthy congressional hearings, isolated and effectively disappeared from public life. But the McCarthy-era's witchhunt, anti-democratic, anti-labor and anti-civil liberties laws that his generation introduced were allowed to linger for decades. The capitalists of that era, and today, see no reason to change or remove any repressive legislation that facilitated their "right to profit." "Anti-communism" and fear of dissent was drilled into the consciousness of millions and remained there for decades until a new youth rebellion combined with the dramatic Black-led Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam antiwar movement to fundamentally break with the witchhunt's "better dead than red" mentality. It was only during this period, some two decades later, when the new mass movements once again dominated public life, that the US Supreme Court, via Chief Justice Earl Warren's 5-4 majority, repeatedly ruled that most of the McCarthy-era legislation was "unconstitutional."

Today's growing mass antiwar mobilizations demanding an end to US-backed genocide in Gaza, properly labeling Israeli Zionism as genocidal and demanding "Free Palestine From the River to the Sea!" are key to keeping the modern-day witchhunters at bay.

UN FAILS TO ORDER CEASE-FIRE TO STOP ZIONIST GENOCIDE

By Jeff Mackler and Marty Goodman

The UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, Netherlands delivered its non-binding verdict on January 26 on South Africa's multiple charges that Zionist Israel was guilty of genocide. The court's 17 judges, in near unanimous decisions on a myriad of issues, rejected South Africa's key de-

some language aimed at assuaging the world's contempt for the actions of the racist, settler Zionist regime. It found "plausible" evidence of genocide, and called on Israel to "take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all such acts."

Israel was "ordered" to issue a report



mands that Israel immediately declare a ceasefire and stop its genocidal slaughter of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and that Israel open its border crossings with Egypt to allow lifesaving medical supplies, food and water for Gaza's Zionist-starved population.

Indeed, the day after the rulings, Zionist officials dismissed the ICJ proceedings with contempt, ordering intensification of its genocidal war, murdering an additional 900 Palestinians in the following week.

The court also ruled that Hamas immediately and unconditionally release all 100 of the remaining Israeli hostages taken on October 7 during Hamas's Al-Aqsa Flood attack. There was no mention of the Zionist Entity's releasing its 8000+ imprisoned, beaten and often tortured Palestinians prisoners that Hamas aimed at exchanging for its captured hostages.

In its carefully crafted rulings, aimed at portraying the court as at least alert to the genocidal horrors inflicted on the Palestinian people, the judges included

in a month's time indicating that it had now refrained from killing Palestinians in accord with all nations' obligations under the 1948 Geneva Convention on genocide. More than one observer noted that given the 28,000 Palestinians already murdered by the Zionist killing machine since October 7 and another 81,500 wounded, at the current rate, another some 8,500 Palestinians could be expected to be slaughtered and countless more wounded during the one-month timeframe that the court gave Israel to report back on its "progress."

Meanwhile, 80 percent of Gaza's buildings have been destroyed or damaged with Israel declaring that it would now literally plow through the rubble to construct roads to facilitate the passage of its military vehicles to better facilitate its slaughter.

Here I leave aside a detailed account of South Africa's 75 pages of genocide charges and the court's decisions, all of which fall into the category of Orwellian politics and "diplomacy" played out on the world stage as opposed to

binding decisions capable of enforcement by any international body or state.

Neither the UN nor its ICJ, sometimes called the World Court, have the authority to enforce its resolutions or findings, unless, that is, they are unanimously approved by the UN Security Council, where any single permanent member has the unqualified right of veto. The US exercised this veto a few months ago in rejecting a UN Security Council "ceasefire" resolution. The Biden administration indicated in no uncertain terms that any World Court decisions condemning Israel and moving to stop its genocide would be similarly ignored. The US had previously voted against a UN General Assembly ceasefire resolution approved by a vote of 153 in favor, 10 against and 23 abstaining. Like all General Assembly resolutions it merely indicated the opinions of the UN's member states. No more!

No ICJ judge voted to demand Zionist genocide be stopped

Thus, the World Court's "decisions" and especially its ambiguities and guarded formulations, instantly became the international format for every nation and international player to publicly state their views, interpreting the ICJ's report for their own political purposes. But the essence of the matter is that under US pressure, not a single judge voted to demand an immediate ceasefire!

Two New York Times January 27 headlines captured the ICJ's equivocating decisions: "Israel Must Shun Acts of Genocide, U.N. Court Rules: No Decree To End War" and, "U.N. Court Rules Israel Must Avoid Genocide, But Remains Mum on War."

Rhetoric aside, all serious legal observers agreed that any ICJ deliberations regarding any final findings of Israeli genocide would take multiple years to litigate and verify. And again, whatever the "final outcome" the US is all but pledged, in advance, to veto any proposed UN action to remedy the situation.

US imperialism is today Israel's chief benefactor, supplying state-of-the-art weapons, at \$3.8 billion annually – plus a special additional \$10 billion approved this past year. US imperialism's chief military enforcer in the Middle East, Israel has long ranked first in the world in receipt of US military funding.

The UN is and has always been an

institution subordinate to the major world powers. Established in 1945 in the post-WWII era, its five-member Security Council, which then included representatives of the Soviet Union, the US, UK, France and China, operated with the right of any single member having veto power over any and all critical decisions. Thus, the key issues in world politics, from 1945 to this day, rarely came before the UN for resolution.

The liberation of oppressed people everywhere was never decided by or facilitated by the UN but rather by the collective organization and mobilization of imperialism's victims.

That South Africa rose to the defense of Palestine in initiating the ICJ's charges of genocide, while an important political contribution to exposing Zionist genocide, could in no way lead to a UN resolution of the ongoing Israeli horror. That South Africa's voting ICJ delegate retreated from its original proposals to damn Israel's genocide and call for an immediate ceasefire is a telling indication that its capitalist minor-imperialist government – the role it plays in Africa – is far from breaking from the clutches of US imperialism. South Africa's president Cyril Ramaphosa, today a multi-billionaire sitting on the board of several leading white-owned and/or US-controlled corporations, was afforded the opportunity to showcase his corrupt and strike-breaking African National Congress government before the world, burnishing the ANC's decayed image as still acting as a leading national liberation force today. Tragically, the ANC's national liberation credentials were marred from the beginning when it negotiated a "settlement" with the white racist apartheid government of FW de Klerk (who shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Nelson Mandela) that formally ended racist apartheid rule but left de Klerk's capitalist state economy intact.

Palestine's future rests centrally with Palestinian masses and their continued capacity to inspire worldwide solidarity via ever-increasing united mass mobilizations everywhere. It rests with a broadly reconstituted, united and democratically-organized US and international antiwar movement that demands an immediate end to all US aid to Zionist, apartheid Israel.

Free Free Palestine From the River to The Sea! For a Democratic Secular Palestine With the Right To Return of All Dispossessed Palestinians! For a Socialist Federation of the Middle East. Join us! socialistaction.org so-