

New York rally declares: Jerusalem is Palestine!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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New York City, April 29. Photo: Al-Awda NY

The chant “Palestine will be free from the river to the sea!” was heard by thousands of people in New York City on April 29. Manhattan’s Herald Square was filled with

protestors who were outraged at Israel's attacks on worshippers at the Al-Aqsa mosque during the holy month of Ramadan.

At least [150 worshippers were injured](#) by Israeli cops on April 15 with rubber bullets and other weapons. Israeli troops and settlers have murdered dozens of Palestinians on the occupied West Bank this year.

The Al-Aqsa mosque is located in Jerusalem, which in Arabic is called Quds. The Iranian Revolution established Al-Quds Day on the last Friday of Ramadan to rally people worldwide to defend the capital of Palestine.

This year Al-Quds Day fell on April 29. That day people rallied in Detroit, Johannesburg, Lagos, Paris, Tehran and more than 50 other cities.

In New York City, Marya Abbas of the Muslim Congress and Nerdeen Kiswani of Within Our Lifetime co-chaired a rally that featured many speakers.

They included Dr. Raza Moosvi of the Muslim Congress and Kawthar Abdullah of the Yemeni Alliance, who described the suffering the U.S.-armed Saudi military has inflicted on Yemen. A young boy, Taqi Abbas Abidi, gave a beautiful and melodious recitation from the Quran.

It was pointed out that the U.S. government has given over \$140 billion to the apartheid regime occupying Palestine. A rabbi denounced the racism of Zionism.

Lamis Deek of Al-Awda NY, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, spoke of the upcoming [Rising to Return conference](#) planned for May 6-8 at the Peoples Forum in New York City.

Bill Dores of Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and the Socialist Unity Party / Partido de Socialismo Unido pointed out that Washington funds and arms the Zionist occupation regime in Palestine at the expense of working-class communities here.

He called on workers and oppressed people in the U.S. to stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine.

Among the organizations sponsoring the event was MuslimCongress.org; Al-Awda NY, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition; Jafria Association of North America; Within Our Lifetime-United For Palestine; United National Antiwar Coalition; Muslims for Progress; Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network; BDSapp.org; Muslims United for Justice; Muslim Girl; Yemeni Alliance Committee NY; Socialist Unity Party; Workers World Party; International Action Center; and CAIR NJ.

Free Palestine!



Philippines community rallies to demand fair elections

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On April 23, nearly 200 members of the Philippines community from up and down

the east coast came to Washington, D.C., to demand clean and fair elections from U.S.-backed dictator Rodrigo Duterte. They held a spirited rally at Dupont Circle, then marched to the Philippine Embassy. The voting in the Philippines will take place on May 9. Many Filipino overseas voters placed their absentee ballots in the box set aside for voting on the embassy grounds.



Three days in May to fight imperialist war and fascism

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The struggle against imperialist war and white supremacy is global.
Pictured: Brooklyn protest after the police murder of George Floyd, June 1, 2020; Victory Day 2016 in Lugansk. SLL photos: Greg Butterfield

This May, as U.S. imperialism wages a criminal proxy war against Russia on the territory of Ukraine and the Donbass republics, the workers' movement should take steps toward organizing to defeat imperialist war and fascism. Three days of fight-back give us an opportunity to begin that urgent work.

May 1 is International Workers' Day, commemorating the 1886 Haymarket protest and deadly police repression in Chicago. The day of international working-class solidarity is celebrated around the world. In the United States, anti-communism and anti-Sovietism nearly wiped out May Day for decades, until it was revitalized by the

struggle of undocumented immigrant workers in the early 2000s.

May 2 marks the anniversary of another massacre: in Odessa, Ukraine, in 2014, carried out by U.S.-backed neo-Nazis. At least 48 anti-fascist protesters were killed when supporters of the illegal Maidan coup set fire to the House of Trade Unions and slaughtered those who tried to escape the burning building. This massacre isn't yet well known in the U.S. but should be, since it illuminates the ugly reality behind Washington's "Stand with Ukraine" war propaganda.

May 9, meanwhile, is recognized in the former Soviet countries and much of the world as Victory Day - marking the final defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. It's no surprise that this day isn't celebrated in the U.S., since it challenges the well-cultivated myth that the U.S. was the lynchpin in the defeat of the Third Reich. But in reality, the USSR and its partisan allies across Europe defeated German imperialism - at the cost of 27 million civilian and military lives and the destruction of much of the socialist country's infrastructure.

In the Donbass people's republics of Donetsk and Lugansk, in Russia, and until eight years ago in Ukraine itself, the period from May 1 through 9 is an important holiday time when people remember those who sacrificed so much to defeat the 20th century fascist menace.

Since 2014, it has gained new meaning in Donbass, as people also honor those family members and neighbors who've died defending the republics from Ukraine's NATO-armed military - including the neo-Nazi battalions that form the backbone of the current Ukrainian state.

This May 1-2, it's been announced that [Odessa will be under day-long curfews](#) to prevent any expression of working-class struggle or opposition to the Zelensky/NATO regime. Ukrainian President Zelensky recently appointed the leader of the fascist Aidar Battalion as governor of the Odessa region.

Victory Day commemorations have been banned in Ukraine since 2014. Elders who have taken to the streets in defiance of the Ukrainian regime to mark Victory Day have been arrested by police and beaten by neo-Nazis.

War on workers

President [Joe Biden has requested](#) a \$33-billion addition to the U.S. war budget to pump even more weapons into Ukraine to counter the Special Military Operation of the Donbass republics, Ukraine's anti-fascist underground and the Russian Federation. The aim of the Special Military Operation is to denazify and disarm the NATO-controlled Ukrainian regime.

Given the eagerness of Democrats and Republicans alike to support the U.S. proxy war, there's little doubt Biden's request will be granted – if not more.

Along with the military-industrial complex, U.S. Big Oil and Big Banks will profit handsomely. A key motivation for launching a major European conflict was to cut off the supply of Russian fuel to Washington's Western European allies, to ensure their money flows into U.S. coffers.

But the war drive is a disaster for working-class and oppressed people. While Washington pours a fortune into war, sacrificing the lives of Ukrainian and Donbass workers for Wall Street's gain, people here are left holding the bag in the aftermath of the devastating pandemic.

Rents are skyrocketing and evictions alongside them. Inflation is slamming the lives of workers from the grocery store to the gas pump. Biden and the Democratic-controlled Congress have reneged on every promise they made to their voter base: protecting the right to organize, stopping police brutality, defending reproductive rights, LGBTQ2S rights and Black voters' rights, canceling student debt, action to stop climate change, and on and on.

An even more devastating economic crisis looms. On April 28, it was announced that the U.S. economy shrank and the [Gross Domestic Product fell 1.4%](#), the first contraction since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Censorship and hate-crime propaganda have soared to new heights. The Biden administration and Big Tech have methodically censored workers' access to factual information and alternative views on the conflict in Ukraine. Washington is [setting up a “Disinformation Governance Board”](#) under the Department of Homeland Security to deepen the war censorship.

At the same time, the recently announced buyout of Twitter by super-rich bigot Elon Musk with the backing of big banks indicates that, in tandem with the war censorship, the weak curbs introduced on social media fascists after Jan. 6, 2020, will be removed, giving white supremacists free reign to escalate their divide-and-conquer attacks that fuel violence against people of color, trans people and other oppressed sections of the working class.

Unite the working class

“During a reactionary war a revolutionary class cannot but desire the defeat of its government,” [wrote Marxist leader V.I. Lenin](#) in 1915. “This is axiomatic, and disputed only by conscious partisans or helpless satellites of the social-chauvinists. The opponents of the defeat slogan are simply afraid of themselves when they refuse to recognize the very obvious fact of the inseparable link between revolutionary agitation against the government and helping bring about its defeat.”

Unfortunately, in 2022, many of the socialist, communist and other organizations that claim to represent the working class have forgotten this critical lesson. Many anti-war and left groups have bent to the intense pressure of imperialist propaganda and thrown their support behind the U.S. proxy war directly or indirectly. Others are keeping their heads down, afraid to take to the streets or go to the working class to

refute Washington's war lies.

But there are signs of hope. Of particular significance are the powerful union-organizing drives at Amazon and Starbucks, fueled by young workers, Black and Brown workers, women and queer workers, including the ground-breaking victory of the Amazon Labor Union in Staten Island, New York. In Oakland, California, teachers and longshore workers united to shut down the city's schools and ports April 29 to fight racist gentrification. Grassroots movements are fighting tooth-and-nail to defend trans youth and people who need abortions from repressive laws in Texas, Florida and other Republican-dominated states.

Despite the grim conditions facing our class, we must remind ourselves that it has been less than two years since the George Floyd uprising against racist police terror shook the ruling class with the biggest movement for social change in the country's history. Today's right-wing offensive from the top is a reaction to that powerful struggle.

We know that millions of people can and will fight back. The job of the revolutionary left is to connect the dots of the many struggles, to help the workers overcome the divide-and-conquer politics of the capitalists by building solidarity with the most oppressed, and to show how the bosses' war against workers here and U.S. wars around the world are one and the same.

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite - to defeat imperialist war and fascism!



Dollar dominoes

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Will Washington's seizure of \$300 billion Russian assets end domination of dollar as global currency?

On Feb. 26, the U.S. blocked Russia's access to over \$300 billion in foreign reserves held in banks in the U.S., the European Union and Japan. This was part of the sanctions U.S. President Joe Biden announced as part of the U.S./NATO proxy war against Russia.

China did not freeze Russian assets. China's banking regulator said it would not participate in sanctions against Russia, adding that the sanctions "have no legal grounds."

Another way to put it is that the U.S. taking \$300 billion in Russian assets is illegal - a robbery.

Russia responded with counter-sanctions, requiring all payments from “unfriendly countries” in rubles. The list of “unfriendlyies” includes all G7 and EU nations, as well as Ukraine. Since assets in the form of dollars or euros might be seized by the U.S., requiring payment in rubles is reasonable.

What are foreign reserves?

Foreign reserves are a government’s holdings of gold, foreign treasury bills and foreign currency — dollars, euros, pounds, yen and yuan. Although a country can hold foreign reserves in its own banks, governments often choose to keep their reserves overseas to avoid costly cross-border transactions and gain direct access to foreign markets.

U.S. President Joe Biden has imposed severe sanctions on Russia, including the freezing of Russia’s foreign reserves. The impact of this U.S. economic and financial warfare is expected to raise the prices of oil, industrial metals, natural gas, fertilizer and food.

CNBC reported April 6: “A fertilizer shortage, worsened by war in Ukraine, is driving up global food prices and scarcity.” The shortage is not because of any military activity; it’s because of the sanctions. Sanctions are not an alternative to warfare, as some might claim. Sanctions are economic warfare.

Hidden for now is the potential impact the seizure of foreign assets will have on the dollar-dominated international monetary system.

The U.S. world empire consists of a series of institutions – military, financial, trade and political. These institutions, whose roles have evolved over the years, include NATO, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and even the U.S.-dominated United Nations Security Council. Plus, importantly, the U.S. dollar-centered international monetary system.

The world's reserve currency

The U.S. dollar was designated as the world's reserve currency by the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944. The world's central banks all operate on the dollar standard, holding their international monetary reserves in the form of U.S. Treasury bills, U.S. bank deposits and U.S. stocks and bonds.

More than a century ago, central banks had kept their reserves in the form of gold and silver. By the beginning of the 20th century, central banks started to hold some of their reserves in treasury bills of other countries, which enabled central banks to earn interest on their reserves, something they couldn't do with gold bars.

However, both gold bars and treasury bills can be stolen, as fictionally dramatized in the James Bond "Goldfinger" story.

Venezuela's central bank had about \$2 billion "safely" deposited in the Bank of England, which was "frozen" (stolen) by the U.S./NATO imperialists as part of the economic and financial war (sanctions) against Caracas.

Turns out, central banks aren't neutral or safe havens.

U.S./NATO defeat in Afghanistan

The war on Afghanistan was a U.S./NATO operation. The U.S. had 100,000 troops at 800 military bases in Afghanistan. In addition, under U.S. command, an additional 130,000 troops from other NATO countries were stationed at 400 NATO bases in Afghanistan.

The war was a major defeat of the imperialist forces. When the U.S./NATO withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021, the U.S. government froze \$9.5 billion in dollar reserves of the Bank of Afghanistan. This threw the economy of Afghanistan into a deep crisis, devastating the whole population.

The U.S./NATO war had already driven the country into total poverty. In July 2020, before the Taliban returned to power in Kabul, the Ministry of Economy in Afghanistan had said that 90% of the people in the country lived below the international poverty line of \$2 a day.

The freezing of Afghanistan's dollar reserves, [according to the U.N. Development Program](#), "means only 5% of the population has enough to eat, while the number of those facing acute hunger is now estimated to have ... reached a record 23 million. Almost 14 million children are likely to face crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity this winter, with 3.5 million children under the age of five expected to suffer from acute malnutrition, and 1 million children risk dying from hunger and low temperatures."

Freezing bigger dollar assets

Until now, most assumed Washington's freezing of monetary reserves held in U.S. Treasury bills or other dollar-denominated assets was confined to small countries like Venezuela or Afghanistan.

If other countries, like the People's Republic of China, fear their central bank reserves might be frozen by the U.S./NATO imperialists, won't they shift their reserves to gold?

The U.S. dollar domination of the world economy is already in decline. Will this lead to not just decline but destabilization?

As researchers working for the Wall Street bank Goldman Sachs [cautioned](#): "The move by the U.S. and its allies to freeze Russia's central bank out of much of its foreign currency reserves has raised concerns that countries could start moving away from using the dollar, due to worries about the power the currency grants the U.S."

