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Palestine solidarity in Oakland, California Port protest stalls U.S. military supplies for Israel

By Lallan Schoenstein

As the sun rose on Nov. 3, protesters began to pour into a site near Berth 20 in the Port of Oakland in California, where the U.S. military vessel MV Cape Orlando was preparing for departure. It is a roll-on/roll-off ship, part of the U.S. fleet that is replenishing military stockpiles in Israel.

After leaving Oakland, the ship's next destination was the Port of Tacoma, in Washington state, where there is a power projection platform* located close to the McChord Air Force Base. The Cape Orlando will be prepared to deliver tanks, armored personnel, carriers, and mobile rocket launchers, as well as troop trucks, cargo trucks, and Humvees.

Swelling ranks of protesters occupied Berth 20 and shut it down. The departure of the ship was delayed for more than nine hours.

A group of young Palestinians, their energy fueled by the loss of family and community, breached the Homeland Security Department's MARSEC security perimeter. While they scaled the fence, they must have thought of their siblings shot dead by Israeli forces when they approached the walls bounding Gaza.

Protesters lashed the boat back to its mooring lines on the bollards. Three locked themselves to the ladder leading onto the ship, adding significant delay. They are currently being held in custody by the police.



Millions protest U.S.-Israeli genocide

Photo: Arab Resource and Organizing Center

Hands off Rashida Tlaib!

► **New Orleans port protest**

► **Port of Tacoma shut down**

Protesters at the Port of Oakland blocked Berth 20, where a U.S. military ship was scheduled to leave for Israel. Others breached a barrier and locked themselves to the ship.

The protest was called by the Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC) less than 24 hours after the U.S. House of Representatives passed a \$14.3-billion aid package to Israel. Merchant marine workers told AROC about the ship.

"We know that the ship is destined as a military ship to Israel because of the courage of workers," says Lara Kiswani, AROC executive director.

"We're hoping that when it reaches Tacoma, the workers will not load that military cargo, that people of Tacoma will show up to protest this genocide, and that workers around the world will continue to stop ships like this anywhere they may be found," she said.

"We are simply trying to call for an immediate ceasefire and stop the aiding of the genocide of my people."

The protest grew quickly even though there had been little time to organize the action. Speakers denounced President Biden's cruel hypocrisy of talking about a "humanitarian pause" to the epic massacre of Palestinians in Gaza.

Kiswani said: "Today we showed the world: No business as usual while Israel commits genocide against the Palestinian people. This genocide is being funded by our government and they're sending weapons starting from our city."

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S.L. photo: Sharon Black

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