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Gaza Solidarity Encampments sweep California campuses

written by Scott Scheffer
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At UCLA April 28, Palestinians and supporters were blocked by campus security from joining the main student rally. The protesters held their ground, chanting and clapping. SLL photo: Scott Scheffer

April 30, Los Angeles – Student encampments in solidarity with Palestine have spread rapidly over the last two days in California. The news media is particularly alarmed as a student struggle at Cal Poly Humboldt – a small campus nestled among the Redwoods of northern California — has intensified.

The New York Times referred to today’s events there as the “Nation’s Most Entrenched Protest.” Students barricaded themselves inside two campus buildings

and the administration shut down the entire campus for the rest of the semester.

Huge numbers of cops have moved in and issued orders to end the occupation and leave the campus, but students are staying put. The standoff is ongoing.

At the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), where an encampment is ongoing, Palestinians and their supporters were blocked by campus security from joining the main rally on April 28. Not to be dissuaded, they marched to the periphery of a section of the Zionist counterprotest and held their ground, chanting and clapping.

The main rally at the center of the campus was supported by numerous community organizations, including Unión del Barrio, Palestinian Youth Movement, Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice, ANSWER Coalition, and others.

Across town at the University of Southern California (USC), students rebuilt their week-old encampment after nearly 100 arrests on April 25. The administration began issuing suspensions today after students ignored a second deadline to clear out, issued by the Los Angeles Police Department.

Organizers of a planned May Day rally, including Unión del Barrio, Harriet Tubman Center, and a long list of other community organizations, announced a new march route that will end at USC and finish with an International Workers' Day rally in support of the students – even though the administration is blocking non-students from the campus until further notice.

Several other California campuses joined the student uprising in support of Palestine today, with University of California Riverside, Cal State Sacramento, University of California Irvine, and Occidental College all setting up encampments.

