



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

Los Angeles May Day marchers link arms with student protesters

written by Struggle-La Lucha Los Angeles bureau
May 7, 2024



Photo: Stan Haugland

In Los Angeles on May Day, hundreds of people set off on a march and motorcade from MacArthur Park for the annual celebration of the international workers' holiday. The neighborhood that surrounds the park is home to thousands of immigrant workers and has become the traditional launching point for the annual event.

An opening rally was held from the back of a flatbed truck when the event kicked off. Then the loud procession slowly made its way downtown for a final rally at a busy intersection adjacent to the University of Southern California (USC).

Chants that called out all the issues that are important to working-class people at home were interspersed with expressions of solidarity for the people of Gaza. The anger over the Biden/Netanyahu genocide echoed off the storefronts along the three-mile route.

Originally, the march was to have ended at the Los Angeles Federal Building. But during the weeks of organizing for the May Day march, campus protests and encampments in solidarity with the people of Gaza seemed to pop up everywhere. By May Day there were tents occupying the grounds of college campuses not only across the country, but internationally.

Students at USC had been arrested and their encampment had been cleared out when the L.A. cops were called in by the campus administration in the days leading up to the workers' holiday. To the shock and dismay of the cops and campus authorities, the 93 arrests that they carried out didn't end the protest.

Students reconstituted their tent city almost immediately. It was this beautiful act of defiance that inspired May Day organizers to change their destination to make sure to express the utmost support for the campus protesters.



SLL photo: Scott Scheffer

Shutting down traffic for Palestine

For the final rally, the flatbed truck that had led the march was parked across the intersection of Jefferson Boulevard and Figueroa Street for at least an hour and was surrounded by throngs of May Day marchers, blocking rush hour traffic.

There is a long tradition of May Day marches being organized by Union del Barrio, Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice, BAYAN USA and others. This year took on a new level of determination and spirit. The courage of the students at USC and so

many other campuses fed the militancy of the May Day demonstration.

As the organizing days ticked by, a host of organizations joined in the effort, such as Unmute Humanity, which had held a demonstration at CNN to protest U.S. media support for the genocide, and the Palestinian Youth Movement, which has been organizing mass protests repeatedly since Oct. 7.

The Association of Raza Educators, Gabriela LA, Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, United Teachers Los Angeles, American Indian Movement, Los Angeles Tenants Union and others all joined in the effort to build May Day.

The beautiful poster for the event was printed in English, Arabic and Spanish, and sported the logos of 23 community and anti-war organizations. Every group helped spread the word for weeks to bring people out.



SLL photo: Maggie Vascassenno

The deadly agenda of U.S. imperialism and its proxies has never been more visible. Biden and Netanyahu are despised by millions for their terrible crimes. Those brave students and activists who protest are being slandered with ridiculous accusations of antisemitism and claims they are all “outside agitators” by the capitalist media. But the slanders are ineffective.

Around the world, working-class people understand the nature of the Zionist state. The campus protests are hailed in the Global South countries that have been exploited and targeted by U.S. imperialism. There is growing awareness that it doesn't matter which of the two parties of the billionaire class occupies the White House. The hope for humanity is in a united global working-class struggle that resists imperialism.

Long live International Workers' Day! Viva, viva Palestina!

