

Struggle ☐ La Lucha PDF - June 7, 2024

written by Struggle - La Lucha

June 16, 2024

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Struggle-La-Lucha.org

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Socialist Unity Party

Partido de Socialismo Unido

From Palestine to Pride: Solidarity with all oppressed

By Gregory E. Williams

June 1, Mandeville, Louisiana – Despite increasing attacks on the community from well-funded, far-right organizations, the Northshore region of Louisiana held its first-ever Pride Parade this June. Around 500 people marched, and an impressive 2,000 people lined the parade route in the small parish outside New Orleans.

Although Governor Landry and his capitalist backers want to silence and divide LGBTQ+ people and other workers, the people of St. Tammany Parish stood together. They did not back down.

This area has been a major focus of struggle in the state. The Landry-aligned, book-banning, Moms for Liberty clones – the St. Tammany Parish Library Accountability Project – caused havoc with repeated attempts to censor libraries in the parish.

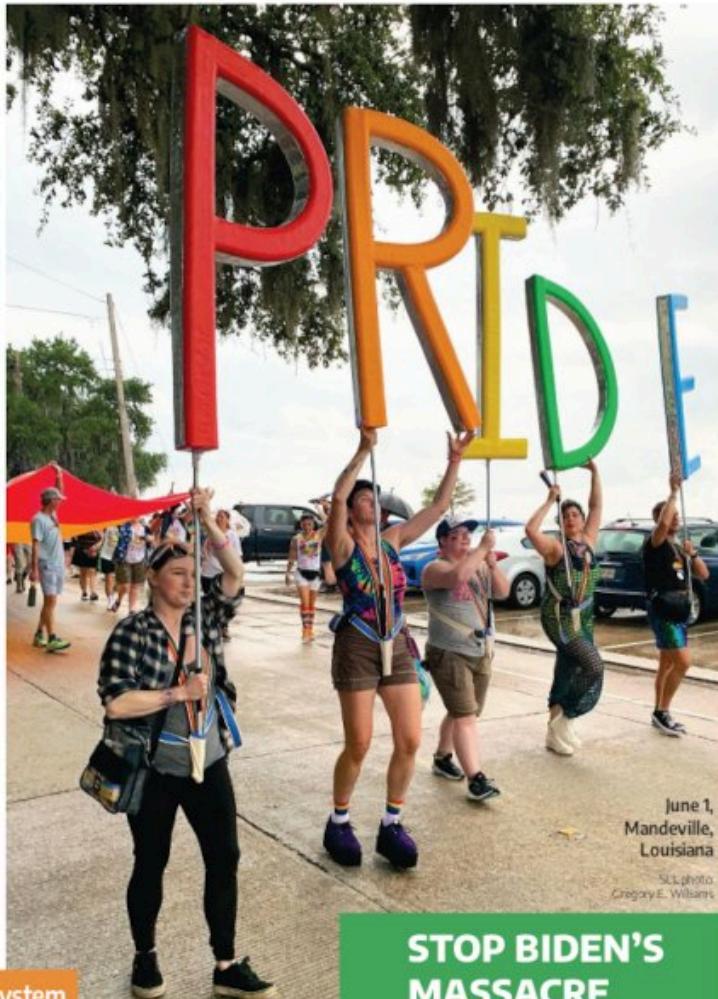
They wrongly believed that targeting smaller suburban communities would lead to easy victories, but the people of St. Tammany rallied repeatedly, coming out in large numbers to council meetings. They showed up at libraries to defend these important public institutions, uniting progressive groups and LGBTQ+ people. From their organizing came Northshore Pride.

A Mandeville parent speaks

A Mandeville home-health worker and parent, Mike Spalt, spoke about this historic Pride event.

"With last year being my first time marching in a pride parade [in NOLA], I had no idea the feeling it brought within me and everyone I saw out there. It was also my first experience with Queer

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ELECTIONS in an undemocratic system

In India, Mexico & Venezuela

AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY

STOP BIDEN'S
MASSACRE
IN GAZA!

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How the Pentagon waged an anti-

vax propaganda war against China

written by Struggle - La Lucha

June 16, 2024

During the Trump administration, China's COVID-19 vaccine, Sinovac, was freely distributed to the Philippines and over 40 other nations across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, marking a significant global health initiative.

A June 14 [Reuters exposé](#) reports that in response, the Pentagon unleashed an anti-vax campaign against China. The campaign, centered in the Philippines, aimed to discredit Chinese vaccines and aid through fake social media accounts impersonating Filipinos, leading the anti-vax propaganda effort.

According to Reuters, the Pentagon's anti-vax campaign involved the use of fake social media accounts posing as Filipinos. These accounts disseminated anti-vaccine propaganda and cast doubt on the safety of Chinese medical supplies, including masks, test kits, and the Sinovac vaccine.

At least 300 of these fake accounts were identified on X, formerly Twitter, spreading the slogan **#Chinaangvirus**, which translates to "China is the virus" in Tagalog. The accounts posted messages such as "COVID came from China and the VACCINE also came from China, don't trust China!"

The operation expanded beyond Southeast Asia, targeting Central Asia and the Middle East. The Pentagon used fake social media accounts aimed at Muslims to suggest that Chinese vaccines contained pork gelatin and were thus forbidden under Islamic law. This effort was part of a broader U.S. military strategy to undermine China's influence by exploiting local sensitivities and spreading fear about the vaccines. The anti-vaccine campaign was continued by the Biden administration until mid-2021.

The Pentagon's anti-China propaganda campaign was driven by concerns that China's COVID-19 diplomacy, including offers of vaccines and medical supplies, was increasing Beijing's influence in countries like the Philippines. China's diplomatic efforts, including providing vaccines as a "global public good," were seen as a threat to U.S. geopolitical interests.

The Pentagon was also defending the profit-making of Moderna and Pfizer.

Reuters reports that the campaign's fallout included heightened vaccine hesitancy in the Philippines, where vaccination rates were among the lowest in Southeast Asia.



Demonstrate against the death merchants - Los Angeles, June 22

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**NO US WEAPONS FOR
ISRAEL'S GENOCIDE IN GAZA**

STOP US IMPERIALIST WARS

**DEMONSTRATE AGAINST
THE DEATH MERCHANTS
AT BOEING &
RAYTHEON-RTX**

**JUNE 22, 2 PM
1950 E IMPERIAL HWY, EL SEGUNDO**

**WEAPONS MADE IN SO-CAL WERE USED TO
FIRE BOMB REFUGEES IN RAFAH!
TELL ISRAEL'S LA ACCOMPLICES "OUT NOW!"**



unmute
humanity.



Contact to volunteer or endorse: 323-306-6240
info@harriettubmancenterla.com





PAL-Awda launches global week of action against Citibank

written by Struggle - La Lucha

June 16, 2024



For Immediate Release

Email: alawdany@gmail.com

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Instagram handle: [@palawda](https://www.instagram.com/palawda)

PAL-Awda Launches Global Week of Action Against Citibank, Plans June 13 Rally at NYC Headquarters

On Monday, June 10th, PAL-Awda NY/NJ: Palestinian Assembly for Liberation announced a **Global Week of Action against Citibank, June 10th - June 14th**,

calling on people across the US and the world to boycott, protest, and shut down Citibank and “all those who profit off of mass murder in Gaza.”

PAL-Awda urged people to close their accounts at Citibank and cancel their Citi credit cards throughout the week. In NYC, the Week of Action includes a **protest at Citibank's World Headquarters, 388 Greenwich St, New York 10013, at 4 PM on Thursday, June 13th.**

According to PAL-Awda, “Citibank and its parent company, Citigroup, deserve special attention” amongst US banks and corporations, due to the ways in which “their actions make the genocide in Gaza possible.” With assets of \$2.9 trillion, Citigroup is one of the top four banks in the United States.

In 2021, Citi loaned the Israeli occupation regime \$2.5 billion to buy 25 new F35 jet fighters. The US government is currently repaying that loan. PAL-Awda organizers explained that “those planes now rain death on families living in tents in Gaza. They destroy homes, hospitals, schools, mosques and churches.” The week of action takes place days after the Israeli Occupation Forces, with US support, massacred at least 274 Palestinians in Nuseirat refugee camp, Gaza, Palestine.

According to the Citigroup website, “**Citi boasts the largest presence of any foreign financial institution in Israel and offers corporate and investment banking services to leading Israeli corporations and institutions and global corporations operating in Israel.** Citi also offers private banking services to high-net-worth individuals living in Israel. Citi has demonstrated its leadership and commitment to Israel for many years. Citi’s Technology Innovation Lab in Tel Aviv is one of the best innovation labs in the world, working locally and globally together with the Citi accelerator program and cyber security lab.”

PAL-Awda also named major Citi shareholders known for war profiteering, such as Berkshire Hathaway, Black Rock, State Street, Vanguard, and Saudi Kingdom

Holding.

In addition to the June 13th rally in New York City, **organizers also encourage community groups in different cities around the world to hold protests at local branches of the bank.**

Photos and videos of protest activities are available upon request.



A call for global action to stop the profits of genocide

BOYCOTT/PROTEST/SHUTDOWN CITIBANK, CHEVRON & All Those Who Profit off Mass Murder in Gaza

Follow @palawda on Instagram for campaign updates

The richest US banks and corporations are growing even richer off the horror being inflicted on the people of Palestine. Their actions make the genocide in Gaza

possible.

CITI THE GENOCIDE BANK The crimes of Citibank and its parent company, Citigroup, deserve special attention. With assets of \$2.9 trillion, Citigroup is one of the top four banks in the United States.

- In 2021, Citi loaned the Israeli occupation regime \$2.5 billion to buy 75 new F35 jet fighters. The US government is repaying that loan. Those planes now rain death on families living in tents in Gaza. They destroy homes, hospitals, schools, mosques and churches. They bomb villages in Lebanon.
- In its own words, “Citi boasts the largest presence of any foreign financial institution in Israel and offers corporate and investment banking services to leading Israeli corporations and institutions and global corporations operating in Israel. Citi also offers private banking services to high-net-worth individuals living in Israel. Citi has demonstrated its leadership and commitment to Israel for many years. Citi’s Technology Innovation Lab in Tel Aviv is one of the best innovation labs in the world, working locally and globally together with the Citi accelerator program and cyber security lab.”
- Warren Buffet’s Berkshire Hathaway, a major investor in Israel’s war industry, is a top Citi shareholder. So are financial groups Black Rock, State Street and Vanguard, war profiteers all. Shamefully, Saudi Kingdom Holding also owns 500 million shares in the bank.

We call on people all over the U.S. and the world to join us in a

GLOBAL WEEK OF ACTION AGAINST CITIBANK

June 10 to June 14th: On those days we urge people to close their accounts at Citibank, cancel their Citi credit cards, and protest at Citibank offices.

(Here are some banking alternatives for people in the United States:

[https://www.nerdwallet.com/best/banking/best-credit-unions"\)](https://www.nerdwallet.com/best/banking/best-credit-unions)

- We call on community groups to visit their local branches and express their opposition to Citi's financing of genocide.
- We call on people around the world to protest Citi operations in their countries.

CHEVRON: GENOCIDE GAS Big Energy also makes big bucks off the genocide in Palestine. Chevron, the second biggest U.S. oil company, stole 12 billion cubic meters of natural gas from occupied Palestinian waters last year. That gas not only fuels the settler state's economy. It is also sold to Egypt and Jordan. No doubt, the company hopes to get its hands on the gas off Gaza as well.

Chevron also owns oil fields in Kazakhstan and Iraq Kurdistan that supply Israel's war machine. Shamefully the corporation is allowed to pump oil and gas in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf kingdoms.

We call for a global boycott on Chevron and its subsidiaries, Texaco, 76, Caltex, and Gulf, until the company stops fueling mass murder and oppression in Palestine.

THEY ARE NOT ALONE

All of Corporate America has blood on its hands. The guilt of the giant arms makers—Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics, Raytheon, Boeing, etc—is clear. Washington pays them billions to arm Israel's murder machine.

When the war criminals in Tel Aviv spend our tax dollars faster than Congress can cough them up, the bankers come in.

Over the past four months, Bank of America and Goldman Sachs have helped Israel

raise \$6 billion dollars through private sales of Israel Bonds. Meanwhile, Bank of New York Mellon finances Israeli arms maker Elbit. All who care about justice should protest and boycott these murderous institutions.

BRING BACK A REAL BOYCOTT

In the first two decades of Al Nakba, the Arab League called a boycott not only of the occupation regime but of corporations that invested in the occupation. In those years, the U.S. feared to openly supply arms to Israel. It is time to bring back a real comprehensive global boycott and hold the genocide bankers and corporate war criminals accountable for their deeds.



Russia and Cuba, beyond warships

written by Struggle - La Lucha

June 16, 2024

While the international media only report on the arrival of a Russian naval detachment in Cuba, relations between the Russian Federation and Cuba go much further and are getting stronger. Unlike the policy of Joe Biden's administration, which is focused on maintaining the economic and financial persecution measures

against the island, the Russian government is working together with the Cuban government to reach mutually beneficial agreements, which you will evidently not read about in the major press chains.

Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs, [visited Russia to attend a meeting of the BRICS Plus Forum](#) and to hold official talks with his Russian counterpart. At the same time, several news reports confirmed the strengthening of economic ties between Havana and Moscow.

Within the framework of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum Sputnik news agency announced that the Russian Deputy Energy Minister, Evgeni Grabchak, said that there is an intention to build renewable energy facilities in Cuba.

He pointed out that they are working on the modernization of thermal power plants and specified that: "as regards the construction of power plants and networks, it is above all with Cuba, with which we maintain an intense collaboration (...) in relation to the energy projects that we are implementing, some of which are related to the construction of renewable energy facilities".

Likewise at the Forum, the Russian Ministry of Agriculture informed TASS news agency, that that country "has all the necessary resources to expand supplies of products of the agro-industrial complex to Cuba."

"Russia and Cuba are historically united by close relations. Not only is political dialogue developing, but also economic-trade cooperation is gaining momentum," the ministry officially reported, noting also that in 2023 the volume of Russian-Cuban trade in agro-industrial products increased twice compared to 2022.

On the other hand, the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) announced the signing of a cooperation project with BioCubaFarma, to invest more than 11.2

million dollars in the development of innovative drugs against geriatric and oncological diseases.

On the subject, the general director of the fund, Kiril Dmitriev, informed the press that: “the BioCubaFarma company has become the first partner of RDIF in Cuba (...) investments in the biopharmaceutical industry will facilitate assistance to a greater number of patients and will significantly expand the capabilities of Russian medicine”. They also point out that the fund gives full priority to the health sector and the initial financing approved could increase tenfold, exceeding \$100 million in the future.

Also, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko proposed the prompt issuance of Mir cards in the territory of Cuba, which would allow Cuban tourists to pay for goods and services in the territory of Russia and transfer money by card number, thus establishing a direct monetary flow between people in both countries.

“The next stage in the development of retail payments could be the issuance of Mir cards on the territory of Cuba. Taking into account the great social importance of this project, we propose to initiate its practical development,” the official said. This could be accomplished in the very short term due to the recent approval of a Russian bank branch in Havana.

Regarding the MIR, the Cuban state-owned Fincimex reported the execution up to May of at least 67,000 transactions in Cuba since the establishment of the system in December 2023, which means an incentive to tourism from Russia.

Finally and most importantly, the director of the Latin American department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Shetinin, declared that “there are advances” in the negotiations on the de-dollarization of trade with countries of this region and Russia, where the largest of the Antilles is included.

According to the note published by RT, there is a “process of negotiations between banking and business entities [...] on the search for the most acceptable and comfortable forms of interaction to ensure trade and economic ties between our countries”.

The talks on the transition to alternative forms of financial transactions include the proposed use of national currencies or the use of the MIR system with direct payments; the latter seems to be the most promising option with tangible steps forward for Cuba.

Abandoning the use of the dollar in commercial exchange is a strategic step for both Cuba and Russia, due to the application of unilateral sanctions of all kinds to the financial sector of both countries by the US.

Taking into account all of the above, we can affirm that, while the Western media tries to sell Russia as that malevolent enemy that comes to invade your lands, unlike those who try to impose their interests with pure bombs, the Russian Federation maintains mutually beneficial relations of cooperation and complementation with Cuba, which go far beyond the simple arrival of warships to this Caribbean island.

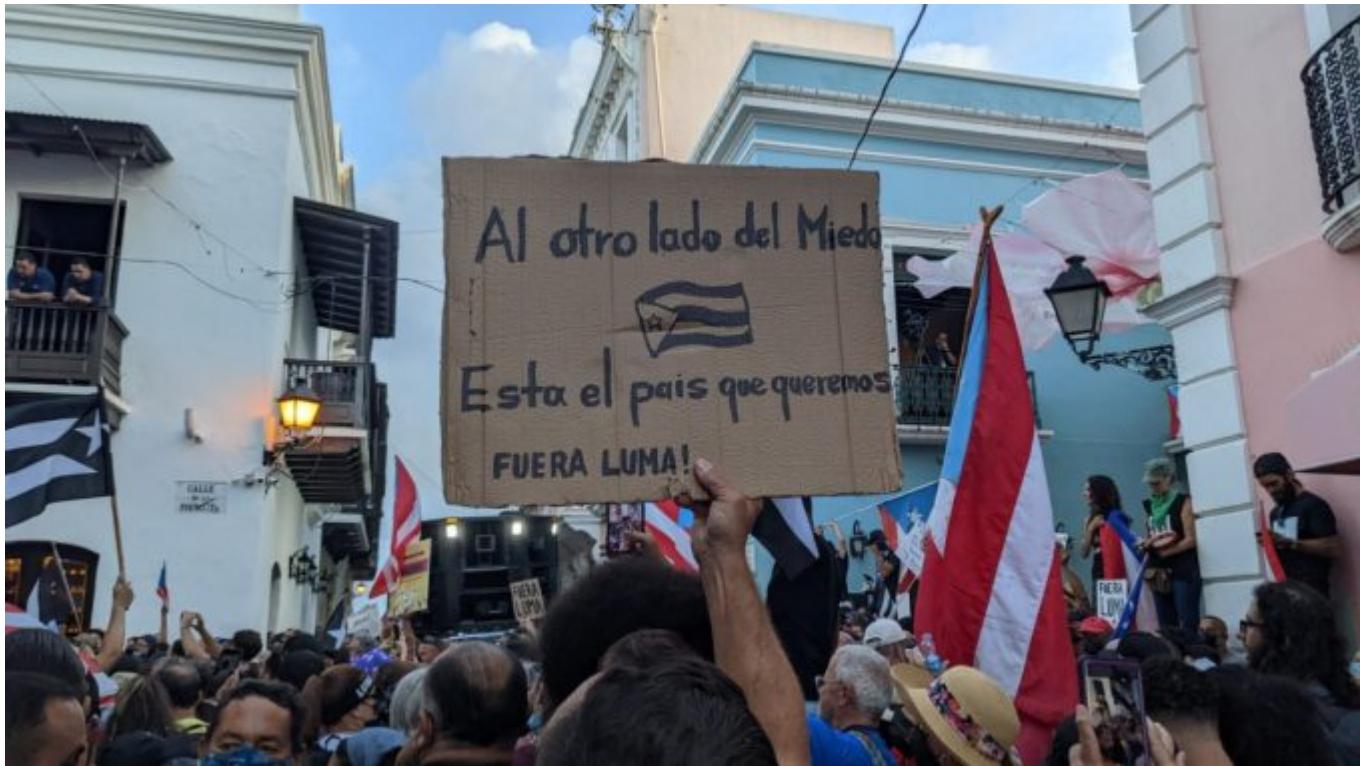
Source: [Razones de Cuba](#), translation by Internationalist 360°



El pueblo boricua se cansó de privatizadoras de energía

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Esta pasada semana el pueblo boricua ha comenzado a expresarse contundentemente en contra de la privatización de la energía. Tanto Luma Energy que tiene a cargo la transmisión y distribución, como Genera PR, que como su nombre indica, tiene la función de generar, han sido puestas bajo aviso.

Comenzando con la derrota del gobernador en las primarias de su partido, que recibió el mensaje de repudio por haber sido un incompetente administrador de la colonia, pero sobre todo, por haber defendido y justificado a las compañías energéticas privadas que tanto sufrimiento están causando a nuestra gente.

Pero el acabose fue a mediados de semana. Después de que por casi dos semanas varios pueblos en el sur soportaran la falta absoluta de luz, lo que en muchos casos significa además la falta de agua que llega por bombas eléctricas, bajo una racha de calores intensos, ocurrió un apagón de gran escala en el norte de la isla.

Fuimos más de un millón de personas que permanecimos a oscuras por más de diez horas. La Universidad de Puerto Rico tuvo que cancelar clases, el Centro Médico y oficinas de salud tuvieron que cancelar citas a sus pacientes. Total, que la vida se le afectó a la mayoría del país.

Pero como esto no le importa a estas privatizadoras, ni siquiera le dieron la cara al pueblo para explicar las causas. Fue luego de varios días que vinieron con la excusa de que la culpa la tenían los árboles. Y que para eso está esperando por fondos federales de emergencia para hacer un talado que durará por 3 años y comenzará el 1 de julio. O sea, que en vez de podar sistemáticamente como lo hacía la compañía pública, intentan deforestar dondequiera que haya líneas eléctricas y así hacer su trabajo más fácil, a costa de las consecuencias devastadoras para el clima y nuestro pueblo.

La incompetencia de Luma, que ya ha estado aquí por tres años, y que tuvo un año antes de comenzar el contrato para conocer el sistema, es inconcebible. Y así el pueblo ha estado respondiendo. Desde la primera noche del apagón casi general, comenzaron a manifestarse frente a la Fortaleza, la sede del gobernador y ya han sido convocadas varias manifestaciones que incluyen hasta cacerolazos cada noche a las 8 de la noche.

Lo que se augura es que es poco el tiempo que le queda a Luma y a Genera porque el pueblo pide que se les ANULEN los contratos y que la energía vuelva a las manos del pueblo.

Desde Puerto Rico, para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci



Labor coalition demands D.C. ceasefire resolution

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At 8 a.m. on Wednesday, June 5, dozens of rank-and-file union members, labor activists, and community organizers rallied in front of Washington, D.C.'s City Council.

The dedication of these workers was such that they planned this protest so they could go to work after the demonstration.

The D.C. for Ceasefire Now Coalition consists of the D.C. Metro chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), the D.C. Metro chapter of Jewish Voices for Peace, the SAG-AFTRA & Sister Guild Members for Ceasefire, the Claudia Jones School, and others.

Speakers from these organizations, including a former president of the local Postal Workers (APWU) and a member of the American Federation of Teachers Georgetown

Alliance of Graduate Employees (AFT-GAGE), reaffirmed their commitment to the passage of a ceasefire resolution, their defense of the Palestinian resistance, and their fight against capitalism and racism.

Chelsea Bland, OPEIU Local 2 and CLUW member, talked to Struggle-La Lucha about how the demonstration came together. “Members of our CLUW chapter came to us and talked about a labor picket,” she said. “This is an issue that our rank-and-file members care about, and CLUW passed a resolution for a ceasefire last year. We knew we had to put words into action.”

The D.C. City Council has responded by claiming that “international issues are not their jurisdiction.” Of course, this isn’t their history, including their stance against South African apartheid and for good relations with Cuba.

The D.C. for Ceasefire Now Coalition continues the struggle with continuous outreach, growing the support for the resolution in every ward of D.C.



The problem of elections in an undemocratic system

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June 16, 2024



This is a presidential election year in the U.S. If the U.S. were a true democracy, voters might have a clear choice: either support President Joe Biden's policy of financing and arming genocide in Gaza or back the Palestinian struggle for their homeland.

Instead, this year's presidential politics is restricted to a verbal battle between a far-right Republican candidate — former president Donald Trump — and right-wing Democrat Genocide Joe Biden. Their actual policies are often indistinguishable. Biden has carried on almost all the Trump policies he had promised to end when campaigning in the last presidential election.

As a candidate, Joe Biden pledged to reverse Trump's policies on Cuba. However, he has not even removed Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism List, a designation that represents Trump's most criminal act against Cuba. This is a move that Biden supporters believed would be swiftly addressed.

With Biden as president, U.S. police killings have increased to [record highs](#). Each of Biden's years has seen increases in police killings, each marked the deadliest year on record for police violence in the U.S. In 2023, Black people were killed by police at a rate 2.6 times higher than others.

In 2023, the country was gripped by a series of high-profile cases of police violence, including the fatal beating of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, the tasing of Keenan Anderson in Los Angeles, and the shooting of Niani Finlayson in Lancaster, California, who had called 911 for help with a domestic violence situation. These cases represent just a fraction of the hundreds of similar incidents throughout the year.

Through his budgets, Biden gave police a green light to behave violently. After entering office in 2021, Biden dramatically scaled up federal subsidies to police. [Sixty-eight percent](#) of Biden's discretionary budget for fiscal year 2024 (\$1.1 trillion) is for military and police-related programs.

[Black Lives Matter](#) responded: "Biden's [increasing police] budget is showing Black people that he couldn't care less about saving Black lives."

The Vietnam War era

To fully understand the current presidential election, it is essential to look beyond the immediate political contest. The current political atmosphere resembles the era during the Vietnam War.

During the Vietnam War, the U.S. was engaged in the Cold War against the Soviet Union and People's China.

The United States was conducting bombing campaigns in Laos and Cambodia. In 1965, the U.S. sent 42,000 troops to the Dominican Republic to suppress a popular uprising against the military dictatorship that had taken power in a 1962 coup.

In the 1960s, the U.S. had a significant military operation in South Korea, with an occupation army of 60,000. The U.S. military still occupies South Korea.

In 1965, the U.S. deployed aircraft carriers and destroyers to the Taiwan Strait in a direct threat to the People's Republic of China.

At the same time, a mass Civil Rights Movement was sweeping the country, as well as an anti-war movement that was particularly strong among students. Socialist ideas were spreading with these movements.

The ruling class itself was in crisis and divided, fearing a deepening polarization and instability at home, intensified by the emergence of endless wars abroad

These divisions were reflected in the presidential politics of the era, from the assassination of John F. Kennedy to the forced retirement of Lyndon Baines Johnson to the resignation of Richard M. Nixon under threat of impeachment. Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr., leaders of the Black Liberation and Civil Rights Movements, were assassinated.

The cost of U.S. imperialism's endless wars on many fronts was devastating to the economy. Military spending goes to produce planes, tanks, missiles, and high-tech weapons systems. The product of the military-industrial complex has no use value. Military spending redirects capitalist production into producing means of destruction. More capital is consumed than is created.

"Military spending crowds out other spending," said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University, who noted that Vietnam War spending in the 1960s contributed to the soaring inflation at that time, which led to stagflation.

Living conditions in the U.S. deteriorated during the Vietnam War. The average inflation rate in the late 1960s was 6%, reaching 11% in Nixon's last year, 1974. Stagflation, that is, a stagnant economy with high inflation and high unemployment, was devastating the country.

Prices outflank wages

The inflation rate under Biden peaked at just 9.1% in June 2022. It is currently at 3.4%. Prices have not gone down even when the rate of increase has gone down. Also, the services inflation rate, calculated separately, rose 19.32% between January 2020 and April 2024. Most of your daily costs are for services like rent or mortgage, transportation, health care, and so on.

Wages have fallen in the Biden years and have not caught up with inflation.

Biden's military budgets have been among the highest in history. According to the [National Priorities Project](#): "The United States broke records last year by continuing to ramp up its military spending. Consistently spending more than 50% of its discretionary budget on militarism, the United States funds war at a level much greater than that of any other nation."

As [Nikkei Asia](#) reports, Biden's military budget is meant to support a multi-front war

against China, Russia, Palestine, Iran, and Korea. [Foreign Policy in Focus](#) reports: “The United States is a heartbeat away from a world war.”

Decline of U.S. imperialist dominance

U.S. imperialism, that is, U.S. monopoly capitalism, is facing a pivotal moment as its global dominance wanes. For 17 years, manufacturing productivity has stagnated. Simultaneously, China’s manufacturing sector has ascended, outproducing the next nine largest manufacturing countries combined.

Additionally, China is challenging the U.S. lead in digital technology. The ongoing trade war includes a significant focus on semiconductors. This “chip war” began in 2018 when President Trump banned U.S. agencies from using Huawei systems and further escalated with prohibitions on investments in Chinese companies. In 2022, the Biden administration imposed limits on semiconductor sales to China.

Microchips are essential to modern economic and geopolitical power. While the U.S. once led in chip design and production, its advantage has been eroded by competitors in Taiwan, Korea, Europe, and especially China. Now, China spends more on importing chips than oil and heavily invests in domestic chip production to catch up to the U.S.

The decline of U.S. imperialist dominance is evident. Its share of global GDP relative to the G7-plus nations has shrunk significantly compared to China’s.

The decline of U.S. dominance in manufacturing, trade, and technology echoes the fall of British imperialism in the 19th century. The G7-plus nations’ share of global GDP is now only twice that of China, compared to 300 times in 1970.

This situation also mirrors Britain’s shift from free trade to protectionism in the late 19th century.

Protectionism becomes the rallying cry in times of economic distress, especially for a threatened imperialist power. The United States can be expected to impose more tariffs, protectionist restrictions, and sanctions.

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

In Marx's era, the fight against capitalism was primarily seen as the working class's unified struggle against the bourgeoisie. This struggle aimed to secure democratic rights not just for workers but for all others deprived of democratic rights. However, it was apparent that only minor reforms were achievable under capitalism.

Socialist propaganda focused on abolishing capitalism altogether, highlighting its inherent contradictions, the exploitative nature of wage labor, the impoverishment of farmers, and the rise of monopolies at the expense of small businesses.

The rallying cry for the socialist movement was "Workers of the world unite!" as it says in the Communist Manifesto.

Lenin updated this to reflect capitalism's changed character. Competitive capitalism had evolved into monopoly, which not only required vast expansion at the expense of oppressed peoples around the world but also exacerbated and intensified every type of national oppression at home. Lenin added the oppressed peoples to the slogan, which now reads, "Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!"

Marx said in Capital about the class struggle in the United States: "Labor in a white skin cannot emancipate itself where it is branded [enslaved] in a black skin."

The liberation of oppressed peoples in the U.S. is essential for the working class struggle. As a settler state, its colonies are internal, starting with the brutal subjugation of the Indigenous population and the enslaved African American colony. These are oppressed nations.

In current day-to-day terms, this is the fight against racism. The African American population still does not have economic or political equality, nor do the Indigenous peoples. Reparations are owed and necessary.

Voting rights have been a battle that continues to this day. In 2013, the Supreme Court nullified the Voting Rights Act. In 2016, the Trump campaign used the Court's ruling in an effort to suppress the Black vote.

Not a democracy

Which brings us back to the fact that the U.S. is not an actual democracy.

The U.S. was never a full democracy. As any college history professor could tell you, the 18th-century founders of the U.S. were quite familiar with the classical Western history of ancient Greece's ideal of democracy and the Roman Republic. They chose the Roman imperial model.

The U.S. Constitution closely mirrors that of ancient Rome, a president (Roman Consul) selected by the Electoral College (Roman Assembly of the Centuries - military officers). The Senate (like the Roman Senate) was appointed (until 1913) and doesn't represent populations but rather "states." The U.S. Constitution does not have a popular democratic assembly (Roman Plebeian Council) but instead substitutes a House of Representatives based on elections (which are funded by the wealthy).

They added a Supreme Court so that ultimately, the law is not decided by Congress, the elected branch of government, but by an appointed-for-life elite coterie.

The right to vote was given to white men (no women allowed) who were property owners. The Constitution specifically bars all rights to the Indigenous Native peoples. And the Constitution says that enslaved people are property and have no rights.

The Supreme Court's 1857 Dred Scott decision found that not only were enslaved people property, but the Constitution also forbids citizenship to anyone of African ancestry.

Not until the victory of the Civil War were the Reconstruction Amendments made to the Constitution. The 14th Amendment, ratified in 1868, granted citizenship to all persons "born or naturalized in the United States," including formerly enslaved people. In 1870, Congress passed the 15th Amendment, stating that voting rights could not be "denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

In 1919, the 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote.

Not until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were Indigenous peoples' right to vote put into law.

While the political system appears more democratic with wider participation, a stronger social and economic process has been unfolding. This process involves the consolidation of power within undemocratic institutions, stemming from the concentration of the means of production in the hands of a ruling class that wields and allocates power in ways most beneficial to their interests. It is no surprise, then, that the Supreme Court holds the ultimate authority in exercising power. With its lack of direct accountability and conservative nature, the Court is the most dependable institution for the ruling class.

The Electoral College system for presidential elections means a candidate can win the presidency without winning the popular vote. This system has dominated all presidential elections this century. In 2000, Al Gore received more votes than George W. Bush, but the Supreme Court intervened and gave the Electoral College selection to Bush. In 2016, Hillary Clinton received almost three million more votes than Donald Trump, but the Electoral College gave the presidency to Trump.

Donald Trump is counting on the undemocratic Electoral College system to bully his way back into the White House. In fact, because of the Electoral College system, the election, it is said, will be decided by only six “[swing states](#)” — Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Nevada. So what about everywhere else?

Fight for what you want. But not for Biden. Nor for Trump.

That message might be sent with a vote. In some states, socialist candidates have overcome many obstacles and gotten on the ballot. Give them your vote and say you’re against genocide in Gaza and for Palestinian rights.



The hoax of ‘weaponized rape’ in Gaza takes what seems a fatal hit from The Sunday Times

written by Struggle - La Lucha
June 16, 2024

The Afterlives of Lies

Special to [Consortium News](#)

June 12 — Last Friday, while President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, and other Western leaders, along with the reporters who clerk for them, were in Normandy busily airbrushing out the Red Army's heroism in defeating the Reich 80 years ago, something truer to history occurred in the pages of *The Sunday Times*, the distinguished sibling of *The Times of London*.

Under the headline, "Israel says Hamas weaponized rape. Does the evidence add up?" two investigative reporters, Catherine Philp and Gabrielle Weiniger, decisively shredded the dense fabric of lies on this topic, woven these past eight months by the Israelis, Western media, freakishly obsessed Zionist sympathizers and various feminist poseurs.

[See: [Evidence Missing in 'Mass Rape' Charge Against Hamas](#)]

Philp and Weiniger have produced an exceptional piece of journalism, the virtues of which I will shortly consider. For now, just this: You will never read a piece of this integrity on this side of the Atlantic — and certainly never in *The New York Times*, whose infamous dishonesty in the matter of alleged sexual violence in the Gaza crisis has few matches in the history of the once-but-no-longer newspaper of record.

But the significance of *The Sunday Times* piece extends well beyond its quality as first-rate work. Mainstream media have at last reported on the monstrous propaganda operation that has fabricated lurid allegations of sexual abuse on the part of Hamas militias. The surface of silence has finally been disturbed. The historians will have a record with which to work.

And the record will include, as reflections in a mirror, the base derelictions of other major media — *The New York Times*, the BBC, the wire services, and so on down a long list — as they collaborated with the Zionist state to advance this edifice of lies

to justify the barbarities of the Israel Occupation Forces. (And let us rename these savages in uniform.)

I liked Aaron Maté's remark when he posted a link to *The Sunday Times* piece on X soon after it came out: "Establishment media starting to catch up with independent journalists and a squirrel Twitter account" - the latter a reference to the man, woman, or entity that flagged the piece when it was published last Friday.

Just the point, or one of many. Various independent publications, notably but not only *The Grayzone*, *Mondoweiss*, *Electronic Intifada* and *The Intercept*, were swift to expose the Israelis' aggressive propaganda op when, with Jeffrey Gettleman's breathtakingly counterfeit pieces in *The New York Times* last December, the lying got entirely out of hand.

These publications kept the light shining on a story that otherwise would have disappeared in darkness. We see in their reports the increasing power of independent media to force accurate accountings of events into the record. In this case if not in many others, those airbrushing the picture failed.

Unambiguous Rebuttal

Answering the question posed in the headline atop their piece, Philps and Weiniger reply with an unambiguous "No": there is no sound evidence whatsoever that Hamas militias, and others that crossed into southern Israel with them last Oct. 7, engaged in systematic, officially planned sexual violence against Israelis, women and men, during their attacks on various kibbutzim just across the Gaza-Israel border.

These fabrications began to appear within days of the Oct. 7 events and have ever since polluted public discourse across the West. We must now bear another bureaucratic acronym, CRSV, "conflict-related sexual violence," to secure the gravity of the charges in our minds.

Prominent faux-feminists — Hillary Clinton and Sheryl Sandberg chief among them — continue to indulge in “the politicization of rape,” as one of Philps and Weiniger’s sources calls it.

But the air begins to clear. From here on out, those who continue to peddle the junk conjured by the Israeli propaganda machine will merely expose themselves as unserious buffoons in the service of an apartheid state. Let them.

Philps and Weiniger devote considerable column inches to the report issued March 4 by Pramila Patten, the U.N.’s special representative on sexual violence in zones of conflict.

Predictably, Western media went long on Patten’s report of “reasonable grounds to believe that conflict-related sexual violence occurred in multiple locations.”

Lost in the frisson this language prompted in the mainstream press was the U.N.’s finding that there is also credible evidence, and a lot of it, of such abuse by the IOF. And as Philps and Weiniger report, the Israelis flatly refused to cooperate with a formal investigation into any of these matters — the allegations against either Hamas or the IOF — when Patten, whose mission was preliminary to an official inquiry, recommended one.

The gaping hole Philps and Weiniger blow in the propagandists’ bow also derives from the Patten report. Whatever her team may have found in the way of sexual violence during its Jan. 19-Feb. 14 mission, it reported finding no evidence that Hamas ordered it as a systematic weapon of war.

Netting this out, sexual violence in wartime is as old and as regrettable as warfare itself.

The peasants in the Red Army’s infantry had a reputation for it during World War II. But it was not Soviet military policy by any stretch any more than it was or is the

Hamas leadership's.

The distinction is key to the destruction of propagandists' edifice. The most infamous piece of rubbish published on this point — Jeffrey Gettleman's long Dec. 28 takeout, the piece that lit the fuse — was headlined, "[Screams Without Silence: How Hamas Weaponized Sexual Violence on October 7.](#)"

'Inherited Trauma'

Having surfaced this fraud in an influential mainstream newspaper, Philps and Weiniger are simply without equal as they investigate just where the Israelis' platoons of fabricators and outright liars got the imagery that made the propaganda op so explosive. They mark it down to the "inherited trauma" — Gabor Maté's phrase, not Philps and Weinger's — European Jews bear within from all those centuries of pogroms and from the Reich's concentration camps.

Here are the two *Sunday Times* reporters explaining this use of the past. Their reference in this passage is to Sarai Aharoni, a scholar at Ben-Gurion University who is assembling an archive of the events that began Oct. 7 (and may it prove accurate when it is opened after a 50-year embargo):

"For Jewish Israelis, the specter of rape was more closely associated historically with the pogroms of Eastern Europe, in which thousands of Jews were killed and Jewish women raped by Christian soldiers and antisemitic mobs. That persecution would become one of the driving forces behind modern Zionism and the resettlement of European Jews in the Ottoman province that became British mandate Palestine.

These 'historical memories,' Aharoni notes, have become a cultural inheritance for the Jewish people, particularly those without a secular education, a fact that would come to play a role in the reporting of what happened on October 7."

And later in the piece:

"Aharoni and others are struck by how closely the Zaka accounts cleaved to stories handed down about the horrors of the pogroms. 'The first framing of rape and sexual violence was automatically linked with European histories,' she says, particularly by those with a religious education. 'So there is a Zaka [an ultra-orthodox rescue group known for fabricating evidence] volunteer whose main education is religious. He's read a lot of Jewish texts that depict the raping of women. These texts kind of reappear again and again in Jewish stories and they reappear every time there is a major event against Jewish communities."

And further on:

"The now debunked story of the pregnant woman and her slaughtered foetus is well known from the pogroms. Many other erroneous tales involved babies — one Zaka figure claimed to have found a baby baked alive in an oven."

Very fine journalism. Philps and Weiniger are also excellent on the sociology of the worsening of Israel's ever-present racism since Benjamin Netanyahu, in the cause of his political survival, formed a government of beyond-belief freaks in the final days of 2022.

"The idea of the Arab male as an explicit sexual threat to Jewish women," they write, "developed in tandem with the movement of Israeli politics to the right."

Philps and Weiniger are too kind, in my view, to put the framing of Hamas for directing sexual abuse down to the Jews' past traumas. It seems to me more in the line of amateurishly sloppy propaganda and yet another case — how heartily sick one grows of this — of pimping the historical sufferings of Jews to maintain the Zionists' cynical claim to be the world's eternal victims.

Will *The Sunday Times* exposé cause the propagandists and Zionist zealots to desist, now that a mainstream newspaper adds its voice to the honorable work of the independent publications noted earlier? In the long term, yes. The story of gang rapes, baked babies, and disemboweled mothers is dead.

Maintaining the Facade

In the short term, no. One of the defining characteristics of propagandists is that they can never admit to being wrong when exposed. Surrender is out of the question when your objective is not to convey realities but to construct a façade obscuring them: Façades collapse like poorly built walls if a single chink appears in them.

Jeffrey “I don’t want to even use the word ‘evidence’” Gettleman is our case in point.

While there is no question of the *Times* firing him — this would be to admit the paper’s dishonor — I had predicted he would be reassigned to the police blotter in Trenton or some other such ignominious fate. I was wrong. Gettleman is back in Ukraine, from whence he was reporting until the morning of Oct. 7.

His first piece, after a hiatus of three and some months, appeared May 11 and was actually a very good report on the recent Russian advances into northeastern Ukraine. Several others in this line followed, all more or less balanced — or more balanced, let’s leave it, than the obvious propaganda the *Times* has long given readers in its Ukraine reports.

Gettleman’s latest, datelined June 8 — a day after *The Sunday Times* ripped him a new one without mentioning his name — was a weirdly long report on how popular caffeinated energy drinks are among Ukrainian soldiers at the front. I read this, war correspondence at its pithiest, as an indication the *Times* has begun a lengthy rehabilitation of a reporter in whom it has long taken pride.

Will you ever again trust a Gettleman byline? Not I. An “X” user named Mazen

Labban put it nicely as *The Sunday Times* piece got around: “Every day the NYT keeps Gettleman on its staff, and does not retract the drivel he’s written, is an insult to journalists and journalism.”

No, there is no erasing a disgrace of the magnitude of Gettleman’s, Mazen. But Gettleman will stay — he must. His job from here on out is to stand in place so the façade does not crack.

There is also the case, at least as egregious as Gettleman’s, of Sheryl Sandberg, the longtime propagator of, let’s call it, corporate feminism. Sandberg took on the sexual violence fraud with what we have to count reckless abandon given how eagerly she adopted the unexamined Israeli propaganda and how indifferent she has since proven to contradicting facts.

On May 2 Sandberg released a 60-minute film on Hamas’ “weaponization” of sexual violence theme titled “Screams Before Silence.” If this suggests to you she is fine replicating all the demonstrated lies of the infamous Gettleman takeout, stay with the thought.

Sandberg calls the film a documentary, and also the worthiest work she has ever done. It is a straight-out rehearsal of the original Israeli line, complete with Zaka and all the other discredited non-witnesses and liars paying attention readers will have encountered in the Gettleman piece and countless others like it.

Screams Before Silence was released two months after the Patten report and the independent journalism previously mentioned, but never mind all that. Sheryl Sandberg will soldier on regardless. She is determined to make hatred of Hamas, and one suspects by extension Palestinians, some kind of feminist cause. Pitiful. No mention of the 20-odd thousand women the IOF has slaughtered, Ms. Sandberg?

This is feminism weaponized in the Zionist cause, plainly and simply. Genuine,

worthwhile feminism, feminism as a subset of humanism, went out the window long, long ago, I am perfectly aware. But this seems to me a degradation too far, even with the sorry history of a cause that was once so promising in view.

Maybe because of Sandberg's obsessive motivations and the repetition of so many false narratives, *Screams Before Silence* has earned faint praise indeed in mainstream media.

CNN and *The Wall Street Journal* covered it, mutedly. Few others have had anything to say.

Lies in the cause of our hegemonic orthodoxies have afterlives, certainly. But they rarely, if ever, live eternally, and they often die slow, painful deaths.

Patrick Lawrence, a correspondent abroad for many years, chiefly for The International Herald Tribune, is a columnist, essayist, lecturer and author, most recently of [Journalists and Their Shadows](#), available [from Clarity Press](#) or [via Amazon](#). Other books include *Time No Longer: Americans After the American Century*. His Twitter account, @thefloutist, has been permanently censored.



From Palestine to Pride: Louisiana Northshore shows solidarity with all oppressed

written by Struggle - La Lucha
June 16, 2024

June 1, Mandeville, Louisiana - Despite increasing attacks on the community from well-funded, far-right organizations, the Northshore region of Louisiana held its first-ever Pride Parade this June. Around 500 people marched, and an impressive 2,000 people lined the parade route in the small parish outside New Orleans.

Although Governor Landry and his capitalist backers want to silence and divide LGBTQ+ people and other workers, the people of St. Tammany Parish stood together. They did not back down.

This area has been a major focus of struggle in the state. The Landry-aligned, book-banning, Moms for Liberty clones - the St. Tammany Parish Library Accountability

Project – caused havoc with repeated attempts to censor libraries in the parish.

They wrongly believed that targeting smaller suburban communities would lead to easy victories, but the people of St. Tammany rallied repeatedly, coming out in large numbers to council meetings. They showed up at libraries to defend these important public institutions, uniting progressive groups and LGBTQ+ people. From their organizing came Northshore Pride.

A Mandeville parent speaks

A Mandeville home-health worker and parent, Mike Spalt, spoke about this historic Pride event.

“With last year being my first time marching in a pride parade [in NOLA], I had no idea the feeling it brought within me and everyone I saw out there. It was also my first experience with Queer Northshore.

“So, when I heard they were bringing the Northshore its first pride parade, I offered to help. My family and friends marched this year, and words can’t describe seeing our community come together over a common cause.

“Of course, not everyone was on board with the LGBTQ community holding a parade. It’s something the queer community has faced since the beginning. The attacks on books, libraries, librarians, and members of the queer community are rooted in ignorant fear. ... It doesn’t stop us. It moves us.

“I’m really taken aback at how amazing [Pride organizers] Jeremy and Mel organize here on the Northshore. Since the LGBTQ community lives throughout the Northshore, it’s time it felt like their home too.”

When asked how it feels to be a parent of a queer or trans child when your child is under attack by grown-up bullies trying to score political points, he said:

“All of that is what inspires my opening line to a parent who has just found out their child is LGBTQ: As a parent, don’t be their first bully. They are going to encounter many. Unfortunately, these adult bullies spewing hate for the queer community could be the very cause of their own child taking their own life.”

The Trevor Project, a suicide-prevention organization focused on LGBTQ+ youth, reports that “1.8 million LGBTQ+ young people (ages 13-24) seriously consider suicide each year in the U.S. — and at least one attempts suicide every 45 seconds.” But, “LGBTQ+ young people with *at least one* accepting adult in their life report significantly lower rates of attempting suicide.”

When the right-wing whips up hatred with rhetoric and repressive laws, children die. The purpose of these attacks is to create an atmosphere of desperation for queer and trans people and to scapegoat LGBTQ+ people while the rich strip away every right – from abortion to minimum wage, from lunch breaks for teenage workers to bathroom access – that workers have won in this state, and beyond.

From Louisiana to Palestine, all the attacks are connected

A contingent of around 15 people with Louisiana Allies for Palestine marched in the parade, bringing attention to how the struggle for Palestine is connected to the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. All our communities are under attack, and the spirit of Pride means standing up for everybody. This contingent raised the Palestinian flag, chanting “Free, free Palestine!” with support from the crowd.

Many watching the march also had Palestinian flags or wore keffiyehs, the patterned scarves that are a symbol of the Palestinian people. One young man with a Palestinian flag painted on his face said, “We can’t forget Palestine while we’re out here.”

A New Orleans-area Palestinian public health worker recently spoke to this writer

about how she has experienced the past eight months of the U.S.-Israeli genocide:

"Think back to the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, when people were trapped on rooftops, bodies were floating down the street; people were crowded into the Superdome, babies didn't have formula.

"My life for the past eight months has been like watching that, getting worse and worse and with a far higher death toll. It's a terrible feeling of powerlessness. In the first few days of this horror, I didn't know if my son would make it back to New Orleans. He happened to be back home in Palestine at that time. Thankfully, he was able to leave after a few days, but he was very much affected by that experience."

The same government in Washington that let working-class (especially Black) New Orleanians die during Katrina is the one bank-rolling the Zionist killing machine responsible for around 40,000 deaths in Gaza. They do not care about human life so long as their rich backers are making money, as they certainly are doing in the current war. Many of those same politicians are leading the assault on queer and trans people. But we can take them on if we stand together, just like they did in St. Tammany.

Stonewall was a riot! Free, free Palestine!





