

# **‘Lethal assets’: U.S. finance capital owns the bombs falling on Palestine**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
January 17, 2024

## **Lenin on the economic essence of war**



Street Art by Banksy in Gaza, Palestine.

Lenin wrote in “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism”:

“I trust that this pamphlet will help the reader to understand the economic

essence of imperialism, for unless this is studied, it will be impossible to understand and appraise modern war and modern politics.”

In the new book “War and Lenin in the 21st Century,” author Gary Wilson writes about industrial capital merging with banking capital, creating “finance capital,” a financial oligarchy. This combination allows financial institutions to exert significant control over the economy as well as the government.

The banking institutions of monopoly capitalism own the arms manufacturers that are supplying weapons of genocide in Gaza warfare. The competitive drive to expand profitable investments and to absorb an ever-greater proportion of the U.S. government’s budget is fueling the broader war fronts all across the globe. It is threatening to develop into a Third World War.

Top arms manufacturers owned by largest financial institutions				
Financial institutions	BlackRock Fund Advisors	The Vanguard Group, Inc	Capital Group Com. <small>American Funds family</small>	SSgA Funds Manage- ment, Inc. <small>State Street Global Advisors</small>
RTX <small>Raytheon Technologies Corp.</small>	a top shareholder	major shareholder	a top shareholder	major shareholder
General Dynamics Corp.	major shareholder	major shareholder	a top shareholder	major shareholder
Lockheed Martin Corp	major shareholder	a top shareholder	a top shareholder	largest shareholder
Boeing Co. - <small>LMC subcontractor</small>	a top shareholder	largest shareholder	a top shareholder	large SPDR
Northrop Grumman Corp.	a top share holder	major shareholder	major shareholder	major shareholder
BAE Systems PLC	a top shareholder	a top shareholder	a largest shareholder	
TransDigm - <small>subcontractor</small>	a top shareholder	largest shareholder	a top shareholder	a top shareholder

## The shadow banking system

**BlackRock** (BLK) is the largest private asset manager, holding about \$10 trillion in assets as of 2022. The company became the leading asset management operation

after it acquired several large firms' portfolios, including Merrill Lynch Investment Management and Barclay's Global Investors (BGI).

According to data from [WallStreetZen](https://www.wallstreetzen.com), as of April 2023, 61.87% of BLK shares were owned by institutional investors, investment firms, and asset managers. This means that over half of the Blackrock shareholders are investment firms and asset managers, similar to BlackRock.

As of April 2023, the institutions with the most BLK stock were The Vanguard Group, State Street Corp, and Bank of America (BofA). BofA is the second biggest bank in the U.S. after JP Morgan.

**The Vanguard Group** is a U.S.-based asset management firm that oversees more than \$8 trillion in assets for both individual and institutional investors.

**Capital Group Companies** manages more than \$2.3 trillion in investments. In 1953, an investment in Royal Dutch Petroleum made Capital Group one of the first U.S.-based finance capital firms to invest outside the U.S. After WWII, U.S. finance capital became dominant globally with the U.S. dollar becoming the world currency.

**State Street Global Advisors, Inc.** is the world's fourth-largest asset manager, with nearly \$4.14 trillion in assets in December 2021.

These institutions are known as the shadow banking system. Shadow banks are not regulated and include hedge funds, private equity funds, mortgage lenders, and some large investment banks.

### **Their lethal assets**

**RTX** (formerly Raytheon) is the second largest U.S. defense contractor behind Lockheed Martin. RTX manufactures weapons and military electronics. It is the world's largest producer of guided missiles and special-mission aircraft, including

the Patriot system, a shoulder-fired stinger missile.

**General Dynamics** supplies technologically advanced wheeled combat vehicles, including the Abrams tank, Stryker combat vehicles, LAVs and AJAX armored fighting vehicles. They provide weapons systems, nuclear submarines, and munitions for naval, air, and ground forces across all weapons platforms, boasting that they “offer lethality on the battlefield.”

**Lockheed Martin** provides helicopters and rotary-wing military aircraft to all five branches of the U.S. armed forces, along with military services and commercial operators in 40 nations. Lockheed claims their aircraft can target static or moving targets with rockets and laser-designated air-to-ground missiles. Their long-range, guided missile carries a 500-pound class blast fragmentation warhead.

In a joint venture, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman prepared a high-tech system they call a “force multiplier” that is supposed to provide aircrews with automatic target detection while enabling rapid, multi-target engagement in all weather conditions over multiple types of terrain.

In 1993, Lockheed purchased the Fort Worth-based jet fighter division of the General Dynamics Corporation, giving them the F-16 fighter program and a greater stake in developing the F-22 “stealth” fighter. The \$3.5 billion F-22, by the way, is not yet working. The U.S. Air Force says it can’t use the F-22 jets because it would require too much effort and cost too much to get the aircraft ready for battle.

**Northrop Grumman** pioneered stealth technology to keep military aircraft virtually unseen. They claim to lead in advanced multifunction systems that will deliver intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, electronic attack, and multi-domain networking capabilities for the U.S. defense and intelligence community and international customers.

They are the prime contractor delivering the \$21 billion B-21 Raider, a so-called strategic bomber. The B-21, only one of which has been built, making a single test flight in November 2023, is designed to be a nuclear bomber.

In April 1994, the company was formed when Northrop Corporation acquired Grumman Corporation. Lockheed Martin then acquired Northrop Grumman in July 1997.

**Boeing** designs, manufactures, and sells military weapons, including attack helicopters, combat aircraft, missiles, bombs, battlefield laser systems, and intelligence and surveillance systems. Boeing's AH-64 is a combat helicopter for the U.S. Army and many other countries' military forces.

The Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system is the United States missile defense program. As prime contractor, Boeing designs, produces, integrates, tests and sustains all GMD components deployed across 15 time zones.

**TransDigm**, as a subcontractor, buys up companies the military depends on for spare parts. By providing maintenance and parts for weapons it creates a locked-in market.

Forbes magazine reported in May 2023 that the expansion of NATO has opened up a big new market for U.S. military-industrial complex defense contractors. It's "a big win" for Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, and Northrop Grumman. "More importantly, aligning with NATO is a commitment to interoperability with the American defense ecosystem. This directly benefits the big U.S. contractors. The market for their goods is expanding and they will face no competition for the foreseeable future. ...

"The F-35-ification of European armies might be a bigger deal, though. In addition to the cost of the units, corresponding ground support, spare parts and maintenance, there is a lock-in factor. Europe is now committed to America-made gear for decades

to come.”

Weaponry acquired by the Defense Department is a process that is most easily navigated by experienced defense contractors like Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and General Dynamics.

The 10 most expensive weapons systems in the world total \$868 billion in research and development and manufacturing costs. The Department of Defense has commissioned each of the 10 weapons systems.

### **Weapons contractors set their own inflated prices**

Military contractors overcharge the Pentagon on almost everything the Department of Defense buys each year, expert Shay Assad told [60 Minutes](#) on May 21, 2023. Assad is now retired after four decades negotiating weapons deals for [Raytheon](#) and then for the U.S. Defense Department.

Assad points to the Patriot weapons system purchased by the U.S., NATO, Ukraine, and Taiwan. In 2015, Assad ordered a review, and Army negotiators discovered Lockheed Martin and its subcontractor, Boeing, were grossly overcharging the Pentagon and U.S. allies by hundreds of millions of dollars for the Patriot’s PAC-3 missiles.

Shay Assad said, “The average profitability that was negotiated in a firm fixed price contract was typically between 12% and 15%. But Pentagon analysts found total profits approached 40%.”

In 1993, the Pentagon, claiming that it was aiming to cut costs, urged defense companies to merge. Fifty-one major contractors consolidated into five giants. In the early 2000s, the Pentagon, in another cost-saving move, cut 130,000 employees whose jobs were to negotiate and oversee defense contracts.



Assad said. “They were convinced that they could rely on the companies to do what was in the best interests of the war fighters and the taxpayers.”

Now that Raytheon is the sole supplier of stinger missiles, the cost is seven-fold more than in 1991.

The cost of Lockheed Martin’s troubled F-35 program, seven years behind schedule – is now \$90 billion over the original estimate and may end up costing taxpayers \$1.3 trillion. The Pentagon had ceded control of the program to Lockheed Martin. Lockheed and its suppliers retained control of design and repair data – the proprietary information needed to fix and upgrade the plane. The weapon system belongs to the defense department. However, the data underlying the design of the airplane does not.

When a part breaks, it’s likely to come from a subcontractor like TransDigm, which has seen its stock soar as it buys up companies the military depends on for spare parts. Assad’s review team found the government “will pay” the company “\$119 million” for parts that “should cost \$28 million.”

Since 2002, total arms sales among the 100 largest arms manufacturers have increased by 60%. Over half of all arms sales that year were made by 10 companies with the highest revenue from arms sales.





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# **Namibia condemns German support for Israel at the ICJ - given Germany's genocide in Africa**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
January 17, 2024

On 13 January, the President of Namibia, Hage Geingob, criticized Germany for giving its backing to Israel in the genocide case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) brought by South Africa. The President condemned Germany's own role in committing genocide, a history that is not limited to its Nazi era but includes the internationally recognized genocide that Germany carried out in Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Between 1904 and 1908 Germany waged a military campaign, in its colony of German South West Africa (Namibia), against the indigenous Herero and Nama peoples. The goal of the campaign was to exterminate these peoples and take over their lands. People were driven off their lands into the desert, where there was absolutely no means of survival. Germany killed tens of thousands of people.

It took till 2015 for the German government to even refer to the killings as genocide, but it still refuses to accept that this is genocide in legal terms so it can avoid international legal obligations to make reparations. It was only in 2021 that Germany issued some public expression of apology, but still, today, it will not fully resolve the reparations issues.

President Geingob's statement about Germany's support for Israel's case at the ICJ was released [here](#) on X.

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### Namibia rejects Germany's Support of the Genocidal Intent of the Racist Israeli State against Innocent Civilians in Gaza

On Namibian soil, [#Germany](#) committed the first genocide of the 20th century in 1904-1908, in which tens of thousands of innocent Namibians died in the most inhumane and brutal conditions. The German Government is yet to fully atone for the genocide it committed on Namibian soil. Therefore, in light of Germany's inability to draw lessons from its horrific history, President [@hagegeingob](#) expresses deep concern with the shocking decision communicated by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany yesterday, 12 January 2024, in which it rejected the morally upright indictment brought forward by South Africa before the [#InternationalCourtofJustice](#) that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in [#Gaza](#).

Worryingly, ignoring the violent deaths of over 23 000 Palestinians in Gaza and various United Nations reports disturbingly highlighting the internal displacement of 85% of civilians in Gaza amid acute shortages of food and essential services, the German Government has chosen to defend in the International Court of Justice the genocidal and gruesome acts of the Israeli Government against innocent civilians in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian

Territories.

Germany cannot morally express commitment to the United Nations Convention against genocide, including atonement for the genocide in Namibia, whilst supporting the equivalent of a holocaust and genocide in Gaza. Various international organizations, such as Human Rights Watch have chillingly concluded that Israel is committing war crimes in Gaza.

President Geingob reiterates his call made on 31 December 2023, “No peace-loving human being can ignore the carnage waged against Palestinians in Gaza”. In that vein, President Geingob appeals to the German Government to reconsider its untimely decision to intervene as a third-party in defence and support of the genocidal acts of Israel before the International Court of Justice.

[Source](#)



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## Activist Viola Plummer dies at age

# 86

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 17, 2024

Activist and Chairperson of the December 12th Movement Viola Plummer has died. Her passing was announced on Monday. She was 86.

"This evening it is with a heavy heart that we announce the Black Liberation Movement's loss of one of its most resolute and determined leaders, Cde. Viola Plummer, Chairperson of the December 12th Movement," a statement said.

A longtime civil rights activist, Plummer previously served as chief of staff to Brooklyn Assemblyman and City Council Member Charles Barron.

In an [interview with the AmNews](#), Plummer said she had been a freedom fighter since 1954, and always believed that "our people should unite as one against our oppressors."

At the age of 17, she joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) after witnessing what she calls a racist unjustified act by the United Nations.

"I didn't just want to be a witness, I wanted to be a part of the movement," she said.

In 1986, along with Sonny Abubadika Carson and many other activists, Plummer created The December 12th Movement. After Carson's death in 2002, Plummer became the head of the organization.

"I am so glad that through the 62 years of being a freedom fighter, I meet people who still have the same views as me," Plummer told the *AmNews* in 2016. "It is important for our young people to know that you have to fight for justice, and that

they, too, have a role to play in securing our rights for self-determination.”

Funeral arrangements will be announced soon. For information, call (718) 398-1766 and [D12m.com](http://D12m.com)

[Source](#)



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# **Madison: Stop the Hate: Build People's Unity! Feb. 10**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
January 17, 2024

# **STOP THE HATE: BUILD PEOPLE'S UNITY!**

## **RALLY & MARCH**

**GATHER AT LIBRARY MALL AT UW MADISON  
728 STATE STREET  
1 P.M.**

Our public institutions, public spaces and every section of the working class is increasingly under severe attack from a well-funded and nationally organized network. This includes fascists (Nazis marched in Madison in November 2023 and synagogues and other Arab and Muslim buildings are being defaced with bigoted messages) to right-wing politicians and their rich bosses. We will not be silent! We are fighting back!

Join us (and bring your friends, family, neighbors, fellow students and co-workers) on Feb. 10 to resist the hate and participate in this unity action to continue building a stronger, more engaged people's movement in Madison and beyond.

See list of endorsers and for more information:

**@Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement**

**@wiscoforpali**

**@werisefightinglaborpodcast**

**wibailoutpeople@gmail.com**

**This event is in solidarity with Black History Month!**

**WIBAILOUTPEOPLE.ORG**

No Nazis in Madison!  
Union, Yes! - LGBTQ Rights!  
Hands off the UW System!  
Reproductive Justice!  
Stop the war on children!  
People's needs not prisons & war!  
Healthcare, Housing & Parks  
not warfare!

**SATURDAY,  
FEBRUARY**

**10**

**2024**



**LEAFLET UNION DONATED  
FREE PALESTINE!**

Details: Gather at Library Mall at UW Madison at 1 P.M. Speak out and march. This emergency event is in direct response to the neo- Nazi "Blood Tribe" march and attempted recruitment rally that was held in Madison on November 18, 2023. This

same terrorist organization menaced an LGBTQ community event in Watertown last year. Just some of the latest outrages in Madison/Wisconsin include:

- Recent Islamophobic and anti-semitic attacks in Madison;
- Unrelenting racist, bigoted, anti-worker attacks by the right-wing politicians in the state legislature against the UW system, BIPOC communities, LGBTQ communities, women, prisoners, Palestine and more. These attacks by the right-wing politicians (and their rich bosses) continue to create the climate for hate.

Our public institutions and public spaces are increasingly under severe attack from a well-funded and nationally organized network organized by fascists like the “Blood Tribe,” and the “Proud Boys.” And right-wing organizations such as the Milwaukee-based Bradley Foundation that oppose free thought, truth and diversity, worker’s rights, unions, safety laws, healthcare for all, environmental safety and any regulations that infringe on rich people’s profits.

Join us (and bring your friends, neighbors, fellow students and co-workers) on Feb. 10 to resist the hate and participate in this proactive action to continue building a stronger, more engaged people’s movement in Madison and beyond.

We Demand:

- The restoration of workers’ union rights in Wisconsin;
- Guaranteed access to quality healthcare and medical freedom for everyone;
- Full LGBTQ rights and legal protections against discrimination in healthcare, housing, employment, education, and all other arenas of life;
- Nazi-free streets;
- Investment in our communities not the systems of police and prisons;
- A free Palestine and the ceasing of all U.S. military spending and campaigns globally.
- The restoration of Indigenous land rights. We demand Land Back here and around the globe. System change not climate change!;
- Water is Life!
- An end to the economic, environmental, and military attacks that are driving global migration crises. No Human Being Is Illegal!;
- The human right to vote;
- Full Abortion Rights Now;
- Money for human needs (housing, public schools, healthcare, parks, infrastructure)



not endless U.S. wars;

- An end to all fascist attacks against our communities;

- Hands off all public education from elementary to the UW System.

Only by getting organized and joining in unity with fellow workers and community members will we be able to stop the hate and build a people's world of love and solidarity where we have bread AND roses.



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# **Sekou Odinga, Black liberation fighter and former political prisoner, passes at 79**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 17, 2024

**Odinga leaves behind a legacy of resistance, having helped Assata Shakur escape prison and having been a member of the most notable Black liberation organizations**

Sekou Odinga, a former United States political prisoner for 33 years stemming from his involvement in the Black liberation movement, passed away on January 12.

Odinga was a part of several of the most impactful organizations in US Black liberation history, including Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity, the Black Panther Party, and the Black Liberation Army. Odinga is also known for his role in the escape of fellow political prisoner Assata Shakur, who lives free in Cuba to this day.

Odinga was released from prison in 2014. Regarding his role in Shakur's escape, he never pleaded guilty to charges but told *Democracy Now!* in 2016 that he was "proud to be associated with the liberation of Assata Shakur."

Speaking about what drew him to the program of the Black Panther Party, Odinga told *Democracy Now!*, "What attracted me more than anything else was the stand against police brutality, because like all the other ghettos in this country or Black areas of this country, police brutality was running rampant. From my first memory of it was—in New York was little Clifford Glover, who was murdered out in my neighborhood in Jamaica, Queens...what we were really concerned about was trying to put some kind of control on the police, or at least be in a position that we could counter some of what they were doing." Odinga's words reflect the legacy of Black liberation movements throughout US history, which from the mass movement sparked by the murder of Emmett Till to the 2020 uprisings after the murder of George Floyd, share a common outrage at the brutal violence waged against Black people.

Nino Brown, an organizer with the Jericho Movement, an organization fighting for amnesty and freedom for the political prisoners of the US, told *Peoples Dispatch*, "We in the Jericho Movement were honored to host Sekou, break bread and learn from him so we can continue the fight against oppression and exploitation. He is known to many as 'Baba Sekou' and rightfully so."

"While his life has ended his legacy lives on with all of his comrades and this next generation of revolutionaries," Brown continued.

In 1965, Odinga joined Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity, later leaving the organization to found the Bronx chapter of the Black Panther Party. In 1969, Odinga became a part of the group of BPP defendants dubbed the "Panther 21," who were accused of planning coordinated attacks on two police stations and one education office in New York City. The trial eventually collapsed, following a grassroots campaign in support of the defendants.

Following the increasing police and FBI repression against the BPP, Odinga joined many activists in moving towards underground organizations, such as the Black Liberation Army.

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)



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## **Massive march and rally in Washington: Stop the genocide in**

# Gaza!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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At least 400,000 people came to Freedom Plaza in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 13 to demand an end to the slaughter of Palestinian people. They gathered three blocks east of the White House where Genocide Joe Biden oversees the killing of thousands of children in Gaza. (He who pays the piper calls the tune.)

As people were coming to the capital of the blood-soaked empire, the U.S. Navy was again attacking heroic Yemen, one of the poorest countries on earth. Yemen's crime is to turn ships around that were going to the Zionist state occupying Palestine as a way to stop the bombing of Gaza.

The rally and the following march were a mass outpouring from the Arab and Muslim communities in the United States. They had many allies. Parents brought their children with them.



People carried signs in English, Arabic, Spanish, and other languages. A truck carried a banner reading “Sikhs for Palestine.”

Union contingents, including those from the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), lined up with their banners. APWU president Mark Dimondstein, who is Jewish, has demanded a ceasefire in Gaza.

Among the many groups that came was the People Power Assembly from Baltimore. Among the speakers was Indiana Rep. Andre Carson, one of three Muslims in Congress.

The massive event was organized by the American Muslim Task Force for Palestine. It includes American Muslims for Palestine (AMP), Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), Muslim American Society (MAS), Muslim Student Association-National (MSA), Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA), Muslim Ummah of North America (MUNA), and Young Muslims (YM).

Participants carried thousands of flags. Most flags were Palestinian, but many were those of heroic Yemen. South African flags were also welcomed.



Nelson Mandela’s South Africa has righteously charged the Zionist apartheid regime with genocide. Mandela declared, “We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.”

The proceedings being held before the International Court of Justice have put a spotlight on Israel’s mass murder, paid for by the United States.

Two days after the rally would have been the 95th birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. King was assassinated exactly one year after he declared that the United States was “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.”

Joe Biden and the Pentagon are still the greatest purveyors of violence. They are Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's paymasters and bosses.

People from Yemen and South Africa to the United States will stop the genocide in Palestine!



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## **Luxemburg-Liebknecht memorial: Police in Berlin attack Palestine solidarity activists**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 17, 2024

"Viva Palestine" could be heard from afar during the kilometer-long demonstration that marched under red flags to the Socialist Cemetery. Israel's war against Gaza was the dominant theme at the traditional memorial demonstration for Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the co-founders of the Communist Party of



Germany who were murdered by right-wing Freikorps soldiers 105 years ago, on Jan. 14 in Berlin.

Solidarity with Palestine was also the trigger for brutal police attacks that left numerous people injured. First, a speaker from a block of mostly Palestinian demonstrators was arrested — the reason for this was the banned slogan “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” a police spokesman told jW. After the arrest, contingents at the front of the demonstration turned around and the police were briefly pushed away.

Video: [@redstreamnet](#)

The frightening results of the subsequent use of batons and pepper spray by the helmeted state power: A 65-year-old man, run over by the police, lay unconscious on the ground and bleeding from his mouth and nose. According to demonstration paramedics, 15 other demonstrators also had to be treated in hospital with injuries, some of them serious, such as broken bones. The police, however, spoke of attacks on officers during the demonstration, with 21 police officers injured.

“I’m glad that the other demonstrators immediately showed their solidarity with us. This is where our strength lies,” a Palestinian activist named Walid told jW.

According to the police, among the 16 demonstrators arrested are several musicians from Turkey’s Grup Yorum, who are currently on a hunger strike for comrades imprisoned in the Federal Republic of Germany.



According to the organizers, more than 10,000 people took part in the demonstration. In addition to contingents from German Communist Party (DKP) and Socialist German Workers Youth (SDAJ), Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD), Trotskyist groups and socialist parties from Turkey and Kurdistan, left-wing trade unionists and neighborhood initiatives, what was noticeable was the strong participation of mostly young supporters of Marxist-Leninist organizations, dressed in black and in orderly formations among a sea of red flags. "Road free for the red youth," "Youth, future, socialism" and "With Rosa and Karl against war and capital" were heard from these blocks.

With the banner "Defend revolutionary history! Attack German warmongers!" and images of Luxemburg, Liebknecht and Lenin, who died 100 years ago, the "Perspective Communism" movement made it clear that commemoration is not a nostalgic end in itself. This is also how Sevda Karaca, a member of the Labor Party (EMEP) in the Turkish parliament, sees it. "Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht are revered worldwide as champions of socialism," Karaca told this newspaper at the Socialist Cemetery. "In times when fascist ideas are increasing worldwide, it is

particularly important that we reflect on the roots of our resistance.”



Even before the demonstration arrived, thousands of people, including the leadership of Die Linke party, had taken part in a “silent commemoration.” The murdered labor leaders were honored at their graves with red carnations and wreaths.

Solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, the call for peace and the need for socialism also played a central role at the 29th International Rosa Luxemburg Conference. The conference organized by this newspaper took place on Jan. 13 in the Berlin Tempodrom with a new record attendance of 3,700 visitors.

*Translated by Melinda Butterfield*

Source: [junge Welt](https://www.jungeWelt.de)



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# **Thousands shut down Port of Oakland, demand ceasefire, end U.S. support of genocide in Gaza**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
January 17, 2024





Saturday, January 13, 2024

\*\*\* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \*\*\*

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# **Thousands shut down Port of Oakland, demand ceasefire and an end to U.S. support of genocide in Gaza**

# Organizers declare initial victory in halting all port operations

For visuals of the action, click [here](#).

Oakland, CA - Starting at 5 a.m. this morning, over 2500 community members disrupted the majority of Port of Oakland operations today to demand an end to U.S. economic and military support of Israel's [genocidal](#) bombing campaign in Gaza. This port shutdown comes as the death toll of Palestinians in Gaza has reached over 30,000, including over 9,000 children, and genocide proceedings against Israel are taking place at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the UN's highest court.

Along with the massive turnout of community members showing up to protest the ongoing war on Gaza, the Oakland Port Authority also called off business that was scheduled at the docks for the morning shift in anticipation of community turnout, effectively shutting down the port. Organizers have declared an initial victory and are vowing to return to the port at 2 p.m. to shut down any business as usual for the afternoon shift.

"The Oakland port has facilitated the transport of weapons, military equipment, and technology that fuel the Israeli slaughter of Palestinians. As long as the U.S. enables this war with our tax dollars and through our port, there can be no business as usual," says Lara Kiswani, Executive Director of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center. "Every day, around \$12 million in revenue is generated at the Port of Oakland. This is nearly the same amount of money that the U.S. sends to Israel per day in economic and military aid. Today we are shutting it down to make it clear that we will not sit by as the U.S. government is complicit in genocide."

In early November, hundreds of protestors disrupted the loading and departure of a military vessel used to supply Israel with military equipment and technology. The

vessel has returned and is currently docked, though its future deployment plans are unclear.

“The U.S. can end the war on Gaza tomorrow by demanding a permanent ceasefire. Instead, Biden is making the massacre of Palestinians possible by sending billions of dollars of U.S. military aid to Israel, as the only thing this country cares about is profit with no regard to human life,” said Cat Brooks, Co-founder and Executive Director of the Anti Police-Terror Project. “By shutting down one of the busiest ports in North America, we are hitting them where it hurts, and will do so until a ceasefire is implemented, until the U.S. stops funding the apartheid state of Israel, and until Palestine is free.”

The Israeli war on Gaza is funded and supplied in large part by the U.S. government. In November of last year, Bay Area community members turned out to [block](#) a U.S. military vessel, the Cape Orlando, which departed to supply Israel with weapons and military equipment for use in Gaza. The vessel was then met with protests in Tacoma, Washington, where weapons were loaded on the ship. The ship is scheduled to return back to the Port of Oakland, and community members are demanding that Oakland stop aiding in the transport of war machinery and the U.S. stop its military support for Israel’s war on Gaza

The Port of Oakland is a frequent site of protests that target war profiteers, and actions at the port, taken by workers and Bay Area communities alike, have a long [connection](#) to social justice struggles.

Questions and comments may be sent to [info@freedomarchives.org](mailto:info@freedomarchives.org)





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# **‘We’ve learned power’ from labor - MLK on Longshore Union solidarity**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 17, 2024

If Martin Luther King Jr. still lived, he’d probably tell people to join unions.

King understood racial equality was inextricably linked to economics. He asked, “What good does it do to be able to eat at a lunch counter if you can’t buy a hamburger?”

Those disadvantages have persisted. Today, for instance, the wealth of the average white family is more than [20 times that of a Black one](#).

King’s solution was unionism.

## **Convergence of needs**

[In 1961, King spoke before the AFL-CIO](#), the nation’s largest and most powerful labor organization, to explain why he felt unions were essential to civil rights

progress.

“Negroes are almost entirely a working people,” he said. “Our needs are identical with labor’s needs – decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children and respect in the community.”

My book, “[Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area](#),” chronicles King’s relationship with a labor union that was, perhaps, the most racially progressive in the country. That was Local 10 of the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union, or ILWU.

ILWU Local 10 represented workers who loaded and unloaded cargo from ships throughout San Francisco Bay’s waterfront. Its members’ commitment to racial equality may be as surprising as it is unknown.

In 1967, the year before his murder, King visited ILWU Local 10 to see what interracial unionism looked like. King met with these unionists at their hall in a then-thriving portside neighborhood – now a [gentrified](#) tourist area best known for Fisherman’s Wharf, Pier 39.

While King knew about this union, ILWU history isn’t widely known off the waterfront.

## **Civil rights on the waterfront**

[Dockworkers had suffered for decades](#) from a hiring system compared to a “slave auction.” Once hired, they routinely worked 24 to 36 hour shifts, experienced among the highest rates of injury and death of any job, and endured abusive bosses. And they did so for incredibly low wages.

In 1934, San Francisco longshoremen – who were non-union since employers had

crushed their union in 1919 – reorganized and led a coast-wide “[Big Strike](#).”

In the throes of the Great Depression, these increasingly militant and radicalized dockworkers walked off the job. After 83 days on strike, they won a huge victory: wage increases, a coast-wide contract and union-controlled hiring halls.

Soon, these “wharf rats,” among the region’s poorest and most exploited workers, became “lords of the docks,” commanding the highest wages and best conditions of any blue-collar worker in the region.

At its inception, Local 10’s membership was 99 percent white. But [Harry Bridges](#), the union’s charismatic leader, joined with fellow union radicals to commit to racial equality in its ranks.

Originally from Australia, Bridges started working on the San Francisco waterfront in the early 1920s. It was during the Big Strike that he emerged as a leader.

Bridges coordinated during the strike with [C.L. Dellums](#), the leading black unionist in the Bay Area, and made sure the handful of black dockworkers would not cross picket lines as replacement workers. Bridges promised they would get a fair deal in the new union. One of the union’s first moves after the strike was integrating work gangs that previously had been segregated.

### **Local 10 overcame pervasive discrimination**

Cleophas Williams, a black man originally from Arkansas, was among those who got into Local 10 in 1944. He belonged to a wave of African-Americans who, due to the massive labor shortage caused by World War II, fled the racism and discriminatory laws of the Jim Crow South for better lives – and better jobs – outside of it. Hundreds of thousands of blacks moved to the Bay Area, and tens of thousands found jobs in the booming shipbuilding industry.

[Black workers in shipbuilding experienced pervasive discrimination](#). Employers shunted them off into less attractive jobs and paid them less. Similarly, the main shipbuilders' union proved hostile to black workers who, when allowed in, were placed in segregated locals.

A few thousand black men, including Williams, were hired as longshoremen during the war. [He later recalled to historian Harvey Schwartz](#): "When I first came on the waterfront, many black workers felt that Local 10 was a utopia."

During the war, when white foremen and military officers hurled racist epithets at black longshoremen, this union defended them. Black members received equal pay and were dispatched the same as all others.

For Williams, this union was a revelation. Literally the first white people he ever met who opposed white supremacy belonged to Local 10. These longshoremen were not simply anti-racists, they were communists and socialists.

Leftist unions like the ILWU embraced black workers because, reflecting their ideology, they contended workers were stronger when united. They also knew that, countless times, employers had broken strikes and destroyed unions by playing workers of different ethnicities, genders, nationalities and races against each other. For instance, when 350,000 workers went out during the mammoth [Steel Strike of 1919](#), employers brought in tens of thousands of African-Americans to work as replacements.

Some black dockworkers also were socialists. [Paul Robeson](#), the globally famous singer, actor and left-wing activist had several friends, fellow socialists, in Local 10. Robeson was made an honorary ILWU member during WWII.

## **Martin Luther King, union member**

In 1967, King walked in Robeson's footsteps when he was inducted into Local 10 as

an honorary member, the same year Williams became the first black person elected president of Local 10. By that year, roughly half of its members were African-American.

King addressed these dockworkers, declaring, “I don’t feel like a stranger here in the midst of the ILWU. We have been strengthened and energized by the support you have given to our struggles. ... We’ve learned from labor the meaning of power.”

Many years later, Williams discussed King’s speech with me: “He talked about the economics of discrimination. ... What he said is what Bridges had been saying all along,” about workers benefiting by attacking racism and forming interracial unions.

Eight months later, [in Memphis to organize a union, King was assassinated](#).

The day after his death, longshoremen shut down the ports of San Francisco and Oakland, as they still do when one of their own dies on the job. Nine ILWU members attended King’s funeral in Atlanta, including Bridges and Williams, honoring the man who called unions “[the first anti-poverty program](#).”

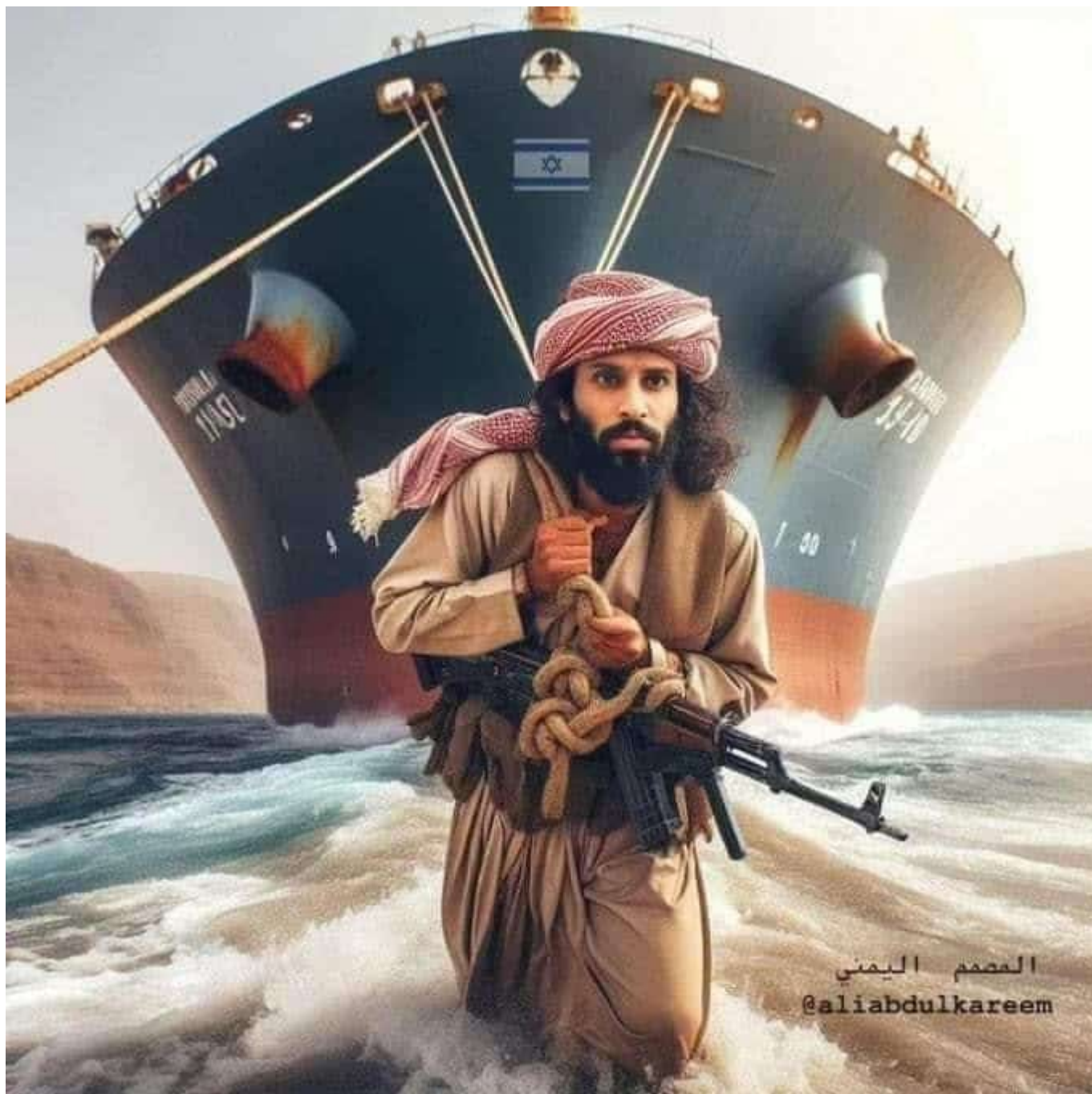
Source: [The Conversation](#)



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# **Yemen: An indomitable people (part 2)**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
January 17, 2024



The transnational mainstream media have planted the narrative that Ansarallah act under the influence of the Iranian government. While neither Iran nor Ansarallah has denied being part of an axis of resistance against imperialism, colonialism, and



Zionism, an axis that also incorporates political forces from Lebanon, Syria, Bahrain, and Palestine itself, simplifying the equation to a relationship of “subordination” is both superficial and banal, given the Yemeni people’s own history of struggle.

In West Asia, the growing aggressiveness of “Israel” and the interventionist presence of the United States have been polarizing the political situation. Iran’s recent agreement to settle differences with Saudi Arabia, as well as other agreements that have brought Egypt and Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, among others, closer together after years of estrangement, in addition to the stagnation of the war in Yemen—all point to the weakening of the imperialist-Zionist pole and the strengthening of the resistance.

In this context, by history and geographical location, the role of Yemen and the Ansarallah movement is decisive. It is worth noting that Ansarallah has never hidden its relationship with Iran. They are united by their common belonging to the Shiite branch of Islam. Both the founder of the Ansarallah movement and his brother, who leads it now, spent part of their lives in Qom (Iran), training politically and ideologically while studying the Shiite current, based on the idea that the legitimate succession of Mohammed belongs to the descendants of his son-in-law Ali, as opposed to the Sunnis who believe that the successors of Mohammed should be the companions of the prophet. Sunni comes from “Ahl al-Sunna,” which translates as “the people of tradition,” and Shia comes from “Shiat Ali,” which means “the party of Ali.”

But this does not mean that Yemenis are mere “accessories” of Iran. Beyond the financial, military, communications, and political support it has received from Tehran, the Ansarallah movement has demonstrated autonomy and self-determination in the design and execution of its actions both in the war against Saudi Arabia and its allies since 2015 and now in supporting the Palestinian cause.

In addition to its aid to Palestine, Yemen has a direct conflict with Israel for the

support that the Zionist entity gave to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during the war of 2015 that allowed it to occupy the strategic Yemeni islands of Socotra, located in the Arabian Sea, about 350 kilometers south of Yemen's coasts. In Socotra, the entity has established a series of spy bases for gathering information throughout the region, and in particular in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

The UAE-Israel base in Socotra also benefits the United States because through this base the U.S. controls the Gwadar port in Pakistan which is also part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The Gwadar port was developed by China so that goods unloaded there could be shipped overland to China, especially to its western region.

As for the current events, Yemen's actions in support of Palestine began almost immediately after October 7. On October 19, a U.S. Navy ship shot down missiles and drones fired by Ansarallah against Israel, according to Pentagon information released at the time.

A few days later, on October 27, six people were injured when two drones fell in Taba, an Egyptian town bordering Israel, after being intercepted by the Israeli air force. On October 31, Ansarallah claimed a drone strike against the Zionist entity. The "Israeli" army reported intercepting a missile launched from the south.

Ansarallah military spokesperson General Yahiya Sa'ari announced in a televised statement that the organization had launched a large number of ballistic missiles and drones toward "Israel" and that there would be more attacks in the future "to help the Palestinians achieve victory." In response, Israeli National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi said that the Ansarallah attacks were intolerable but declined to elaborate when asked how "Israel" would respond.

In mid-November, Ansarallah announced that its armed forces would attack all ships sailing under the Israeli flag or operated or owned by Israeli companies or sailing to

Israeli ports. A few days later, General Sa'ari announced that the Yemeni armed forces would prevent ships of all nationalities bound for Israeli ports from sailing in the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea until the food and medicine needed by the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip were allowed to enter the war-devastated enclave.

In view of this announcement and following the first attacks on ships bound for Israel, four major shipping companies: the world's largest container line, Swiss-based Mediterranean Shipping Co. (MSC), Denmark's Maersk, France's CMA CGM, and Germany's Hapag-Lloyd suspended the passage of their vessels through the Red Sea. These companies transport approximately 53% of the world's maritime containers and about 12% of world trade in terms of volume. It should be noted that 30% of the world's container traffic passes through Bab al-Mandeb.

In response, on December 19, the United States proposed to create a naval alliance in order to launch an operation called "Prosperity Guardian," presumably dedicated to "ensuring freedom of navigation in the Red Sea." In practice, this meant declaring war on Yemen and militarizing the Red Sea. But Yemen has remained unbowed in its position. Its armed forces have asserted that "any attack on Yemeni assets or Yemen's missile launching bases would stain the entire Red Sea with blood," claiming that they possess "weapons to sink your aircraft carriers and destroyers."

The escalation of actions since then has been evident. On December 20, the leader of Ansarallah, Sayyed Abdul Malik Al-Houthi, emphasized in a speech that the responsibility of the Islamic world, and especially the Arab world, for the conflict in Palestine, was great, for being "the heart of that world." In this regard, he deplored the Islamic-Arab position in the summits held to discuss the issue, especially the one held in Saudi Arabia. Al-Houthi characterized that view as weak. He noted that there should be a commitment by the Arab and Muslim peoples to support Palestine and criticized the focus of some countries on the "conspiracy against Palestine." The Yemeni leader said that his nation did not expect from the United States and

European countries a positive position or role towards Palestine. For these reasons, he considered that the perspective of the axis of resistance should be aimed at raising the level of military support for Palestine.

In this framework, Al-Houthi warned that Ansarallah would attack U.S. warships if Yemeni forces were attacked by Washington after the launching of Operation Prosperity Guardian. According to Al-Houthi, the U.S. is not trying to protect world shipping but is seeking to militarize the sea.

However, the United States could not reach a consensus with its “allies” about the naval alliance. Disagreements were generated with the Arab countries that were called to join the coalition, which has hindered a coherent response to the Yemeni attacks on ships transiting the Red Sea. Two key regional countries involved in the long-running U.S. war against Yemen—the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia—expressed opposition, which has been a major obstacle to the U.S. plan to end the maritime attacks. The final course of action considered by Washington is a military response to Ansarallah, but some Arab allies have refused to join. Instead, they prefer the diplomatic route and the reinforcement of maritime protection for ships.

Analysts consulted on the matter agree that the objectives of the proposed U.S. operation are vague as the naval chiefs have not been given precise missions. Moreover, the coalition ships, although equipped with advanced weaponry, can only limit themselves to repel missile attacks, escorting merchant ships with warships, which is questionable since Yemen’s missile arsenal is inexhaustible in light of the actions undertaken in the last eight years. “Neither the management of the world shipping companies, nor the captains of merchant ships, nor the insurers will be willing to play this lottery,” stressed Ilya Kramnik, a Russian expert on naval forces.

Similarly, Michael Horton, co-founder of Red Sea Analytics International, an independent consulting firm dedicated to providing unbiased analysis of security

dynamics in the Red Sea, noted that Ansarallah “has only deployed a fraction of its weapons and has not used longer-range missiles more advanced drones, and hard-to-detect sea mines.”

In this situation, U.S. Vice Admiral Kevin Donegan noted that “the United States has also been accepting as normal the persistent attacks... by the Houthis.” According to the New York Times, this has forced President Biden to face a difficult choice related to future deterrence plans for Ansarallah. He must consider that Saudi Arabia is not seeking an escalation of the conflict that could scuttle a hard-negotiated truce. Tim Lenderking, U.S. special envoy for Yemen, stated in mid-December that “everyone is looking for a formula to reduce tensions.”

On the other side of the conflict, on December 24, the commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, Major General Hossein Salami, announced that Israel would face a total naval blockade if the Mediterranean Sea, the Strait of Gibraltar, and other waterways were closed. To date, Yemen has already been able to blockade almost in its entirety the Israeli port of Eilat, located on the Red Sea, which is operating at only 15% of its capacity. Ansarallah armed forces were also able to hit an Israeli ship deep in the Arabian Sea, near India, at a great distance from Yemeni territory. Meanwhile, Iran has drones and long-range hypersonic missiles, which, in the event of an all-out war against Zionism, could easily target commercial ships moving through the Mediterranean towards Israeli ports.

Moreover, in preparation for a combat of other dimensions against Israel, the Yemeni armed forces announced that it has 20,000 reservist soldiers trained and ready to fight alongside the country’s armed forces against the Zionist entity and the coalition led by the United States.

On December 28, Yemen warned the United States and its partners about the militarization of the Red Sea and stated that it would intensify its attacks against its enemies if the blockade of Gaza continued. In this context, a day earlier, the top

commanders of the Yemeni Armed Forces met to discuss the latest regional developments and review the combat readiness of the troops. At the end of the meeting, they expressed their readiness to carry out the orders of the Ansarallah leader. On January 4, after a Yemeni naval contingent came face-to-face with U.S. military forces in the Red Sea, in which the Yemeni side lost three boats and 10 fighters, the commander of the Yemeni Coastal Defense Forces, Major General Muhammad Al-Qadiri warned that Yemen would respond by determining the target in each case on the islands, in the Red Sea, and at “the bases where the Zionists and the Americans are stationed.”

If the U.S. and its alliance eventually decide to directly challenge Ansarallah in the Red Sea, they will face a vast naval war from the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean. It would unleash an unstoppable spiral of confrontations of incalculable dimensions.

In any case, Yemen has already been able to use its strategic position as a force in the global scenario and to impose itself as an important player in the ongoing confrontation and to express one of the most courageous forms of support for the Palestinian people facing the Israeli war machine supported by the United States and Great Britain, constituting an important pressure card against Zionism and its U.S. mentor.

Controlling the Suez Canal means controlling 90% of global trade, directly affecting Israel by hitting its economy. In this sense, Ansarallah has been able to do what Israel and the United States have tried to avoid at all costs until now: “to turn the genocide in Gaza into a global crisis.”

Lebanese journalist Khalil Harb, citing the World Bank, stated in an article for The Cradle that Israel imports and exports almost 99% of its goods by river and sea, and more than half of its GDP depends on trade in goods.

Brazilian journalist specialized in international politics, Eduardo Vasco, pointed out that in addition to the direct impact that the Ansarallah movement is causing in West Asia, its actions are “paralyzing the world economy, that is to say, the very functioning of the capitalist regime, which is at the root of the war of aggression in the Middle East.” Vasco is of the opinion that the United States and Israel are limited in carrying out a direct attack on Yemen because there could be retaliation against U.S. allies in the region, “mainly against their oil fields, which would brutally aggravate the economic crisis with an oil crisis, which has already begun. For this reason, while the UAE wants strong action against Ansarallah, the Saudis are cautious.”

At the close of this article came the information that Yemen had attacked a U.S. ship carrying supplies to Israel, thus responding to the recent U.S. attacks against Yemeni naval forces.

Moreover, responding to the statements of U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, Yemen’s Deputy Foreign Minister Hussein Al-Ezzi confirmed “the safety of navigation to all destinations except the ports of occupied Palestine,” categorically discarding the fake news disseminated by Washington, London, and Berlin regarding the safety of navigation.

All these actions show the capacity and determination of the Yemeni people to take a leading role against Israel’s war on Palestine. In fact, they make it clear that, despite being a small country, globally and regionally marginalized from economic development, they have a will to fight that expresses the millenary sentiment of existing as an independent nation, challenging the U.S. by putting obstacles and impediments to the imperial execution of its policies in the region.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano](#) Translation: [Orinoco Tribune](#)



