

# Baltimore's May Day joins student encampment for Gaza

written by Struggle - La Lucha

May 13, 2024



SLL photo: Sharon Black

This year, the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly held its annual International Workers' Day celebration at the newly established Palestine solidarity encampment at Johns Hopkins University. About a hundred already supporting the encampment were joined by hundreds more.

Originally planned at the War Memorial Plaza in front of Baltimore City Hall, this

May Day was held in honor of Palestinian workers and the immigrant workers who died in the Key Bridge collapse.

The student organizers of the solidarity encampment were enthused when PPA organizers asked if they would welcome the May Day event. Not only were the students looking for an opportunity to raise the working class and its connections to Palestine, they knew it would be uplifting for morale.

The May Day program taught about the working-class origins of May Day and its relevance to the anti-imperialist movement we are currently witnessing for a free Palestine. The relevance, of course, is that the working class is crucial to winning the fight against imperialism. The anti-imperialist struggle is itself a class struggle.

Speakers represented the Peoples Power Assembly, Socialist Unity Party Baltimore branch, Palestinian Youth Movement, Starbucks Workers United, Unemployed Workers Union, Prisoner Solidarity Committee, Party for Socialism and Liberation Baltimore branch, CPUSA Baltimore Club, and West Wednesdays Coalition. All gave important educational talks about an aspect of May Day, the working class struggle, and the liberation of Palestine.

As the program ended, speakers representing the Peoples Power Assembly encouraged students to hold strong in their encampment and for everyone to mobilize as often as possible to be there in support.



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# **UCLA students for Gaza resist violent attacks by cops, Zionists**

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024

Los Angeles - The widespread campus revolts over the genocidal attack on Gaza by the Zionist state continue to spread. High-tech communications are such that millions are watching the horrific military assault on Palestinian babies, their parents, and all Palestinians in sight with the machinery handed over by U.S. military contractors, paid for by our tax dollars.

The spread of determined protests, inspired and often led by young Palestinians, is historic in how fast it has grown and how widespread it has become. Students have been suspended, expelled, arrested, unjustly accused of antisemitism, and physically attacked. Support has emerged from faculty, unions, and thousands of individuals. Campus authorities are clueless as to how to stop it.

UCLA students are a great example of how durable this new protest movement is. In spite of their actions being declared illegal by the school's chancellor, a four-hour

fascist attack during the early morning hours of May Day, police brutally breaking up their encampment on May 2, and nearly 300 arrests and constant harassment by violent Zionists, LA cops and a private security agency, the struggle continues.

Immediately after the students set up the encampment at Royce Hall, Zionists began showing up with an expensive sound system and huge video screen. The funding that paid for their equipment and perhaps more than that was from a GoFundMe account that raised nearly \$100,000. Among the contributors was Jessica Seinfeld, the wife of reactionary comedian Jerry Seinfeld, and billionaire hedge-funder Bill Ackman. That was the first indication that there would be an ongoing presence of a pro-genocide crowd.

Campus police and California Highway Patrol (CHP) were stopping people going to the anti-genocide rally, while people wrapped in the Zionist flag or carrying pro-genocide signs were freely wandering into the pro-Zionist crowd.

### **Cops, fascists, media collude**

Beginning late Tuesday night, April 30, the Zionists began showing up in greater numbers at the edge of the ongoing encampment. These were a more ominous crowd than the Zionists that had been showing up for several days. Some sported the Zionist flag, but others were masked and wrapped themselves in the U.S. flag. It looked like past gatherings of Proud Boys or other right-wing goons.

Just after midnight, these thugs routed the handful of UCLA campus police, who fled when they were on the receiving end of barricades being picked up and thrown. The Zionist side blasted the sound of babies crying and music from their huge sound system to keep people from sleeping. They threw debris, sprayed water, and began tearing down the plywood walls that protesters had erected. They used bear spray.

One protester was dragged out of the encampment, thrown to the ground and kicked

by four fascists. Fireworks were tossed into the middle of the tent city. One protestor suffered a head injury when he fell after being hit with bear spray. Other protestors carried him to a safe space, where he lay prone and barely conscious as they tried to get an ambulance.

The call for an ambulance brought three accompanying squad cars. EMS workers rinsed some peoples' eyes, treated a few minor injuries, and left. The cops (who turned out to be campus police) milled around for a few minutes and then left without taking any action or ordering the fascists to leave.

When this writer called the Los Angeles Police Department and demanded to know why they did nothing to stop the attack, the cops claimed that they were there. It was a blatant lie, and the next morning, CBS News falsely reported that LAPD had shown up in full riot gear to stop the attack. Nothing of the sort happened.

Fatineh Judeh, a member of the organization Unmute Humanity, confirmed with Struggle-La Lucha that no LA cops had ever shown up to stop the attack and that one protester had been stabbed by a knife-wielding attacker.

In reality the LAPD held back while the fascists attacked. In hindsight, it looked like a case of collusion between cops and hired fascist thugs, as well as a media coverup.

### **Calls for chancellor's resignation**

The power of this protest movement is such that UCLA's chancellor, Gene Block, is now facing consequences. He's hired the former Sacramento police chief to form a new "Office of Campus Safety." The first task is to "investigate," along with LA police agencies, the question of "if" there had been a security lapse. This is clearly a case of the fox being appointed to guard the henhouse.

UCLA's [Daily Bruin newspaper reports](#) that Block is facing calls for his resignation even after the clumsy attempt to save himself.

If there were still questions about the role of the cops after they did nothing to stop the fascist attack the night before, they were answered when California Highway Patrol moved in overnight on May 1-2 and broke up the encampment, arresting 200 people in the process.

Their assault was no walk in the park though. Their first attempt to rout the students failed. Students and their supporters from UCLA faculty and other UCLA workers had linked arms and would not budge. The shoving match went on long enough so that the cops retreated.

It was only when they returned in larger numbers, using flash bangs, rubber bullets and pepper spray, that the cops succeeded in kettling the protestors and arresting 200 people.

With all of this, the protest is continuing. On Monday, May 6, students held two consecutive sit-ins at Moore Hall and Dodd Hall. As the sit-ins were getting organized, cops arrested another 43 people - this time in the parking lot before they even reached any activity. Absurdly, they charged them all with "conspiracy to commit burglary" and "breaking curfew."

Hours later though, hundreds of students, faculty and staff marched through campus again.

The students united will never be defeated! Down with Zionism, down with U.S. imperialism!



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# **Thousands march in New York City demanding ‘Hands off Rafah!’**

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024

May 7 — Thousands of people marched tonight on New York City streets demanding an end to the latest U.S.-Israeli assault on Rafah in Gaza, Palestine. While Zionist soldiers kill Palestinian children, it's Genocide Joe Biden who is supplying the bombs and shells.

People gathered at 6 p.m. in lower Manhattan's Union Square for a short rally. Ysabella Titi of the Palestinian Youth Movement, Areej Khan of PAL Al Awda: the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, and Layan Fuleihan of The People's Forum demanded an end to the U.S.-sponsored genocide. So did TPF Executive Director Manolo De Los Santos and Claudia De la Cruz, the presidential candidate of the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Thousands marched out of Union Square carrying signs and banners. They headed west on 14th Street. People chanted “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be

free!" while playing drums.

Cops forced marchers onto the sidewalk and singled out Manolo De Los Santos for arrest. Other marchers were arrested as well.

The demonstration went north on Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Avenue), then turned east on 42nd Street. Onlookers were friendly and interested.

A rally was held in front of the great reference library on Fifth Avenue. Hundreds then went to One Police Plaza for jail support.

Others went to the Fashion Institute of Technology, where cops arrested 50 people while breaking up the student encampment there. The people will stop the genocide in Gaza!



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**On May Day, New Orleans**

# celebrates diverse working class

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024

New Orleans, May 1 - Immigrant-worker organization [Unión Migrante](#) led a march to celebrate the international workers' holiday, which has been revived across the country in recent years by immigrant activists.

The march began on Conti Street beneath a statue of Mexico's Indigenous president, [Benito Juárez](#). (Juárez was a Zapotec leader from a peasant family who was exiled by a conservative government during the 1850s, first in Havana, Cuba, and then in New Orleans.) The May Day march ended with a rally in front of City Hall.

Representatives from many endorsing organizations spoke, including unions like the National Association of Letter Carriers, United Teachers of New Orleans, and Starbucks Workers United. Speakers from revolutionary organizations also took to the mic, such as Workers Voice Socialist Movement, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, and Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Reflecting the great movement that is sweeping the country, many participants wore keffiyehs and speakers emphasized the importance of the Palestinian liberation struggle. An organizer with Students for a Democratic Society spoke on behalf of Tulane University's Palestine encampment, which had been brutally suppressed by police the day before.

The prominence of Palestine solidarity on May Day is a very good thing. The workers' movement cannot confine itself to narrow economics. All attacks on oppressed people are attacks on workers. These are all workers' issues. Indeed, this was one of the main arguments in Bolshevik revolutionary Vladimir Lenin's pamphlet, "[What is to Be Done?](#)"

He said that the workers' struggle absolutely cannot confine itself to just wages or economics in the narrow sense. Instead, our movement must expose the oppressors and exploiters in whatever sphere they're operating, and we must fight all their attacks. We might take this advice to heart, given that Lenin led the revolution that established the first lasting workers' state.

### **'Resist Landry!'**

Queer and trans contingents were prominent throughout the march, from trans youth organization BreakOUT!, to La Familia LGBTQ del Sur, to the Queer and Trans Community Action Project (QTCAP), newly formed by members of the old Real Name Campaign.

QTCAP activists held aloft a banner saying, "Resist Landry." Jeff Landry is Louisiana's far-right, bigoted governor, who recently tried to prevent hungry kids from accessing school lunch over the summer (doesn't seem like much of a "family man"). Others in the crowd held up the blue, pink and white trans pride flag.

One stage and film set worker with the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees or IATSE gave a talk. He said:

"The union movement right now in this country is huge. The workers' voice is being heard and they are very frightened. Stay together, fight the fight, continue to spread the message of what is right."

This message of unity was echoed in all the speeches. We are living in dangerous times. Capitalism is in crisis and attacks are coming down everywhere. Things are bad in Louisiana. Landry and his fascist movement are ramming through anti-worker, anti-immigrant, anti-Black, anti-queer, and anti-trans legislation. They're imposing anti-women legislation. (Landry made a career undermining abortion rights long before he was elected governor.)

But that speaker was right. Our ruling class enemies are afraid. If they weren't afraid, they wouldn't be attacking us so fiercely. Six southern governors wouldn't have signed a letter denouncing the United Auto Workers union drive in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Despite the governors' efforts, the workers won! They organized a union.

As in cities and towns across the country, and around the world for that matter, the crowd that gathered in New Orleans on May Day was a microcosm of the working class. Our class is diverse. It is immigrant and non-immigrant, Black and white, Asian, Indigenous. It is trans, cis, straight, and queer. Despite these differences, we are all workers. The capitalists are afraid of that.

May Day was a warmup. They know that we can come out in the thousands and the millions, just like we did for Black lives in 2020.

¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido! The people united will never be defeated!



# As Israel begins 'final phase' of genocide, Biden slams pro-Palestine protests

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024



May 7 — As Israel embarked on the first steps of its long-promised invasion of Rafah, Biden delivered a chilling speech scapegoating Hamas militants and pro-Palestine protesters for antisemitism in the U.S. on Tuesday, vowing a crackdown on demonstrators seeking to end Israel's atrocities in Gaza.

During [remarks](#) at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Annual Days of

Remembrance ceremony, Biden interweaved discussion of the Holocaust with condemnation of Hamas militants' attack on Israelis on October 7, 2023. Invoking racist tropes, Biden claimed that Hamas militants harbor the same "ancient hatred" of Jewish people that spurred the Holocaust — an equivalence that has been drawn by Israeli officials time and time again to justify Israel's brutality against Palestinians.

Antisemitic "hatred was brought to life on October 7 of 2023," Biden said, by Hamas militants "driven by an ancient desire to wipe out the Jewish people off the face of the earth." At one point, he equated the attack on October 7 to the Holocaust. "Too many people denying, downplaying, rationalizing, ignoring the horrors of the Holocaust on October 7, including Hamas's appalling use of sexual violence to torture and terrorize Jews."

This statement is incorrect and dangerous for many reasons, as human rights advocates have pointed out. As a group, Hamas is far from "ancient" — Hamas was established 37 years ago by revolutionaries seeking to liberate Palestine from decades of violent Israeli occupation, ethnic cleansing and apartheid, with an opposition to Zionism, not the Jewish people, as the group established in their 2017 charter.

Saying that there is an "ancient desire" to kill Jewish people within the Palestinian resistance, then, implies that Biden believes that Palestinians have an innate desire to oppose Jewish people — an implication that many advocates for Palestinian rights have pointed out is deeply racist, and an accusation that has long been levied against Palestinians in order to justify their slaughter.

"Hamas was founded in 1987. So when the president says 'ancient desires' to eliminate the Jews, he's making a point about Arabs/Muslims as inherently and viscerally genocidal," said AJ+'s Sana Saeed on social media.

The president spent roughly half of his speech, supposedly aimed at addressing antisemitism, denouncing Hamas and student protesters against genocide, without a word about the antisemitism growing within the Republican Party and embraced by his opponent in the presidential election. This is only the latest example of Biden and Zionists within his administration cynically using antisemitism as a bludgeon to silence critics of Israel's genocide — a practice that many [Jewish anti-Zionists have said only](#) makes it harder to fight actual antisemitism.

Biden is one of the only people in the world [with the singular power to end](#) Israel's genocide, which has killed [at least 34,000 Palestinians](#) so far, including over 14,500 children, [with full U.S. backing](#).

But rather than stop Israel as it [began its raid of Rafah](#) on Monday and Tuesday — something Biden said was a “red line” that Israel [cannot](#) cross just two months ago and that advocates have warned [is the “final phase”](#) of the genocide — Biden focused on vilifying the wave of pro-Palestine student protesters opposing Israel's genocide. For the second time in days, [he smeared the protesters as antisemitic](#) without evidence, and vowed to crack down on them.

“We've seen a ferocious surge of antisemitism in America and around the world,” Biden said before going on to reference the protests. After implying that campus protests and pro-Palestine advocates were a danger to Jewish people in the U.S., he said that his administration is “mobilizing the full force of the federal government to protect Jewish communities.”

Jewish advocates for Palestinian rights reacted with horror to Biden's speech.

“It is a horrific lie that Jewish safety is protected by the Israeli government's slaughter of Palestinian families or that riot police arresting peaceful protestors is for the sake of Jewish students,” said Stefanie Fox, Jewish Voice for Peace's executive director, in a statement. “Biden's speech used accusations of antisemitism

to distract the American public from our complicity in the ongoing genocide of Palestinians. It was a grotesque betrayal of the memories of our families murdered in the Holocaust.”

These remarks play into the tradition of Zionists [weaponizing antisemitism](#) in order to fuel repression of pro-Palestine advocates, levying accusations of antisemitism against advocates when [many Jewish advocates and Jewish organizations](#) have said that they have seen no evidence of widespread antisemitism among protesters. Rather, Zionists are seeking to obfuscate the history of Palestinian resistance and Israeli occupation by saying that any criticism of Israel is antisemitic; ironically, Zionist Republicans have invoked [detestable antisemitic tropes themselves in order to smear](#) protesters as the real antisemites.

Members of Congress recently sought to codify this into law with a bill that would explicitly adopt a definition of antisemitism that includes criticism of Israel. But this conflation actually risks worsening antisemitism and weakening the movement against it, as San Diego State University political science professor Jonathan Graubart recently wrote for *Truthout*.

“Shamelessly ... the [Anti-Defamation League] and other mainstream Jewish organizations add fuel to antisemitism by subordinating the struggle against antisemitism to advocacy on behalf of the state of Israel,” Graubart wrote. “Rather than educate the public about the dangers of conflating Israel’s actions with Jews at large, these organizations do the opposite by framing virtually all criticisms of Israel as antisemitic.”

[Source: Truthout](#)



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# All eyes on Rafah: Palestinian factions urge popular mobilization to stop genocide

written by Melinda Butterfield  
May 13, 2024



May 7: The actions of the “israeli” occupation forces in launching a ground assault on Rafah, occupying and destroying the Rafah crossing, and closing the “Kerem Shalom” crossing—the only outlet for the Gaza Strip—is a humanitarian disaster targeting 2.5 million Palestinian citizens in the Gaza Strip and poses a direct threat to more than 1.5 million displaced Palestinians, including 400,000 citizens who have fled from areas deemed safe by the occupation just yesterday, although Rafah is experiencing the largest displacement movement in modern history.

The occupation and closure of the Rafah land crossing and the “Kerem Shalom” commercial crossing, along with conducting ground military operations in Rafah, reveal the occupation’s intentions to commit massacres and a humanitarian catastrophe, by starting to cut off food, medical, and humanitarian supply lines and blocking the movement of travelers for the wounded and citizens, preventing the entry of food trucks that are insufficient even if they enter daily to meet Rafah’s needs by 5%, in addition to the remaining hospitals and health centers going out of

service—meaning the assured killing of thousands of the wounded, cancer patients, women, children, and others.

This aggression is clear and premeditated to foil the efforts of mediators and challenge the will of the international and regional community, and the popular will especially after the resistance leadership, along with our factions and popular forces, agreed to a proposal to stop the aggression and exchange prisoners; which confirms the zionist government's lack of desire to stop the aggression and achieve a prisoner exchange deal, thus threatening the negotiation process and leaving the occupation to continue the genocide against our people.

We call on the countries of the world, international institutions, and the United Nations to intervene immediately to save the lives of 2.5 million citizens threatened by murder, starvation, massacres, and genocide war in the largest humanitarian disaster the world is witnessing now.

We urge international, regional, official Arab, and Islamic popular mobilization to stop the genocide immediately and curb the occupation's terrorism through sit-ins in squares, cities, and universities, cutting off supplies to the occupation by land, sea, and air, and holding it accountable for its crimes in international courts, as we call on the resistance in all arenas and fronts to escalate their resistance against the zionist occupation and its supporters until the aggression against our people stops.

[Source: Resistance News Network](#)



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# **Los Angeles May Day marchers link arms with student protesters**

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Shutting down traffic for Palestine**

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

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

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

The Association of Raza Educators, Gabriela LA, Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, United

Teachers Los Angeles, American Indian Movement, Los Angeles Tenants Union and others all joined in the effort to build May Day.

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

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

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

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



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# **Build a movement to stop genocide from Los Angeles to Gaza**

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024

*Talk given at the 2024 Los Angeles May Day march by John Parker of the Socialist Unity Party and Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice.*

We remember George Floyd. We remember white knees on Black necks. We remember that on April 18, Frank Tyson was murdered by that white knee on his Black neck in Ohio. And the last thing he said was, "I can't breathe."

How many times have we heard that? We've heard it many times, and it's just part of the genocide that has been going on. It's been beating records every year in terms of police killings of Black and Brown people.

We're well aware of the murder of immigrants at the border, at detention centers and the denial of health care for immigrants that is currently causing more deaths.

With so much genocide going on here that we can see with our own eyes, why would

anyone be tolerant of genocide overseas in Gaza? We can see the denial of health care and homes and food that is afflicting all of the working class.

When we talk about genocide against people of color, we also have to remember that during the height of the COVID pandemic, the likelihood of death for Black and Brown people was sometimes three times higher.

And what did Biden do when federal funds were supposed to go to the states for pandemic relief? He told people like New York City Mayor Eric Adams, “Don’t worry about using money for COVID. Use it to hire more police.” He said that during another record year of police killings.

We know that the genocide will continue until the movement for justice is strong enough to stop it.

How do you stop genocide by building a movement? By making it so powerful that business as usual will not be possible. That’s what we’re going to do. We’re doing it right now and we’re going to do it tomorrow and we’re going to do it until those bombs that are falling on children in Gaza finally stop.

Palestine will be free, from the river to the goddamn sea!



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# **'Trump and Biden, no solution!' A revolutionary May Day in San Diego**

written by Melinda Butterfield

May 13, 2024

Hundreds showed up at the Federal Building in downtown San Diego on May 1 for the International Workers' Day opening rally. The rally was followed by a three-mile march to Chicano Park, the heart of Barrio Logan in Logan Heights.

The May Day Organizing Committee, a coalition of grassroots organizations, unions, and workers, comes together annually to plan and organize the event. This year the committee, led by *Unión Del Barrio*, began organizing early in February. The committee united on the theme: "Trump and Biden, NO SOLUTION! Working Class for REVOLUTION," recognizing neither Biden nor Trump prioritizes the struggles of the working class.

Chants emphasized the points of unity and demands: union jobs at a livable wage; free universal health care, housing, and education; end police terror; abolish all colonial borders and the U.S. war machine; end U.S. funding to Israel; and lift the

siege on Gaza.

Chants along the march included: “Not another nickel, not another dime! No more money for Israel’s crimes!”, “Abolish the war machine”; “Cancel RIMPAC”; and “Hands off Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Palestine, Africa, and the Philippines!”

Armed with banners and signs alerting the public about issues that have a direct impact on workers, the crowd swelled as marchers began the three-mile march from the Federal Building through Logan Heights to historic and artistic Chicano Park. There the Danza Azteca Dancers and Drummers performed while organizers prepared for the closing rally.



May Day is a day of international workers' solidarity recognized in countries worldwide. Workers march - voicing our demands, showing we are determined to continue to fight until respect, dignity, and justice is won. Together we will end capitalism, colonialism, and U.S. imperialism.

We must believe we can change the world. The solution for the working class in the United States and around the world is revolution - a socialist revolution.

Endorsing organizations included: Unión Del Barrio, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), United Auto Workers, Socialist Unity Party, Association of Raza

Educators, Party for Socialism and Liberation, International People's Democratic Uhuru Movement (INPDUM), Anakbayan S.D., Malaya, The Panther Party, Palestinian Youth Movement, Free Them All!, Friends of Friendship Park, and Armadillos Search & Rescue.



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## **Biden, Congress stoke war on all fronts with \$95.3 billion package**

written by Melinda Butterfield  
May 13, 2024



On April 20, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a \$95.3 billion aid package for Washington's proxies in Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan. Included in the package were provisions for imposing sanctions on China, Russia, and Iran, and a requirement that TikTok's Chinese parent company sell its stake within one year or be banned in the U.S.

One third of U.S. adults use TikTok, including a majority of those under 30. A majority of teens use the platform. The potential ban would certainly curtail people's ability to freely access information and communicate. Importantly, it would limit people's ability to access global perspectives.

The so-called "liberal" media is even portraying far-right House Speaker Mike

Johnson as a sensible “adult in the room” for working to get the bill passed. They also said that Trump had become more “presidential” after he greenlit the assassination of popular Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in 2020.

Some House Republicans had held up the bill by attaching it to demands for intensifying repression of immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border and other reactionary policies. Some of the Republicans do have misgivings about Ukraine funding, but only because the ruling class is divided on where exactly to focus its attacks. These Republicans are not anti-war. They have never flinched when it comes to arming Israel throughout this genocide.

Both parties are totally united on the goal of continuing U.S. imperialist supremacy at any cost. There are no peace-loving doves leading these parties of war-mongers.

Following the House, the Senate quickly passed the bill on April 23 with a 79-18 vote. Biden signed the bill the very next day. He stated: “In the next few hours — literally, a few hours — we’re going to begin sending in equipment to Ukraine,” and that “it’s going to make the world safer.”

Given that Washington has repeatedly blocked United Nations ceasefire resolutions to end the genocide in Gaza, all the while pumping money and weapons into Israel (the administration found ways to keep the flow steady while the funding bills were tied up), there is no indication that Biden is interested in making the world safer. Quite the opposite.

As for Ukraine, it is Washington that set the stage for the current war, orchestrating the fascist Maidan coup in 2014 on behalf of U.S. capitalists and International Monetary Fund creditors who demanded extreme austerity. It is Washington that funded the coup regime for eight years as it cracked down on domestic dissent (namely the left and trade unions), while attacking and killing some 14,000 people in the Donbass region.

After Biden signed this funding bill on April 24, the Pentagon jumped to send the first \$1 billion delivery to Ukraine. The weapons include shoulder-fired Stinger surface-to-air missiles, cluster munitions, Javelin anti-tank guided missiles, and more.

[According to Forbes](#), in late 2022, the U.S. had already sent 8,500 Javelins. Citing the army's 2023 missile procurement budget, they said that these missiles cost \$197,884 each. Eight thousand five hundred times that unit price would come to \$1.7 billion. That's just the cost of one class of weapon by the end of 2022. This is undoubtedly good for the shareholders of Raytheon and Lockheed Martin, the companies that together manufacture the Javelin.

### **Biden chides student protesters**

With the majority of Washington behind him - especially the Pentagon - Biden is stoking war on all fronts. The blood of the 32,000+ dead in Gaza is on his hands just as much as it is on Netanyahu's. And yet, when he finally decided to comment on the student protesters who are acting as the conscience of the country (the same young people he wants to come out and vote for him in November), he scolded them!

"Vandalism, trespassing, breaking windows, shutting down campuses, forcing the cancellation of classes and graduation — none of this is a peaceful protest," he said.

First of all, in every location, it has been the police who have violently attacked the student protesters. The students have been brutalized by the police, and there is no doubt that approval is coming from the top.

We have all spent months watching horrific videos of dead, mutilated children being pulled from rubble, killed by weapons Biden has paid for with our tax money. We could be forgiven for being more outraged by that than by a proverbial broken window. Biden's audacity in talking about peace is astonishing.

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said this 57 years ago in his “Beyond Vietnam” speech, at a time when U.S. imperialism was murdering millions in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

We can imagine what King would say today if he were alive to witness the absurdity of this military spending compared with the increasing immiseration of the population in the United States, the richest country in the world.

Right now, the same Supreme Court that took away women’s and other people’s right to reproductive autonomy – the same unelected Supreme Court being exposed for their lavish, free resort stays and wine tastings – is hearing a case about how easy it should be to throw homeless people in jail. The case started because the city of Grants Pass, Oregon wants free rein to fine and jail the homeless. But municipalities across the country are attempting to do the same thing. Instead of the government addressing the housing crisis this is what we get.

In January 2023, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development counted 653,104 homeless people in their annual [Point-In-Time Homeless Assessment Report](#). That is about 1 out of every 500 people experiencing homelessness, up 22% from the year before. People are suffering from soaring food, housing, medical, and other costs.

The federal government spent \$700 billion in 2008 to bail out the “too big to fail” for-profit banks. It is spending many billions to wage wars on behalf of shareholders. But it will not bail out the working class. It is obvious where the government’s priorities lie, and it is not helping the people.

