

Stop the attack on Rafah! NYC students mobilize for Gaza

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 18, 2024



SLL photos: Stephen Millies

Thousands of New York City students mobilized again on Friday, Feb. 16, to protest the genocidal attacks on Gaza. They gathered from all over the city at the big reference library on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue.

Hundreds of them were high school students. Two hundred students marched out of Fort Hamilton High School in Brooklyn. Other schools had smaller walkouts.

One long banner carried by members of the Palestinian Youth Movement read, "Stop

Arming Israel / Arms Embargo Now!" Genocide Joe Biden is demanding another \$14 billion of weapons for the Zionist regime's assault on Rafah.

As was done during the 1980s struggle against the then apartheid South Africa, students are demanding their schools divest from the apartheid regime occupying Palestine. Students from the State University of New York carried a banner, "Israel Bombs / SUNY Pays."

Another banner read, "SVA [School of Visual Arts] Students Against Genocide Apartheid Zionism."



Among the speakers at the rally were representatives of Al-Awda: The Palestine Right to Return Coalition and the Party for Socialism and Liberation. Roger Wareham, a member of the December 12th Movement's International Secretariat,

reminded people of the struggle against the Vietnam War. Palestine, like Vietnam, will win.

Despite police harassment, people marched down Fifth Avenue, turning west on 34th Street. Many people on the busy shopping street showed their support.

The march went north on Eighth Avenue, with people stopping by the New York Times headquarters to protest its lying coverage. Hundreds of people made it to 48th Street before dispersing, vowing to continue the struggle for Palestine.





Washington readies thousands of bombs for continued Gaza genocide

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U.S. President Joe Biden and other White House officials are preparing to send additional bombs and other weapons to Israel even as the U.S. claims to be pushing for a ceasefire in Gaza, the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) [reported](#) on 16 February.

Citing current and former U.S. officials, the WSJ says the proposed arms delivery includes 500-pound MK-82 bombs, KMU-572 Joint Direct Attack Munitions that add precision guidance to bombs, and FMU-139 bomb fuses.

The value of the weapons deliveries is estimated to be “tens of millions of dollars.”

The proposed delivery is still being internally reviewed and must be approved by a congressional committee.

As of December 2023, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has twice used emergency measures to bypass congressional review to send weapons to Israel.

Israeli warplanes wipe out an entire residential square in the Shujaeya neighborhood of Gaza City. [#IsraelWarCrimes](#) [#IsraelTerroristeState](#) [#GazaGenocide](#) pic.twitter.com/q9ozD7RSUv

— *Palestine Info Center (@palinfoen)* [December 3, 2023](#)

While publicly asking Israel to kill fewer Palestinians during its military operations, Blinken and Biden have been staunch supporters of Israel’s military, refusing to set any red lines on the use of U.S. weapons.

President Biden recently stated that the U.S. would take no action against Israel should it invade Rafah, the city in southern Gaza where over 1 million displaced are sheltering, despite warnings from aid agencies that such an invasion would be a “bloodbath.”

Israel has dropped tens of thousands of U.S. bombs, including [hundreds](#) of 2,000-pound BLU-109 bunker-buster bombs, on Gaza, destroying entire residential neighborhoods, creating 40-foot craters in crowded refugee camps, and killing dozens at one time.

Israel's air and ground offensive on Gaza since 7 October has killed 28,775 people, mostly civilians, and displaced nearly all of its more than 2 million inhabitants from their homes.

The Israeli campaign is widely viewed as genocide, while Israeli leaders openly discuss their desire to ethnically cleanse the besieged enclave, annex it, and establish Jewish settlements on the remains of destroyed Palestinian cities.

Source: [TheCradle.co](https://www.thecradle.co)



South Africa: Gaza genocide is in the hands of the countries that supply Israel with money and weapons

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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South Africa Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor's Official Statement, Feb. 14, 2024

"Israel was not deterred by the decisions of the Court of Justice, and the evidence is to continue its war in Rafah.

The decision to stop the fighting in Gaza is in the hands of the countries that supply Israel with money and weapons.

What concerns us is that Israel is allowed to ignore the ruling of the Court of Justice and not protect civilians.

The actions of the Israeli government prove what we submitted to the Court of Justice regarding genocide.

We condemn the targeting of journalists in general and Al Jazeera journalists in particular, and this is a criminal act.”



Free Samaher Esmail!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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On Feb. 5, Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) soldiers kidnapped Samaher Esmail, a 46-year-old mother and Palestinian-American who lives in Gretna, Louisiana. The kidnapping occurred in the family home near Silwad city in the occupied West Bank, as reported by her son, Ibrahim Hamed.

Both the IOF and the U.S. State Department confirmed the arrest, but have revealed

little else. The occupiers have prevented the family from obtaining information about Samaher's whereabouts or condition. This is typical, and is part of the Israeli practice of "administrative detention."

A Palestinian-American school teacher - another resident of the greater New Orleans area - wrote the following to explain the context of Samaher's situation, a context often absent in mainstream media coverage:

"Administrative detention - a grim facet of Israeli military policy - involves the arbitrary apprehension of Palestinian individuals in the West Bank and Gaza. Labeling them as 'potential suspects,' the military confines them to prisons for up to six months, with the possibility of indefinite extension, all without trial, formal charges, or due process.

"Families are left in agonizing uncertainty about their loved ones' whereabouts, while detainees are denied access to legal counsel. Shockingly, [even children as young as 8 or 9](#) are not spared from this injustice, further exacerbating the trauma inflicted upon entire communities.

"The surge in detentions from 1,200 to about 4,000 between Oct. 7, 2023, and January 2024 reflects Israel's wanton disregard for international standards, which mandate the use of administrative detention only in emergency situations. This abusive practice has [become a cornerstone](#) of Israel's oppressive policies against Palestinians throughout its existence, perpetuating a climate of fear and uncertainty among the populace.

"The recent kidnapping of Samaher Esmail, a 49-year-old American-Palestinian mother and resident of Gretna, Louisiana, with strong ties to the Palestinian city of Silwad, underscores the chilling reality faced by those who dare to speak out against Israeli injustices. Despite her unknown offense, it is suspected that her social media post expressing grief over the death of a Palestinian at the hands of Israeli settlers

served as the pretext for her detention.

“This blatant suppression of dissent highlights Israel’s attempts to silence those who expose its atrocities, particularly through social media censorship.

“The [tragic toll on journalists and media personnel](#), with more than 122 lives lost in Gaza since October, serves as a stark reminder of Israel’s ruthless campaign to stifle first-hand information on its terrors.

“The U.S. government must condemn Israel’s ongoing genocide in Gaza. We demand an immediate ceasefire to halt the bloodshed. Accountability for human rights violations is non-negotiable.

“Samaher Esmail must be returned to her family without delay.”



Under attack for solidarity with

Palestine, NYC students are fighting back

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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A thousand people came to New York City's Washington Square Park in Lower Manhattan on Feb. 8 to show their solidarity with Palestine. "All Students and Youth for Gaza" was the rally's call.

Many were college students under attack for protesting the slaughter of 30,000 Palestinians, although older folks also came. Hundreds of Palestinian flags were flown, accompanied by many signs.

Speakers included representatives from the Palestinian Youth Movement, Resist 4 Return, and the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Amin Husain, an adjunct professor at New York University, described how he was suspended for speaking out against the genocidal bombing of Gaza. The Palestinian scholar has been absurdly labeled an "antisemite" even though he's a Semite.

Surrounding the rally were lavish buildings belonging to New York University. Wealthy donors to NYU, which has an endowment of nearly \$6 billion, are propelling a witch hunt against any pro-Palestinian voices. Similar inquisitions are taking place at Columbia, Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania, and other schools.

Caesar, a Dominican student at the State University of New York campus at Purchase, described how he was suspended after a Zionist assaulted him. He quoted Malcolm X: "If you're not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed and loving the people who are doing the oppressing."

A Columbia University student described how campus Zionists, who are Israeli army reservists, used “skunk spray” on pro-Palestinian protesters. This is a chemical formula developed by that apartheid army for crowd control. Yet it’s the protesters who are being attacked by the school’s administration, not the thugs who sprayed them.

Columbia officials suspended both Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace. So much for freedom of speech on the campus!

Other solidarity messages were given by speakers from The People’s Forum, a Stony Brook University student, as well as representatives from the Hunter College Palestine Solidarity Alliance and the Students for Justice in Palestine chapter at NYU.

People then marched over 35 blocks north to Grand Central Terminal before going over to the big reference library on Fifth Avenue. Numerous cars and trucks honked their horns in support of Palestine.



NYU's dirty laundry

Just behind the Washington Square rally was NYU's Elmer Holmes Bobst library. It's

named after a big NYU donor and pharmaceutical executive who hated Jewish people.

In one of his letters to fellow bigot Richard Nixon, Bobst complained to the U.S. president about the alleged “malicious action of Jews.” [Bobst was accused](#) by his granddaughter and great-granddaughter of raping them.

One of the architects of the 12-story library was Philip Johnson, who accompanied the Nazi army during its invasion of Poland. Johnson did so as a correspondent of the pro-Hitler “Social Justice” newspaper published by the fascist priest Charles Coughlin.

None of this prevented the Zionist regime from hiring Johnson to redesign Al-Quds (Jerusalem). (“Father Coughlin” by Sheldon Marcus.)

A block east of Washington Square Park is the still-intact building, now owned by NYU, that housed the Triangle Shirtwaist factory. A fire there on March 25, 1911, killed 146 workers, who were overwhelmingly young women, including many teenagers.

Almost all the victims were from Italian and Jewish immigrant families. The company refused to hire Black workers.

To avoid being burned alive, many women leapt to their deaths. None of the Jewish workers cried out the Zionist slogan “Next year in Jerusalem!” as they fell. Why should they have?

The two Jewish capitalists who owned the factory had locked the doors, guaranteeing their deaths. What common interest did these murdered workers have with their killers?

Zionism is racism, and capitalists, like those who owned the Triangle Shirtwaist

<https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/palestine/page/25/>





PFLP: War criminal Biden's statements on Gaza are false, deceptive, and election-oriented

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Feb. 9 — The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) confirmed that the recent statements by the U.S. president, war criminal Joe Biden, regarding Gaza are false, deceptive, and have electoral dimensions, reaffirming the involvement of the U.S. administration in the zionist genocidal war waged against our people in the Gaza Strip.

The Front emphasized that Biden's false statements about "the zionist response behavior in the Strip exceeding the limit, and that he is working towards achieving a sustainable cessation of fighting" are brazen and evasive.

The U.S. administration, to this moment, does not support a ceasefire, overlooks the occupation's massacres against civilians in the Strip, thwarted decisions to stop the

aggression in the U.N. Security Council, and, more dangerously, continues to supply the zionist entity with various types of lethal weapons, and persists in its political cover for the occupation to continue the genocidal war against our people.

The Front added that the U.S. administration tries to exploit the humanitarian issue to try to beautify its ugly face before the voters and the American public, despite not exerting real pressure on the occupation to allow all relief aid into the Strip, most of which were prevented from entering, especially in the northern areas and Gaza suffering from siege, hunger, thirst, and diseases.

The Front clarified that Biden's deceitful speech is aimed at the American voter after his popularity declined according to opinion polls.

The American public, especially among the Black, Arab, and Palestinian communities, Indigenous people, and the youth, is beginning to lose confidence in the complexities of Biden's administration, convinced that it is fully complicit in the zionist genocide in the Gaza Strip, and does not respond to the American voters' calls to stop this war and its support for the Zionist entity.

The Front concluded its statement, affirming that the U.S. administration's full partnership in the zionist genocide against our people is indisputable, and all statements and clamor of the U.S. administration about its efforts to stop the aggression and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid are exposed and false, falling before its behaviors on the ground, and its insistence on its stance in supporting the continuation of the occupation's aggression on the Strip, and not stopping the aggression.

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
Central Media Office

Source: [*Resistance News Network*](#)



U.S. hands off Iraq, Syria and Yemen! Will the Pentagon attack Iran?

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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After frame-up victims Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were executed in 1953, French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre wrote that the capitalist United States was “sick with rabies.”

Seven decades later, Wall Street’s Big Oil empire is even more rabid and bloodthirsty. Using U.S.-supplied bombs and shells, the Zionist regime occupying Palestine has killed 30,000 people in Gaza. Behind the fascist Benjamin Netanyahu is Genocide Joe Biden.

In less than a month, the Pentagon has attacked Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, killing dozens with bombs and missiles. Over 106 million people live in these three sovereign countries.

Twenty-one years after the Second Gulf War, [U.S. troops are still in Iraq](#) despite the country's parliament demanding that they leave. The U.S. occupies oil fields in Syria and steals the petroleum.

Beginning in 2014, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — both vassal states of Big Oil — invaded Yemen, [killing 377,000 people](#) before being beaten back. Meanwhile, Yemen was blockaded by the U.S. Navy as its children starved.

Now, the U.S. and Britain are bombing Yemen because the country has closed the Red Sea to ships owned by or going to apartheid "Israel." Yemen's people, led by the Ansarallah movement, are doing so in righteous solidarity with Gaza.

In the last week, the Biden administration has struck Iraq and Syria over 75 times. A Feb. 7 attack killed two commanders of a resistance group in Baghdad. [Iraqis responded](#) by chanting, "America is the devil."

The White House's excuse for these devilish attacks was a drone that hit a U.S. base in Jordan near the Syrian border on Jan. 28. Three Black GIs from Georgia were killed.

As with over 7,000 Black GIs killed in the dirty war against Vietnam and Laos, it's the Pentagon that has the blood of these three soldiers on its hands.

Demonizing the oppressed

The wealthy and powerful always slander freedom fighters. The U.S. State Department kept Nelson Mandela [on its terrorist list](#) until he was 89 years old.

The response of the Zionist state to the International Court of Justice chastising its crimes in Gaza was to attack the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Netanyahu's regime claimed that a dozen of the UNRWA's 13,000 employees took part in the Oct. 7 Al- Aqsa Flood offensive.

While the capitalist media gave wall-to-wall coverage to this allegation, it's been almost silent about the [154 UNRWA employees killed](#) by Israel.

That one-out-of-a-thousand UNRWA employees supposedly participated in this uprising was enough for the United States and eight other capitalist countries to cut off funding. Endangered are the UNRWA's 706 schools with over 500,000 students and 140 health facilities.

In 2022, the U.S. contribution towards these absolutely essential activities was [\\$344 million](#). The U.S. Senate voted on Feb. 4 to give 40 times as much — \$14 billion — to the Israeli military to kill more Palestinian children.

Continual racist poison is necessary for this slaughter. Fox News and Tucker Carlson are not the only sources for a sewer of Islamophobia.

[New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman](#) has likened resistance fighters in Palestine and Lebanon to insects. Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting has rightfully compared Friedman's words with Nazi descriptions of Jewish people.

The Nazis used insecticide to kill millions in the gas chambers. The U.S.-supplied white phosphorus bombs that Israel drops on Gaza are not any more humane.

Is Iran or Korea next?

Biden's bombings of Iraq, Syria, and Yemen don't satisfy everyone in the military-industrial-complex. They want to attack Iran, a country of nearly 90 million people.

Forty-five years ago, the Iranian people overthrew the U.S. puppet called the Shah. His CIA-trained torturers in the SAVAK secret police were hunted down and given justice.

Even the Pentagon's defeat by the Vietnamese people may not have affected Wall Street as much as the Iranian Revolution did.

The real Dr. Evil — David Rockefeller of the Chase Manhattan Bank, now JP Morgan Chase, with assets of \$3.9 trillion — welcomed the exiled Shah to the U.S.

For if the Shah could be overthrown, why not the kings, emirs and other U.S. stooges in the Arabian peninsula? The supremacy of the U.S. dollar as world money rests upon them, particularly the Saudi monarchy, using greenbacks.

For many in the Pentagon, the way out of their quagmire in Western Asia is to attack Iran. Or will the next target be the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (called "North Korea" in the media)?

Meanwhile, the Pentagon is continuing its "pivot to Asia," which is aimed at the People's Republic of China. And the U.S. is conducting a full-scale war against the Russian Federation in Ukraine.

These bloody wars will continue no matter who wins the presidential election until the people stop them.



Countries which aid Israel complicit in genocide - South Africa warns

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Minister Naledi Pandor says all states have a legal obligation to ensure respect for the provisional measures, and not be complicit in genocide.

South Africa's Minister of International Relations, Naledi Pandor, has warned that all states have a legal obligation to uphold the provisional measures ordered by the ICJ in regard to Israel's actions in Gaza, adding that failure to do so is complicity in the crimes of genocide.

"Despite its claims, these orders are binding upon Israel. It has to immediately implement these provisional measures to prevent a further increase of its human rights violations," Pandor said on Sunday. She was speaking at a public report back session on the case, at a Cape Town mosque.

“In fact, all states now have a [legal obligation](#) to ensure respect for the provisional measures as well as ensure that they are not complicit in the genocide,” Pandor explained.

She added, “Essentially if the case proceeds as we anticipate, and it is found that Israel committed genocide, all those who were complicit are as guilty as Israel.”

On January 26, the International Court of Justice ordered Israel to adopt six provisional measures to ensure it, inter alia, takes all measures within its power to prevent genocide. South Africa brought the case to the World Court in December, [accusing](#) Israel of committing the crime of genocide in Gaza in violation of the 1948 Genocide Convention, which both countries are party to.

Minister Pandor said “There are many who are seeking to undermine these orders, for example, the attempt to redefine it so that the killings continue.”

“Some Western governments immediately said, ‘we hear the judgement, but they didn’t order a ceasefire.’ We can see this only as aiding and abetting.”

The minister said “This order for us, is a win for international law, and for the Genocide Convention which embodies the solemn pledge to prevent the crime of genocide and hold those responsible to account.”

She continued that it is “truly tragic” that the Genocide Convention “which was drafted following the holocaust against Jewish people in Europe, that it is the very people who then moved to Palestine who are offending this Convention.”



‘israel stands naked to the world’

Minister Pandor stressed that despite Israel’s “attempts to block the ICJ from making this order, and in its failed attempt to spin the judgment itself as a victory for them, Israel stands [facing](#) the international community and peoples of the world.”

It stands “having failed to deflect attention from its crimes or justify its unfolding genocide. It is now naked to the world, for the first time.”

She explained that “for the first time in 75 years, Israel is being held accountable by an institution and by the global community.”

“We have now as South Africa broken a dangerous culture of impunity that has characterized the illegal occupation of Palestine. The oppression of apartheid in Palestine, and its now unfolding genocide. For the first time, we have opened up for the world to see. We, South Africa.”

The minister impressed upon the audience that “although we have won our freedom from the oppression of apartheid, it is our duty to seek that freedom for all humanity, for all who are oppressed, this is our duty and we must carry it out.”

Before filing a case against Israel at the ICJ, South Africa also referred Israel to the

International Criminal Court for an investigation into alleged war crimes committed in its ongoing assault on the Gaza Strip. A few other countries joined South Africa in that referral.

Minister Pandor said South Africa took those actions “in an attempt to save lives, for justice, peace, and for an end to violent occupation.”

She emphasized that during the struggle against apartheid, the international community joined in, “in developing a concept, some of us forget, called international solidarity.”

“While we waged a mighty struggle against apartheid, our leaders went from country to country across the world and asked for support,” she explained.

“That is all that is making us stand up today, that being free, enjoying human rights, having a constitution, having sovereign right to your land does not mean you enjoy it purely for yourself. Having been joined in international solidarity, your task today is to join the world in fighting for the people of Palestine until they are free. This is what we must do.”

Killed and displaced

Israel is being accused of committing genocide in Gaza. According to Gaza’s Ministry of Health, 27,478 Palestinians have been killed, and 66,835 wounded in Israel’s ongoing genocide in Gaza starting on October 7.

Moreover, at least 8,000 people are unaccounted for, presumed dead under the rubble of their homes throughout the Strip.

Palestinian and international estimates say that the majority of those killed and wounded are women and children.

The Israeli aggression has also resulted in the forceful [displacement](#) of nearly two million people from all of the Gaza Strip, with the vast majority of the displaced forced into the densely crowded southern city of Rafah near the border with Egypt – in what has become Palestine’s largest mass exodus since the 1948 Nakba.

Source: [The Palestine Chronicle](#)



Study finds media giants New York Times, CNN, and Fox News pushing for U.S. war in Yemen

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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A MintPress study of major U.S. media outlets’ coverage of the Yemeni Red Sea blockade has found an overwhelming bias in the press, which presented the event as an aggressive, hostile act of terrorism by Ansar Allah (a.k.a. the Houthis), who were presented as pawns of the Iranian government. While constantly putting forward

pro-war talking points, the U.S. was portrayed as a good faith, neutral actor being “dragged” into another Middle Eastern conflict against its will.

Since November, Ansar Allah has been conducting a blockade of Israeli ships entering the Red Sea in an attempt to force Israel to stop its attack on the people of Gaza. The U.S. government, which has refused to act to stop a genocide, sprang into action to prevent damage to private property, leading an international coalition to bomb targets in Yemen.

The effect of the blockade has been substantial. With hundreds of vessels taking the detour around Africa, big businesses like Tesla and Volvo have announced they have suspended European production. Ikea has warned that it is running low on supplies, and the price of a standard shipping container between China and Europe has more than doubled. Ansar Allah, evidently, has been able to target a weak spot of global capitalism.

Western airstrikes on Yemen, however, according to Ansar Allah spokesperson Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, at least, said that they have had only a “very limited” impact so far. Al-Bukhaiti made these comments in a recent [interview](#) with MintPress News.

Biased reporting

MintPress conducted a study of four leading American outlets: **The New York Times**, CNN, **Fox** News and NBC News. Together, these outlets often set the agenda for the rest of the media system and could be said to be a reasonable representation of the corporate media spectrum as a whole.

Using the search term “Yemen” in the Dow Jones Factiva global news database, the fifteen most recent relevant articles from each outlet were read and studied, giving a total sample of 60 articles. All articles were published in January 2024 or December 2023.

For full information and coding, see the attached viewable [spreadsheet](#).

The study found the media wildly distorted reality, presenting a skewed picture that aided U.S. imperial ambitions. For one, every article in the study (60 out of 60) used the word “Houthis” rather than “Ansar Allah” to describe the movement which took part in the Yemeni Revolution of 2011 and rose up against the government in 2014, taking control of the capital Sanaa, becoming the new de facto government. Many in Yemen [consider](#) the term “Houthi” to be a derogatory term for an umbrella movement of people. As Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, Head of Yemen’s Supreme Revolutionary Committee, [told](#) MintPress:

‘Houthis’ is not a name we apply to ourselves. We refuse to be called Houthis. It is not from us. It is a name given to us by our enemies in an attempt to frame the broad masses in Yemeni society that belong to our project.”

Yet only two articles even mentioned the name “Ansar Allah” at all.

Since 2014, Ansar Allah has been in control of the vast majority of Yemen, despite a U.S.-backed Saudi coalition attempting to beat them back and restore the previous administration.

Many of the articles studied, however (22 of the 60 in total), did not present Ansar Allah as a governmental force but rather as a “tribal group” ([the New York Times](#)), a “ragtag but effective” rebel organization ([CNN](#)), or a “large clan” of “extremists” ([NBC News](#)). Fourteen articles went further, using the word “terrorist” in reference to Ansar Allah, usually in the context of the U.S. government or American officials calling them such.

Some, however, used it as a supposedly uncontroversial descriptor. One [Fox](#) article, for example, read: “For weeks, the Yemeni terrorist group’s actions have been disrupting maritime traffic, while the U.S. military has been responding with

strikes.” And a CNN caption [noted](#) that U.S. forces “conducted strikes on 8 Houthi targets in Iranian-backed Houthi terrorist-controlled areas of Yemen on January 22.”

Ansar Allah is responding to an Israeli onslaught that has killed tens of thousands of civilians and displaced around 1.9 million Gazans. Yet Israel and its actions were almost never described as “terrorism,” despite arguably fitting the definition far better than the Yemeni movement. The sole exception to this was a comment from al-Houthi, whom [CNN](#) quoted as calling Israel a “terrorist state.” Neither **the United States** nor its actions were ever described using such language.

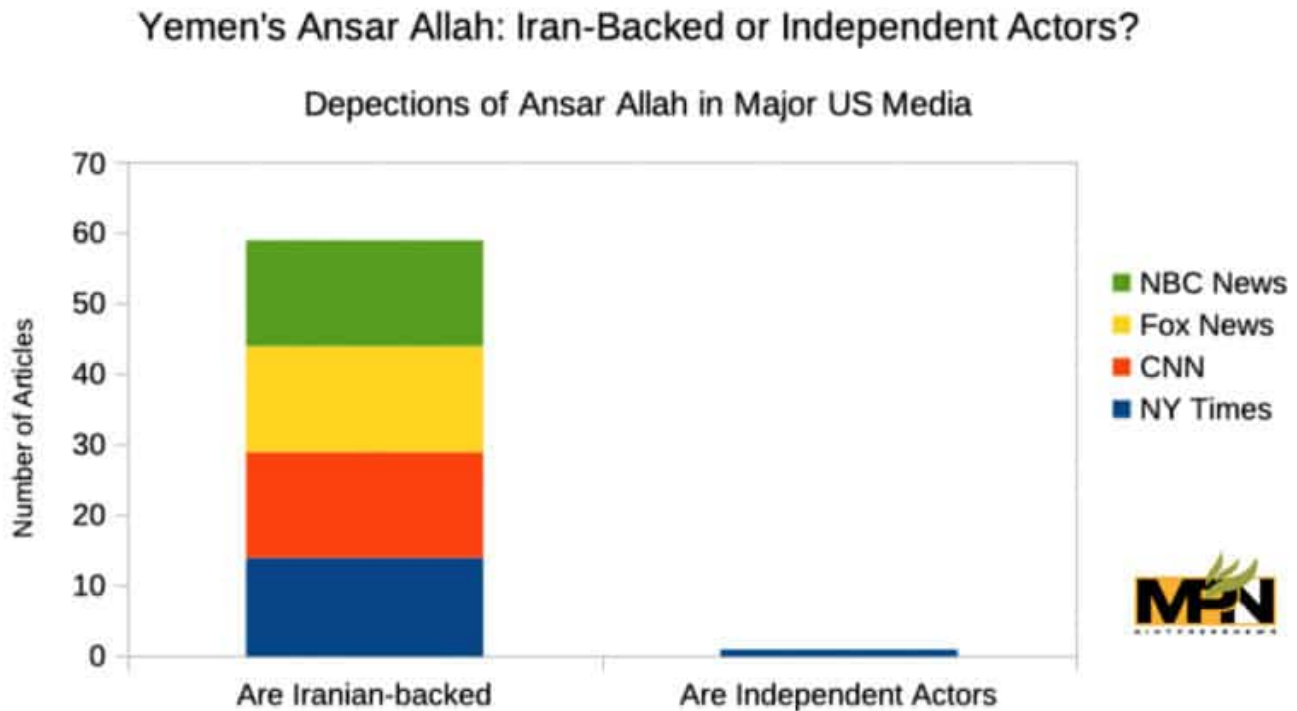
Eyes on Iran

Although the perpetrator of the attacks on shipping is unquestionably Ansar Allah, corporate media had another culprit in mind: Iran. Fifty-nine of the 60 articles studied reminded readers that the Yemeni group is supported by the Islamic Republic, thereby directly pointing the finger at Tehran.

It is indeed true that Iran supports Ansar Allah politically and militarily. When directly [asked](#) by MintPress if Tehran supplies it with weapons, al-Bukhaiti dodged the question, calling it a “marginal issue.” Why this facet of the story needed to be repeated literally hundreds of times is unclear. Often, the media studied would repeat it *ad nauseam*, to the point where a reader would be forgiven for thinking Ansar Allah’s official name was the “Iran-backed Houthis.” One [CNN](#) round-up used the phrase (or similar) seven times, a [Fox News](#) article six times, and an [NBC News](#) report five times.

Not only was the “Iran-backed” factoid used constantly, but it was also made a prominent part of how the issue was framed to the American public. The title of one [Fox News](#) report, for instance, read (emphasis added throughout): “U.S.-U.K. coalition strike *Iran-backed* Houthi targets in Yemen after spate of ship attacks in Red Sea,” its subheadline stated that: “Yemen’s *Iranian-backed* Houthi militants have stepped up attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea in recent weeks,” and

its first sentence read: “The United States and Britain carried out a series of airstrikes on military locations belonging to *Iran-backed* Houthis in Yemen early Friday in response to the militant group’s ongoing attacks on vessels traveling through the Red Sea.”



From a stylistic point of view, repeating the same phrase continuously is very poor form. It does, however, drive the point home, suggesting perhaps that this was an inorganic directive from above.

This is far from an unlikely event. We know, for example, that in October, new CNN CEO Mark Thompson [sent](#) out a memo to staff instructing them to always use the moniker “ Hamas-controlled ” when discussing the Gazan Health Ministry and their

figures for deaths from Israeli bombardment. This was done with the clear intent to undermine the Palestinian side of the story.

Not only did the four outlets studied constantly remind readers that Ansar Allah is supported by Iran, but they also regularly framed the violence as orchestrated by Tehran and that Ansar Allah is little more than a group of mindless, unthinking pawns of Ayatollah Khamenei. As the [New York Times](#) wrote:

Investing in proxy forces — fellow Shiites in Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen, and the Sunni Hamas in the Gaza Strip — allows Iran to cause trouble for its enemies, and to raise the prospect of causing more if attacked...The Houthi movement in Yemen launched an insurgency against the government two decades ago. What was once a ragtag rebel force gained power thanks at least in part to covert military aid from Iran, according to American and Middle Eastern officials and analysts.”

This “Iran is masterfully pulling all the strings” framing was present in 21 of the 60 articles.

The fearmongering about Iran did not stop there, however, with some outlets suggesting Tehran is building an international terror network or constructing an atomic bomb. The [New York Times](#) quoted one analyst who said:

Iran is really pushing it...It’s another reason they don’t want a war now: They want their centrifuges to run peacefully.” The Iranians do not have a nuclear weapon but could enrich enough uranium to weapons-grade in a few weeks, from the current 60 percent enrichment to 90 percent, he said. “They’ve done 95 percent of the work.”

The point of all this was to demonize Ansar Allah and ramp up tensions with Iran, leading to the inevitable calls for war. “The U.S. needs to strike Iran, and make it

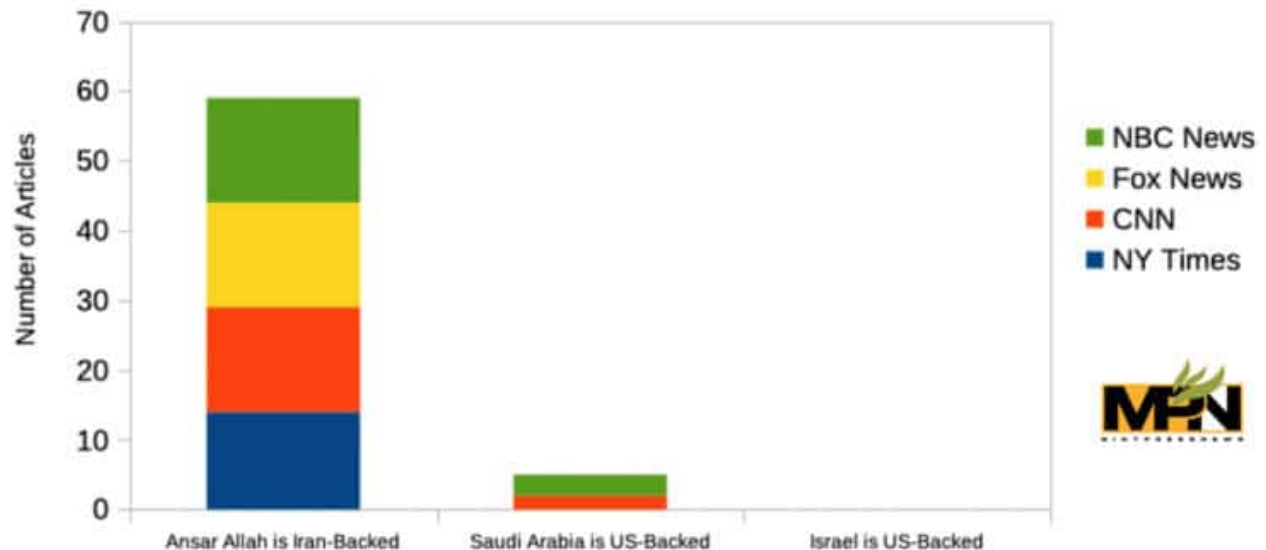
smart,” ran the (since changed) title of a [Washington Post](#) editorial. “The West may now have no option but to attack Iran,” wrote neoconservative Iran hawk John Bolton in the pages of [The Daily Telegraph](#). Bolton, of course, is part of a group called United Against Nuclear Iran that, since its inception, has been [attempting](#) to convince the U.S. to bomb Iran. Earlier this year, MintPress News [profiled](#) the shady think tank.

While the media in the sample reminded us literally hundreds of times that Ansar Allah is Iran-backed, similar phrases such as “U.S.-backed Saudi Arabia” or “America-backed Israel” were never used, despite the fact that Washington props both those countries up, with diplomatic, military and economic support. The Biden administration has [rushed](#) more than \$14 billion in military aid to Israel since October 7, [sent](#) a fleet of warships to the region, and [blocked](#) diplomatic efforts to stop Israel’s attack on Gaza.

Meanwhile, it is doubtful whether Saudi Arabia would exist in its current form without U.S. support. Militarily alone, the U.S. has sold tens of billions of dollars worth of weaponry to Riyadh, helping the petro-state to convert its oil profits into security. From 2014 to 2023, Saudi Arabia led a U.S.-backed coalition force attempting to remove Ansar Allah from power. This consisted primarily of a massive bombing campaign against civilian targets in Yemen, including farms, hospitals and sanitation infrastructure. The violence turned Yemen into what the United Nations regularly [called](#) the “world’s worst humanitarian crisis,” with around 400,000 people dying and tens of millions going hungry and lacking even basic healthcare.

Who Backs Whom in the Middle East?

No. of times selected media reminded readers about which forces are foreign-backed



The U.S. backed Saudi Arabia the whole way, selling the government at least \$28.4 billion worth of arms, according to a MintPress [study](#). In 2021, the Biden administration [announced](#) it would only sell the kingdom “defensive” technology. However, this has [included](#) shipments of cruise missiles, attack helicopters, and support for gunships.

Both Saudi Arabia and Israel featured prominently in the articles studied. But only five of the 60 mentioned U.S. support for Saudi Arabia, and none at all for Israel. This context is extremely important for American audiences to know. Without their government’s political, military, economic and diplomatic support, none of this would be possible, and the current situation would be radically different. Only six articles mentioned U.S. support for the Saudi onslaught against Yemen - and none

featured the fact prominently as they did with Iranian support for Ansar Allah.

Only one article in the sample suggested that Ansar Allah might not simply be an Iranian cat's paw. The [New York Times](#) wrote that: "The Houthis are an important arm of Iran's so-called 'axis of resistance,' which includes armed groups across the Middle East. But Yemeni analysts say they view the militia as a complex Yemeni group, rather than just an Iranian proxy." This was the sum total of information given suggesting Ansar Allah is an independent actor.

A humanitarian blockade?

Yemen considers its actions in blocking Israeli traffic from the Red Sea as a humanitarian gesture, similar to the "right to protect" concept the U.S. frequently invokes to justify what it sees as humanitarian interventions across the world. As al-Houthi [told](#) *MintPress*:

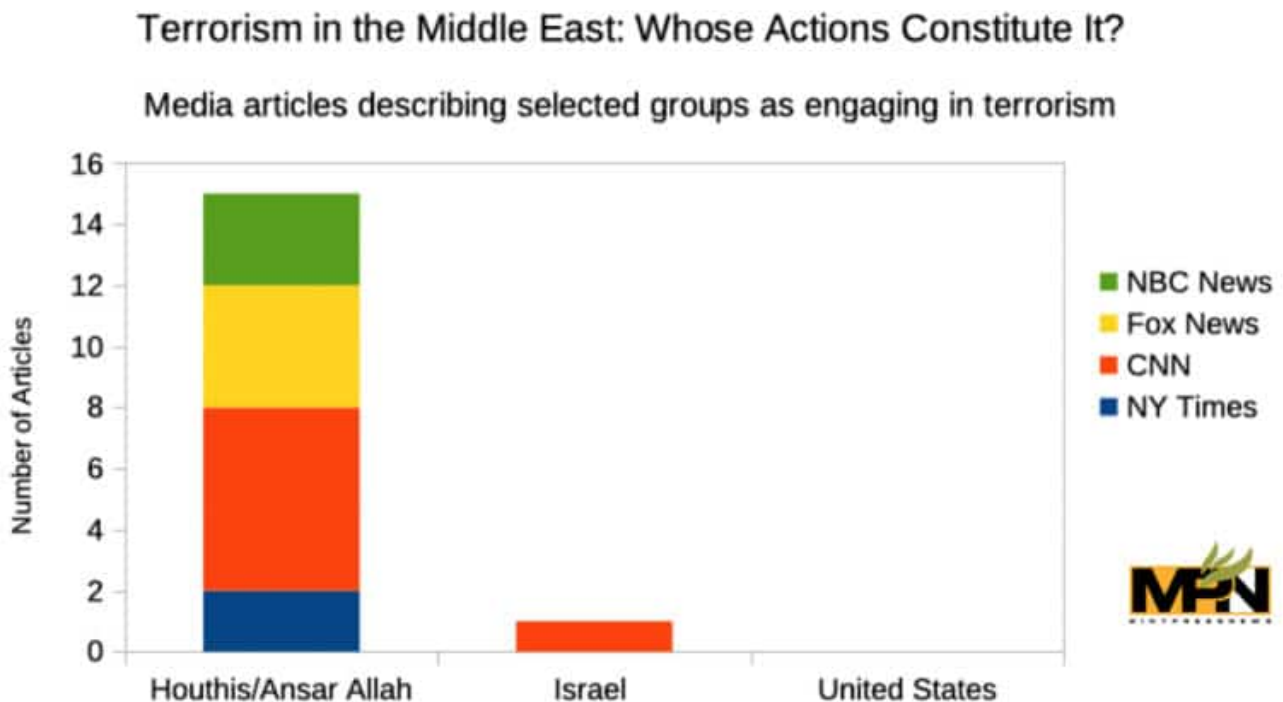
First, our position is religious and humanitarian, and we see a tremendous injustice. We know the size and severity of these massacres committed against the people of Gaza. We have suffered from American-Saudi-Emirati terrorism in a coalition that has launched a war and imposed a blockade against us that is still ongoing. Therefore, we move from this standpoint and do not want the same crime to be repeated."

Al-Bukhati said that Ansar Allah did not intend to kill anyone with their actions and that they would stop if Israel ceased its attack on Gaza, [telling](#) MintCast host Mnar Adley that:

We affirm to everyone that we only target ships associated with the Zionist entity [Israel], not with the intention of sinking or seizing them, but rather to divert them from their course in order to increase the economic cost on the Zionist entity [Israel] as a pressure tactic to stop the crimes of genocide in

Gaza.”

However, this “humanitarian” framing of Yemen’s actions was not prominently used and was only introduced by identifying it as a Houthi claim. Many articles only alluded to the position of Ansar Allah. [CNN](#) wrote that “The Iran-backed Houthis have said they won’t stop their attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea until the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza ends.” Meanwhile, NBC News and Fox News frequently presented Ansar Allah’s actions as purely in support of their ally, Hamas, as the following two examples illustrate:



“The Iran-backed militants, who say their actions are aimed at supporting Hamas, vowed retaliation and said the attacks had killed at least 5 fighters at multiple rebel-held sites” ([NBC News](#)).

“Houthi forces have taken credit for continued attacks on merchant vessels and threatened to expand their targets to include U.S. and British vessels — all in a campaign to support Hamas in its war against Israel” ([Fox News](#)).

Therefore, humanitarian action was refashioned into support for terrorism.

Other articles also suggested a wide range of reasons for the blockade, including to “expand a regional war” and “distract the [Yemeni] public” from their “failing...governance” ([New York Times](#)), to “attempt to gain legitimacy at home,” ([CNN](#)), and “revenge against the U.S. for supporting Saudi Arabia,” ([NBC News](#)). Many offered no explanation for the blockade whatsoever.

A war ‘nobody wants’

As al-Bukhaiti’s comments suggest, there would be a very easy way to end the blockade: get Israel to end its operations in Gaza. But only twice in 60 articles was this reality even mentioned; one noting that Omani and Qatari officials [advised](#) that “reaching a cease-fire in Gaza would remove the Houthis’ stated impetus for the attacks,” and once in the final sentence of an [NBC News](#) article quoting al-Bukhaiti himself saying exactly as much. However, due to the placement of the information and the fact that it came from an organization regularly described as an Iran-backed extremist terrorist group, that idea likely held little weight with readers. Instead, military solutions (i.e., bombing Yemen) were the overwhelming response offered by the corporate press in their reporting.

Despite this, the media consistently presented the United States as a neutral and honest actor in the Middle East, on the verge of being “sucked” into another war against its will. As the [New York Times](#) wrote, “President Biden and his aides have struggled to keep the war contained, fearful that a regional escalation could quickly draw in American forces.” There was a profound “reluctance,” the Times told readers, from Biden to strike Yemen, but he had been left with “no real choice” but

to do so.

This framing follows the classic trope of the bumbling empire “stumbling” into war that media watchdog Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting has [documented](#), where the United States is always “responding” to crises and is never the aggressor. “How America Could Stumble Into War With Iran,” wrote [The Atlantic](#); “Trump could easily get us sucked into Afghanistan again,” [Slate](#) worried; “What It Would Take to Pull the US Into a War in Asia,” [Quartz](#) told readers.

None of the journalists writing about the U.S.’ frequent misfortune with war ever seem to contemplate why China, Brazil, Indonesia, or any other similarly large country do not get pulled into wars of their own volition as the United States does.

The four media outlets studied regularly presented the U.S. bombing one of the world’s poorest countries as a method of defending itself. [CNN](#) wrote that “Administration officials have repeatedly said that they see these actions as defensive rather than escalatory,” without comment. And [Fox News](#) ran with the extraordinary headline, “U.S. carries out ‘self-defense’ strike in Yemen against Iran-backed Houthi missiles” – a framing which could surely only fly in a deeply propagandized nation.

In reality, the United States’ military meddling in Yemen did not start this winter. Biden is the fourth successive U.S. president to bomb the country. In December, the White House [confirmed](#) that there are already American troops in Yemen, though what their precise focus is remains unclear.

How propaganda works

This sort of wildly skewed coverage does not happen by accident. Rather, it is the outcome of structural and ideological factors inherent within corporate media. The New York Times is committed to Zionism as an ideology, and its writers on the

Middle East are not neutral actors but protagonists in the ongoing displacement of Palestinians. The newspaper [owns property](#) in West Jerusalem that was seized from the family of writer Ghada Kharmi during the 1948 ethnic cleansing. And while many Times writers are openly supportive of the Israeli project and have family members [serving](#) in the Israeli Defense Forces, staff who speak out against the ongoing genocide are promptly [shown the door](#).

Fox News is no less complicit in the Israeli project. Its owner, Rupert Murdoch, is a major owner in Genie Energy, a company profiting from oil drilling in the illegally occupied Golan Heights region. Murdoch is famously hands-on as a boss and makes sure all of his media outlets follow his line on major issues. And on Israel, the Australian billionaire is explicit: "Israel is the greatest ally of democracy in a region beset with turmoil and radicalism," he [said](#) in 2013. The network's massive Evangelical Christian viewership would expect little else than strong support for the U.S.-Israeli position, either.

CNN, meanwhile, operates a strict, censorious, top-down approach to its Middle East coverage, with everything the outlet prints having to go through its notoriously pro-Israel Jerusalem bureau before publishing. Senior executives send out [directives](#) instructing staff to make sure that Hamas (not Israel) is always presented as responsible for the current violence while, at the same time, barring any reporting of Hamas' viewpoint, which its senior director of news standards and practices [told](#) staff was "not newsworthy" and amounted to "inflammatory rhetoric and propaganda."

Therefore, the results of this study, while shocking, should not be surprising, given this context. Through examining the coverage of Yemen in four leading U.S. outlets, it is clear that corporate media are failing to inform the public of many of the basic realities of who Ansar Allah is, why they are carrying out their campaign, and what it would take to end the hostilities, they are perpetuating this war, and therefore are

every bit as responsible as the politicians and military commanders who keep the bloodshed going.

Feature photo | Illustration by MintPress News

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Source: [MintPress News](#)



New York City continues to ‘get louder’ for Palestine

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 18, 2024

Thousands of people marched in Manhattan on Feb. 4 to demand a ceasefire and an end to the genocide in Gaza. At least 30,000 Palestinians, including 10,000 children, have been murdered there.

The action, called by the Shut It Down for Palestine Coalition, started with a rally in front of the great reference library on Fifth Avenue.

One of the speakers was Manolo De Los Santos, executive director of The People's Forum, who has been targeted for arrest by the cops. Police busted De Los Santos again at Sunday's peaceful protest, along with six other people.

The recent series of arrests is part of an attempted crackdown on the pro-Palestinian events. It's reminiscent of police attacks on the Black Lives Matter movement.

One of the cops' excuses for busting protesters is the use of bullhorns and other sound devices. So people were encouraged to bring noisemakers, drums and anything else to make it louder for Palestine.

Thousands marched down Fifth Avenue and across 34th Street, past the block-long Macy's department store. Police continually played a recorded message threatening arrests if people didn't stay on the sidewalk. Nobody was intimidated and marchers took to the streets when they could.

People then marched north on Eighth Avenue, stopping briefly at the New York Times, which has been lying about Palestine for 75 years. The march ended at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

The complex was built by evicting thousands of Puerto Rican and Black families from the neighborhood. It was a mini-Nakba, like the Nakba that drove 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland.

Among the groups that organized the protest were the Palestinian Youth Movement;

Al Awda NY/NJ, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition; Students for Justice in Palestine; The People's Forum; ANSWER Coalition; Party for Socialism and Liberation; and Neturei Karta, Jews Against Zionism.

Keep it louder for Palestine!





