

Detroit/Seattle Workers' Voice mailing list

October 16, 2024

- Some recent experience in the solidarity movement
- Israel steps up genocidal attacks in Gaza

Some recent experience in organizing support for the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples

by Frank Arango, *Seattle Workers' Voice*

For the five days leading up to the October 5 demonstration I relied on handing out the *Seattle Workers' Voice* leaflet at <https://www.comunistvoice.org/Sea240929.pdf>, and I was encouraged by the results.

For example, one morning at Seattle Community College I gave out 160 copies of the leaflet—a record number for this place where I regularly distribute *SWV*—and the next morning I gave out 130. Along with this, many people who didn't want a leaflet would say they agreed with the “No more aid to Israel!” headline and/or thank me for passing it out. Additionally, on the first morning I talked with a student who's very angry against what Israel has been doing to the Palestinians, and now to the Lebanese, as well as being worried about her older brother being sent to the Middle East because he's in the Navy. When I saw her following morning she wanted some leaflets to pass out, and she gave out 25-30 in just a few minutes—which was better than what I was doing! Upon parting, she said that she would help leaflet the next time I was there.

Also at SCC, one morning two people who had been mobilized by the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) handed out a half-sheet flyer calling for students to attend the Saturday demonstration, as well as another small flyer urging people to vote for the PSL presidential candidate. Although I don't agree with PSL's overall politics, I think these two people's activity probably helped enliven the political atmosphere among the students.

I gave out 45 leaflets during two short visits to the University District.

I would estimate that 800-1,000 people turned out for the October 5 rally and march, which is fewer than the number who attended numerous demonstrations last fall and winter. All of the local left groups were there, usually with literature, with 10-12 people of all nationalities handing out the PSL flyers I had received at SCC. Nevertheless, I gave tons of leaflets to people who'd already gotten PSL's. This seems to be a good sign, i.e., people continue to want to read more than what's on a half-sheet of paper. And I gave out 200.

I know that there are nearly always some Hamas supporters at the solidarity demonstrations, but they're usually silent about expressing their support, and I've never knowingly talked with one. Now I have. A young white woman who said she'd read the *SWV* leaflet, told me I was spreading false information. What was false? Hamas didn't murder 796 Israeli civilians on October 7, the Israeli Defense Forces murdered them, and not a dozen or 25 of them, but all of them. I kept leafleting while arguing with her, and it turned out that she also vehemently supported Hezbollah and the Islamic Republic of Iran. She claimed that she was a humanitarian and a democrat, but mention that Hezbollah had killed many thousands of Syrians as it helped Assad and the Russian and Iranian imperialists decimate the democratic uprising of the Syrian masses and she would ignore it. Mention Iran's "supreme leader" Khamenei using the police and military against the Women, Life, Freedom movement and against the workers' movement and she would ignore that too. (I didn't even mention Iranian oppression of the Kurds, Balochs, Arabs and other non-Persian nationalities.) The woman eventually told me I had no business being there, and to leave. She threatened to grab my leaflets, to which I replied that I might be an old man, but that I would fight. She began telling people not to take the leaflet because it was against Palestinian liberation, but that didn't work either. So she left, and I never saw her again. (Later, I did see a couple of white guys circulating in the crowd with Iranian flags.)

I think this woman's choosing to ignore the facts about Hamas, Hezbollah and the IRI (which others in the movement also do) is based in some kind of desperate, non-class politics that leads them to frantically proclaim that anything goes in the fight against the zionists and U.S. imperialism, and to argue that the enemy of my enemy is automatically my friend. In this way they unwittingly become a mirror images of the Israeli and U.S. ruling classes they oppose, and actually support the reactionary global status quo. <>

Israel steps up genocidal attacks in Gaza

by Pete Brown, *Detroit Workers' Voice*

Israel has been opening up a new front with its invasion of Lebanon. But it isn't done with Gaza, not by a long shot. On the anniversary of October 7, Israeli forces launched a campaign against the northern Gaza city of Jabaliya. In the early morning hours, Israeli tanks and drones surrounded the area around Jabaliya and cut it off from the rest of Gaza. (Jabaliya is a few kilometers north of Gaza City.) Residents of the area, who number about 200,000, woke up to find themselves surrounded and cut off from food supplies. Some of them tried to escape by venturing out of their homes, holding white flags as they tried to walk out of the area. But they were immediately targeted by quadcopters (drones) circling the area and shot down. (1) Children playing outside were also targeted. Residents mostly huddled inside their homes, waiting to see what came next.

The next day, Israeli forces announced the evacuation of the entire area. Residents were ordered out of their homes and began a long march to southern Gaza. A few unlucky ones were selected by the Israeli forces as human shields, to be used in checking out houses for hostile forces and booby traps. These human shields, called "wasps" or "mosquitoes" by the Israelis, were forced to go up to houses, knock on the door, and tell anyone who answered they must evacuate. Israeli troops stood by, watching but out of harm's way in case anyone opened fire on the "mosquito". (2)

This use of Palestinians as human shields has been well documented by reporters for the New York Times. (3) Palestinian men are forced to enter homes and underground tunnels that are thought to harbor Hamas militants or mines and booby traps. By radio, they are told to move furniture and other items to see if they explode. Using human shields is illegal under international and Israeli law, but it goes on anyway, condoned by the Israeli brass.

After the invasion and forced evacuation came the air strikes. Some evacuees had stopped at community centers, schools and hospitals to regroup and possibly find food before moving on. No food supplies have come to northern Gaza since October 1. But these groups were then targeted by the Israelis. An airstrike at the Yemen al-Saeed Hospital in Jabaliya killed at least 15 people. (4) In the nearby city of Deir al Balah, an airstrike on the hospital complex of Al Aqsa Hospital caused a tent encampment there to catch fire, leaving at least four people dead and 70 others injured, some of them badly burned. (5) Another air strike on a school in the city of Nuseirat killed 20 people. (6) This school was used for giving children polio vaccines, so the Israeli military was well aware of its existence and peaceful use. The Israeli air force also bombed a flour distribution center where people had been able to obtain a little food.

So, the horror show in Gaza continues. Every day the Israelis murder scores of innocent civilians. Every day more children succumb to lack of food, polio or other diseases. Supposedly the Israeli government is considering annexing northern Gaza; if so, it's clear they plan to evict the population first. Meanwhile, Kamala Harris issues ineffective calls for food aid for Gaza while her administration keeps rolling out the bombs for Israel's use.

Notes

(1) Tareq S. Hajjaj, "Inside Israel's ongoing invasion of Jabalia in northern Gaza: Israel laid siege to Jabalia in northern Gaza on the anniversary of October 7. Residents tell Mondoweiss that the Israeli army is forcibly conscripting civilians as human shields and shooting residents who attempt to evacuate." *Mondoweiss*, October 9, 2024. <https://mondoweiss.net/2024/10/inside-israels-ongoing-invasion-of-jabalia-in-northern-gaza/> .

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) Natan Odenheimer (<https://www.nytimes.com/by/natan-odenheimer>), Bilal Shbair (<https://www.nytimes.com/by/bilal-shbair>) and Patrick Kingsley(<https://www.nytimes.com/by/patrick-kingsley>), "How Israel's army uses Palestinians as human shields in Gaza: Natan Odenheimer, Bilal Shbair and Patrick Kingsley interviewed 16 Israeli soldiers and officials who knew about the practice, as well as three Palestinians, on the record, who were forced to take part in it." *New York Times*, October 14, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-military-human-shields.html> .

(4)"Israel-Iran: Netanyahu and Biden talk for the first time since August; Israel warns Lebanon of destruction like Gaza's". *NBC News*, October 9, 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/live-blog/israel-iran-live-updates-netanyahu-biden-idf-hezbollah-lebanon-gaza-rcna174629> .

(5) Jin Yu Young and Matthew Mpoke Bigg, "Live Updates: Deadly Israeli strike hits central Gaza hospital complex: Israel said it targeted Hamas fighters inside the hospital compound, where displaced people were living in tents. A separate strike killed several people at a Gazan school turned shelter." *New York Times*, October 14, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/10/14/world/israel-lebanon-hezbollah-news#a-school-turned-shelter-is-hit-in-a-deadly-strike-the-un-says> .

(6) *Ibid.* < >

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For more information about the D/SWV list, see http://www.comunistvoice.org/DSWV_email_list.html .

Picture: Tent camp in Central Gaza at the compound of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, targeted by Israel on October. 14, 2024: https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-apps/imrs.php?src=https://arc-anglerfish-washpost-prod-washpost.s3.amazonaws.com/public/BBL2OFPMTLOSC5LR2TUJSGS2PY_size-normalized.jpg&w=1200