

U.S.-led armada threatens Yemen, Iran Resistance forces defy imperialist fleet

By Monica Moorehead

In response to the Yemen Armed Forces (YAF) shutting down major shipping lanes for ships using the Suez Canal to supply the Israeli apartheid regime, the Joe Biden administration announced a joint operation in the Red Sea with Washington's imperialist allies and client states named "Prosperity Guardian."

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced this maneuver Dec. 18 while visiting Israel. "Countries that seek to uphold the foundational principle of freedom of navigation must come together to tackle the challenge posed by this non-state actor [the Ansarallah movement in Yemen]," he said. (@incontextmedia, Dec. 18)

The fleet for this operation will also include Bahrain, Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles and Spain. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates declined the invitation to join the operation.

Out of solidarity with the Palestinian resistance, the YAF's actions in the Red Sea have forced some of the world's largest shipping companies that were bringing goods to and from Israel to stop using the Suez Canal. Those companies to date include

the Danish shipping company Maersk; German shipping company Hapag-Lloyd; BP (formerly British Petroleum); China's OOCL, based in Hong Kong; Norwegian Wilhelmsen shipping and logistics company; and Swiss-Italian MSC, the world's largest container shipping company. Israel's Eilat port has been temporarily shut down due to the Yemeni blockade.

Ships are forced to take an alternative route around the Cape of Good Hope at the southern end of Africa. Such a detour

can add 10 days to delivery time, say analysts. This interruption of the trade through the Suez Canal results in a combined loss of an estimated \$9 billion daily for these corporations.

To date, almost 80% of the world's shipping companies have delayed deliveries to Israel since Hamas and other Palestinian Resistance organizations opened a new phase of the Intifada against the brutal Israeli occupation on October 7.

The Ansarallah movement has stated

that it will continue to use military means to stop all ships from doing business with Israel until: 1. Israel ends its genocidal attack against the Palestinians; and 2. all humanitarian aid is allowed into Gaza to provide food, clean water and other necessities for the besieged population there.

According to the EuroMedHR study on the growing hunger crisis in Gaza: 71% of the people suffer from severe hunger, with 98% unable to consume enough food, 64% eating fruits, wild or raw foods and expired items.

Instead of organizing a fleet to bring vital humanitarian aid to Gaza, this U.S.-led imperialist operation is clearly meant to pose a military threat to Yemen and other sovereign countries in the region, such as Iran.

Resistance remains strong

The people of Yemen, who have come out to the streets in the millions in solidarity with Palestine, and their leaders remain vigilant. Given their statements, the armada has failed to intimidate them.

Yemeni Defense Minister Major General Mohammad al-Atifi declared to the imperialist coalition, "We have what will sink

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Philadelphia, Dec. 18, 2023. Palestine protest at Christmas Village.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Labor solidarity with Palestine grows

By Martha Grevatt

Labor solidarity with Palestine continues to grow — even in the U.S. where the leadership of organized labor has historically been pro-Zionist.

Thousands of union activists and allies rallied in Oakland, California, on Dec. 16, to voice solidarity with Palestinian workers. Called by Bay Area Labor for Palestine, the demonstration was endorsed by over 20 labor organizations, including American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299, Oakland Education Association, Service Employees Union (SEIU) Local 1021, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, UNITE HERE Local 2, Inland Boatmen's Union San Francisco — ILWU, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers Local 21, Trader Joe's United (Rockridge) and others.

Also on Dec. 16, Labor for Palestine and the Palestinian Youth Movement held a rally in New York City with the hashtag #LaborShutItDown4Palestine. The labor rally that brought out hundreds fed into a larger mass march.

"Workers have a special ability to stop Israeli genocide," said Michael Letwin of Labor for Palestine. "If workers refuse to load or unload Israeli Zim Line ships, that's worth 1,000 resolutions." Letwin is the former president of United Auto Workers Local 2325, the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys.

Meanwhile the largest U.S. health care workers' union, SEIU1199, issued

a statement Dec. 15 calling for a cease-fire in Palestine. Among other national unions raising this demand are the UAW, American Postal Workers Union and United Electrical Workers (UE), who held a joint press conference outside the U.S. Capitol Dec. 14, along with several House representatives.

Speaking at the press conference, UAW President Shawn Fain said: "As the UAW, we take pride in our history of standing up for justice at home and around the world. ... I thank our UAW members for speaking out and pushing us to come out in support of a cease-fire." (UAW International Union Facebook)

President Fain was acknowledging the hard work of dozens of UAW rank-and-file members, especially graduate student workers and legal services workers in UAW Region 9A, which encompasses the New York City area, New England and Puerto Rico. In meetings with Region 9A Director Brandon Mancilla, these workers made it crystal clear that their union must take a position in solidarity with Palestine. Director Mancilla also spoke at the Dec. 14 news conference.

Pro-Zionist labor leaders under fire

Activists have been hammering pro-Zionist labor leaders. American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten is one of the most reactionary union defenders of Israeli apartheid. Rank-and-file teachers disrupted an event in New York City Dec. 14 where she was given an award by Citizen Action, an advocacy organization closely associated with

the Working Families Party, which functions as a ballot line for the Democratic Party in New York.

Despite Weingarten's reactionary stance, AFT locals are passing pro-Palestine resolutions. The Professional Staff Congress, representing 30,000 faculty and instructors at the City University of New York, voted to support a cease-fire by a better than 3-to-1 margin.

The next day labor allies of Palestine interrupted bureaucrats at a gala New York State AFL-CIO holiday party Dec. 14 to attempt to remind them of the genocide in Gaza. For decades the AFL-CIO has backed Israel and recently defeated a motion for a cease-fire introduced by APWU President Mark Dimondstein.

Some labor organizations have gone beyond merely calling for a cease-fire, including Starbucks Workers United, which stated in October that its members "stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people's right to self-determination." SBWU added, "furthermore, we condemn Starbucks for shamefully using this devastating humanitarian crisis to make false statements against our union and to vilify us."

While SBWU did not officially endorse a call for strikes in solidarity with Palestine, there were wildcat strikes at several Starbucks stores. (Starbucks Workers United on X)

In some cases, rank-and-file-led caucuses inside unions have taken more progressive positions on Palestine than their own union leadership. The Movement of Rank-and-file Educators (MORE), a caucus within the United Federation of

Teachers, stated Oct. 18 that, "We call on our union to listen to Palestinian trade unionists and heed their calls to action." The UFT represents 200,000 New York City educators and is affiliated with the AFT. (morecaucusnyc.org)

Unite All Workers for Democracy, a caucus inside the UAW, passed a resolution Dec. 10, including the point: "Be it resolved that UAWD shall commit to organizing support for Palestinian liberation and BDS [the non-violent Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement to remove complicity with Palestinian oppression] among rank-and-file UAW members, and to making BDS the official position of the UAW International." The resolution referenced the call from over 30 Palestinian labor organizations for workers around the world to obstruct the Zionist military machine and "end complicity with Israeli genocide." (uawd.org)

In the Chicago, Illinois, area, workers at over 200 workplaces, including several schools, participated in the Palestinians' call for a global strike on Dec. 11 to call attention to the tens of thousands of Palestinians killed by Israel in the past two months. This follows the Nov. 13 call by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) for a cease-fire in Gaza.

In a myriad of ways, the U.S. working class is entering the struggle for a free Palestine. This is long overdue.

Martha Grevatt is a Stellantis retiree who served on the executive board of UAW Local 869.

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your fleets, your battleships, your submarines and your aircraft carriers, and the Red Sea will be your graveyard. (Resistance Monitor, Dec. 18)

“[U.S.] America recently sought direct communication with the Republic of Yemen in Sana’a, but it was rejected. We take pride in refusing direct communication with a country that kills children in Yemen and Gaza. America is the real terrorism,” said another Yemeni official. (Warfare Analysis, Dec. 18)

In a release, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine stated, “The real goal of forming this coalition is to protect the state of the entity [Israel] and save it from its predicament due to the legendary steadfastness of our people and their resistance, and the qualitative strikes deliv-

ered by the Yemeni armed forces against Zionist targets in southern occupied Palestine and in the Red Sea waters.

“This also confirms their [the coalition’s] determination to enhance their presence and capability in the region and control its resources and wealth, posing a challenge and threat to the security of the region and international peace and security.” (Resistance News Network, Dec. 19)

This so-called Prosperity Guardian operation poses a threat not only to Yemen’s right to self-defense, but for the entire region, and especially Iran, which Western imperialism considers the main sovereign state opposition.

Just as the world movement has refused to sit on the sidelines to protest the horrific genocide in Gaza, this same movement cannot remain silent in opposing the potential of a widening regional war propelled by pro-Zionist forces led by U.S. imperialism. □



Boston Coalition for Palestine in Downtown Crossing shopping district, Dec. 17, 2023.

WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

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Vol. 65, No. 51 • December 21, 2023
Closing date: December 20, 2023

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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published monthly by WW Publishers, 121 W. 27th St., Suite 404, New York, NY 10001. Phone: 212.627.2994.

Subscriptions: One year: \$36; institutions: \$50. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 121 W. 27th St., Suite 404, New York, NY 10001. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 121 W. 27th St., Suite 404 New York, N.Y. 10001.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and

worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

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