

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

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54th National Day of Mourning demands: ‘Land Back, from Turtle Island to Palestine!’

By Workers World Boston bureau
Plymouth, Massachusetts

Over 2,000 Indigenous people and their supporters—with thousands more in attendance via live stream—shut down business as usual in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on Nov. 23 to commemorate the 54th National Day of Mourning (NDOM). Here—where millions of tourist dollars depend on the origin myth of the Pilgrims, seeking religious freedom, landing on an apocryphal rock as advertisement for the U.S.’s most sanctified of holidays—protesters filled the blockaded Main Street business district with demands to “Free Leonard Peltier!” and “Free Palestine!”

Following an opening ceremony at noon on Cole’s Hill, leaders of United American Indians of New England (UAINE) rallied the swelling crowd overlooking Plymouth Harbor. Kisha James (Aquinnah Wampanoag and Oglala Lakota), UAINE co-leader, opened by recounting the history and significance of NDOM, founded in 1970 by her grandfather Wamsutta Frank James.

James exploded the racist “thanksgiving” legend at the center of U.S. settler-colonial mythology. Far from seeking refuge from “religious persecution,” the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonists were participating in a commercial and military venture—spelled out in their “Mayflower Compact”—which resulted in the genocide of the Indigenous peoples of the land, including the Wampanoag, and theft of their lands.

Nor did the first “thanksgiving” take place in 1621, as bourgeois historians and mass media continue to falsely claim. Rather, it took place in 1637 when Governor John Winthrop proclaimed the first official “day of thanksgiving” to celebrate the massacre of over 700 Pequot children, women and men on the banks of the Mystic River, nearly 100 miles from the Plimoth Plantation.

James said: “Our very presence on this land frees this land from the lies of the history books and the mythmakers. We will remember and honor all of our ancestors in the struggle who went before us. We will speak truth to power as we have been doing since the first National Day of Mourning in 1970.”

James vowed that the NDOM tradition will



Plymouth, Massachusetts, Nov. 23, 2023.

WW PHOTO: RACHEL DUELL

continue until all oppressed peoples win liberation from the racist, patriarchal, homophobic and transphobic system of capitalist settler colonialism that began with the Pilgrim invasion.

James declared: “We are not vanishing! We are not conquered! We are as strong as ever!”

Palestine: Struggle for Indigenous sovereignty

Mahtowin Munro (Oglala Lakota), co-leader of UAINE, called attention to the worsening climate catastrophe, which disproportionately affects Indigenous peoples, who protect over 80% of global biodiversity. As Munro stressed, neoliberal “green” energy plans are not genuine solutions to this crisis. “Eco-capitalist” projects—such as wind turbines built without consent on Aquinnah Wampanoag territory off the island of Noepe (Martha’s Vineyard) and the Peehee Mu’Huh (Thacker



Plymouth, Massachusetts, Nov. 23, 2023.

WW PHOTO: RACHEL DUELL

Pass) lithium mine on sacred and unceded Northern Paiute and Western Shoshone land—continue to exploit and destroy Indigenous lands.

Munro proclaimed full solidarity with the Indigenous people of Palestine in their struggle against ongoing Zionist genocide: “Our organization (UAINE) has supported Palestinian resistance for decades, and we pledge to never let our relatives here or there down.

“When you see a genocide happening, whether in Congo, or Sudan, or Armenia or Palestine, you need to try to do something about it. If you are silent, that is supporting the genocide. And this is a basic principle that I think many of us as parents have taught to our children. Yet too many people are still standing by right now, afraid to speak up because of the repression that’s being directed at those who stand up and defend Palestine.”

As Munro emphasized, the Zionist terror-bombing and massacres over the past six weeks have continued and intensified the genocide that the Palestinian people have been experiencing since the 1940s.

Munro said: “What we are witnessing is the resurgence of the ongoing, barbaric violence of settler colonialism there. Palestinians have been subject to being killed, imprisoned, assaulted, tortured, starved and denied access to water for years. Right now, a second Nakba, or catastrophe, has been happening. And if you believe Land Back is necessary here, then you need to understand that Land Back is also necessary for other colonized peoples of the land.

“We speak plainly and say that this is also apartheid. Our organization opposed apartheid in South Africa decades ago, and we oppose it in Palestine now.”

Munro also highlighted the struggle of the Kānaka Maoli people of U.S.-occupied Hawai‘i as they continue to suffer from the devastation and displacement of the wildfires caused by settler mismanagement of their stolen lands. She demanded settler authorities stop the ongoing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People epidemic (MMIWG2S+); and stressed the need to strengthen protections for Native children, who, despite the successful Indigenous-led campaign to uphold the Indian Child Welfare Act, remain at disproportionate risk of separation from their parents by racist settler authorities.

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Beyond ‘Cease-fire now’

By Richie Merino and Sara Flounders

On Nov. 21, the world media announced a four-day cease-fire in Gaza, a pause in the Israeli genocidal assault on Gaza’s people. Should this cease-fire take place as announced, the movement of overwhelming global solidarity with and support for Palestine, including within the United States, must adjust its stance to a new period beyond the demand for cease-fire now.

According to a Nov. 21 Hamas statement, the agreement includes entry of hundreds of the blocked truck convoys carrying

humanitarian aid, relief supplies, medical assistance and fuel to all regions of Gaza. It also includes an exchange of prisoners. The resistance will release 50 women and children held in Gaza since Oct. 7. In return, the Israeli state will release 150 Palestinians, all children under age 19 and women, from among the 9,000 prisoners long held hostage in Israeli prisons, many without being charged.

Resistance forces voiced demands, both before and after the Oct. 7 Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, similar to those in the agreement. Thus Hamas and its allies in the Palestinian resistance and Gaza’s

courageous people have already achieved a victory. Despite the merciless bombing, the resistance has moved toward its stated goals, with its global mass support, while Zionism and U.S. imperialism face the world’s condemnation.

Slandering the Al-Aqsa Flood; propaganda fails

The corporate media’s rush to categorize Al-Aqsa Flood with the worst insults, including slandering a popular resistance as terrorist, is aimed at obscuring the demands attached to the operation. These demands, all legitimate, include the release

of political prisoners, an end to Israeli impunity for crimes against Palestinians in the West Bank and at Al-Aqsa Mosque and the lifting of the siege on Gaza.

By calling the Oct. 7 events “terrorist,” the Zionist state tried to hide its historical context: a settler-colonialist state imposing a 75-year campaign of ethnic cleansing. It was the Israeli regime’s attempt to present extermination as the only option, to manufacture consent for a genocidal war against Palestinians in Gaza.

Israel’s propaganda has fallen flat. Its military objectives remain unachieved,

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despite the cost in civilian lives in Gaza. That Gaza's armed resistance has survived and even prevailed with its guerrilla battles and ambushes in northern Gaza has smashed the Israeli military's image of invincibility.

An advance for Palestine

The four-day pause marks a step forward for the Palestinian cause. It may save many lives but in itself, is no guarantee to end Israel's genocide. Previously, the Zionist government had announced plans to drive Palestinians into the Sinai desert, rejected prisoner exchanges and declared the intention to continue its bombing campaign until all Israelis captured on Oct. 7 were returned. The skill and bravery of the armed Palestinian resistance and its continued support from the embattled people of Gaza have forced an agreement.

Escalate global solidarity with Palestine!

The victory is not in one battle. Israel's war on Palestine continues. Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and within Israel's 1948 borders can still be murdered during the cease-fire, and Israel has intensified its attacks on Lebanon. Remember that Gaza's destruction had and has full U.S. political and diplomatic support, supplied by U.S. weapons, backed up by aircraft carriers and taxpayer dollars.

Beyond cease-fire now: Full liberation

A recent demonstration at the United Nations by the Bronx Antiwar Coalition sought to shine a spotlight on the historic Palestinian position of full liberation, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. The Nov. 12-16 international delegation to Cairo to call for the release of supplies through Rafah was one of many actions going beyond demands for a cease-fire.

We urge the movement to act in complete solidarity and salute this accomplishment of steadfast Palestinian resistance and address the root cause of the conflict: Zionist settler colonialism. Supporters of Palestinian liberation should join with the Palestinian Resistance in advocating for a single Palestinian state with Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital. The struggle to dismantle the Zionist state of Israel, the release of all political prisoners held in occupation jails and the total liberation of Palestine must remain at the forefront of the movement.

While the four-day truce provides a temporary respite, the murder of Palestinian civilians continues, despite the declared cease-fire. A permanent cease-fire only freezes in place the continued apartheid regime.

We urge the solidarity movement to embrace the popular call for a "Free Palestine — from the river to the sea." We must escalate our protests and solidarity. It is essential to always include the demand: End all U.S. aid to Israel. Only when the Israeli occupation ends, all Palestinian prisoners are freed, all Palestinian land is returned to its rightful owners — and when Palestine and the world are liberated from Zionist fascism — can we desist.

We urge the movement to act in complete solidarity with and salute this accomplishment of steadfast Palestinian resistance and address the root cause of the conflict. □



WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

Bronx Antiwar Coalition protest outside the United Nations, New York City, Nov. 20, 2023.

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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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Palestinian struggle reflects strength and solidarity of women

By Monica Moorehead

Nov. 25 marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, proclaimed by the United Nations in 2000. And this year the U.N. is launching a “UNITE” campaign which will include 16 days of activism starting on Nov. 25 and ending on Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day.

What the U.N. is projecting and what these 16 days will look like is anyone’s guess. It’s doubtful that whatever activities the U.N. campaign organizes will make any real difference in the lives of women and girls, regardless of their age, gender identity or sexuality. The U.N. has proven itself to be a non-democratic body where any votes taken by the 193 members of the General Assembly can be overridden by the 15-member Security Council, with its five permanent members, including the United States, which can veto any decision.

There is no other world development today that more clearly highlights the need for the elimination of violence against women than what is happening in occupied Palestine, especially Gaza. Ever since the events of Oct. 7—truthfully since Israel was established in 1948—Palestinian women, along with children have borne the brunt of a genocidal war by the terrorist Zionist state of Israel.

According to the Government Media office on the Resistance News Network, over 20,000 Palestinian civilians have been slaughtered since Oct. 7, including over 4,000 women and 8,000 children. And there are more than 7,000 unaccounted for due to being buried under the rubble of bombed residential buildings, homes and other structures. These horrendous numbers do not include those murdered by the Israeli Occupation Forces in the occupied West Bank.

Since Nov. 24, when the temporary truce went into effect between the Palestinian resistance and Israel, many Palestinian prisoners released or scheduled to be released are women. Many of them were detained as teenagers and spent years in prison for the “crime” of being Palestinian.

They experienced beatings, physical and mental torture,

sexual violence, lack of healthy food and hygiene and much more. These heroic women include Fadwa Hamada, Israa Ja’abis, Nourhan Awad, Shorouq Diwayat, Maysoon Al-Jabali, Aisha Al-Afghani, Shorouq Salan Ibrahim, Yasmeen Taysir, Abdulrah Shaaban, Nufuz Jad Aref Hammad and Itaf Yusuf Muhammad.

Al-Jabali, who was imprisoned for over eight years, states, “Resistance must continue, all forms of resistance. Of course, there will be a cost. We will be imprisoned and martyred on the path to liberation.

“As women prisoners, we always confront the prison administration. Our spirits are high and always return high even if we break. The occupation is happy when we are sad, so despite everything, we rejoice and stay strong.

“We want to thank all those who worked for the deal: the resistance, the Gazan people, all the Palestinian fighters and all the foreigners who protested and opposed their governments’ positions, especially those who defended the resistance.

“There is no occupation that lasts. ‘Israel’ will fall, and we will return as one people.” (Resistance News Network, Nov. 27)

Solidarity: another form of resistance

This particular phase of the Palestinian resistance has inspired an unprecedented level of global solidarity in the Global South and Global North. Massive protests have brought out millions of people into the streets. In the U.S., thousands have participated in protests at the White House, in malls during Black Friday, on college campuses and at high schools and more.

Every sector in U.S. society has been impacted to one degree or another by the genocide in Gaza. This includes the film industry.

While a growing number of celebrities have called for a cease-fire, two women actors took high-profile stances, actually putting their careers on the line. Those women are the well-established Oscar winner Susan Sarandon and a relative newcomer, Melissa Barrera.



Maysoon Al-Jabali

Melissa Barrera

Barrera, who is Mexicana, was recently fired from her leading role by producers of the popular franchise horror movie series “Scream” for expressing her sympathy for the people of Gaza facing genocide. Her remarks were labeled “antisemitic.”

In her Nov. 21 Instagram post, Barrera wrote, “Gaza is currently being treated like a concentration camp. ... Cornering everyone together, with nowhere to go, no electricity, no water ... People have learnt nothing from our histories. And just like our histories, people are still silently watching it all happen. THIS IS GENOCIDE AND ETHNIC CLEANSING.”

Sarandon, who has a history of opposing imperialist wars and other forms of injustice for decades, was let go by United Talent Agency for outspoken pro-Palestinian remarks. She spoke at the 300,000-strong Free Palestine demonstration in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 4.

On X (formerly Twitter) Sarandon stated: “You don’t have to be Palestinian to care about what’s happening in Gaza. I stand with Palestine. No one is free until everyone is free.”

Whether on the front lines of a liberation struggle like the women of Palestine or expressing unwavering solidarity with Palestinian people as Barrera and Sarandon have done, an International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women should not be limited to just one day but should be a priority every single day.

Days of solidarity like Nov. 25 and Dec. 10 can be used by the world movement to help to move the class struggle forward in the interests of women and gender-oppressed people, an integral sector of the working class and oppressed peoples, until there is total liberation from the scourge of capitalism and imperialism. □

‘Land Back, from Turtle Island to Palestine!’

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Harriet Prince (Sagkeeng First Nation), an 82-year-old residential school survivor, shared the horrific experiences she and her sister endured in these “schools”: “They didn’t get rid of the Indian in me. I’m still here!”

Power in solidarity with Palestinian resistance

Salma Abu Ayyash (Palestinian) — the first Palestinian speaker in NDOM’s history — stressed the connections between the Palestinian people’s decades-long battle for self-determination and all other Indigenous struggles for liberation.

Abu Ayyash said: “This gathering continues to be a place where we not only mourn and remember past and current genocides, but also a place where we unite in power, in our belief that a different world is possible. In our conviction that we, humans of all backgrounds, will not stand for supremacy, genocide and the continued extractive, destructive processes ... that colonialism, capitalism, imperialism and greed continue to employ to destroy our planet and humanity.

“This is our struggle, our children’s struggle and that of our ancestors before us. And it will be a long one, it will be a hard one, but we will never, ever give up our fight for Indigenous rights of land stewardship and repatriation. We will never give up our right to fight for Black liberation and reparations. We will never give up fighting for all immigrants and



UAINE banner, Plymouth, Nov. 23, 2023.

WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

oppressed people across the planet. And I hope you are all with me in our struggle to liberate Palestine.”

The crowd bolstered Abu Ayyash throughout with spontaneous chants of “Long Live Palestine!” and “Free, Free Palestine!”

As Abu Ayyash stressed, proposals for a temporary cease-fire or “humanitarian pause” in Gaza will not stop the Israeli genocide. Denouncing the essential U.S. financial and military support for the Zionist state, she urged continued protests in solidarity with Palestine in coordination with the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

Abu Ayyash said: “Our solidarity is everything. To our oppressors I say: You can build your dreams on our bones. You can imagine your safety guaranteed through the violence you inflict on us. But we will not stand by. We will resist you to our last word and our last breath.”

Chal’Inaru Dones (Taino), a Massachusetts representative of the United

Confederation of Taino People, read a message from American Indian Movement (AIM) activist Leonard Peltier (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians). Peltier has been a U.S. political prisoner for 48 years.

Peltier wrote: “I spent most of my life caged. But they cannot cage the soul of a sun dancer. My grandfather taught me a long time ago what I must be and do for my people. That can and never will be caged. We are changing the world; every one of us must grasp what is ours to change. History is not something that happens in a vacuum. History is forged, and forge we will, until victorious.”

From Main Street to Plymouth Rock: ‘You are on Native land!’

From Cole’s Hill, demonstrators, led by Indigenous elders, marched through the tourist district of Plymouth chanting “No Justice, No Peace!” and “Land Back Now!”

At the site of “Plymouth Rock” — in reality a discredited stone surrounded by a Chamber of Commerce-funded Roman Doric Order facade — further speakers buried this token of settler-colonial mythology.

Speaking on behalf of the Council of Mayan Elders, Rosalba Gonzalez (Maya) stressed the importance of international solidarity among workers, peasants, students and teachers of all nationalities with Indigenous nations in their existential

struggles to “build a world where many worlds fit.”

Jamiann Hasselquist S’eiltin (Tlingit) described the struggle of Indigenous nations in Alaska to reclaim sovereignty and self-determination on their traditional homelands despite genocidal U.S. colonization, which began in the 1860s with the bombardment of Native villages. She went on to lead the crowd in demands for “Land Back!”

The march ended at Post Office Square, where Massachusetts Bay colonists gruesomely displayed the head of Metacombet on a pike for over 20 years. Metacombet was a Wampanoag leader who led Native resistance to settler militias during “King Philip’s War” (1675-1676). His spouse, children and untold numbers of his people were sold into enslavement on Caribbean plantations operated by the settlers’ founding fathers.

In the shadow of the Church of the Pilgrimage, Jean-Luc Pierite (Tunica Biloxi), president of the North American Indian Center of Boston (NAICOB), closed the rally by reading a resolution submitted to the National Congress of American Indians. The resolution urges unconditional solidarity between the Indigenous Nations of Turtle Island and the Palestinian people in their common fight to defeat settler-colonial genocide worldwide and reclaim their stolen lands.

View the uncut 3.5 hour live stream of NDOM 2023 — produced by Sunny Singh of hate5six.org — at youtube.com/watch?v=wR4wLjUYFss.