

Dedicated to Abolishing War, Establishing Justice, and Fighting Climate Disaster
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America's War on Iran Is Breaking Its Own Troops



The bodies of six U.S. soldiers killed in the Port Shuaiba, Kuwait, drone attack being transferred to the U.S. on March 7.
(The White House /Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain)

By Col. Ret. Ann Wright

Rotten food, overflowing toilets into bunking areas, no room in the incoming missile shelters, confiscated cellphones that are the notification devices for incoming missiles, infrequent mail, social media closed down: these were some of the issues that military families identified at the Aug. 6 national conference of Veterans For Peace.

Spouses and parents of Air Force, Army, Marine and Navy members and members of Military Families Speak Out told of plummeting morale, lack of basic supplies and attacks on U.S. military bases that are not reported in the U.S. media.

These frustrations echoed those of military families who met with senior military officials to describe conditions on U.S. bases in the Middle East that are coming under attack from Iran in response to the brutal U.S.-Israeli five-month offensive.

On Aug. 6, the Navy's senior leadership held listening sessions with the families of aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln*'s sailors—one in-person session in San Diego, and a second online session later the same evening, according to The Maritime Executive. Recordings of those sessions that family members leaked MS NOW described conditions aboard the aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln*: showers plagued with stubborn mildew, flagging morale, heavy fatigue, shortages of supplies and food, contaminated water supplies, and lost mail.

Since departing from Naval Base San Diego on Nov. 21, 2025, the *USS Abraham Lincoln* and its crew of 5,000 sailors and Marines has been deployed more than 250 days, with only a stop in Guam in December and a brief visit in Oman in June after 208 days at sea.

A second aircraft carrier *USS Gerald R. Ford* had similar problems when it sailed from the Caribbean to the Middle East after being off Venezuela in the kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his wife in January.

During that deployment, the ship's toilets

kept failing, with sewage often overflowing and spilling onto the floor. Additionally, a fire broke out in the laundry room, causing enough damage that the *Ford* went into a port on the Greek island of Crete for repairs.

More than 200 sailors on the *Ford* were

treated for smoke inhalation, according to USNI News, “with one sailor medically evacuated from the carrier after being injured in the damage control effort. Two others were treated for lacerations. The smoke damage from the laundry-room fire extended to the berthing.” More than 100 bunks and personal gear were destroyed in the fire.

Articles in *Stars and Stripes* and the *Navy Times* detail at least six attempts by crew members to jump overboard from the *USS Abraham Lincoln*, with interviews conducted with sailors and families of those on board who described the impacts of the lengthy deployment.

Jefferson Kelley, the father of a *USS Abraham Lincoln* sailor, wrote to his U.S. senator, Bernie Moreno, asking Moreno to make an official inquiry to the U.S. Navy to see if he could do a “parent swap” with his son, Jackson, 20, due to the terrible conditions aboard the *USS Abraham Lincoln*.

Kelley said he had not been asked by his son to make the swap, but he had read of the conditions on the aircraft carrier that included food rations, safety concerns, water contamination and poor mental health, which has purportedly led to some sailors attempting to jump overboard during the 250 days at sea. He felt that he as a

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Dockworkers Unions in Six Countries Announce Day of Strikes and Protests Against War and Genocide

Unions representing workers at 40 ports in Europe and the Mediterranean are calling for an international day of action on October 30.

By Sarah Lazare

Dockworkers unions in France, Greece, Basque Country, Turkey, Morocco, and Italy are calling an international day of action “against war and militarization” on October 30. They are demanding an end to “the genocide of the Palestinian people” and the “U.S.-Israeli wars of aggression in the Middle East and against Iran.”

“Each union will decide the most appropriate form of mobilization according to its national circumstances, starting from strike action and from a shared commit-

ment to prevent the loading of death and destruction,” reads a joint statement from the unions, which was sent to *Workday Magazine* and *In These Times* on July 31.

“It was a beautiful sight to see the dock

workers surrounded by their city.”

Together, the unions represent workers at 40 ports in Europe and the Mediterranean, according to the statement. Their call

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Italian dockworkers and students block the Port of Livorno Sept. 22, 2025, in support of Palestine and an end to the genocide in Gaza. Photo: Laura Lezza

McCarthyism on Steroids

Totalitarianism is a recent species of autocracy, which is characterized by the concentration of power in a single centre, be it an individual dictator or a group of power holders such as a committee or a party leadership. This centre relies on force to suppress opposition and limit social developments that might eventuate in opposition. The power of the center is not subject to effective controls or limited by genuine sanctions: it is absolute power.” —*Encyclopedia Britannica*

The groundwork has been prepared. The McCarthy era is not only reborn, it is on steroids. In a conference called “Threats From Left-Wing Terrorists,” with 60 countries participating, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio gave a long address loaded with inaccuracies and out-and-out fabrications demonizing leftist opposition and calling for its exorcism from the body politic and society. It is difficult to pick any statement that particularly encapsulates his rant as almost every sentence was a vehement attack on any opposition to Trump’s policies. Here’s a small example: “Far-left political terrorism is not a recent-day, modern novelty. It is not a fiction manufactured by conservative politicians. For most of the modern era, it was, in fact, the dominant form of political violence.”

A 2024 study of three decades of data from the National Institute of Justice actually found the opposite: “The number of far-right attacks continues to outpace all other types of terrorism and domestic violent extremism,” the study asserts. Trump’s Department of Justice quietly removed the report from its website.

Considering the overseas wars for profit, the police and ICE violence at home and far-right, white supremacist violence, Rubio’s statement was an absurd lie. It doesn’t matter. Propaganda works with repetition.

Following Rubio came White House Homeland Security Advisor and Deputy Chief of Staff, Stephen Miller, who was equally if not more vindictive and direct about disrupting, identifying and imprisoning any opposition to their clearly totalitarian, policies. He said, “Here in the United States, we have taken the neces-



VFP has been putting up billboards near military bases around the country.

sary and essential action of formally recognizing left-wing violence as a form of political terrorism that is a direct threat to our national security and the survival of our republican form of government.” He went on to cite President Trump’s National Security Presidential Memorandum that, for the first time in U.S. history, directs all our law enforcement and intelligence agencies to “work together to disrupt, identify, defund, debank, arrest, and prosecute these political terrorists that are operating in our country.”

Miller, of all people, pontificated on being “normal.” This would be funny if it wasn’t so weirdly ludicrous, especially coming from Miller, who would fit right in with the Third Reich. He told the audience, “If you look at two photographs and you see a normal American in the street and you see an Antifa protest, why do the people that are violently demonstrating—why is there not one normal-looking person among them? You know what normal is. You know what beautiful is. You know what good is. You know that families are right. You know that children are precious and beautiful and must be protected. You know that the criminal and the junkie and the predator is a threat to normal, healthy living.”

Wow.

If one’s eyes and ears are open, it is clear what is planned, and it follows every historic totalitarian fascist takeover anywhere. Crush and destroy any opposition. The more effectively that is done, the more secure those in power are. Absolute state control, militarized police and ICE terror, mass surveillance, and educational indoctrination—call it brainwashing—of our young. The Trump gang of gangster capitalists fully intends to crush any independent or rival political opposition, and they will go about it very violently and effectively.

violence into a spectacle of fear? Where is the international movement of artists, academics, and cultural workers willing to organize, strike, and refuse complicity with the corporate barbarians who flood the culture with hatred, purchase elections, and seize control of the commanding institutions of public life?”

There are some potential remedies for this life- and democracy-destroying disease of an autocratic dictatorship.

We need to use economic, people power to stop business as usual. That means general strikes to demand an end to U.S. support of Israel’s genocide and U.S. war-making abroad on Iran and other places. We need to demand ICE and its terrorism be abolished. We can make other demands as well, but we must strike. That means all of us who care, not just labor unions.

Another potent remedy is encouraging active-duty troops to think more deeply and to disobey illegal orders, and refuse to participate in illegal wars of aggression.

Veterans For Peace, as a veterans organization with plenty of street cred, has been doing exactly that. They have put large billboards encouraging noncompliance with illegal orders outside some major military bases and thousands of troops have seen the message.

We also work to get *Peace & Planet News* into the hands of troops.

Last and not least is community power, and that is built on person-to-person support, solidarity, and friendship. The autocrats will try to divide and therefore disable us. We must not let them. The empathetic, peace and justice community may be our last barricade. Stay strong. Stay together.

—Tarak Kauff

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Photo: Ellen Davidson

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For more information or to join or support our work, scan the QR at left or visit veteransforpeace.org.

It's Scary As Hell Being Black in America Right Now

By Alain Stephens

There is a tangible heat to being Black in America this summer.

Every morning starts the same. A jolt of coffee and nicotine as my thumbs scroll a daily intake of Black death and indignity.

It mostly comes dosed in tears. Tears of Black moms and aunties, projected behind stone-faced fathers and grandpops trying to hold it together behind press podiums.

This summer, it was Nolan Wells, an 18-year-old who disappeared during a trip to Mississippi's Horn Island over the Fourth of July. Wells, who traveled to the island with a predominately white group of friends, was found dead in the water two days later. Authorities have not announced a final determination of what happened, but Wells's family has challenged the official timeline and sought an independent autopsy. The investigation remains ongoing, which is to say that another Black family is waiting for answers in the indeterminate dark. In a state synonymous with deep-seated anti-Black racism, and the highest number of recorded lynchings, speculators and community members have begun to fear the worst.

It's an expectation that has set the tone for living while Black in this new era. Where at any moment you, as Black person, can be erased for the most negligible of offenses, and if you're not careful, be discarded into the void.

Before Nolan Wells, we watched in June as another Mississippi family laid their Black boy to rest. Kohen Wiley, who was just a year old, was shot and killed by Senatobia police officers, who fired into the vehicle where Wiley was sitting on his mother's lap. After a friend of Wiley's mother was accused of shoplifting a box of diapers at a Walmart, police opened fire on their car under the pretense that the vehicle was "oncoming" toward the officers. Civil rights attorney Ben Crump has said the officers were not in the car's path, citing a photo from the scene. A month later, investigators have yet to release body camera footage of the incident or provide any new answers. No charges have been filed.

Black Americans had already borne witness to those familiar echoes. Earlier that month, a jury in South Carolina acquitted 61-year-old Rick Chow of a murder charge after he shot and killed Cyrus Carmack-Belton, 14, for the alleged offense of stealing bottled water. Video evidence of the 2023 incident shows the store owner chasing Carmack-Belton out of the shop after falsely accusing him of theft. Chow, who had twice before shot patrons he suspected of shoplifting, would go on to shoot the teenager in the back as he fled.

Whether over a box of Pampers or a gulp of water, it is a startling reminder that for too many non-Black Americans, protecting even the most trivial property can take precedence over the sanctity of a

Black life.

It's an existential dread that has now turned into expectation, an anxiety meant for the mind to blunt the inevitable oncoming pattern of pain, disappointment, and injustice—in this case, being Black in America.

These deaths do not exist in isolation. They arrive amid a broader retreat from the institutions that, however imperfectly, once acknowledged Black Americans as a constituency deserving of protection and investment.

of court decisions making it more difficult to challenge racial gerrymandering and voting restrictions. The Supreme Court's recent decision dismantling key Voting Rights Act protections has opened the door for states to erase Black-majority districts, which threatens to strip Black communities of congressional representation across the South.

If there was anything novel to the current pulse of American white supremacy, it is that it doesn't seek domination but to erase Blackness altogether.

over the brink. But together they communicate something many Black Americans increasingly recognize: that America has further turned tail and ran away from its promise of an egalitarian society, or even the aspiration that it should be one.

That departure has consequences well beyond Washington. It shapes who receives the public's attention, which communities are viewed as worthy of investment, and whose fears are treated as matters of national concern.

For Black Americans watching another



Nolan Wells's mother Christine Wonsley held a press conference on July 10, 2026, in New York City after her son's mysterious death over the Fourth of July off the coast of Mississippi. Photo: Steve Sanchez/Sipa

And the casualties of Black existence transcend more than just bodies. The Trump administration has waged full spectrum warfare on Black identity in every sense.

Since Trump returned to office, Black workers have experienced rising unemployment, with Black men seeing some of the steepest job losses in recent memory, according to an analysis by the Economic Policy Institute.

This coincides with broader efforts by the Trump administration to dismantle federal diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, directing agencies to terminate DEI programs and contracts while encouraging similar rollbacks throughout the private sector. The administration has also sought to reshape how race is discussed across the federal government, from education and museums to civil rights enforcement.

At the same time, the administration has continued to chip away at the legal architecture of voting rights, with years

Trump's supporters have come out in droves to support this mission, from swarms of masked white supremacists descending on the U.S. Capitol in honor of our nation's 250th birthday to the endless viral videos of white men brandishing guns at Black people doing anything from swimming at the pool to handing out flyers.

It is no surprise that, under the constant reminder that the market value of Black life has plummeted, many Black Americans are succumbing to despair. Suicide rates among Black Americans—especially young Black men—have risen sharply over the past decade. Researchers point to a convergence of untreated depression, limited access to mental health care, economic instability, exposure to violence, and the cumulative weight of racialized stress.

None of those policies alone determine whether a police officer fires a gun, whether a jury reaches a particular verdict, or what pushes a broken down mind

summer marked by funerals, investigations, and courtroom disappointments, the sentiment is not simply that violence persists. It is that the country is becoming less interested in confronting why it persists at all.

That is the understanding of it. But the feeling is something entirely different. And that feeling is scary as hell.

Alain Stephens is an investigative reporter covering gun violence, arms trafficking, and federal law enforcement. A two-branch military vet and former law enforcement officer, Stephens has earned national recognition as a Livingston Award finalist, and recipient of the First Amendment Coalition's Free Speech & Open Government Award. His podcast The Gun Machine, tracking the history of America's arms industry, won a national Edward R. Murrow Award. Stephens's reporting has been the catalyst for multiple federal, congressional, and legal policy actions to public safety.

Day by day we count the dead and dyin'
Ship those bodies home while the networks
all keep score.

Day after day another mamma's cryin'
She's lost her precious child to a war that
has no end

Did you hear 'em talkin' bout it on the radio?
Did you stop to read the writing at the wall?
Did that voice inside you say, "I've seen it
all before?"

It's like déjà vu all over again

—John Fogerty

By Mike Ferner

John Fogerty's "Déjà Vu All Over Again," released after the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003.

During "my war," John and his band, Creedence Clearwater Revival, had a big hit called "Fortunate Son." 45 years after "Fortunate Son," he wrote Déjà Vu All Over Again. And now, 23 years after "Déjà Vu," we're at it again.

Again ... and again ... and again, until we break down in tears or get lost in a bottle or put a gun in our mouth.

Veterans are all too familiar with war's suffering and death. That's why we take to the streets, occupy congressional offices, go to jail in protest.

The president of Veterans For Peace and I both worked in Navy hospitals, trying to mend the broken pieces of humanity shipped back from Viet Nam, where the U.S. killed over two million people and destroyed their environment.

But it's déjà vu all over again because our government is run by the same merchants of death—madmen arsonists who set fires all over the globe; fires that enrich their corporate masters at Boeing and Raytheon and General Dynamics. And with enormous wealth comes enormous political power.

Forget the myths of freedom and democracy and self-governance we were taught.

Corporate agents are the ones who actually govern us. They not only buy the elections, they write the legislation, cor-



rupt our culture with militarism, tell us what is good and what is bad.

Here in the streets we do our best to put out the fires of the madmen arsonists, but our bucket brigades just can't keep up. We must keep firefighting but we are deluding ourselves if we don't also learn fire prevention.

That means we must end corporations' ability to govern by abolishing corporate free speech, equal protection and all the rights intended for human beings that these legal fictions use to govern, to plunder and kill for profit. It means abolishing the insane notion that money equals speech.

I want to tell you a little story about the three months I spent in Iraq, just prior to and just after the U.S. invasion in 2003.

Up near Balad, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, a local sheikh approached me and described in great detail what his

people had endured ... soldiers busting in doors at two in the morning, thievery, destruction of property and animals, and men disappearing to a place called Abu Ghraib.

Angry as he was, I was astonished when

how hard we have worked, how many demonstrations we attended and arrests we endured, we're only fighting one fire after another ... and we simply cannot keep up.

I know because I've been doing it for over 50 years. But I have also learned the difference between firefighting and fire prevention ... the difference between fighting every new corporate inferno or taking away their ability to commit arson.

Nothing less than the fate of the planet demands we be honest with ourselves. We spend our precious time, our talent and energy opposing the latest coup, invasion, bombing, and weapons system ... kind of like Déjà Vu All Over Again. We feel good fighting the good fight, but in the end the madmen arsonists still write the legislation, still buy elected officials, still corrupt our culture, still do flyovers at sports games, still prey on high schoolers.

At its core, we don't have a foreign policy crisis or a climate crisis or a health-care crisis ... we have a democracy crisis.

When the Supreme Court gave corporations the constitutional protections of the Bill of Rights, it essentially gave them the power of gods ... and we are reduced to pleading with them to be kind when using that power.

Our constitution has been amended 27 times—the 18th amendment prohibited alcohol and the 21st amendment brought it back! If we can amend the constitution twice over beer, surely, we can do it

But it's déjà vu all over again because our government is run by the same merchants of death—madmen arsonists who set fires all over the globe; fires that enrich their corporate masters at Boeing and Raytheon and General Dynamics. And with enormous wealth comes enormous political power.

he graciously said, "We know the American people are different from the government." Then said something I'll never forget. "But you say you live in a democracy. So how can this be happening to us?"

I wish I had the presence of mind to say to him, "No, my brother, I do not live in a democracy. Where I live the weapons makers and oil companies run the military; insurance companies write our healthcare laws and the highway lobby does the same for transportation."

We do not have democracy because democracy can't exist without economic justice. In my country the richest 400 people are worth 7 trillion dollars; to be among that 400 you must own at least \$4 billion. In my country, one man will have to spend \$10 million a day for 274 years to exhaust his trillion dollars. In my youth, the wealthiest were taxed at over 90% ... and today they pay far less than half of that.

Democracy, my brother? Oh, we have a huge surplus of it ... we have so much we export it all over the world ... in B-52s.

The elders of our movement have a responsibility to younger activists to acknowledge that no matter how long and

to abolish corporate rule and the insanity that money equals speech.

Veterans For Peace and Move to Amend keep fighting fires AND practicing fire prevention by abolishing corporate power to govern ... abolishing Raytheon and Boeing and AIPAC's supposed "right" to lobby and buy elections ... abolishing equal protection and all the other constitutional rights intended for human beings that corporations use to govern, plunder and murder.

Join with us to democratize our culture so courts will once again issue decisions like this one that unanimously dissolved a NY corporation with these words: "The judgment sought against the defendant is one of corporate death ... The life of a corporation is, indeed, less than that of the humblest citizen ..."

Mike Ferner is a former Toledo City Council member, a Navy corpsman during the Vietnam War, and author of Inside the Red Zone: A Veteran for Peace Reports from Iraq. He is a former national president of Veterans For Peace and has also served as executive director.

They Don't Come Home Loud

By Lara Costa

They don't come home loud.
No marching bands follow them
into the quiet of their kitchens.
No one hears the war
in the way they close a door
just a little too carefully.
They sit at tables
with people who love them,
smiling at stories
they weren't there to remember.
Because part of them
is still somewhere else—
in dust,
in heat,
in a moment that never ended.
We say they're brave.
We say they're strong.
But we don't always see
how strength looks like silence,
how bravery sometimes means
getting through a normal day

without falling apart.
War doesn't always stay
where it was fought.
It follows ...
in quiet rooms,
in sleepless nights,
in the space between
who they were
and who they had to become.
So if you thank them,
mean it.
Not just for what they did,
but for what they still carry.
Because the truth is,
some never come home at all,
and some do ...
just not all the way.

This poem by an 11th grade student at Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, Harwich, Mass., won First Place in the 31st Annual Voices of Peace Poetry Contest sponsored by the Cape Cod Chapter 41.

Betrayal

A Major Theme in American Politics

A major theme in U.S. politics is betrayal.

I know: politicians lie. Who knew? But the lies are so blatant, so fundamental (if that's the right word), that it's hard not to despair.

Consider Barack Obama. As a candidate he was a beacon of hope and change. He told Planned Parenthood that signing the Freedom of Choice Act would be the first thing he did as president. Once in office, he said it was not his highest legislative priority—and it never got done. He allied himself with neoliberals and Wall Street and bailed out the banks in a process begun by George W. Bush (remember the TARP?) even as millions of Americans defaulted on their home mortgages. In 2011 he offered little meaningful support to the Occupy Wall Street movement as the police in New York and other cities dismantled the encampments. He escalated the Afghan War (promise kept!) and became (according to the 2013 book *Double Down*) “really good at killing people” via Predator and Reaper drones. His

health care plan was much like Romney care as he abandoned the public option. After he left the presidency, he cashed in big time through books, media deals, speaking fees and other ventures, with Forbes estimating his net worth at more than \$70 million. (I got a fundraising letter from him recently asking me to send \$25 to the DNC. Instead, he could donate a few million or sell his mansion on Martha's Vineyard.)

Obama said he was the hope and change for Americans to believe in. He proved to be a very smooth con man.

Consider Donald Trump. He promised to put Americans first, end wasteful wars, take on the military-industrial complex, and restore American “greatness.” Instead, he's waging a costly and apparently losing war with Iran and he's throwing buckets of mega billions at the Pentagon as he chops away at educational, Medicaid, food/SNAP, and other funds for the

working classes. Trump is using the presidency to enrich himself and his family, showcasing a brazen greed that might make Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi blush. He's a one-man wrecking crew for faith and trust in the government.

Trump said he was the man to make America great again. He's proven to be an abrasive but nevertheless very successful con man.

Back in the Reagan days, we were told government was the problem, and that it had to be downsized radically (the Pentagon, of course, was exempt from downsizing). An untrustworthy and spendthrift federal government is most definitely a problem today as the U.S. national debt just soared past the \$40 trillion mark.

And where does half of federal discretionary spending go today? To wars and weapons, to the Pentagon and Homeland Security, to more nukes and golden domes, together with more schemes to

enrich Trump and his oligarch cronies. If that's not bad enough, Trump is seeking \$500 billion more for the Pentagon in FY2027. Remember he vowed to take on the military-industrial complex? He's feeding it instead.

Betrayal. Small wonder that Americans are despondent as well as angry. And why perhaps so much effort is being exerted to redirect that anger away from the betrayers-in-chief and toward other “enemies.” Even “Marxist-communists” are back—the “enemy” that will not die, as if Marxists are pulling the strings and reaping the profits in Washington, DC. It's laughably absurd.

“Throw the bums out!” is a mood in America today. But will new politicians actually have principles to serve working-class Americans? How do you reform a system where money basically equals speech and where lobbyists exert enormous power? Stay tuned as the great American experiment plays itself out.

William Astore, a retired lieutenant colonel (USAF) and professor of history, is a TomDispatch regular and a senior fellow at the Eisenhower Media Network. His personal blog is Bracing Views.

War on Iran

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parent should share the burden.

Families of U.S. ground forces on the U.S. military bases scattered all over the Middle East describe extreme overcrowding in shelters for incoming missile attacks.

According to the news outlet War Horse, the only public source for injuries during the U.S. attack on Iran is the Defense Casualty Analysis System, which provides monthly totals for the war on Iran with limited demographic data.

More than 400 casualties (nonlethal) were recorded from Feb. 28 and April 8 due to the U.S. attack on Iran, War Horse reports, adding:

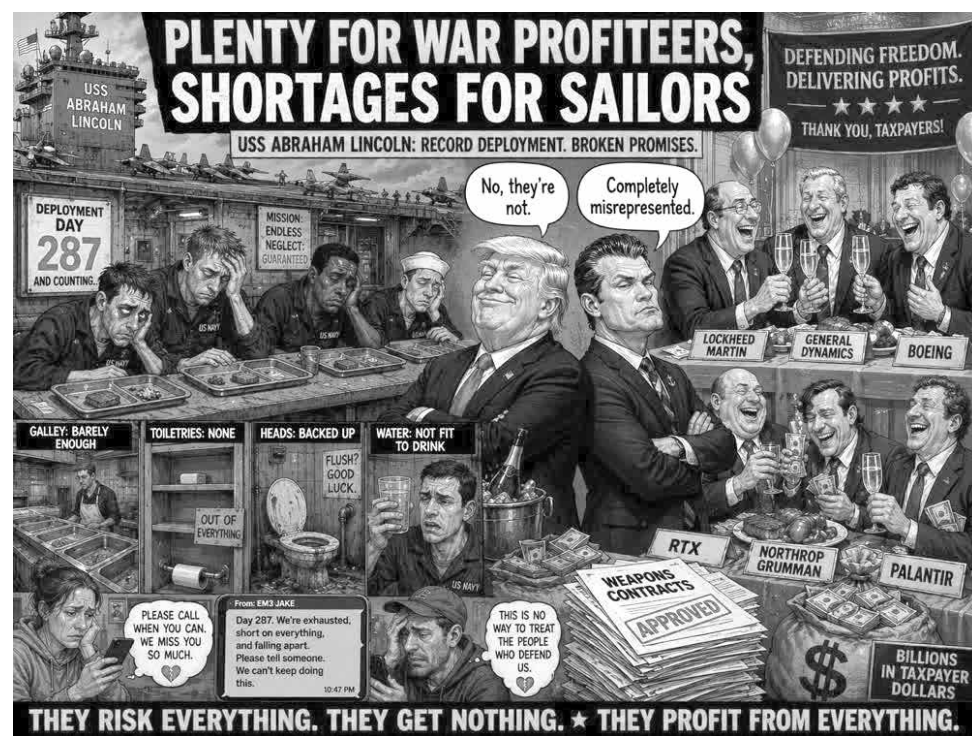
“More than 270 of the roughly non-lethal 400 casualties were Army soldiers, and about one-third of those were reservists. Enlisted soldiers accounted for most Army casualties, including 57 sergeants and 53 specialists. But also wounded were 64 Army officers, including 20 captains and 13 lieutenant colonels or colonels . . .

“The Navy reported 64 casualties, none of whom were classified as seriously injured. The Air Force recorded 51 casualties, and the Marine Corps recorded 19. Unlike the Army, the other branches did not list the type or cause of injury.”

U.S. troops suffered shrapnel wounds, broken bones, smoke inhalation and other injuries. But one category appeared far more often than any other: head trauma.

At least 170 troops sustained head trauma between the start of the war to early April, according to the data.

Some military health experts, according to War Horse, worry that the large portion of the wounded suffering from traumatic brain injuries—caused by damage to the brain that can impact thinking, movement and emotion—could become the signature injury of this war, as in the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Families describe overflowing toilets, spoiled food, missile attacks, mental-health emergencies and hundreds of wounded service members as deployments drag on.

The Pentagon has attempted to reduce the accounting on the number of U.S. military killed and wounded in the war on Iran by separating those killed/wounded before the May 1 ceasefire and after.

In a total accounting, from before and after the ceasefire, 18 U.S. troops have been killed and 624 wounded since the U.S. began its war against Iran on Feb. 28.

The U.S. Congress is finally getting involved. On Aug. 12, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a member of the Armed Services Committee, wrote a letter to Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and the Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao to express “serious concern” about the increasing length of deployments and to demand answers about living conditions aboard the carrier.

“There have been widespread reports of shortages of basic supplies, water contamination, plumbing issues, deteriorating mental health, deck safety concerns,” aboard the ship, he said in the letter, as well as “disruptions in the mail system, which

have caused many care packages in route to the ship to be lost in transit for months.”

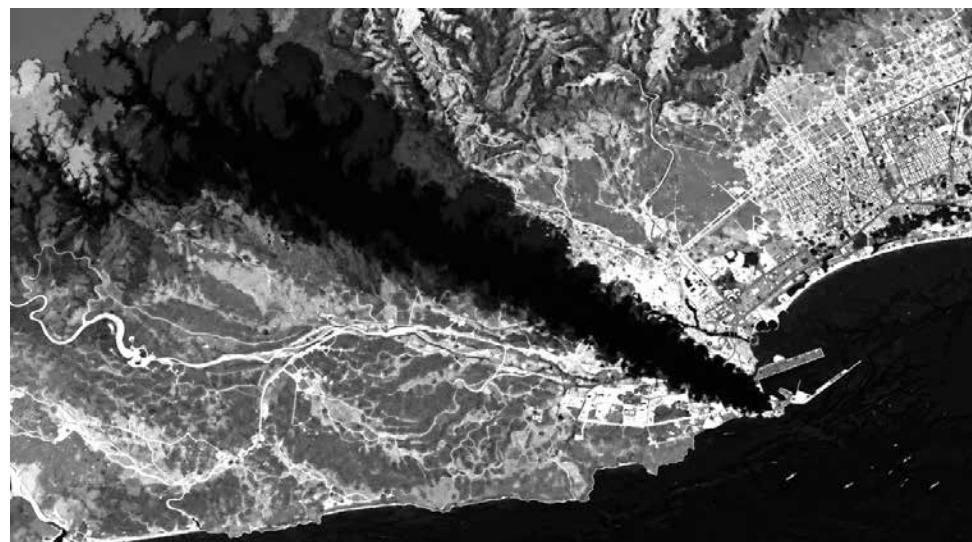
Blumenthal's letter ends with six questions for Hegseth and Department of Defense concerning conditions on the USS

Abraham Lincoln and a call to treat servicewomen and men properly:

“The men and women aboard the *Lincoln* have answered the call to serve their country. The Department owes them not only adequate supplies, maintenance, and support during this deployment, but a sustainable force-generation model that does not rely on repeatedly extending sailors and ships to meet persistent operational demands.

“Our servicemembers deserve nothing less than the full support of their government—and the American people deserve a military strategy that is worthy of the sacrifices we ask them to make.”

Ann Wright is a 29-year U.S. Army/Army Reserves veteran, a retired U.S. Army colonel and retired U.S. State Department official who resigned publicly in the runup to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Wright was also a passenger on the Challenger 1, which, along with the Mavi Marmara, was part of the 2010 Gaza flotilla. She served in Nicaragua, Grenada, Somalia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Sierra Leone, Micronesia, and Mongolia. She is the co-author of the book Dissent: Voices of Conscience.



Satellite imagery of black smoke rising from the Port of Salalah on March 13 during Iranian strikes on Oman. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Where Is the Outrage?

From education to politics and culture, corporate power is narrowing the spaces where people learn to question authority, imagine alternatives and act as democratic citizens.

By Henry A. Giroux

Moral witnessing has largely retreated into billboards, podcasts, a commodified and hate-filled media ecosystem, and relentless gestures of liberal empathy emptied of consequence. Too few artists, intellectuals, and cultural workers are willing to risk their careers by confronting the genocidal wars of our time and the governments and institutions that sustain them with weapons, money, and silence. Where are the voices for the children being slaughtered in Gaza and for those subjected to the horrors of war, displacement, and hunger in Iran, Lebanon, Sudan, and elsewhere? Where is the outrage against the masked thugs patrolling America's streets, terrorizing communities, violating the law, and turning state violence into a spectacle of fear? Where is the international movement of artists, academics, and cultural workers willing to organize, strike, and refuse complicity with the corporate barbarians who flood the culture with hatred, purchase elections, and seize control of the commanding institutions of public life? Where is the collective outrage over what Joel Whitebook calls "humanity's headlong race toward an ecological cliff and the accelerating global spread of neo-fascist movements"?

Under the reign of neoliberal billionaire fascism, the planet burns, cities are militarized, inequality deepens, war becomes a governing principle of politics, racism returns as a celebrated language of power, and young people are robbed of both a future and a place in history. Cruelty is normalized, ignorance is weaponized, and the machinery of death is dressed up in the language of security, efficiency, and national greatness. Border madness feeds white nationalism and colonial fantasies. What once provoked shame is now performed as spectacle. What once demanded outrage is absorbed into the rhythms of everyday life.

This collapse of moral courage is no-

where more visible than among the liberal establishment of the Democratic Party, whose fear of an emerging democratic socialism among young people and an increasingly organized DSA appears at times more intense than its opposition to the militarized gangster capitalism of the Trump era. The contempt is revealing because it exposes what liberal centrism fears most: not authoritarian power, but a politics willing to challenge the economic

tion is whether a party wedded to corporate power, militarism, and neoliberal capitalism has already forfeited its capacity to speak to millions of young people who no longer believe the existing order has a future. This fear is manufactured through a sterile self-serving ideological language. In Rolling Stone, Bernie Sanders becomes a "Trojan horse" who "infiltrated" the Democratic Party, democratic socialism is associated with Animal Farm and a "bitter worldview," while Trump's politics, despite its acknowledged racism and cruelty, is described as "eminently salable." Democratic socialism is treated as a pathology to be contained, while authoritarian politics is translated into the bloodless language of electoral viability.

Jon Cowan and Matt Bennett, co-founders of the centrist group Third Way, declared in a Washington Post op-ed that

and the radical democratization of wealth and power.

At a moment when fascism is gathering force and ecological catastrophe is accelerating, defending capitalism against those demanding a more just society is not political realism. It is moral surrender dressed in respectable suits and cowardice repackaged by the media as common sense. And nowhere is this moral bankruptcy more grotesque than in the continued flow of American weapons to Israel as tens of thousands of Palestinian children have been killed or wounded in Gaza. The centrists who recoil at democratic socialism as "electoral poison" have remarkably little difficulty accommodating themselves to a political order in which children are bombed, starved, and buried beneath rubble. Apparently, demanding economic justice is consid-



Photo: Fight Back! News

order on which that power feeds. Even the liberal press often reproduces this panic, framing the resurgence of democratic socialism less as a response to grotesque inequality, corporate rule, and the political exhaustion of neoliberalism than as a threat to the Democratic Party itself.

The question posed by Rolling Stone, whether the democratic socialist surge might "doom the party," gets the crisis exactly backward: the more urgent ques-

the DSA's ideas are "electoral poison." But what exactly is the poison they fear? A politics that demands economic equality, universal social protections, racial justice, democratic control over concentrated wealth, and an end to a political order in which billionaires purchase elections while the poor and working class are abandoned and public life is hollowed out. This political betrayal runs through the Clinton and Obama years, when the Democratic establishment made its peace with neoliberalism, Wall Street, corporate power, and the permanent war state, leaving it increasingly incapable of confronting the economic forces that nourish authoritarianism.

What haunts the party's centrists is not simply the DSA but the return of a radical democratic tradition they had hoped history had buried: the ghosts of Eugene Debs, Michael Harrington, Stanley Aronowitz, and, more recently, the insurgent democratic socialist politics associated with Zohran Mamdani. This tradition invokes a language the liberal guardians of the existing order find increasingly intolerable: class power, economic justice, solidarity, public goods, racial capitalism,

ered too radical; underwriting mass death and militarized gangster capitalism is not.

At a moment when silence has become a form of complicity, where are the voices willing to make power tremble? Where are the heirs to W. E. B. Du Bois, Arthur Miller, James Baldwin, I. F. Stone, and Angela Davis, alongside contemporary artists such as Roger Waters and Javier Bardem, who understand that art and intellectual work surrender their moral force when they turn away from human suffering? The question is no longer simply who will speak. It is who is willing to risk something by speaking, to refuse the safety of silence, and to transform moral witnessing into collective resistance and outrage into organized power. The task is no longer merely to bear witness to the darkness, but to build the movements capable of confronting and defeating the forces producing it.

Henry A. Giroux holds the McMaster University Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest and is the Paulo Freire Distinguished Scholar in Critical Pedagogy. His latest book is *Assassins of Memory: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Erasure*. He is *LA Progressive's* Associate Editor.



What You Need to Know About the Call to Abolish ICE

We can create an immigration system that treats everyone with dignity and keeps families together. ICE won't help us get there.

By Amy Gottlieb, American Friends Service Committee

Our communities are stronger with immigrants. They are our neighbors, family members, loved ones, students, business owners, and friends. As a Quaker organization, AFSC is guided by our belief in the inherent worth of every person. All people should be treated with dignity and have their rights respected, no matter where they were born or how they came to the U.S.

Imagine an immigration system where families stay together. Where people seeking safety or opportunity are met with support, not armed agents. Where our tax dollars go toward health care, education, and ways to help everyone thrive—not funding a deportation force. That's the world we're working to create.

But we can't build that world while Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) tears apart families and terrorizes our communities. That's why AFSC joins people across the country in calling to abolish ICE.

Here's what you need to know:

ICE was created in 2003 as part of a broad expansion of national security enforcement during the U.S. government's "war on terror." That expansion included mass surveillance, aggressive policing, increased racial profiling, and the treatment of immigration primarily as a security issue rather than a human or economic one.

As part of the Department of Homeland Security, ICE treats immigrants as security threats rather than as people who are part of our communities. Its main purpose is to detain and deport immigrants.

As if this writing, an estimated 68,000 people are jailed in immigrant detention facilities daily. Since January 2025, more than 390,000 people have been deported—each one a family member, neighbor, or friend torn from our communities. People detained by ICE are often taken to detention centers far from their loved ones, almost always in inhumane living conditions. They do not have a



its use of violent tactics. In cities and towns around the U.S., armed masked agents have grabbed people from their homes, cars, workplaces, near schools, and at court-houses and routine immigration check-ins.

The murders of Renee Good and Silverio Villegas González by ICE agents are among the most recent examples of the deadly violence inherent in the agency. Violence and terror are at the core of how ICE operates.

ICE provides substandard medical care to those in detention, which has proven deadly. In 2025, 32 people died in ICE custody—the highest number ever since the agency's creation. Beyond these deaths, there is no shortage of documented accounts of ICE abuse and neglect in detention, including violent physical and sexual assaults, chronic food shortages, and unsanitary conditions.

Despite this long history of human rights violations, ICE has remained unaccountable to the courts, to our communities, and to Congress, which has repeatedly urged ICE to improve detention standards and address fiscal mismanagement. The agency has largely ignored

Abolishing ICE means we stop treating immigration as a military operation and start treating it as what it is—people seeking safety and stability in the U.S.

We don't need an abusive police force to arrest people for their immigration status and deport them from our communities, we need clear and fair ways for people to access immigration status based on need. ICE's functions are harmful and unnecessary—and could be performed by other agencies in ways that respect our rights and human dignity.

We don't need to replace ICE with more militarized enforcement. Our immigration system should be grounded in human rights. It should build on things we know can create safe, healthy communities—like access to health care and education for all.

There are many alternatives to ICE that are more effective, more humane, and far less costly. That includes legal services, case management, social services, and other community-based support. These approaches help people navigate immigration processes while keeping families together—creating stability in our communities rather than chaos.

1. Tell elected officials: Keep ICE out of our communities. Congress must do more to protect families and communities against brutal immigration enforcement. Demand that they keep ICE and Border Patrol out of our communities. Urge them to support an end to detention and deportations.

2. Pressure local officials to stop helping ICE. ICE relies on local law enforcement to carry out raids and detentions. We can pressure our cities, counties, states, and schools. Demand they end cooperation with ICE, refuse to share information about residents, and adopt sanctuary policies to protect all community members.

3. Support immigrants in our communities. Volunteer your time. Support organizations that provide legal services, know your rights trainings, and offer sanctuary in places of worship. Accompany immigrants as they go through court processes, ICE check-ins, or other appointments. Take part in ICE watch programs at court-houses and in your community.

Show up for protests, vigils, and other events. Our actions can garner public attention, put pressure on elected officials, and engage others in our efforts.

As AFSC's U.S. Migration Director, Amy Gottlieb leads AFSC's work to address the economic and political drivers of migration and ensure that migrants' rights are respected in all circumstances.

Because the very mission of ICE is at odds with values we hold dear—treating all people with dignity and respect. An agency created to tear apart communities cannot be reformed into one that strengthens them.

right to legal representation in immigration proceedings.

In 2025 alone, ICE got more than \$28 billion in federal funding. That's money that could instead be invested in health care, schools, food assistance, jobs, and other programs that actually make our communities safer and stronger.

Because the very mission of ICE is at odds with values we hold dear—treating all people with dignity and respect. An agency created to tear apart communities cannot be reformed into one that strengthens them.

Since its inception, ICE has routinely violated human rights. ICE agents and police officers colluding with ICE engage in racial profiling, warrantless searches, detention without probable cause, and fabrication of evidence. Millions of people have had their lives destroyed by detention and deportation.

Since January 2025, ICE has dramatically increased

these demands.

Yes. The idea of abolishing a government agency isn't radical—continuing to fund a violent deportation force is what's extreme. And abolishing a government agency isn't unprecedented. Various administrations—both Republican and Democratic—have created and dissolved agencies based on changing needs and politics.

The real question isn't whether ICE can be abolished. It's how we build the political will to make that happen.

The U.S. public wants change. Three-quarters of people in the U.S. say they support a welcoming, dignified, and just immigration system. And as ICE's violence has escalated, public support for abolishing ICE is growing. A January 2026 poll found that 46% of Americans support abolishing ICE, compared to 41% who oppose it. When people see what ICE actually does, they are ready for structural change.

Trump's Phantom Enemies

The administration is laying the groundwork for blacklisting and criminalizing all left-wing, progressive, antiwar and anti-imperialist dissent.

By Chris Hedges

The State Department's 100-page report on Cuba's "campaign of subversion against the United States," along with Donald Trump's assertion that "Americans were blatantly lied to about the security of our election infrastructure," lays the groundwork for dictatorship.

Elections will be sabotaged in the name of "national security." Left-wing dissent will be criminalized in the name of "combating terrorism." Democracy will be snuffed out in the name of protecting "freedom."

Trump, who has lately taken to issuing warnings about a communist plot to take over America, posits that an island of 9.6 million people—nearly 90% of whom live in extreme poverty amid extended blackouts due to decades of U.S. economic warfare—is an existential threat.

These accusations are not meant to be rational. They, like the charge that our elections are manipulated, are transparent excuses to go after institutions and individuals that are seen as threatening Trump and the Republican Party's absolute grip on power. While Cuba has supposedly "carried out one of the most durable and damaging foreign intelligence penetrations in American history" Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, as well as non-state groups, "have the capability to compromise U.S. election infrastructure."

Under the heading "Front Groups and Fellow Travelers," the report assembles a disparate collection of organizations belonging to Cuba's "ideological network."

For example, the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), founded as an ecumenical social justice organization by the Presbyterian Church, is described as part of a Cuba "solidarity network" which "facilitates radical agita-

acted as an intermediary—perfectly legally—facilitating tax-exempt donations and handling grant management, compliance and reporting. These include The Jericho Movement, Equality for Flatbush, Claudia Jones School, Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, changingFrequencies, Viva Palestina U.S., and The People's Forum, which the report describes as "a major activist group in Cuba's U.S. ideological network."

The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) and Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) are castigated in the same chapter. The NLG "is one of the most persistently relevant—and insidious—organizations in Cuba's U.S. network."

The report continues:

"The association of extreme-left lawyers and radical street activists has played a key role in a disproportionate share of the far-left terror and violence that has plagued the United States from the 1960s up to today. Throughout its history, it

versity on defunding and dissolving the law school's chapter of the National Lawyers Guild (HLS NLG), which provided legal assistance to individuals and student groups that opposed the genocide.

A subsection in the report is dedicated to the anti-war activists at CODEPINK and their co-founders Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans. It notes Evans' marriage to the wealthy software entrepreneur Neville Roy Singham was attended by a "Who's Who" of progressivism" including co-host of Democracy Now! Amy Goodman; Ben & Jerry's co-founder Ben Cohen and the playwright V (formerly known as Eve Ensler) who wrote "The Vagina Monologues."

Naming guests at a wedding is one of the more bizarre passages.

The report grossly exaggerates the influence of Singham's support for left-wing organizations—described as "far-left"—while ignoring the massive sums supplied by U.S. corporations, millionaires and billionaires, as well as the Israel lobby, to both major political parties, super PACs, think tanks and advocacy networks.

tration operations ever undertaken by a foreign power against the United States." This assertion libels thousands of individuals and organizations as Cuban assets, offering nothing more than innuendo.

It lists "the founder of Mother Jones,"—although there were four founders—along with "several other [unnamed] notable magazine editors, leaders of powerful labor unions and advocacy groups, think tank executives, and a suite of professors at top U.S. universities" as Brigade "alumni."

Transporting humanitarian goods to Cuba is not a crime. Although the Justice Department's extradition request from Spain of philanthropist Fergie Chambers, who provided funds to humanitarian organizations in Gaza, may see the criminalization of any person or any group that assists those suffering under sanctions and a blockade.

The report attacks members of the March 2026 "Nuestra América Convoy" which transported goods to Cuba "in defiance of U.S. sanctions." It notes that 120 organizations "from across 33 countries joined the caravan" with "a suite of influential progressives," including Isra Hirsir—daughter of U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, video game live streamer and commentator Hasan Piker—with whom I discussed my book "A Genocide Foretold" last year—former U.K. Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn and "several other current and former members of European Parliament." Even the Gaza flotilla activist Thiago Avila—who I interviewed in July after he was tortured by Israeli soldiers—gets a mention.

Those listed in the report did not become "radicals" because of Cuban indoctrination. Their politics are homegrown, formed in opposition to racism, genocide, police violence, the terrorizing and killing of immigrants and U.S. citizens by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) thugs and neoliberalism, along with the crimes of U.S. imperialism and militarism.

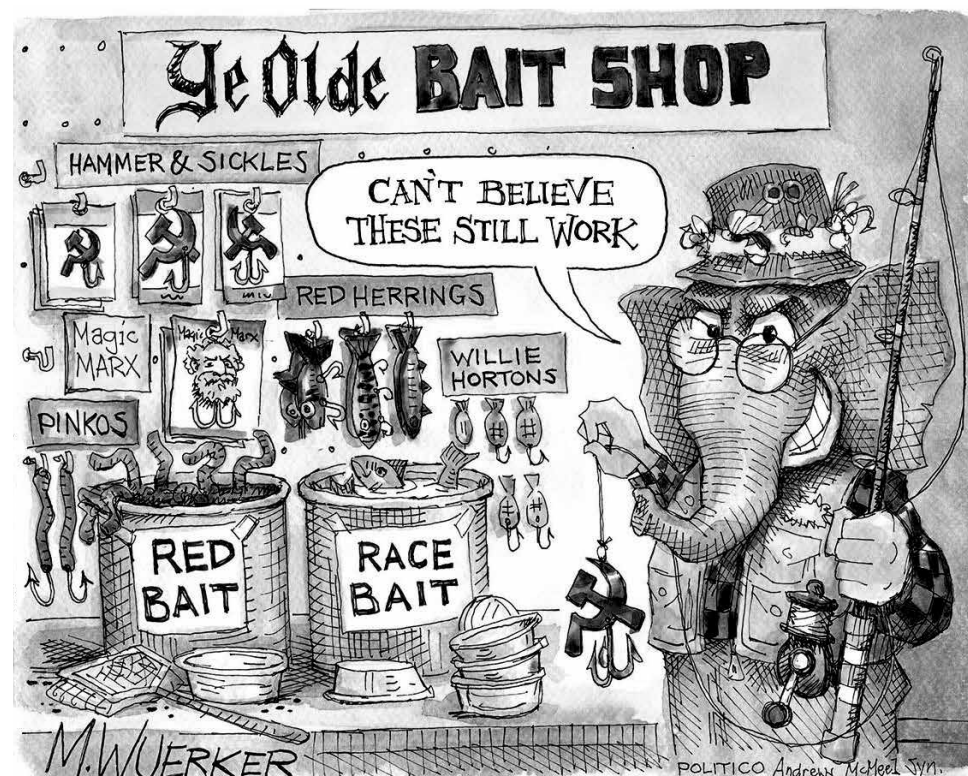
The report makes passing reference to a wide range of people on grounds so tenuous that it has to be read to be believed.

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani is mentioned for refusing "to denounce" a "tribute to [Assata] Shakur," who was almost certainly framed for murder and who fled to Cuba after escaping from a U.S. prison in 1979.

It dedicates two paragraphs to Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass for her "friendliness towards the communist regime." The evidence provided is her participation in a congressional delegation that joined then President Barack Obama on a visit to the island.

Cuban agents, it charges, "maintain a foothold in hundreds of front groups, activist organizations, solidarity centers, and ideological NGO and nonprofit networks. These groups collectively represent one of the single largest, most sophisticated and dangerous vectors for hostile foreign influence in modern American history." Cuba has allegedly "infiltrated the highest reaches of the U.S. government, recruited and cultivated generations of American activists [and] backed an unprecedented wave of leftwing ter-

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has maintained intimate ties to Cuba and other communist regimes and has explicitly sought to advance the causes of the international far left, including by working to defend and facilitate terrorism and extremist violence—from the Weather Underground of the 1970s to the violent BLM militants and Antifa terror cells of today."

Israel has a far more insidious influence on U.S. politics and foreign policy than Cuba, Russia and China combined.

The State Department attacks the co-founders of The People's Forum, Manolo De Los Santos and Claudia De la Cruz.

It draws on documents that are often decades old and infused with Cold War paranoia. These include a 1966 Senate report claiming there is "overwhelming evidence that the machinery of the Cuban Government has been progressively organized over the years, to carry out its number one task—the export of Communist subversion."

It ignores more thoughtful assessments, including a 1981 CIA estimate that acknowledged "[m]uch of the turmoil around the world is rooted in regional and local disputes of a political, social, or religious nature and has nothing to do with Communism."

In a chapter titled "Revolutionary Tourism," the Venceremos ("We Shall Overcome") Brigade is characterized as one of the most "extensive and dangerous infil-

In a chapter titled "Revolutionary Tourism," the Venceremos ("We Shall Overcome") Brigade is characterized as one of the most "extensive and dangerous infiltration operations ever undertaken by a foreign power against the United States."

tion within the United States."

I am an ordained Presbyterian minister. I can assure you the Presbyterian Church is not facilitating "radical agitation."

The report lists a wide variety of organizations on whose behalf IFCO has

The NLG is labeled a foreign influence operation because it provides assistance to activists, whose right to legal representation is constitutionally enshrined.

In 2025, the Trump administration conditioned federal funding to Harvard Uni-



America Is Overdue for a General Strike

By A.J. Schumann

With America and the entire world threatened and with many deported, jailed and even killed here in the U.S. and with Trump and Netanyahu on a unhinged fascist rampage, a general strike in 2028 may be too late. How many more will have to die in Gaza, Lebanon, Iran and here in the U.S. in the ensuing months ahead? How deeply entrenched will Fascism USA be by then?—the editors

May Day 2028 will be the defining moment of our generation,” United Auto Workers president Shawn Fain declared in a recent Jacobin essay.

That date—when the UAW’s contracts at the Big Three auto manufacturers are set to expire—has emerged as a target for the activists hoping to orchestrate a massive strike across industries in the United States, more commonly referred to as a general strike.

General strikes involve workers across multiple sectors shutting down production simultaneously. The strategy is simple, but effective: disrupt routine services until workers’ demands are met.

While the concept may sound foreign to Americans today, our country has seen general strikes many times before. Consider just a few examples:

- The dockworkers of New Orleans sparked a three-day city-wide strike in 1892, partnering with other unions to form a multiracial coalition of over 25,000 workers that secured both a shorter workday and a wage increase.
- Over 100,000 workers across Seattle joined a six-day strike in 1919, and although it was undone by red-scare hysteria, it proved that workers could effectively organize essential services without bosses.
- After police shot two strikers in 1934, San Francisco longshoremen started a strike that grew to 150,000 workers throughout the Bay Area, sparking a wave of unionization up and down the West Coast.
- As recently as 1998, the privatization

of Puerto Rico’s public telephone company triggered an island-wide strike involving some 500,000 workers.

Large scale strikes were once a core element of the American dissident’s repertoire.

In the absence of representation in formal political circles—and in the face of repression by those same circles—workers turned to mass walkouts to assert their will.

We can think of general strikes, then, as a kind of people’s veto. It is the means by which workers harness their collective power to stop business-as-usual when ballot boxes and legislatures prove unresponsive.

It should not surprise anyone that the American political system is largely indifferent to public opinion. Corporate lobbying and concentrated wealth tilt the playing field so steeply that even popular reforms struggle to clear Congress.

This dismal reality has, understandably, precipitated a number of protest movements in recent years. And while protests can sway hearts and generate headlines, only economic leverage can disrupt the flow of profit.

So, why have mass work stoppages become so rare in the U.S. today?

Part of the answer is legal. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 severely restricted the power of organized labor by, among other things, banning solidarity strikes and providing employers with a powerful arsenal of tools to disrupt unionization. This, combined with examples of outright state repression—like the NYPD breaking up a strike by arresting Amazon workers in Queens last year—leaves organizers on hostile terrain.

Part of it is also cultural. After decades of union-busting and ceaseless “bootstraps” refrains, Americans have been taught to treat collective action with suspicion. We’re conditioned from an early age to view ourselves not as workers, but as lone entrepreneurs-in-waiting. Few myths do more to stall progress.

These obstacles are real. But strikes are

not born of ideal conditions; they arise precisely because conditions have become intolerable.

Which makes now—with economic inequality rapidly accelerating and authoritarianism knocking at the door—exactly the right time to revive the general strike.

Overseas, workers are stress-testing this playbook in real time.

Greece was paralyzed as a general strike rallied thousands of public and private sector employees against a bill introducing a 13-hour workday. French unions are staging coordinated walkouts, building on earlier anti-austerity marches. Hundreds of thousands flooded Italy’s streets during a general strike backing Palestine and the Global Sumud Flotilla.

Contexts vary, of course—organizing in Athens is different from Chicago—but even so, two lessons emerge from the recent uptick in general strikes abroad.

First, disruption at scale can’t be ignored. Our political culture has a habit of normalizing crises, quickly smoothing over shocks that should demand attention. Coordinated strikes in essential sectors puncture that facade by creating commotion that can’t be easily spun by governments, pundits, or bosses.

Second, tying workplace walkouts to broader political issues draws in substantially more supporters. Labor disputes are often narrowed to technical battles over pay scales and contract clauses. Italy’s general strike breaks that mold by braiding together economic grievances and solidarity with Palestine, turning industrial action into a civic reckoning.

Potential for a similar reckoning exists here. Wider policy debates around housing, healthcare, climate change, and more invariably trace back to the fault line of economic inequality. That entanglement

makes labor disputes inherently political, and when our political system continually blocks reform, workers are left with no recourse but to withdraw their labor.

A strike isn’t an irrational eruption from the fringe; it’s the response of a public denied the ability to live decently despite working diligently.

Strikes need not deepen hardship. In fact, history shows they can redistribute care.

When workers in Seattle walked out on their bosses a century ago, they kept hospitals open, ran milk deliveries, and fed thousands in strike kitchens. Far from an

[S]trikes are not born of ideal conditions; they arise precisely because conditions have become intolerable.

exercise in destruction, it was a glimpse at what a society founded on neighborliness could look like.

That, more than anything, is what general strikes demonstrate: workers can reorder the terms of civic life when they organize en masse. May Day 2028 is our chance to prove it once more.

Across continents, workers are organizing to do what ballots alone have not: enforce the public will. It’s time American workers join our peers abroad by reclaiming strikes as part of our own democratic tradition.

A.J. Schumann is a writer from New Mexico and a former Henry A. Wallace Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies.

Trump’s Enemies

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rorism [my emphasis] on American soil.”

Note the word terrorism. Note that it makes these individuals and organizations terrorists. Note that it makes them subject to draconian terrorism laws. And note that the Trump administration has committed itself to hunting down and rooting out the “radical left.”

The report charges that Cuba and its allies are mounting “a revolution against western civilization itself—waged, in part, via the novel and insidious method of persuading the children of the West to turn against their own inheritance.” It accuses Havana of “gleeful support of the George Floyd uprisings.” It asserts that “the rise of antifa” and “the explosion of pro-terrorist activism on American college campuses,” can be “linked, in some way, shape, or form, to Cuban influence.”

It characterizes the DSA as serving “as a particularly potent illustration of the ideological victory of Cuba’s effort to position itself as the spiritual capital of Third Worldist radicalism.” It claims the organization maintains a “fierce, almost religious commitment to the cause of the Cuban regime.” It alleges Cuba has built

a “sprawling revolutionary network” that has “shaped America’s most famous and influential extremist movements” including the Black Panthers, the Weather Underground and antifa. These networks include “powerful leftist nonprofits, anti-ICE collectives, socialist groups, and Marxist militant organizations” in the U.S.

Cuba, the report concludes, “has sought to undermine, degrade and destabilize America with spies and soldiers, but also with students and intellectuals; with terrorist cells, but also with solidarity committees and nonprofit networks with intelligence officers operating under diplomatic cover.”

The broadside is chilling. It is worse than McCarthyism. It presages a savage purging of American society.

We have seen this fascist dance before. We know what comes next. It is not good.

Chris Hedges is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, Presbyterian minister, author, and television host. His books include America: The Farewell Tour; American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America and War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning. He previously worked overseas for the Dallas Morning News, , and NPR, and hosted the Emmy-nominated RT America show On Contact.

By Shatha Hammad

On a large rock under the midday summer sun, Abdul Karim Hassan, 63, sat exhausted by fatigue and grief, staring the whole time toward his two sons' houses on the hill of Ras al-Ain in the village of Qusra, south of Nablus in the central West Bank. A few meters from the walls of three Palestinian homes in the town, settlers pitched a tent on August 9, 2026, and began besieging the Palestinian families in the area to force them out of their homes.

This was only the latest escalation in the series of attacks that settlers have waged on Ras al-Ain for seven months—cutting off electricity and water lines, repeatedly assaulting residents in their homes, trying to break in and burn them, setting ambushes along the road, attacking the homeowners as they moved through the area, and even attempting to kill them.

The settler-instigated siege on Qusra come less than a month after the family of Mahmoud al-Tubasi was driven from their two homes in the village of Jalud, south of Nablus, on July 22, after which Israeli settlers seized the properties.

It is part of a broader state-backed Israeli campaign, with settlers at its head, to push Palestinians out of areas slated for future settlement expansion, which not only encompass the 60% of the West Bank falling under full Israeli control classified as “Area C” under the Oslo Accords, but

“Today the family has no choice but to hold out inside the houses, ... if the world doesn’t act and stand with us against the settlers, they will succeed in driving us out.”

has also increasingly included the 22% of the territory under the civil control of the Palestinian Authority (PA), known as Area B.

A report by Human Rights Watch published on August 20, 2026, found that settler attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank have driven the full or partial displacement of 107 towns and villages since January 2023, alongside unprecedented settlement expansion. A report from the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) further found that the number of Palestinians forcibly displaced by settler attacks and demolition and eviction operations in the first four months of



Abdul Karim Hassan, whose family is besieged on the Ras al-Ain hill outside the village of Qusra, south of Nablus in the central West Bank, August 2026. Photo: Shatha Hammad

this year already exceeds the total recorded for all of 2025.

OCHA has documented an average of 6.6 settler attacks a day—the highest of any year in the agency’s records—which have left 15 Palestinians dead, including two children, as of July 24. This puts the year 2026 on track to surpass the previous record of 16 deaths from settler violence during 2023.

We met Abdul Karim on a hill in the village of Jurish, facing the hill of Ras al-Ain about 800 meters away. The spot has become a daily gathering place for resi-

dents and journalists, who spend most of their time there on alert, watching the besieged houses and tracking the movements of settlers and Israeli soldiers.

“We are going through the hardest moments of our lives, and today the family has no choice but to hold out inside the houses,” Abdul Karim, a Palestinian farmer whose sons’ homes are under siege in Ras al-Ain, told Mondoweiss. “But if the world doesn’t act and stand with us against the settlers, they will succeed in driving us out.”

Yet Abdul Karim sees no serious attempt to stop the settler attacks or prevent his family’s displacement. “Even today, the

United Nations doesn’t enforce its resolutions on Palestine, and in the Arab world, not a single voice has risen in our defense,” he said. “The settlers won’t stop at the West Bank—they’ll reach everyone. Everyone has stayed silent and done nothing.”

Abdul Karim only sleeps inside his car on the hill, which he never leaves, feeling that he is guarding a family he cannot reach. Most of his family is trapped inside the two houses: his wife, 60, his daughter Aisha, 23, and his son Rizq and Rizq’s wife. His son Yousef’s family—Yousef’s wife Ruqaya and their two daughters, Hur and Kinda, aged two and four—had their home turned into a military post by Israeli forces.

“I miss them, and I’m terrified for them,” Abdul Karim said. “There’s nothing I can do but sit and watch the settlers’ movements around the houses.”

While we were on the hill, we called Aisha to check on the family. “We’re all shut in here, like a kind of prison—and we refuse to leave, because they won’t let us come back,” Aisha, Abdul Karim’s daughter, told Mondoweiss. “The settlers and the army block anyone from reaching us.”

“We don’t sleep,” she added. “We live in constant tension and fear, but we comfort each other and keep each other strong. The settlers are around the houses all the time—but there’s no way we’re leaving here. We don’t want what happened to the Tubasi family to happen to us.”

In 2015, Abdul Karim’s family began building their two homes in Ras al-Ain, believing the area—

classified as Area B—was safe. Each house has two floors and covers 200 square meters, alongside a 15-dunam (1.5 hectare) farm that Abdul Karim planted with olive and almond trees. “This land is my identity,” he said. “Without it, I’m worthless.”

Abdul Karim is a Palestinian farmer who depends mainly on agriculture to support his family. He owns 55 dunams (5 hectares) in the villages of Qusra and Jalud, though settlers now block him from reaching most of it, including a 20-dunam vineyard.

This year he lost the entire grape season, with losses estimated at NIS 600,000 (over \$200,000). “I go and check on my land from a distance, and sometimes I go in at night,” he said. “They’ve caused enormous damage to it.”

An Attempt to Kill the Family

Settler attacks on Ras al-Ain began escalating after an outpost was set up on the land of the neighboring village of Jalud, about three kilometers from Qusra, from which settlers launched their daily attacks on Ras al-Ain. “Their attacks were concentrated at night. They tore the door off the storage shed and destroyed the farming tools inside it, wrecked the gate, and stole the fence around the house,” Abdul Karim said. “They would attack the house with stones that came down on us like rain.”

After settlers displaced the Tubasi family from their home in Jalud following a four-month siege (April 19–August 9, 2026), the danger drew closer and grew for Ras al-Ain. “As soon as the Tubasi family was displaced, we felt we might be next,” Abdul Karim said. “We took some precautions—we bought extra supplies, rebuilt the fence, and stopped leaving the houses at all.”

“A few days later, settlers put up a tent just meters from our house and completely cut off the road, so we could no longer move or travel,” Abdul Karim added.



Several families have been besieged in their homes by Israeli settlers on the Ras al-Ain hill south of Nablus in the central West Bank, August 2026. Photo: Shatha Hammad

Settlers scattered nails and sharp tools on the road to disable vehicles and block access. Abdul Karim said settlers have begun taking turns patrolling, armed with knives and clubs. “They attach sharp tools to the clubs, which proves their goal isn’t just to beat us, but to kill us,” he said. “They refuse to talk to us. They attack directly and start beating and assaulting us.”

The two houses belonging to Abdul Karim’s family have been hit by more than 10 violent attacks and break-ins by settlers, causing extensive damage to both homes. “Once we left the house for only two hours,” Abdul Karim recalled. “They took advantage of our absence, broke in, opened a 48-kilogram gas cylinder, and let it leak inside the house before leaving.”

Despite the scale of the settler attacks, Abdul Karim’s family refuses to leave their home or surrender. “Where would we go? We have no option but our homes and our land,” he said. “Nothing will embrace us but our homeland and the land we’ve worked our whole lives.”

“This isn’t only about us as a family,” he added. “If we give up and leave our houses, it won’t just be our houses that go, but all of Ras al-Ain hill. And the settlers won’t stop here—they’ll chase us into Qusra itself and displace us from the entire village too.”

The siege has not stopped at the three inhabited Palestinian homes, extending to roughly 20 buildings under construction

in the area. Their owners are barred from reaching them, and Israeli flags have already been raised over the properties.

Ras al-Ain hill rises 930 meters above sea level, overlooking Jordan to the east, the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal to the north, and Mount al-Asour to the south—placing it in a strategically important and commanding position.

Ras al-Ain, classified entirely as Area B, also holds another kind of importance: it contains four freshwater springs that serve as a main water source for Palestinians in Qusra and neighboring villages. As soon as settlers began attacking the area, they targeted the water lines, cutting them off completely.

“The settlers’ takeover of Ras al-Ain hill is part of an expanding, ongoing settlement process that started in Area C and reached the declared annexation of the Jordan Valley,” Abdul Azim al-Wadi, head of the Qusra village council, told Mondoweiss. “Today, it’s entering a second phase, reaching into Area B and seizing its most important areas.”

Al-Wadi said that since December 2025, Israeli forces have carried out nine formal evacuations of settlers from the hill. “The army would confiscate the tent but leave the settler and his sheep behind for us,” he said.

‘We Will Lose Ourselves If We Lose Ras al-Ain’

But the danger of a settler takeover of the hill goes far beyond seizing a piece of land. “If the settlers succeed in taking the hill, we will have no dignity or worth left, and we will lose ourselves if we lose Ras al-Ain,” al-Wadi said. “We are farmers, and we depend heavily on this hill. It’s not just a source of farming and water for us, but our identity and our history.”

The village of Qusra spans 9,200 dunams (920 hectares), of which only about a third—3,300 dunams (330 hectares)—remains under the village council’s jurisdiction today. It is surrounded by the settlements of Migdalim, Ahiya, Esh Kodesh, and Adei Ad, which have been expanding continuously onto Qusra’s land since October 2023. Al-Wadi said pastoral settlement outposts have driven a rapid and alarming expansion, through which settlers have seized most of Qusra’s important farmland, including the areas known as Ras al-Nakhl, al-Mu’allaga, Nabuh, Ashaki, Basalta, al-Furn, and al-Wa’ar. “Qusra has no farmland



Abdul Azim Wadi, head of the Qusra village council, speaks to Mondoweiss amid the ongoing settler siege on Palestinians in Ras al-Ain hill near the West Bank Village, August 2026. Photo: Shatha Hammad

left,” he said.

Today, settlers are pursuing Qusra’s residents toward the Ras al-Ain hill, the only space that remains. “We, the people of Qusra, have pledged not to allow ourselves to lose Ras al-Ain,” al-Wadi said. “If we lose it, we lose Qusra’s future. We’ll have no space left to exist in, and we’ll turn into a crowded camp that is only allowed to build vertically.”

On the Israeli side, the siege has taken another, more dangerous turn: Israel announced the transfer of authority over the area from the army to the Israeli police, using the events to unveil the move as part of a fresh step toward annexing the West Bank.

Al-Wadi explains that the only hope for the continued steadfastness of the families of Ras al-Ain rests squarely with Qusra’s residents, who have confronted settlers since 2014 and were among the first villages to form what are known as “popular protection committees,” based on groups of volunteers concerned with defending the community against settler violence.

“Since 2014, Qusra has given 11 martyrs, most of them killed while confronting settler attacks,” al-Wadi said. “The most recent was Amir Mu’tasim Odeh, 28, who was killed confronting a settler attack on Ras al-Ain on March 14, 2026.”

Israeli forces have also arrested around 40 people over confrontations between residents and settlers at the Ras al-Ain hill. Al-Wadi says the army has imposed steep fines on those arrested, to deter them from returning to the area.

On August 17, Loay Abu Reida, the owner of one of the besieged homes, returned to Ras al-Ain from the United States to

join the families trying to defend their houses. Though he holds American citizenship and raised the American flag over his house as soon as he arrived, settler attacks on the homes continued, stoning the homes on his second day there.

Since the siege on Ras al-Ain’s residents began, humanitarian and human rights organizations have tried to bring in food aid. UNICEF delivered aid on Saturday, August 6, and the Israeli left-wing organization, Peace Now, also tried to reach the houses and bring in some food aid on August 14.

But according to the besieged families, this cannot stop at aid deliveries and delegation visits that only stand a few meters from

the houses. What’s needed, they say, are concrete steps aimed squarely at removing the settlers and ensuring they don’t return to the area. “Speeches and slogans no longer mean anything today,” al-Wadi said. “What we need today is serious action on the ground that supports people’s steadfastness, lifts the siege on them, and removes the settlers.”

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Shatha Hammad is a Palestinian journalist specializing in in-depth features in the West Bank, where she has reported on the ground since 2011. She holds a BA in Journalism and Political Science and an MA in Contemporary Arab Studies from Birzeit University.



Ras al-Ain hill outside the village of Qusra, Photo: Shatha Hammad



'Is This How Our Story Ends?'



Israeli forces carry out a military raid in the Askar refugee camp, east of the Nablus, on August 6, 2026, just hours after the Qalandia refugee camp raid in the Ramallah area on August 5. Photo: Mohammed Nasser / apaimages

Palestinian refugees live in fear as Israel takes aim at West Bank camps

By Aseel Mafarjeh

Nothing on the night of Wednesday, August 5, suggested that the pre-dawn hours ahead would upend the life of Younis Jahjouh's family.

It was 2:30 in the morning in the Qalandia refugee camp outside Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, when an explosion shook the four-story building as the door to his home was blown open. Within seconds, dozens of soldiers' boots filled the house, and the rooms turned into a military staging ground. Roughly 40 Israeli soldiers stormed the building, led by a Palestinian captive, handcuffed and blindfolded, while soldiers spread through the floors searching every corner and overturning furniture.

Inside the building were Younis Jahjouh, 57, his wife Ghadeer, his 16-year-old daughter Aya, his sons Ahmad, Tamer, and Louay, his youngest son. Ghadeer and Aya were ordered to leave the house immediately. Younis and his sons were forced to hand over their phones before the male family members were herded into the house's small bathroom, where they remained from 3 a.m. until 5 p.m.

During those 14 hours, the house stopped being a home. Soldiers moved in and out, bringing in Palestinian captives from different neighborhoods in the camp, turning the building into a field interrogation center while its owners sat trapped in the bathroom, unaware of what was happening in the rest of their own house.

"They dragged me out of my house like an animal," Younis told Mondoweiss. "My house that I worked so hard for. I worked as an Arabic teacher, and after my shift, at a sweets shop, and I gave private lessons—all just to give my kids a better life."

Younis refused to let his sons speak to journalists, fearing their photographs or testimonies could become grounds for arrest in a future raid. When the Israeli soldiers finally left, the house was not returned to the family as it had been. When the Jahjouhs walked back inside, they found the house in chaos, littered with the traces of the Israeli raid.

"Is this really how the camp's story ends?" he added, his voice weary. "We have nothing left—no [Palestinian] authority, no minister, not even the Arab states."

The August raid on the Qalandia refugee camp, which lasted 48 hours, saw dozens of local homes raided and at least 60 people, including women and children, detained and interrogated.

According to local reports, Palestinian Red Crescent teams treated 51 people during the Israeli assault, including 38 injuries that required hospitalization, six beating-

related injuries treated in the field, one injury from a rubber-coated metal bullet and six cases of gas inhalation.

The raid sent a chilling effect through the camp. It was the second such raid on Qalandia in less than a month and came only a few days after a similar raid on Bethlehem's Dheisheh refugee camp, during which at least 25 people were arrested.

Just one week prior to the raid, Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz instructed the Israeli military to invade and occupy a new refugee camp in the West Bank and expel its residents as part of a larger military operation in the territory "to expand offensive operations against Palestinian terrorism, which is attempting to reestablish itself."

Katz's comments stoked widespread fear among camp residents, who until now had avoided the fate that befell the camps of the northern West Bank last year, that the Israeli military campaign would soon be at their doors.

Confirming Qalandia's worst fears, in a report from Israeli newspaper Yediot Ahronot, the Israeli military plans under consideration involved one of three refugee camps: Jalazone (Ramallah), Balata (Nablus), or Qalandia.

'Where Are We Supposed To Go?'

Omar Abu Halawa, 55, has run a sweets shop in Qalandia for years. For days leading up to the raid, he and so many others in the camp, were on edge. It wasn't a matter of if, but when, their turn would come.

Speaking to Mondoweiss, he recalls the moment he first heard Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir call for applying the destruction wrought on Beit Hanoun in Gaza, and on the refugee camps of the northern West Bank, to other Palestinian towns and villages: his face went pale, and he could not process what he was hearing.

"I stepped outside and found neighbors already talking, warning that Qalandia could suffer the same fate as Jenin, a camp they described as now completely emptied of people," he said, describing the moments after he heard recent remarks made by Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, calling for mass destruction to be carried out on Palestinian towns, camps, and villages in the West Bank.

Ben-Gvir's remarks came after a settler attack near the town of Tell, southwest of Nablus, where four Palestinians and two Israeli soldiers were killed. His statements coincided with Katz's orders to the army to expand military operations across the West Bank, tighten sieges on several cities and towns, accelerate home demolitions, and speed up the legalization of settlement outposts.

"Where are we supposed to go? There are no alternatives, and no one from the Palestinian Authority talks about alternatives," Abu Halawa continued. "All residents believe their turn is coming," he said, as he described near-daily Israeli incursions and home demolitions in the West Bank.

"My fear is no longer of the raids themselves, but of watching this camp become a repeat of the camps in the north, where homes are demolished, and people leave without knowing when they will return".

What is unfolding in Qalandia, which is home to a population of roughly 15,000 Palestinians, is precisely what residents of the West Bank's central and southern camps have feared for more than a year: that what happened in the Jenin and Tulkarem-area refugee camps in the north would no longer be an exception, but a template.

When Israel launched its sweeping "Iron Wall" operation to empty out three refugee camps in the northern West Bank in late January 2025, the campaign moved beyond conventional Israeli raids into mass demolition, forced displacement, and the prolonged closure of camps that has since kept thousands of residents from returning home.

Just one day before the raid on Qalandia, residents in the nearby Jalazone refugee camp, home to an estimated 10,000-13,000 people, feared it may be their turn next, after Israeli military vehicles and a heavier-than-usual troop presence gathered at the camp's entrances.

Ahmad Abu Dweik, 31, stands at the edge of the camp, wondering aloud: "What happened in Qalandia, is it going to happen in Jalazone too?"

Ahmad, who lives in a multigenerational home in the camp, runs a popular gym that serves young people in the area. Despite having dreams of growing the business, today, he no longer thinks about how to grow it—he thinks only about how to save it from destruction.

"How much time are they going to give us? Whoever started this campaign in the north and brought it here to Qalandia—it's clearly a plan for all the camps," he said.

In the family home, Ahmad's father, 65, a member of

Younis and his sons were forced to hand over their phones before the male family members were herded into the house's small bathroom, where they remained from 3 a.m. until 5 p.m.

the local Fatah political organization, directs his frustration at the Palestinian political leadership.

"As an organization, we tried to meet with any political official in the [Palestinian] Authority, and we couldn't," he said. "We don't see any real intervention to stop the demolition and expulsion operations. At the very least, tell us honestly: your turn is coming."

In Ramallah's third refugee camp, al-Amari refugee, home to 10,000—12,000 people, Motassem Nassar, 36, head of the Fatah organization in the camp and director of the Amari youth scouts, describes a reality in the camp shaped by permanent anxiety, and similar frustration with Palestinian leadership.

"In these times, people needed little explanation—they assumed, given the proximity, that their turn would follow," he said, referring to the camp's proximity to Qalandia refugee camp.

Most days, Nassar finds himself trying to address fast-spreading rumors in the camp about Israel's next military target. But despite his membership in Fatah, the ruling party of the Palestinian Authority, he can't provide answers to people's most basic questions: do people stay in their homes and wait? Or should they start getting ready to leave now and look for shelter elsewhere?

People are living under the frustrating weight of two impossible scenarios: "One that means a probable loss, and one that means a fear with no end," Nassar said.

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Aseel Mafarjeh is a West Bank-focused journalist, focusing on stories that speak of the challenges and creativity of youth in Palestine.

From Gaza to Lebanon: A Scorched-Earth Strategy

By Margaux Seigneur

On the morning of October 9, 2023, Oday Abousari, 31, was working on his land in Dhayra, a village in southern Lebanon, when several bombs struck nearby. The farmer's eyesight quickly became blurred, and a suffocating smell spread around him. "I immediately ran home to take shelter and close the windows. I knew that what had just happened was unlike anything I had ever experienced," he recalls. Hours later, when Abousari finally ventured outside, his family's olive trees, hundreds of years old, were ablaze, as were all of his tobacco plantations. More than 15 years of labor put into growing tobacco had been destroyed. "My paradise was burning before my eyes," he remembers.

Israeli forces bombed Dhayra on October 9, 13, and 16, injuring at least nine civilians and damaging many fields, homes, and other infrastructure. In this village where the majority of residents depend on farming, these kinds of bombardments are tantamount to a death sentence. In those bombings, Abousari lost 23 of his goats, all 3 cows, nearly 120 chickens, his tractors, and, most painfully, the fields that his family had been cultivating with devotion for over 100 years.

Today, the village of Dhayra lies in ruins. "I went back there during the ceasefire and didn't recognize anything," Abousari says. "The schools, the mosque, and the houses had vanished, completely destroyed by the Israel Defense Forces. The bodies of my relatives buried in the cemetery had been swept away by the Israeli's bulldozers. I don't know where they are."

In the face of growing cross-border hostilities, Abousari has had to flee his home three times since March 2024. Every time he has tried to return to his land, but Dhayra is now under Israeli occupation, and the constant threat of Israeli drones that hover in the sky above his farm is now keeping him away. "They didn't want us to return," he says. "They were constantly harassing us."

Abousari—who now lives with his wife, their two children, and his parents in the village of Al-Abbassieh, in southern Lebanon's Tyre municipality—prays for the day he can return to his village but worries that the land might be irreparably poisoned. He is also concerned about some troubling physical symptoms he has been experiencing. "Since the attack, I can't breathe as I used to. I get breathless very quickly, but I'm afraid to go and see the doctor," he says, adding that he doesn't want to face the reality of the potential diagnosis.

Abousari's concerns are valid. Several independent investigations have found that the weapons used by the IDF during its attacks on Dhayra and other civilian areas in southern Lebanon during the current escalation of cross-border

"Since the renewal of hostilities, more than 50 villages have disappeared from the map. Entirely leveled, bulldozed. Not only infrastructure and lands are being targeted. We have seen repeated cases of ancient olive trees being uprooted, some of them five or six hundred years old."

hostilities included United States-supplied munitions that contain white phosphorus—a toxic, highly combustible chemical whose use in war is restricted under international law due to its devastating, and often fatal, effects.

Lebanon has condemned the use of such weapons as a deliberate act of ecocide aimed at making southern Lebanon uninhabitable.

According to the World Health Organization, white phosphorus is "harmful to humans by all routes of exposure." This chemical substance ignites instantly upon contact with oxygen, and it can cause severe burns, respiratory issues, and death in humans and wildlife. It scorches any vegetation it touches.

"White phosphorus will continue to burn at 816°C [1500°F] until it is completely consumed or the oxygen supply is cut off," explains Rami Zurayk, professor of ecosystem management and soil science at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. Once ignited, white phosphorus is incredibly difficult to put out. The chemical can also lie hidden in the soil and spontaneously combust when uncovered, posing a continuing threat to the people living in a contaminated zone.

"We have verified footage and [have] documented a pattern of serious violations of the laws of war by Israel in Lebanon since October 2023," says Ramzi Kaiss, re-

one or both parents had been exposed to white phosphorus during the First Gaza War.)

In southern Lebanon, the use of white phosphorus munitions and types of bombs during the current war has ignited fires across wide swaths of land, accelerating the destruction of agricultural areas and contributing to the gradual emptying of the region. According to Lebanese officials, the war has displaced more than 1 million people in the country, killed more than 4,300, and left the landscape littered with unexploded bombs.

Ahmad Beydoun, an architect and PhD researcher at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands, has documented and mapped nearly 250 white phosphorus strikes by Israeli forces in south Lebanon between October 2023 and November 2024. Beydoun found that 39% of uses were in residential areas, 17% in agricultural lands, and 44% in forested or open terrain. According to his findings, approximately 91% of all verified incidents occurred before Israel's ground invasion of Lebanon in October 2024.

"While the stated purpose of white phosphorus is bat-



The Israeli army is unlawfully using deadly white phosphorous and other chemical weapons to destroy farmlands and forests in southern Lebanon, reports reveal.

searcher at Human Rights Watch, who cited the repeated use of white phosphorus over densely populated areas, alongside strikes that have targeted civilians, journalists, medical workers, and peacekeepers. In the absence of any credible accountability mechanism, Kaiss argues, these actions have continued with near-total impunity.

Human Rights Watch analyzed footage recorded in Lebanon and Gaza on October 10 and 11, respectively, documenting multiple airburst detonations of white phosphorus munitions over the port of Gaza City and in two rural areas along the Israel-Lebanon border. Yet efforts to assess the full extent of contamination have been obstructed as Israel has prevented access and blocked the materials needed to conduct such analyses in Gaza, notes Azra Chang, a UK-based independent researcher and consultant in healthcare systems and strategy. As a result, the number of victims, as well as the broader scale of environmental poisoning, remains unknown.

"We are already seeing signs of toxicity, particularly in children, including congenital abnormalities and a rise in chronic illnesses, especially where water sources may be contaminated," Chang says. Because proper laboratory testing are being prevented, many cases remain unconfirmed, she adds. But among children evacuated from Gaza with unexplained liver and kidney damage, Chang notes that "if they were tested [they] would have [shown] poisoning as a result of the toxic environment." (A 2012 study published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health found that in 27% of the families with children who had birth defects,

tlefield concealment, its extensive use prior to the invasion of Israeli forces suggests that the weapon was deployed in contexts not directly linked to troop movement ... 79% of strikes occurred during daylight hours, while 21% took place at night. The overwhelming daytime concentration contradicts claims that white phosphorus was deployed for illumination," details Beydoun's website, WhitePhosphorus.info.

Since the start of the war, Israeli attacks have damaged 22% of Lebanon's farmland, the country's agriculture minister, Nizar Hani, told The New Arab. In the south of the country, agriculture structures daily life and sustains entire communities. Some 70% of Lebanon's citrus fruit and 90% of its bananas are produced in this region.

The Lebanese government says IDF has been using other chemicals as well. It has accused the Israeli military of spraying glyphosate—an herbicide classified by the World Health Organization as "potentially carcinogenic"—along its borders with Lebanon and Syria in early February of this year. Laboratory analyses commissioned by the Lebanese government found that glyphosate concentrations in some samples were 20 and 30 times higher than the levels typically considered acceptable.

The use of such a powerful herbicide, which threatens soil fertility and human health, could hinder the return of displaced communities to the area, says Kaiss of Human Rights Watch. "These areas are heavily dependent on agriculture, including olive groves, tobacco, and other crops, and this incident complicates people's

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'My Life Has Become a Rollercoaster'

Francesca Albanese on death threats and dread after accusing Israel of genocide

By Julian Borger

When the U.N. special rapporteur published her report "Anatomy of a Genocide" in March 2024, she was lionized by some and demonized by the Trump government. She describes what happened next.

In retrospect, arranging to interview Francesca Albanese in a cafe was not the best plan. Before we could start, the waitress wanted a photo with the Italian human rights lawyer. So did the cashier. Then the cook came out of the kitchen in his whites for a group photo. Some of the customers wanted their turn. Albanese was gracious with all comers and chatty in three languages, so the process took some time.

Albanese, 49, has been getting similar rock star welcomes everywhere she goes lately, which is not the norm for unpaid U.N. legal experts. In other times, her job title—U.N. special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967—would sound like a recipe for obscurity. She is one of more than 40 special rapporteurs, human rights experts appointed to do pro bono investigations and reports on areas of concern.

These are no ordinary times, however. The untreated wound of Israel-Palestine has shown its capacity every generation to give the rest of the world a fever. The Hamas attack on 7 October 2023, which killed about 1,200 people, provoked a ferocious Israeli response that has killed more than 75,000 Palestinians—up to 500,000 by some counts—in Gaza, displaced more than 90% of its population and reduced the overwhelming bulk of the territory to ruins.

Albanese was not the first person to describe the Israeli military campaign as a genocide, but she was the first person with the initials U.N. in her title to do so. She has used her megaphone consistently over the past two years not just to condemn the Israeli government and its military, but also the constellation of western states and corporations that have abetted them. Her message, delivered emphatically in person and in a series of U.N. reports, is that we are living in an interlocking system that has shown itself capable of mass killing.

For her public stance, Albanese's life

has been threatened and her family put in danger. She has faced the prospect of arrest in Germany for her choice of words. Donald Trump's administration has named her a "specially designated national", a term usually reserved for terrorists, drug traffickers and the occasional murderous dictator. She is the first U.N. official to have received the designation. "It was bad. That sort of puts you together with mass murderers and drug dealers of international proportions," Albanese says. "It was a paradox of facing one of the harshest forms of punishment without due process, because I've not even been afforded the possibility to defend myself. I've just been sanctioned without trial."

Trump's executive order sanctioning Albanese prohibited any American person or entity from providing her with "funds, goods or services"—a description so broad it has been compared to a "civil death". Her apartment in Washington, bought when she and her family

were living in the U.S. capital, has been seized. She can no longer use a credit card anywhere in the world, as almost all such transactions are processed by U.S.-based services. "I go around with cash or I have to borrow from friends and family," she says. "I've not even been afforded the possibility to defend myself. I've just been sanctioned without trial."

Albanese says. "He has stellar records of performance in all his positions." Cali and the couple's 13-year-old daughter, a U.S. citizen, are suing Trump and top administration officials in federal district court in Washington for the breach of their constitutional rights under the first, fourth and fifth amendments and seizure of property without due process. Under U.N. policy,

Albanese is not able to bring the case in person; a group of U.S. law professors filed an amicus brief on the family's behalf, warning of the "chilling effect" the personalized sanctions had on free speech.

"The genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia did not bring this mass reaction," Albanese says. "So it means that human rights are

Also among the characters is Alon Confino, an Italian Israeli university professor who died in 2024; he came to Albanese's defence when she was first accused of antisemitism. He was among the hundreds of Jewish progressives with whom she has campaigned against definitions of antisemitism that include criticism of the Israeli state.

Albanese has been widely criticised for drawing parallels between the Israeli government's policies in Gaza and the Third Reich, and approvingly commenting on a split-screen post on X in 2024 which compared Benjamin Netanyahu to Hitler.

She defends her use of historical parallels, arguing that the international community should learn from the past in order to identify, prevent and stop genocide being committed in our time. She does admit to regrets, but only in reference to particular remarks she made in 2014, when she alleged that the U.S. was "subjugated by the Jewish lobby," a phrase criticised as echoing antisemitic tropes of Jewish control over national governments. She still insists, however, that these comments did not reflect antisemitism.

"You have never heard me saying anything that refers to the Jewish people in a derogative way, other than [reference to] the 'Jewish lobby' which I used in 2014, really out of ignorance about the fact that it could be a trope." She says she was referring specifically to the influential role in U.S. politics played by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

Her book traces the roots of Albanese's professed "intolerance for injustice" to growing up in a small town in southern Italy, in a world suffused with organised crime in which a citizen is only as successful as their political connections.

Her disdain for this pervasive corruption was inspired by her parents, who refused to succumb to it.

Her role models were Italy's martyrs to justice: Paolo Borsellino, an anti-mafia magistrate assassinated by a car bomb in 1992, and his colleague Giovanni Falcone, killed the same year with his wife and three bodyguards when the mafia blew up a whole section of motorway as their car was passing over it. "That planted an important seed in me," she said.

She thought of them especially when she began to receive death threats after she presented her March 2024 report on the Gaza conflict, which she called "Anatomy of a Genocide." One anonymous caller said her daughter would be raped, giving the name of the school she attended in Tunis, Tunisia, where the family lives. Albanese went to the police for protection. While she doesn't give details of the arrangements, she says: "I have what I need."

She describes the period after that report as "brutal."

"That is when I started wondering. Is it worth it? I have two kids. What if they harm them? I cannot take this responsibility," she says. She describes the dilemma as an "unresolved question", although what she says next suggests she has resolved it for the time being: "There is a lot that I'm putting on the line, but, at the same time, I don't have any alterna-

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She accuses pro-Israel activists based in Geneva of hounding her husband, Massimiliano Cali, a senior economist at the World Bank, until he was fired. "The World Bank was completely craven," Al-

better understood now. This is a test for universality of rights and for humanity."

The difference in the public response is due partly to western complicity. The slaughter in Rwanda was carried out with machetes, the mass executions in Srebrenica by machine guns and assault rifles. Many Palestinians in Gaza were killed by precision bombs supplied by the U.S., guided by AI-assisted, target-selecting algorithms. It is very much a genocide of the 21st century.

Alongside her human rights advocacy, Albanese is bringing out a book, "When the World Sleeps: Stories, Words and Wounds of Palestine," which is part memoir and part elegy to the Palestinians for what she sees as their dignity under oppression and their "rage without hate". The book is built around the stories of 10 characters, beginning with Hind Rajab, a five-year-old girl who was killed in January 2024 in Gaza, curled up on the back seat of a family car, alongside four cousins, after hours appealing for help on a telephone call to the Palestinian Red Crescent.

Trump's executive order sanctioning Albanese prohibited any American person or entity from providing her with "funds, goods or services"—a description so broad it has been compared to a "civil death."

has been threatened and her family put in danger. She has faced the prospect of arrest in Germany for her choice of words. Donald Trump's administration has named her a "specially designated na-

She accuses pro-Israel activists based in Geneva of hounding her husband, Massimiliano Cali, a senior economist at the World Bank, until he was fired. "The World Bank was completely craven," Al-

Lebanon to Gaza

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ability to return to their homes, maintain their livelihoods, and rebuild after extensive destruction,” he says.

For Ghassan Salamé, Lebanese minister of culture, the ongoing destruction marks a decisive shift. “Since the renewal of hostilities, more than 50 villages have disappeared from the map. Entirely leveled, bulldozed. Not only infrastructure and lands are being targeted. We have seen repeated cases of ancient olive trees being uprooted, some of them five or six hundred years old,” he said in a March interview over the phone.

What is unfolding, he suggests, resembles a systematic clearing in which homes, infrastructure, and agricultural lands are dismantled by the IDF.

In the foreword to a report examining the environmental damage caused during the 2023-2024 invasion, Lebanon’s environment minister, Tamara El Zein, accuses Israel’s military of committing “an act of ecocide.”

The report, released by the Lebanese Ministry of Environment and the National Council for Scientific Research in



Israeli shelling targets the southern Lebanese village of Kfar Kila in October 2024.

April, warns that contamination of soils by heavy metals and other conflict-related pollutants may have long-term environmental and agricultural consequences. It concludes that Israeli aggression has “reshaped both the physical and ecological landscape” of southern Lebanon. The

scale of the damage is not only visible via satellites. It is measurable. According to the report, attacks by Israeli forces have damaged 5,000 hectares of forest cover, destroyed \$118 million in agriculture assets, and contaminated soils with phosphorus concentrations up to 1,858 parts

per million, with particular contamination hotspots in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley in the east.

“What is being destroyed is not just what people have built but the environment that sustains them,” says Zurayk of the American University of Beirut, who also directs the university’s food security program and is a founding member of the Arab Network for Food Sovereignty. “The method is strikingly consistent,” he says. “Whether in Gaza, where the destruction is total, or in southern Lebanon, the same justification is invoked: The landscape is framed as a form of wild resistance that must be cleared. What follows is a process of transformation and Westernization of the land, reshaped to dispossess Indigenous populations and refit the territory to the needs and ways of the occupier.”

“When you destroy the habitat, people leave,” Zurayk adds. “That is the most basic principle of scorched earth and ecocide. Both are being implemented by Israel in Palestine and Lebanon.”

Margaux Seigneur is a French independent reporter covering Ukraine, Lebanon, Pakistan, Iraq, and other countries. Her work documents daily life in war and post-conflict societies and the enduring impacts

Francesca Albanese

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tive. I still need to continue to throw water on the fire and I have a bigger bucket right now ... and strong arms.”

Her big bucket is the U.N. mandate her team has to investigate and report at the highest level internationally and she intends to continue throwing water for the remaining two years of her second three-year term. In June 2025, Albanese published a report titled “From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide,” which showed how many of the world’s corporations, including household names, had investments linked to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories.

Last year, Germany tried to ban her and sent riot police to a venue where she was due to speak. The police even threatened to arrest her for having referred to two genocides Germany carried out in the first half of the 20th century: that of the Herero and Nama peoples in Namibia and then the Holocaust.

By putting the two in the same category, she was told she had trivialised the Holocaust, potentially a criminal offence. She had also referred to the area under Israeli

control as “from the river to the sea”, a phrase banned in Germany because of its use by Hamas.

She describes the UK as more outwardly polite, although she adds: “[Keir] Starmer probably hates me as much as [Giorgia] Meloni and [Emmanuel] Macron.” She describes the UK government’s suppression of Palestine Action as “brutal” and the prime minister as a “monster” for arguing in 2023 that Israel “has the right” to cut off electricity and gas to Gaza: “You’re not a human rights person at all if you say such a monstrosity. And the university who gave you your law degree should take it away from you.”

Another of the café’s customers, a young woman, approached, asking, “Can I just interrupt you to say that I admire you. Thank you. You’re doing a great job,” she tells Albanese. The admirer is Greek, and Albanese is delighted, telling her she will soon be presenting the Greek translation of her book in Athens and that they should meet again then.

It’s another reminder of the special rapporteur’s extraordinary visibility and clout. When the woman had gone, Albanese addressed the possibility of a future in politics. “In Italy, some people are scared and some hopeful that I’m going to get into a political party. And, frankly, if there was a party that really looked like a home big enough for me to continue to be who I am, I would do it,” she says, before quickly adding: “There is not.”

That evening, a long line of students from around the world, many with Palestinian keffiyehs, formed outside the University of Geneva to hear Albanese speak. It is the second event she has been invited to on the campus and the hall is packed well beyond its 400 capacity.

She speaks the same way to the crowd as she does in private—chatty, humorous, anecdotal and sweeping. She offers a narrative of hope that the world is in the throes of transformation. “Justice will bloom for you and your children,” she tells the hall. “We have it in our power to undo this. We will change it. Collectively, we are doing better. This is the first genocide that has caused an upheaval.

“Palestine has become a wound, but it has become our wound.”

The students applaud virtually every second sentence and almost all of them stay to ask questions. A young Georgian woman gets up to say that Albanese has inspired everyone in her circle. Another woman asks how

to find political courage, hinting that she has lost a job for speaking out about

Gaza. Albanese’s counsel is never to concede: “My life has become a rollercoaster,” she says in reference to the death threats and sanctions. “I never imagined living without a bank card, but I do.

“People help me. My freedom is stronger than my fear. You are defeated the moment you stop fighting.”

This article was originally published by the Guardian.

Julian Borger is an English journalist and non-fiction writer. He is the world affairs editor at The Guardian. He was part of the Guardian team that won the Pulitzer Prize for public service in 2014.

Answering a Question

by Larry Kerschner

The first man I killed was small and hidden in the tall grass.

Being a killer forever changes you. Even if you learn to be kind and considerate and civilized that part of you is always hiding down inside awaiting a chance.

A normal person does not want to kill and will avoid it at all costs. The military won’t allow you to remain normal. It doesn’t matter if you think you are smart enough not to get caught up in their lies. They will change you.

Don’t be sucked into the biggest myth and lie that dying for your country is somehow heroic.

Really be all that you can be.

Larry Kerschner is a Viet Nam veteran.



Dockworkers

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for an escalation emerged from a meeting of the port workers unions held in Istanbul in May. The announcement also expresses “full solidarity with the peoples of Cuba, Venezuela and Sudan,” and declares that “ports must not be used for the transport of arms, ammunition, military equipment or troops destined for war zones.”

“No to the war economy, government rearmament plans, and the project of militarization of ports and strategic infrastructure from [the] EU,” the unions assert in their statement. “Public resources must be used to meet people’s social needs, not to finance war.” Signatories include CGT FNP in France, ENEDEP in Greece, LAB in Basque Country, LI-MAN-IS in Turkey, ODT in Morocco, and ORSA Porti and USB in Italy.

Since October 2023, Palestinian trade unionists have repeatedly called on union members around the world to go on strike and refuse to handle arms shipments to Israel, to protest the latter’s military campaign in Gaza, which has been denounced as a genocide by leading human rights groups and scholars. (The United States has provided crucial political and financial support to Israel.) On April 5, 2025, the General Federation of Trade Unions in Gaza appealed to unionists to “create real pressure to stop this dirty war.” Dockworkers have played a spirited role in answering this call.

From Belgium to Sweden to Italy, dockworkers have refused to handle weapons components bound for Gaza, and on February 6, they shut down 21 ports across the Mediterranean, including Bilbao and Tangier, to protest the use of civilian port infrastructure for military purposes, and the incorporation of their jobs into a war economy.

The statement follows Italy’s two general strikes in the fall of 2025 in solidarity with Palestinians. Ten months ago, about 60 dockworkers gathered at the Port Authority building in Civitavecchia, a small Italian coastal town northwest of Rome. It was September 22, 2025, and they had



A rally of mostly dockworkers in Genoa, Italy, in response to attacks on the Global Sumud Flotilla, on October 3, 2025. Photo by Emanuela Zampa

walked off their jobs earlier that day, shutting down the port as part of a general strike to protest the Italian government’s status as the third largest supplier of arms to Israel. Where they stood, they were surrounded by about 600 people cheering them on—students, teachers, railway workers, public sector workers—a significant crowd for a tiny town.

“Public resources must be used to meet people’s social needs, not to finance war.”

“It was a beautiful sight to see the dockworkers surrounded by their city,” recalls Riccardo Petrarolo, who serves on the national coordination body for Italy’s ports with Unione Sindacale di Base (USB).

The dockworkers started getting WhatsApp messages from colleagues in larger cities, like Livorno and Genoa, reporting that workers had shut down their ports, too. And news of strikes and closures were also rolling in from the media. “They were saying the exact same thing was happening at the other harbors,” Petrarolo says. When the dockworkers announced each new shutdown over a speaker system, Petrarolo tells me, the crowd let out “a loud cheer, like at a stadium.”

These actions are the product of decades of worker-built relationships with Palestinians, and years of organizing against participation in arms shipments. On August 30, 2025, 40,000 people rallied in Genoa to send off the Global Sumud

Flotilla to deliver food and aid to Gaza. For seafaring people—the workers who labor on the docks, load and unload ships, repair and move equipment, and transport goods to other ports—the flotilla’s struggles to reach Gaza resonated deeply, and attacks against the vessels

provoked profound anger.

Riccardo Rudino, a dockworker with the city’s Collettivo Autonomo Lavoratori Portuali (Autonomous Port Workers’ Collective, CALP), declared to the crowd that sent the ship off, “If, even for 20 minutes, we lose contact with our comrades on the flotilla, we will block all of Europe: from Genoa’s docks. Not a single nail will leave. It will be a global strike.”

Genoa dockworkers soon called for a general strike on September 22, to protest Italy’s complicity in the onslaught on Gaza, and USB, which has roughly 100,000 members in both the private and public sectors, supported the action. About half a million people walked off

the job that day, and 1 million took part in protests across Italian towns and cities. Highways, streets, and subways were shut down, as people across the country took up the call, “Blocchiamo tutto,” or “Block everything.”

José Nivoi, a dockworker and spokesperson for CALP, an independent dockworker union in Genoa, sailed with the Global Sumud Flotilla, and gave an interview from aboard the vessel on September 23 in support of the strike. “The mobilizations we have been carrying out until recently were totally in support of Palestine and we never backed down,” he said.

Then, on October 1 and 2 of 2025, Israel intercepted the vessels of the flotilla and arrested the hundreds of people on board. The time had come to make good on the threat of “not a single nail.” Italian organizers responded with an even bigger general strike on October 3. This time, the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), the largest union federation in Italy, called for the strike, as

From Belgium to Sweden to Italy, dockworkers have refused to handle weapons components bound for Gaza, and on February 6, they shut down 21 ports across the Mediterranean.

did USB. An estimated 2 million people protested in more than 80 cities. Ports and highways were blocked and shut down, rail lines were disrupted, and schools and universities closed.

“This was organized very quickly and outside of the legal framework in Italy, and as before, involved large and small cities, and many people taking to the streets in solidarity,” says Petrarolo from USB. “This, of course, involved a reaction from the Italian state, which involved fines to the unions, and police and judicial actions against organizers. But this did not stop the organizing, and the actual result was that the next day 1 million people took to the streets in Rome.”

Dockworkers are hoping to build on the momentum. The announcement of the October 30 day of action is based on the “Istanbul Declaration,” which was endorsed by all signatories. Alongside their anti-war demands, workers are insisting that “collective agreements must guarantee real wage increases, secure employment, reduced working hours, and fair pension provisions.” And they don’t want mechanization or artificial intelligence to “eliminate jobs or undermine workers’ rights.”

The unions say, “We are ready to meet with organized groups of dockworkers and port workers from any other ports interested in becoming part of this common struggle.”

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Sarah Lazare is the editor of Workday Magazine and a contributing editor for In These Times. She tweets at @sarahlazare.

Anthropocene

By Caitlin Johnstone

We can make a home here.
In these ruins.
In this shattered civilization
full of walking autopsies
where every twinkle in the night sky
is an Elon Musk satellite.

Life can still thrive here.
Even in the Anthropocene.
Even in the middle
of secular armageddon.
There is still moss
in the cracks of the parking lot.
There are still pigeons
roosting in the rafters.

We can make a nest here, too,
out of the plastics and the packaging,
out of the shell casings

and the trillions of chicken bones.
We can rake it into a pile
and lay listening to the ghosts
of the extinct megafauna
and get haunted by the spirits
of the forests that used to be.

It is good to breathe deeply
of the fumes of this wasteland.
The air still crackles
with strange and crooked sorcery.
The earth is still packed full
of winking Buddhas
inside winking Buddhas.
He wears a hazmat suit these days
(he’s not an idiot),
but you can still see him winking
in the iridescent petrol puddles,
and in the shopping cart saints
on the wounded sidewalks,
and even in the shark-eyed stare
of the war pundits on Fox News.

Did you know they’ve discovered
a type of fungus in Chernobyl
which feeds on the radiation there?
When I first learned this I fell to my
knees
and wept tears of wonder and joy.
The water poured from my seaweed
head
and washed cigarette butts
down the gutter.

We are swimming in an ocean of
miracles.
We are living on a giant cocoon.
We have barely begun
to scratch the surface of this world.
Every moment is a leap
into the great Unknown.

I kneel before the black mold in
Chernobyl.

An angel egg is beginning to hatch.

The Ukraine Delusion

By Nate Bear

I've held back on writing about the Russia-Ukraine war, and this article probably won't win me many fans. But for better or worse, I always try to tell it how I, at least, see it. And I'm tired. Tired of the liberal delusion, the hypocrisy, the childish analysis, and outright blood-thirstiness over Ukraine.

I'm tired of the pretence that a proxy war which has now lasted longer than the first world war is a righteous battle against evil for the soul of the world.

I'm tired of the fact that wanting an end to a war which has killed hundreds of thousands of young men, and thousands of civilians, is seen by some as an outrageous, morally deplorable position.

I'm tired of the fact that rational analysis and context is so often labelled as pro-Putin apologia, and how it is almost impossible to get good information on the war that isn't formation and analysis which recognises that Russia isn't losing, that Ukraine is suffering, still too often suggests that the west must wage this war for many more years. This otherwise rational analysis, while detailing all the ways in which Ukraine is definitely not winning the war, nevertheless concludes that it must be fought for many more years to avoid "a bad peace."

Time and again we see the same conclusion. That to give Russia what it wants, namely Crimea, the four annexed oblasts and a neutral Ukraine, would be a "bad peace" that rewards aggression. But few politicians or journalists when selling this story ever spell out explicitly what a "good peace" is and what it would require. But we don't have to guess. Zelensky has on many occasions. And he has



surveillance state. And this position rests atop a childish assertion repeated ad nauseum that grants the war its legitimacy: that Russia's invasion of Ukraine was "unprovoked."

Nothing is ever unprovoked. You can agree or disagree with whether the provocation warranted the reaction. But unprovoked is not an analysis, it is an emotional appeal, and in the case of Russia-Ukraine, it is propaganda designed to obscure the long history which led to Russia's invasion.

It is, in many ways, not dissimilar to the propaganda that October 7 was an unprovoked attack on Israel. Or that Pearl Harbour was an unprovoked attack on the United States.

Narratives that strip out cause and effect and proclaim that a bad thing just happened without any preceding events, that good people were then drawn reluctantly into war to defend themselves

was repeatedly broken until NATO stretched to Russia's borders. The preceding events also include the NATO-backed remilitarization of Ukraine following the ousting of Victor Yanukovich in 2014, the Russian annexation of Crimea in response, and Ukraine's bombing of the Donbass. It includes an acute understanding among the Russian leadership that Napoleonic France, imperial Germany, and Nazi Germany all crossed Ukraine to invade Russia itself.

You don't have to think that Russia was right to invade Ukraine to try to understand why it invaded Ukraine, a consideration we are never prompted to investigate in a discourse dominated by normative moral judgements viewed exclusively through the lens of Western imperialism. The shape of post-2014 Ukraine made Russia fearful that the country could once again be the launchpad for an invasion. And it wasn't as if Putin hid this fact. He repeatedly warned, into late 2021 and early 2022, that the further militarization of Ukraine was a red line and if Ukraine and the West refused diplomacy, Russia would act. He hadn't been that bothered about Ukraine before 2014, there was no war talk, because it wasn't the threat then that he perceived it became.

Again, this is not a defense of Putin, it is a question of cause and effect, and of the Western arrogance and hubris that believes only its red lines on geostrategic issues are valid. Would the U.S. have allowed a military alliance led by China to be built up through South America, reaching Mexico without a response? Would Western media have dismissed American concerns about Chinese militarism as paranoid nonsense if Chinese military bases were dotted throughout South America? Of course not! The media would have demanded war and sold us war. But when the roles are reversed, American militarism becomes mere Russian paranoia.

And now the war that NATO expansionism threatened is not just here but is in danger of becoming a permanent fixture of our lives, with European economies

embracing the bloodshed and building war economies. And to build these war economies, the liberal class is demanding more cuts to a welfare state already decimated, in many places, by two decades of austerity. This week the *Financial Times* ran an article headlined "Europe must trim its welfare state to build a warfare state," demonstrating the brazenness with which anti-working class, hyper-capitalist, hyper-imperialist prescriptions are now presented as sensible opinion.

A "warfare state" all to fight a mythical Russia that didn't invade Ukraine with anything like a force sufficient to conquer the country, but as a final gambit to force Ukraine to the negotiating table. Of course it failed. The liberal media and political class, however, continue to insist that Russia's goal is full conquest, with more to follow, in order to legitimize the creation of war economies. That the liberal class would rather build a warfare state that decimates the welfare state to confront Russia, rather than seek diplomacy and partnership with a country that is home to huge volumes of minerals needed to build, for example, a cleaner energy system, is a demonstration of utter failure.

And who would these "warfare state" economies be powered by? In part, Israel, which has agreed a \$4 billion deal with Greece to supply an air defense system, supplied a similar system to Germany for the same price last year, and handed over a half-billion-dollar missile system to Slovakia.

Israel is a part of the Ukraine-Russia war story in other very important ways, some of which now look decidedly self-defeating for Ukraine and Zelensky.

When the war on Iran started, Zelensky enthusiastically embraced it and regurgitated all the classics, saying that the U.S.-Israeli assault was a good thing because it would "rid the Iranian people of a terrorist regime." In March, with the war on Iran raging, he urged Netanyahu to work with him, saying, "He has what I need and I have what he needs." But now Ukraine is out of interceptor missiles because

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Would the U.S. have allowed a military alliance led by China to be built up through South America, reaching Mexico without a response? Would Western media have dismissed American concerns about Chinese militarism as paranoid nonsense if Chinese military bases were dotted throughout South America?

maintained the only way the war can end is if Russia returns to Ukraine not just the four oblasts annexed in 2022, but also Crimea, and he also wants security guarantees that would amount to the effective integration of Ukraine into NATO.

This is a delusional position that guarantees never peace and a forever war. And forever war isn't an abstract. It means forever death. Forever destruction. It means European societies becoming securitized and militarized, with the Russian foe a ready-made excuse for a Palantir-powered

against bad people, is the oldest trick in the war propaganda book designed to shut down critical intellectual inquiry.

So, briefly, the events preceding Russia's invasion of Ukraine include a 1990 promise made by then-U.S. Secretary of State James Baker that if post-Soviet Russia allowed a unified Germany to remain in NATO, "NATO would not shift one inch eastward." It was a promise made with an understanding that Russia was a legitimate country with legitimate security interests. That promise of course

Courage for Peace, Not for War

By Kathy Kelly

Can we escape the terrors of our time? In September of 2025, during a Saturday vigil in Stockholm's Odenplan Square, Isak Hernández, age nine, asked if he could recite a poem he wrote. Deeply troubled by images he saw, day and night, from Gaza, he resolved not to be silent. "Their lives are not numbers," Isak declared. "Their dreams are not ashes." His refrain repeated: "I won't be silent," and he begged the world, "Listen to me."

Isabella Lundgren, a Swedish jazz vocalist, heard Isak deliver his poem. She felt his words had reverberated throughout Sweden. No one could possibly turn away. Everyone, she said, bore the responsibility of witnessing. She and Isak collaborated to turn his poem into a song entitled "Their dreams are not ashes."

Their witness is crucial for counteracting decisions on the part of countries that have newly decided to enter NATO.

We should acknowledge that NATO has done nothing to stop the U.S.-provisioned Israeli genocide or to restrain Israel.

On the contrary, NATO seeks fuller integration of Israel's "security" into NATO



Count Folke Bernadotte (l) and American diplomat Dr. Ralph Bunche.
Photo: Courtesy of the Swedish Red Cross

strategies. What's more, trade between Israel and European countries continues.

The Swedish government ought to argue that NATO must force Israel to end their genocide of Palestinian people.

We should note that Israel possesses at

least 91 thermonuclear weapons, which it refuses to declare. Each of these weapons would cause the death of at least six million people—a Holocaust in a can, waiting to be opened on human civilization's last day. A planetary omnicide compris-

ing every conceivable genocide, military analysts agree, is almost certain to occur days, hours, or even minutes after any of these weapons are ever again used.

Sadly, Sweden's hurried entry into NATO in 2024, alongside the rise of armaments industries and even support for nuclear weapons acquisition, compromises Sweden's historic capacity to resist the rush into unimaginable genocides.

What are the major threats we all face? Surely, the list must begin with the possibility of nuclear annihilation. Next, we must reckon with possible ecological collapse. Following this, we must prepare for outbreaks of new pandemics. And, achingly, we must oppose genocide. War is not the answer. Militarism exacerbates each of these threats.

Now, as corrupt political leaders extract the hard-earned resources of people throughout Europe and pour those resources into bulging coffers of, primarily, U.S. military contractors, it's crucial to hear Isak Hernández's pledge not to be silent. We also can learn from the legacy of Sweden's heroic diplomat, Count Folke Bernadotte.

As vice president of Sweden's Red Cross, during World War II, he witnessed firsthand how prisoners in concentration camps suffered. He resolved to negotiate with SS leader Heinrich Himmler for the release of prisoners. Bernadotte collaborated with Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian relief groups to create the White Buses campaign. Ultimately, they managed to free over 17,000 thousand prisoners from concentration camps.

During World War II, Adolph Hitler, eager as current European leaders for war with Russia, plainly aimed to eliminate the Jews in Europe. He wanted to create "Grossedeutschland,"—"Greater Germany." The SS had turned into an immense bureaucracy under Himmler's control, systematically enacting Hitler's hideous "final solution." Amid chaotic and extremely dangerous conditions Bernadotte and his team steadily negotiated liberation and transport of prisoners.

Sune Persson records, in *Escape from the Third Reich: Folke Bernadotte and the White Buses*, the minutes from the May 13, 1945, gathering of the Jewish Stockholm community. The chairperson thanked the Swedish Red Cross and Count Bernadotte:

"When the assembly now gathers here today, it is with a strong sense of entering a new epoch. These recent times, darker than humanity has ever known them, have reached a climax, so desperately coveted, and we stand—yearning, inquiring, hopeful—on the threshold of a new world ... We would like to think at this moment of the admirable rescue operation undertaken by the Swedish Red Cross, bringing thousands of people—among them a considerable number of Jews—here to our country, to liberation from the horrors of the concentration camps and a terrible demise."

But Bernadotte's work on behalf of refugees and mediation wasn't finished. After World War II, the U.N. Security Council unanimously chose Bernadotte to be the U.N. Security Council mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1947–1948.

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Have We Advanced Since Homer?

By David Swanson

I have no opinion on the casting or the acting or the straying from the original in the new Hollywood *Odyssey*. Here come some spoilers on what I do have an opinion on.

Christopher Nolan and whoever else had a role in this production obviously tried to improve on ancient morality in a particular way and not in another.

That is, Nolan de-glorified war. In this movie, we're told that the Greeks were lied into the Trojan War for economic reasons. The warriors were forced into the war through threats to their families and towns. The war was boring and wasteful. Then it was horrific, evil, and traumatizing. Then it tore down the rule of law and spread fear and insecurity across the world. Odysseus, in this film, took so long getting home because he was recovering from the moral guilt, horror, trauma, and grief of war. He met dead people who upbraided him for having lied to them and abandoned them. He brought the horror of raping and pillaging wherever he brought his men. There was not one decent thing about the whole filthy enterprise, apart from the misdirected bravery.

Having de-glorified war and inserted some reality of veterans' issues into an ancient epic, and having practically stripped it of the mythology of the gods, and having transformed Odysseus into a sad and tragic, older and wiser, trusting soul ready to turn the page and begin a new and different life, Nolan quit. He just stopped. He gave up and went with the original ending based around the supreme value in Hollywood morality: revenge. Rather than ending with Odysseus reuniting with his beloved wife and son, Nolan gave us gratuitous mass murder with pride and satisfaction, pseudo-justice even, in the butchery.

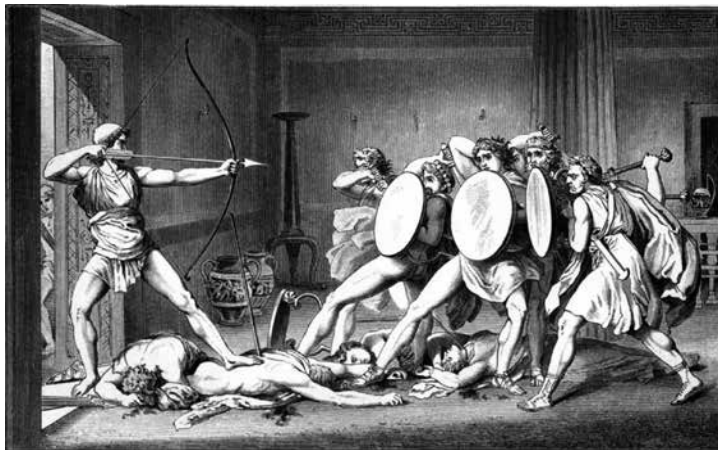
Odysseus, as you know from the original, trapped dozens of people in a room and slaughtered them. He could have sent them into exile. He could have sought their accountability and restitution. He could have scared them away. Indeed, he had to lock the doors to keep them from running away. But all thoughtfulness fell before the king of the gods: revenge. There was no more consideration of moral development whatsoever.

Have we advanced since antiquity?

Homer knew war was traumatic. The cartoonish version of war in which killing is easy and surviving is simple is a creation of modern propaganda and movies.

Homer celebrated revenge. And the movie industry does not question it today. Neither do corporate media outlets. While revenge is not a legal or moral or practical justification for wars, it was the media's accepted basis for the war on Afghanistan for years, and for every war once the war has been going for a little while. Once some of the troops labeled as yours are killed, you can ignore who started the war and promote it with revenge.

When the U.S. public resisted a war on Syria, a few videos of beheadings were enough to create enthusiasm for the war with such passion and blindness that I'm not sure anyone ever noticed that the U.S. jumped in on the opposite side of the war that it had wanted to join up until then. The unpopularity of the wars on Venezuela and Iran right now would be undone if only you could tell a story about those nations having begun those wars (and is undone in the minds



The revenge of Odysseus.

of that minority of people who do fantasize such stories).

So, my recommendation is this. If you're watching the *Odyssey*, and you see Odysseus reunite with Penelope, get up and leave. You'll have already been there for ages. Get up and leave right then, and go home imagining that Western culture has advanced a little over these thousands of years.

David Swanson is an author, activist, journalist, and radio host. He is executive director of WorldBeyondWar.org and campaign coordinator for RootsAction.org. Swanson's books include *War Is A Lie*. He blogs at DavidSwanson.org and WarIsACrime.org.

Agent Blue

By Teresa Mei Chuc

To kill correctly takes calculation.
Down to a science.
Arsenic
cacodylic acid.
Know water and rice
on a cellular level.
Make sure
no surviving
seed can be
collected
and planted.
Because even
a small seed
assures
survival.
Because
mortars,
grenades
and bombs
can not destroy
a grain.
Because our
heart is made
of seeds.
Know what it
takes to kill
the seeds.
Know what it
takes to deprive
the plant of water,
to dehydrate it.



To be surrounded
by love but unable
to absorb it.

Author's Note: During the Viet Nam War (known in Viet Nam as the American War), Agent Blue was sprayed on 250,000 acres of mangrove forests and about 750,000 acres of rice paddies in South Viet Nam, destroying crops and contaminating soils and water sediments with arsenic. In an attempt to win the war, the U.S. military sought to destroy the Vietnamese people's food

supply, rice. Larry Cihacek, U.S. Army veteran who is professor of soil science at North Dakota State University, said, "Agent Blue was the most effective of all the rainbow herbicides in killing rice and grasses and persisted in the soil after the crops were destroyed." Due to the U.S. military's spraying of chemicals, such as Agent Blue, during the war, high concentrations of arsenic have remained in the Mekong Delta environment for the last 60 years, continuing to contaminate the waters, sediments and soils.

Courage

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Count Folke Bernadotte's first report to the Secretary General outlined the desperate plight of Palestinian refugees, nearly a quarter of whom, he wrote, "are simply camped out and living under trees. In most places there was absolutely no sanitary accommodation, and since water was drawn from surface collections, and typhoid was endemic, grave possibilities in this regard at this season of the year were likely."

He surveyed destroyed Palestinian villages and witnessed long lines of people waiting for food, scarce medical aid, and an ongoing humanitarian disaster. He and U.S. diplomat Ralph Bunche wrote a proposal to meet short-term and long-term needs of refugees. Their plan would allow for fixed boundaries between the Israelis and the Palestinians, with an economic union between the states and assurance that Palestinian refugees could return.

"It would be an offense against the principles of elemental justice," Bernadotte wrote, "if these innocent victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes, while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine."

Boldly and truthfully, Bernadotte drew links between meeting humanitarian needs and creating an environment in which peace could take hold. He insisted the U.N. must respect the refugees' "unconditional right to make a free choice."

Bernadotte's and Ralph Bunche's report was submitted to the U.N. on September 18, 1948, but Bernadotte did not live to present it in person. On September 17, terrorists from an extremist Zionist group, the Stern Gang, ambushed Bernadotte's motorcade. They fired six bullets into Bernadotte's body. His colleague, the French Colonel André Sérot was killed by 17 bullets.

Count Bernadotte's principled humanitarian work may have cost him his life, but we can choose to continue his legacy.

It's encouraging to know that the 2026 Stockholm Forum for Peace and Development has recognized a fundamental reality: "Many modern security risks, from climate shocks to pandemics and cyber threats, do not have hard security solutions and do not stop at borders. They are, however, further exacerbated when geopolitical rivalries undermine cooperative solutions."

I hope Count Bernadotte's inspiring life and Isak Hernández's compassionate insistence: "I won't be silent," will steer us as we reckon with what Dr. King called "the fierce urgency of now."

Kathy Kelly (kathy@worldbeyondwar.org), board president of World BEYOND War, co-coordinated the November 2023 Merchants of Death War Crimes Tribunal. She is the author of *Other Lands Have Dreams*, published by Counterpunch/AK Press. Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, she has co-coordinated an international network to assist young Afghans forced to flee their country. With Voices for Creative Nonviolence companions, she has frequently visited war zones in Iraq, the West Bank, Gaza, and Lebanon.

Ukraine

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they've all been used in the war on Iran, with Kiev defenseless against Russian missile attacks. On August 5, every missile launched at Kiev hit its target, with zero interceptors launched. And now, after embracing the war on Iran, Zelensky is complaining about the lack of interceptors, a direct consequence of the war he supported. He hitched himself to empire, yet because of the over-stretching imperial adventurism he himself relies on, that empire has found itself unable to defend his country. It reveals a man who has no plan, beyond hoping that the weapons keep flowing.

Liberals appear reluctant to make the connection between the two imperial wars, preferring the dissonance that comes with an empire state of mind.

This dissonance has also been on display elsewhere, with pro-Ukraine war

influencers demanding the West send more weapons to Ukraine and incredulous at North Korea sending weapons to Russia, seemingly unable to follow their own logic on third-party countries sending weapons to principal conflict belligerents. Empire brains blinded to their own raging hypocrisy.

But as I'm writing, I can hear a criticism, and can even form one against myself. Why, Nate, when you are so morally strident on Israel and Palestine, are you decrying "normative moral judgements" on Ukraine and Russia?

Because the two situations could not be more different.

Ukraine is a state with a standing army supported by empire fighting another state with a standing army. Palestine has been denied statehood despite the 1947 U.N. two-state partition agreement (putting aside whatever one thinks about the legitimacy of that agreement) and has no standing army to defend itself and Palestinians are fighting a colonial occupation armed by empire. If anything, Ukraine is far more similar to Israel than it is to Palestine. Indeed, in 2024 Zelensky proclaimed Israel as the ideal model for Ukraine, saying he wanted Ukraine to be a "big Israel."

Both Ukraine and Israel are proxies at the tip of the imperial spear, one in Europe and one in the Middle East. You don't have to be the invader to be a tool of imperialism. Sometimes being the invaded is more useful as it imparts a moral surety that helps shield your imperial role from critical analysis. I would argue this is exactly what has happened in the case of Ukraine.

None of this is to say I don't have sympathy with ordinary Ukrainians. I do. I

think they've been sold down the river, by both Europe and their own leaders, and have been coerced into fighting a war a majority now want to end with negotiations. The average Ukrainian is quite different to the average genocide-supporting Israeli who upholds apartheid.

Yet despite the wishes of a majority of Ukrainians, Europe and Zelensky refuse diplomacy and continue to fight, incurring enormous costs on Ukraine and ordinary Ukrainians. Of course, enormous costs are being inflicted on Russia too, but these costs have not been, and will not be sufficient for a "good peace." And any costs that would really bite risk an uncontrolled, catastrophic escalation.

The final irony is that despite the war being marketed to westerners as totalitarianism versus democracy, Ukrainians can't even elect a leader who would enact their wish to see a negotiated end to the war since Zelensky, whose term officially expired in 2024, introduced martial law and cancelled elections.

So, as I said, for better or worse, this is my perspective on Russia-Ukraine.

A war that advances only imperialist interests, interests that run counter to European security and prosperity. A war that threatens, at worst, to go nuclear. A war that wasn't unprovoked. A war that, with their minds empty and hearts lacking true solidarity, consciousness or justice, has become a necessary intellectual organizing principle for the liberal media and political class.

Nate Bear has worked as a journalist and in PR/communications for corporations, nonprofits, and climate and wildlife groups. His substack is *Do Not Panic*.



The Grizzly

A Treaty of Cooperation, Cultural Revitalization and Restoration

Save the Yellowstone Grizzly, proudly stands in support of The Grizzly: A Treaty of Cooperation, Cultural Revitalization and Restoration, also known as the Piikani Treaty. Initiated by the Piikani Nation, this historic North American tribal accord has brought together more than 200 Tribal Nations and First Nations in a shared commitment to protect the grizzly bear, revitalize Indigenous cultures, and restore the ancient relationship between people and the grizzly.

For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have lived alongside grizzly bears. Their relationship is rooted not in domination, but in respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. Long before modern wildlife biology existed, Native peoples developed sophisticated systems of stewardship based on careful observation, lived experience, and a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of all living things. Today, we recognize this as Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) knowledge that has been refined over countless generations.

As conservationists, we believe the future of grizzly bear recovery should not rely solely on Western science or political pressure. The best path forward is one that brings together rigorous scientific research with the wisdom, values, and stewardship traditions of the Tribal Nations who have shared these landscapes with grizzlies since time immemorial.

The treaty makes this vision clear. It

calls for restoring grizzly bears to suitable habitat, reconnecting fragmented populations, protecting bears from trophy hunting on Tribal lands, reducing conflicts through education and stewardship, and ensuring that future grizzly management is built upon Indigenous cultural foundations while incorporating the best available science.

This vision closely aligns with our own mission.

For years, Save the Yellowstone Grizzly has advocated for reconnecting isolated grizzly populations across the Northern Rockies, protecting secure habitat, reducing human-bear conflicts, and ensuring that grizzly recovery extends beyond a few isolated ecosystems. We have also consistently supported a greater role for Tribal Nations in wildlife conservation and decision-making.

The treaty reminds us that grizzly bear recovery is about more than population numbers. It is about restoring healthy ecosystems, honoring Tribal sovereignty and treaty rights, protecting cultural traditions, and rebuilding our relationship with the natural world.

The future of grizzly conservation should be guided by partnership not conflict. By listening to Indigenous voices and respecting Traditional Ecological Knowledge alongside modern science, we have an opportunity to create a recovery program that is more durable, more inclusive, and ultimately more successful.



Yellowstone bear emerges from winter with four cubs.

As we work toward a connected and resilient grizzly population throughout the Northern Rockies, Save the Yellowstone Grizzly stands with the many Tribal Nations and First Nations that have signed the Piikani Treaty.

The grizzly has always been more than a species to recover.

It is a symbol of healthy ecosystems, cultural resilience, and our shared responsibility to future generations.

Together, we can ensure that grizzly bears, and the wisdom they represent,

continue to shape the wild landscapes of North America for generations to come.

Save the Yellowstone Grizzly fights for the survival of grizzly bears in the lower 48 states. One of the founders is Doug Peacock, a Viet Nam Special Forces medic veteran who became one of the world's foremost authorities on grizzly bears. Peacock has written numerous books, among them, In the Presence of Grizzlies, Walking it Off and recently, Was it Worth It? To learn more, visit savetheyellowstonegrizzly.org.

Apology at Nagasaki

By Mike Hastie

During the almost three hours I spent at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum on October 24, 2018, I looked closely at all of the horrifying photographs that were on display, taken a few days after the U.S. government dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945, at 11:02 a.m. I also took my own pictures while I was there. While I was walking around,

I started reflecting on the two-and-a-half years I lived in Japan from February 16, 1947, until May 18, 1949. I was 18 months old when I arrived, and four years old when I left. My father was a career Army officer and World War II combat veteran. My family lived in Tokyo. During our time there, my mother hired a 16-year-old Japanese girl to help take care of me. Her name was Sumiko. I always lovingly called her “Sim-e-co.” According to my mother, she

practically carried me on her hip for over two years. We were inseparable during the days she worked at our home. When I left Japan, she had turned 18.

After I had been at the museum for an hour, about a hundred Japanese school girls suddenly arrived. They were all dressed in the same blue and white uniforms, and looked as though they were probably from a private school. The first thing I noticed was all of the girls were very quiet. They rarely talked to each other, and when they did it was a quiet whisper. As the girls gathered around the graphic displays, and went from one display to the next, I started looking at their faces. Gradually, those facial expressions went from being politely solemn, to dazed, to stunned, and finally shocked. I saw girls with their lips pursed, eyes purposely closed, mouths open, to having their hands in front of their faces. All of them maintained their public composure, which was no doubt part cultural. However, after a while, many of them just looked depressed.

Watching this human behavior started to affect me, as my own emotions started to feel profound shame. I wanted to crawl into a deep hole. I no longer wanted to be seen by the Japanese who were all around me. I suddenly went off by myself in a corner, and just stared at the floor. When I finally looked up, I noticed five of the girls

standing about 20 feet away, in a line together, not saying anything to each other. After looking at them for a few moments, I knew what I needed to do. I walked across the room and approached the first girl on the left. I asked her if she spoke English. She motioned to me that she did not. I went to the next girl and asked her if she spoke English. She shook her head. I went to the next girl and asked her the same question. She also motioned no. I went to the fourth girl and repeated the same question. She pointed to the last girl on the right. When I asked her, she said yes. I told her I was an American, and that I was dreadfully sorry that my government had dropped the atomic bombs on their country. By this time, I could feel the long stored up emotions inside of me, but I had a mission to speak to these five girls who were all looking at me. I also told this girl I had always felt great shame for what my country did, and would she please tell the other four girls what I said. I touched her on the arms, with tears in my eyes, and as I walked away I heard her tell them what I said. It was when I returned from this trip that I came up with the word: “Hiroshame-a.”

It took me until this day, to finally realize I was also talking to Sumiko.

Mike Hastie is a lifetime member of Veterans For Peace. He was an Army medic in Viet Nam.



Photo: Mike Hastie