

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org Vol. 67, No. 2 January 9, 2025

Sick-out for Gaza health care workers

By Brenda Ryan
New York City

In a fierce show of solidarity with health care workers in Gaza, protesters held a press conference and rally across from NYU Tisch Hospital in New York City on Jan. 6 to demand an immediate end to the genocide in Gaza and the release of Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya and his colleagues.

On Dec. 27, Israeli forces detained Dr. Safiya, a pediatrician and the director of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza, after the army invaded the hospital and ordered everyone evacuated. Safiya’s whereabouts are unknown. In October, Israeli forces killed his son with a drone strike.

Dr. Safiya described the horrific conditions at the hospital in a guest

essay, “I’m One of the Last Doctors in This Hospital in Gaza. I’m Begging the World for Help,” published in the New York Times on Dec. 2. “The human mind cannot imagine all the death and body parts and blood that surround us around the clock,” he wrote.

The Jan. 6 “Flood NYC for Gaza” action was part of the national day of calling out sick from genocide. Protesters held photos of some of the hundreds of health care workers who have been abducted by Israeli occupation forces.

They chanted “300,000 dead, NYU your hands are red!” and “NYU you will learn, refugees will return.” The demonstration was called by Within Our Lifetime, Healthcare Workers for Palestine, and Doctors Against Genocide.



Solidarity with Gaza health care workers rally, New York City, Jan. 6, 2025. WW PHOTO: B. RYAN

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Protest against President Yoon Suk Yeol and U.S. in Korea, Philadelphia, Dec. 15, 2024. More on Korea, p. 4.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



PHOTO: HOWARD ROTMAN

Boston Coalition for Palestine protest at City Hall, Dec. 31, 2024. See p. 6.

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Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQIA2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

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

youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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

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

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and world-wide. If you're interested in Marxism, class solidarity, and joining us in the fight for a socialist future, please sign up at www.workers.org/join-form and an organizer will get back to you. Or contact a WWP branch near you. □

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Honor the resistance in Palestine!

By Will Hodgkinson
Boston

Hundreds of people answered the call of the Boston Coalition for Palestine (BCFP) to disrupt the city's official "First Night" celebration on Dec. 31, 2024. Gathering in City Hall Plaza, where bands and a parade were sponsored by the city's business elite, speakers, carolers and chanters on a powerful sound system filled the plaza, proclaiming, "No celebration while Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen are burning!"

Speakers and organizers—including from the Palestinian House of New England, North American Indian Center of Boston and United American Indians of New England, Palestinian Youth Movement, Jewish Voice for Peace, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Massachusetts Peace Action, MIT, Harvard, Northeastern and various campus Students for Justice in Palestine chapters and Workers World Party—in unity demanded: "End all U.S. aid to Israel! End the genocide and siege of Gaza, now!"

When the protesters moved to join the parade, in which the public was ostensibly invited to participate, they were immediately surrounded and blocked by a phalanx of cops. Undaunted and with their ranks swelling, the pro-Palestine demonstrators held their ground, eventually taking the downtown streets with tens of thousands of spectators, many cheering the BCFP's unabashedly pro-resistance messages.

Will Hodgkinson of Workers World Party gave the following edited speech, which was interrupted many times by cheers from the gathering crowd. (report by Steve Gillis)

It's such an honor to be with all of you tonight, speaking out in unequivocal, unshakable solidarity with the Axis of Resistance fighting for the liberation of Palestine.

As Workers World has held since its founding, we cannot separate the worldwide struggle of the working class from the struggles of all Indigenous nations and all oppressed peoples against capitalism, imperialism and settler colonialism.

And because capitalism cannot exist without imperialism, without settler colonialism, true victory in any one of these



WW PHOTO: STEVE GILLIS

Boston Coalition for Palestine carolers disrupting First Night on Boston Common, Dec. 31, 2024.

struggles will never be possible without victory in all of these struggles, without the complete self-determination of all oppressed nations around the world.

Tonight, there is absolutely nothing to celebrate this New Year after over a year of this latest horrific stage of genocide, as the Zionist entity attacks hospitals and kidnaps and tortures doctors. As babies in Gaza starve and freeze in the rain. There is nothing to celebrate as Israeli Occupation Forces, backed by the U.S., dismember Syria, tear its sovereignty to shreds and continue to expand their colonial land grab.

What we do honor and salute instead is the resistance to Zionist genocide in Palestine, Yemen, Lebanon and Iran. They are leading the way to a new future. Because as this imperialist aggression intensifies, the resistance will strengthen.

Mobilize worker power against the empire

And that's why it is essential that we here, all of us in the imperial core, that we workers mobilize and use our power in the U.S., this settler-colonial empire, that is making the Zionist genocide possible. We must join and support the resistance and escalate and continue to organize to shut down the companies and universities — all these institutions here — that are not just complicit in the genocide but actively participating in it.

The Zionist garrison and the U.S. empire it belongs to are overextended. They are rotting, and across the world billions of people see them for what they

are. Their depravity is on full display. You see that in the media where pundits are full of tears for a dead health insurance CEO and then turn around and defend and support genocide, the mass murder of children. That's how the ruling class values human life. Shame!

But the ruling class is scared, because they see the resistance is only increasing and growing. They see its momentum and power that will break them and sweep them aside.

And that's why we must continue the struggle into the new year, so that we see the fall of imperialism, the fall of the U.S. Empire and the Zionist regime, so that we see a free Palestine and Land Back in our lifetimes!

From the river to the sea, free Palestine! ☐

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South Korea impeachment sparks revelations of Yoon Suk Yeol's warmongering

By Hugo East

South Korea's impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol faces mounting popular, political and legal pressure as more details emerge about his Dec. 3 declaration of martial law. The South Korean police and the Corruption Investigation Office (CIO) are currently renewing their efforts to detain Yoon after the presidential security service prevented his arrest in a six-hour standoff on Jan. 3.

Revelations have shed light on some of the potential motivations and plans for President Yoon's martial law declaration. The move may have been part of an attempt to start a hot war with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea.) In a Dec. 13 article, Ju-Hyun Park, an organizer with Nodutdol, the anti-imperialist organization of Koreans of the diaspora living in the U.S. or Canada, wrote:

"Citing anonymous military sources, lawmaker Kim Byung-joo, a former four-star general ... told fellow lawmakers on December 10 that 20 members of the Special Forces' Headquarters Intelligence Detachment (HID) unit 'were on standby at a location in Seoul' on the night of the martial law order. Kim [Byung-joo] claims the HID unit would have been mobilized to the National Assembly to arrest lawmakers, and questions whether they would have killed those who resisted, possibly while wearing fake North Korean uniforms. ...

"On December 13, influential independent journalist Kim Eo-jun appeared before the National Assembly with a bombshell claim. According to Kim [Eo-jun], whose studio was targeted by the military in the early hours of the coup attempt, a source from 'the embassy of an allied country' told him Yoon planned to assassinate Han Dong-Hoon, the leader of the president's ruling party, on the night of the martial law order."

False flag operation?

Park added "Kim Eo-jun claimed Special Forces in North Korean uniform were to act as an 'assassination squad' undertaking the following plot: 'First, Han Dong-hoon is to be assassinated during transportation after his arrest. Second, attack the arrest unit escorting Cho Kuk, Yang Jeong-cheol and myself, pretending to rescue them. Third, North Korean military uniforms will be buried at a specific location. Fourth, after some time, the uniforms will be discovered, and the incident will be attributed to North Korea.'"

Cho Kuk is an anti-Yoon politician who leads the minority Rebuilding Korea Party, and Yang Jeong-cheol was an influential aide of former President Moon Jae-in.

Ju-Hyun Park added: "Kim Eo-jun also said he received tips that Yoon planned to 'kill American soldiers to induce the U.S. to bomb North Korea,' and that a biochemical terror attack had also been under consideration. Yoon would have thereby manufactured a situation from which he could emerge as the 'reunification president' who successfully ended Korea's division by means of conquest." (People's Dispatch Dec. 13) [tinyurl.com/park24d13]

South Korean politics has been plunged into chaos since Dec. 3, with several members of President Yoon's inner circle having resigned, and some have been detained by the CIO. In addition, the National Assembly voted Dec. 27 to impeach the acting president, Prime Minister Han Duck-soo.

The people of South Korea organized mass protests to block the initial martial law declaration and continued them during the subsequent political turmoil. Hundreds gathered outside of President Yoon's residence Jan. 4, calling for his ouster and arrest.

A pattern of U.S. colonial manipulation

These recent dramatic events are just the latest in a well-established pattern in South Korean politics, with roots in the U.S. military occupation and its role as neocolonialist power in South Korea.

In a Jan. 3 interview, independent Korean-American journalist and geopolitical analyst KJ Noh stated: "This is the cycle where the United States puts in a dictator, the Koreans overthrow the dictator, and the United States puts in another one. This happened in 1948, 1960, 1972, 1979, 1980, 1987, 2015, and here we go again.

"Yoon Suk Yeol was Washington's man in Seoul. Nobody that I know of had any respect for him as a politician. He's a person who had never held elected office in his life, until suddenly he became the American favorite, because his foreign policy was the exact mirror-image of U.S. foreign policy for Asia. It was a direct clone of the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy. ...

"When he became the President, he said he would turn this into the republic of prosecu-



Massive protest by Korean Confederation of Trade Unions against Yoon in Seoul, South Korea, Dec. 4, 2024.

tion, which is what he did. He was prosecuting unions; he was prosecuting peace organizations; he was prosecuting workers; the media; any and everybody; civil society itself. He was trampling it underfoot. And the U.S. was just continuing to praise him and saying, 'This man is the leader of a global pivot state which is leading the fight of democracies over autocracies.' And the next thing you know, he has declared himself the dictator of South Korea by declaring martial law. ...

"[T]he United States has operational control over South Korea's military the moment it declares DEFCON-3, or preparation for war. So, if we have a situation where the U.S.-favored president declares martial law, uses the pretext of war with North Korea as the justification for martial law, then what happens is South Korea's 500,000 troops, plus potentially 3.1 million reserve troops, fall immediately under U.S. operation control."

KJ Noh concluded: "In other words, we have a situation which primes the entire peninsula for war against China and also creates tremendous moral hazard for this escalation to war." (youtu.be/YtjBjMhjglk)

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The hypocrisy of climate change deniers

By Betsey Piette

Where there is the potential for profit, even the most ardent climate change deniers will seize the opportunity to take advantage of the damage caused by the climate catastrophe. Such is the case with President-elect Donald Trump and his gang of corporate supporters.

In late December, Trump announced his plans for the U.S. to take back control of the Panama Canal and to buy the island nation of Greenland, insisting both were critical to U.S. security. What Trump did not acknowledge was the impact that climate change damage—which is affecting global shipping—has had on both Panama and Greenland.

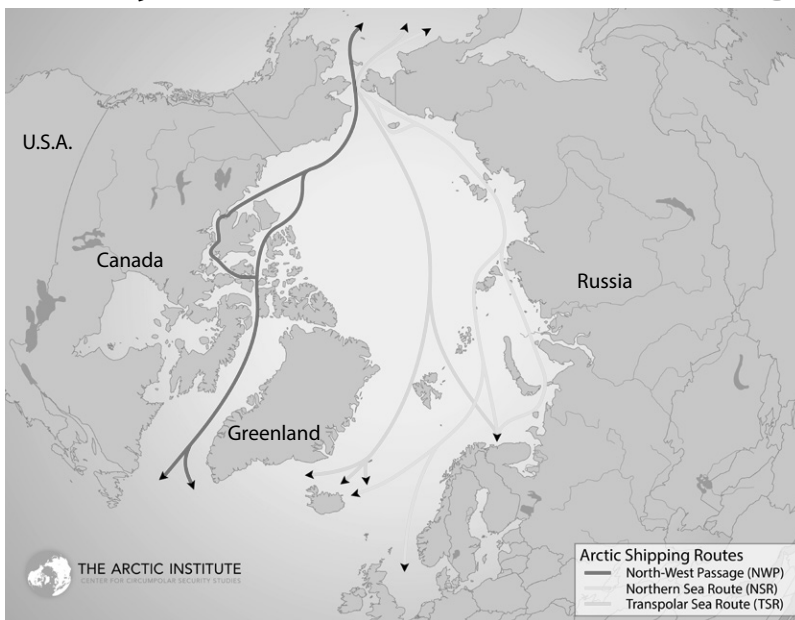
Dec. 31, 2024, marked the 25th year since the U.S. ceded to Panama full control over the canal. While a massive project from 2007 to 2017 greatly expanded the canal's capacity, severe drought in 2023, due to global warming, lowered water levels, hindering the canal's function.

At freshwater Lake Gatún, essential for passage through the canal, water levels sank to historic lows, forcing canal authorities to restrict traffic and impose higher fees. The result has been weeks-long delays to cross through the canal and a 29% drop in ships using it, from 14,080 in 2023 to 9,933 in 2024.

There is also potential for competition from China for a new inter-ocean shipping passage in Central America. In November, China's government announced that it has been negotiating with Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega to construct an alternate waterway to connect the Caribbean Sea to the Pacific Ocean. This challenge from China may be the motivation behind Trump's threats to take over the canal.

Competition for future Arctic passages

A North American island located in the North Atlantic and Arctic oceans between Canada and continental Europe, Greenland is strategic to ships accessing the Arctic. Due to global warming, retreating ice fields



Map shows the Northern Sea Route (right), the Northwest Passage (left) and the Transpolar Sea Route (center).

in Greenland have opened access to new areas to drill for oil and gas, plus places to mine for critical minerals. At the same time, melting sea ice, resulting in sea levels rising by as much as 23 feet, is opening up more ocean trade routes for shipping free of ice field blockage.

While Trump calls climate change a hoax, his former National Security Adviser Robert C. O'Brien recently attributed Trump's interest in buying Greenland to climate change. He said: "Greenland is a highway from the Arctic all the way to North America, to the United States. It's strategically very important to the Arctic, which is going to be the critical battleground of the future, because as the climate gets warmer, the Arctic is going to be a pathway that maybe cuts down on the usage of the Panama Canal." (New York Times, Dec. 31)

Trump may also be eager to get a jumpstart on asserting U.S. domination in the Arctic because of increasing competition with China and Russia. The two countries are currently cooperating to establish alternative Arctic shipping routes in areas previously impassible most of the year. These include the Northern Sea Route along Russia's northern coastline, the Northwest Passage running through Canadian waters and a possible transpolar route crossing the North Pole.

The Arctic Council Working Group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) released an updated study on

Jan. 31, 2024, that found a 37% increase in ships able to use Arctic waterways from 2020-2023 compared to 2013-2019. The studies attribute the increase in the number of ships in the Arctic—and the 111% increase in distances they sailed, from 6.1 million to 12.9 million nautical miles—to changes to the marine environment, primarily a decrease in the extent of sea ice and the loss of older, thick ice.

This has significant implications, resulting in longer navigation seasons and new access to previously difficult to reach regions of the Arctic. (arctic-council.org)

Battleground of the future

O'Brien was right when he called the Arctic a "critical battleground of the future." The U.S. imperialist war threats against Russia and China will not stop with the end of the Biden administration and Trump's takeover as president. Competition between socialist China and the capitalist U.S. has already led Trump to threaten ever higher tariffs against China, while Washington is surrounding China with increasing U.S. military installations.

Access to global trade routes opening up because of global warming will play a key role in this trade war, despite Trump denying the impact of climate change.

Over recent years, China has been dedicated to establishing policies to address global warming. The U.S., on the other hand, has pushed ever-expanding militarism—the number one cause of the climate catastrophe. □

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Who's guilty of terror? The U.S. war machine.

On Jan. 1, there were two incidents in the United States that might have been interpreted as terrorist attacks: A truck plowed into a crowd of ordinary people on Bourbon Street in New Orleans celebrating the New Year's holiday, killing 14 and injuring 35 others. A Tesla Cybertruck exploded near a Trump hotel in Las Vegas, and the truck's driver apparently committed suicide.

Any incident of this character, especially one with many casualties, will be manipulated by ruling-class forces in U.S. society. These forces dominate the state apparatus and corporate media, which controls the narrative at the beginning.

Most often, powerful forces in U.S. society try to use these events against workers and oppressed people, sometimes against entire nations, always against their enemies. They never let the truth get in their way. They tell outrageous lies.

It is the task of revolutionary Marxist organizations to counter these lies and prepare for a struggle. We need to do this whether or not we are in a position to discover what actually happened.

This New Year's first and biggest lie came from the MAGA forces. Upon learning that the alleged perpetrator of the NOLA attack had an Arabic name and was Muslim, Fox News reported that he was an immigrant. President-elect Donald Trump immediately tweeted on X on Jan. 1 repeating his slanders against migrants and attacking the Democrats.

Then other media outlets reported that the NOLA perpetrator, who was killed by police, was a U.S. citizen born in Texas. He served in the U.S. Army from 2007 to 2015 and was deployed to Afghanistan from 2009 to 2010. In civilian life, he promoted himself online as an effective real estate salesperson. According to some sources, he claimed he was a member of the Islamic State or ISIS.

Trump's Big Lie comes as no surprise, since he and his cronies have repeated similar untruths attacking migrants at least since the 2016 presidential election. This particular lie is a cornerstone of his racist program. His campaign throughout 2024 blamed migrants for everything wrong



with U.S. society. As of Jan. 5, there is no sign Trump has apologized for this lie.

Regarding Las Vegas, the Special Forces soldier reported as committing suicide was still on active duty, although on leave from his posting in Germany. He had served two deployments to Afghanistan. Investigators published his alleged posts, one with MAGA-like rhetoric against “woke” policies, one regretting the deaths of civilians in Afghanistan.

The two soldiers were both trained at what was until recently called Fort Bragg, in North Carolina. According to federal investigators, they were trained at different times, and there is no evidence the two men met there, or that their actions were coordinated.

No coordination, but no accident

But that doesn't mean that the two events had nothing in common. The two were professional soldiers, trained to kill and rewarded for doing it well. Consider the following:

The United States is the center of an empire whose ruling class maintains power by force, applied through more than 800 bases around the world and a large fleet of warships. These numbers don't include over 450 military bases inside the U.S., according to the Military Analysis Network. It has been at almost continuous war since 1950 and especially since 1990.

U.S. rulers created a professional military using quasi-mercenary soldiers trained to be part of a mass murder machine. It sent these two soldiers to Afghanistan,

where every civilian was viewed as a “potential threat.” Their role included killing anyone — and this includes non-combatants, even children — who might be seen as a danger. That really means anyone who threatened to diminish the profits of a relative handful of billionaires.

Fort Bragg is now called Fort Liberty. Bragg was the name of a Confederate general who fought for the slavocracy. Unfortunately, this progressive name change caused no change in Fort Liberty's

reactionary task: It trains killers for Wall Street's international organized crimes.

Texas-born veteran Specialist Shamsudin Jabbar and active duty Green Beret Matthew Livelsberger brought this training home. We name them now, to underline that they too can be considered victims of the imperialist ruling class. Combat soldiers come back with brain injuries, often with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), both of which can make socialization and relationships excruciating and alienation likely.

We learned that New Orleans police authorities have used the truck assault as a pretext to increase repression of popular organizations. We protest this other Big Lie.

We offer condolences for the deaths, injuries and trauma caused by these tragic incidents. But we need no further investigation to point to the guilty party: Down with U.S. imperialism! Down with the Pentagon killing machine! □

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