



# Speak Out Now

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mail@speakoutsocialists.org

speakoutsocialists.org

(510) 343-9105

## The War Against Gaza is Not in Our Interests

The violence in Gaza is horrific. In just over four months, the destruction of Gaza has reached a scale of devastation among the worst since World War II. It has continued to worsen everyday.

The Israeli state is knowingly targeting children, civilians, journalists, and medical and rescue workers. Israel is collectively punishing an entire population and seems to have every intention to continue to forcibly remove or exterminate the people of Gaza.

Over 85 percent of the entire population of Gaza is displaced: over 1.9 million people. Many of them have evacuated multiple times, only to be bombed on evacuation routes, or in areas that Israel once declared “safe.”

Now, 1.4 million people are sheltering in the southern-most region, on the border with Egypt. This area, called Rafah, is less than half the size of Washington D.C. There is no infrastructure for people to live: no showers, toilets, drinking water, or housing. Diseases are spreading rapidly. Famine is reaching catastrophic levels. Four out of five people starving in the world are in Gaza. The dire conditions today are due to a blockade of food and resources entering Gaza. The siege itself is not new: Israel has kept Gaza “on a diet” for 17 years, and now has decided to starve them.

As Israeli forces continue to move south, where will the Palestinians go? If the border to Egypt is opened, they fear they will never be able to return to Gaza. In the current conditions, many thousands of people will die. With a further offensive, they will die from American-made, Israeli deployed bombs that will be dropped on civilians, overwhelmingly children. As some refugees in Rafah have said, their only option is to continue to be surrounded by death.

The United States government has supported Israel's actions of forced displacement and genocide of Palestinians for 75 years. The United States has sent billions of dollars in arms, bombs, and other military support to Israel to conduct this genocide. It has vetoed any action in the United Nations to pass a ceasefire resolution and is likely to do so again.

Many people around the world, including in the U.S., have turned out by the hundreds of thousands to protest the attacks on Palestinians. Nonetheless, the politicians have continued to use our tax money to support this genocide. Biden even called the military activity in Rafah “our operation” before correcting himself.

The U.S. government is supporting this genocide out of the interests of its ruling class. Their interests are intertwined with Israel as its strategic location in the Middle East allows the U.S. to maintain control of the oil-rich region. Oil is interwoven in every aspect of our economy, and the oil companies, bankers, and their politicians have every interest in maintaining these economic ties.

These are the same oil companies and banks responsible for global heating and high gas prices. These are the same corporate owners and bankers who charge us ridiculous prices and high interest rates, who drive up the cost of mortgages and rents, healthcare, and the overall cost to live.

The ruling class waging a war on Palestinians is waging a war on us as well. We have the same interests as the people of Palestine: to end the rule of a tiny elite waging war on all of our lives.

### EXPOSING THE LIES OF ISRAEL'S WAR MACHINE

**Sat. Feb. 24 at 4pm**

Tali Shapiro, Israeli anti-zionist activist and researcher whose work has exposed the lies spread by the Israeli state will be speaking live from Ramallah, Palestine.

Join us for a presentation and discussion!

### Niebyl-Proctor Library

6501 Telegraph Ave, Oakland, CA 94609

Can't join in person? Join on Zoom:  
**[tinyurl.com/FEB-TH-24](https://tinyurl.com/FEB-TH-24)**

## Durham School Staff Defy the Threat of Wage Cuts

Recently, the Durham (North Carolina) School System announced that 1,300 classified staff (janitors, IT workers, teachers' aides, and cafeteria employees) would receive a seven percent wage increase. School administrators then quickly canceled the raises and claimed they had miscalculated the money available for staff salary increases. Administrators decided to dock staff paychecks for what the Durham School Board called "overpayments."

Angry staff, teachers, and parents have protested the rollback at Board meetings and rallied at the Board's headquarters. The Durham Educators Association demanded no pay cuts and "a seat at the table" in discussions towards a resolution. Classified staff have carried out one-day sickouts, forcing the Board to call off classes.

Public schools in North Carolina are increasingly underfunded as the state government shifts money to charter schools. If Durham workers force the politicians to cancel the wage cuts, their victory could inspire public sector workers elsewhere to think about what collective action could accomplish.

## Celebrities and the Climate Crisis

Only one percent of people are responsible for about half of all aviation carbon emissions. Billionaires, such as Elon Musk and Taylor Swift, enjoy riding the coattails of a fossil-fuel economy where the rich can buy the right to pollute and emit greenhouse gases to their hearts' content.

Billionaires are trying to conceal their private jet emissions by suspending social media accounts, like CelebJets, that track and post legally available data online. The rich may try to hide records of their emissions, but they cannot conceal the very real impacts of pollution on our climate. And it is the world's lowest income groups facing the brunt of climate change.



## Addiction and Overdose: a Product of Capitalism

Since 2015, overdose deaths have doubled in the United States. In 2021, more than 100,000 people died of a drug overdose. Often, it's after an injury that someone gets painkillers and falls into addiction.

The working class bears the brunt of overdoses and addictions. In industries where workplace injuries are high and there is little or no paid sick time, often the only option is to rely on painkillers. Out of all occupations, workers in construction make up roughly 25% of opioid deaths, followed by those in restaurants and food preparation.

The industry owners and bankers profit from paying us as little as possible, working us as hard as possible, and giving us as little benefits as possible. Some companies make billions off of opioids and the resulting addictions. Capitalism creates these problems, and then profits from their so-called "solutions." This is unacceptable.

## Online Gambling Endangers Many with Serious Addiction

The Super Bowl was the most watched television event in U.S. history, and made gambling history with more than \$23.1 billion in bets placed. Nearly 1 in 4 Americans placed a bet.

In 2018, the Supreme Court struck down the law that prevented online gambling in most states. Because of this, online gambling is everywhere: from cute slot machines to sports betting, all from our phones. Since 2018, gambling addiction has grown by 30%. Millions of people in the U.S. suffer from this addiction.

This prevalence has taken a toll. Online gambling is another way that big businesses take our hard-earned money away from us. But gambling addiction is more than losing money. It leads to losing life savings, broken families, and even suicides. Gambling has the highest suicide rate of all addictions. Why is it that companies can make billions off our addictions while we and our families suffer?

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich – the bosses of the big corporations and banks – keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

***Get in touch with us to fight for a better world!***



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