



Speak Out Now

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We Must Act to End the U.S./Israeli War in the Middle East

On September 28, Israel carried out a massive bombing attack on a residential block in Lebanon's capital, Beirut, killing 700 people. The strike killed Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Hezbollah, a political party in Lebanon's government whose armed forces have a long history of conflict with Israel. Hezbollah was founded in the 1980s, after a major Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Responding to the crisis following the invasion, Hezbollah organized food distribution and medical care centers, developing a strong base of support in the South. It has since imposed its control over the region and concentrated its military forces there.

The day of the attack, Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, arrived in New York to address the United Nations General Assembly. He was met by thousands of demonstrators demanding an end to the war on Gaza. As he entered the UN hall he heard boos and shouts from representatives of the world's governments, many of whom walked out. In his speech, to a half-empty hall, he threatened more carnage and destruction in the region. He left the hall, returned to his hotel room, ordered the air strike on Beirut, and flew back to Israel. Since then, Israel's military has killed other Hezbollah leaders, continued their shelling, terrorizing the Lebanese population, and forcing a million people to flee their homes.

Israel launched these attacks on Lebanon as its genocidal war in Gaza nears its one-year anniversary. The medical journal, the Lancet, estimates Israel's war has murdered 200,000 people, ten percent of the Gaza population. And Israel is increasing attacks in the West Bank where it has killed more than 700 people.

Israel continues to have the full support of U.S. politicians. Both Democrats and Republicans applauded Israel's actions, despite a supposed peace plan proposed by U.S. and France. The Biden administration has sent thousands of weapons, from 2,000 pound mega-bombs to Hellfire guided missiles.

Despite the weak calls for peace, the slaughter continues in our name, with bombs and missiles "Made in the USA" – paid for with our tax dollars. Military aid continues to flow to Israel, totaling \$12.5 billion this year.

The risk of a wider war in the Middle East is very real. Hezbollah is an ally of the Iranian Islamic Republic, and part of Iran's network of alliances in its regional struggle with Israel. Behind this conflict is the U.S. hostility to Iran whose 1979 revolution seized that country's oil and challenged U.S. domination of the wider Middle East. Since that time, the conflict between the U.S. and Iran has played out in every war and conflict in the Middle East. Israel's ongoing attacks could trigger a wider war including Iran.

From the beginning of Israel's attacks on the people of Gaza, there have been mass demonstrations across the U.S. and the world. Student encampments at their universities have been met with hostility from university administrations, including measures to prohibit them in the future.

Both Democrats and Republicans have encouraged and supported the repression of those in the U.S. who have stood up and protested. They claim the opposition to Israel's genocide is a cover for anti-Semitism. It would be absurd to believe these claims – as if the state of Israel represents all Jewish people, or that its horrific actions don't deserve our total opposition. We can't fall for their lies.

It is time to act! We cannot allow this murderous war to be carried out in our name. We can't remain silent while Israel and the U.S. government unleash an unimaginable horror on the people of the Middle East! We need to talk to our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers about the situation there. We need to join with others demonstrating opposition to this war and bring everyone we know with us. It is our obligation to take a stand and refuse to be silenced.