



Speak Out Now

September 23, 2024 baltimore@speakoutsocialists.org speakoutsocialists.org IG:@sonbaltimore

We Must Oppose This War on the Middle East

On Tuesday, September 17, the Israeli government expanded its reign of terror across the broader Middle East in a new wave of attacks on Lebanon. Hundreds of pagers and hand-held radios simultaneously exploded on two successive days in Lebanon, wounding around 3,000. People were killed, lost their eyes and fingers and suffered injuries to their faces, hands, and bodies. This is terrorism!

Mainstream media and government officials in the U.S. are not denouncing these attacks that were aimed at members of Hezbollah, a Lebanese Islamist political party and paramilitary group. The indiscriminate nature of these explosions has killed and harmed many civilians, including children.

This violence can only be understood as state-sponsored terrorism by Israel. Reports point to Israel's spy agency, Mossad, as responsible for planting explosives in pagers and devices months before the attacks while they awaited clearance into Lebanon. Hezbollah officials have also stated that metal balls designed to maximize the explosions' effects were placed in these devices to worsen injuries.

These attacks were followed by Israeli extensive airstrikes across Lebanon, which have killed hundreds. Many of these strikes were on residential areas. Lebanon's hospitals are now overwhelmed. Residents across the country are fearful, and rightly so, about the possibility of additional attacks.

Meanwhile, Israel has continued its onslaught of attacks on Palestinians. Their bombings carry on uninterrupted in neighborhoods and supposed "humanitarian zones" across Gaza, killing civilians, including women and children. Israel has also escalated its raids in the West Bank, leading to more killings and assaults on Palestinians.

Even by United Nations standards, the increased methods of destruction used by the Israeli state violate international law (though these laws are routinely disregarded). Such laws prohibit the use of booby traps disguised as harmless objects and committing violence with the intent to spread terror among civilians.

The Israeli government's rampage is escalating, and its war front is expanding. Politicians in Lebanon and Iran are preparing for a wider conflict, with the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations saying that Israel has "crossed the red line."

The interests of those in power in Israel are not new and should not surprise us. Their recent mass attacks are part of a long-standing agenda to expand their control over the region, all while claiming to act in self-defense. This agenda is supported by the United States, which provides billions in taxpayer dollars and military aid to Israel, motivated by interests in the oil-rich and strategically significant region. President Joe Biden has called for a ceasefire, but he has also indicated that "we've got a way to go," all while continuing to send arms and funding.

U.S. voters are rightfully outraged by watching this genocide unfold, but almost every politician running for election is emphasizing the necessity to support Israel. Their actions contradict any real commitment to ending the suffering, as long as their interests in the Middle East are maintained.

The Lebanese people, along with many others across the Middle East, recognize their shared struggle with the Palestinian people – made even clearer by these latest attacks. The devastation caused by Israel, with U.S. backing, will persist unless there is substantial resistance against their actions.

It is workers and oppressed people in the Middle East and throughout the world who are the victims of this violence. The imperialist regimes of the world are leading us into these endless wars for their benefit.

We must stand in solidarity with the Palestinians and organize against our shared oppressors. We must work towards ending this exploitative system once and for all. Our lives depend on it.

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.

Bay Area, California:

The End of Athletics in Oakland

The A's are wrapping up their final season in Oakland before moving to Sacramento and eventually Las Vegas, on the orders of their wealthy owners. Their departure is a major betrayal to their loyal Bay Area fan base, which has supported them through thick and thin. For decades, working-class families have stood by the A's, passionately backing the team, despite the owners' reluctance to invest in a new stadium or field competitive teams. The move to Las Vegas highlights how owners, like John Fisher, prioritize profits over preserving the team's deep connection to its East Bay community. While fans rallied against the move, the owners continually pushed for relocation, ignoring the interests of working-class families. Once again, the rich use people like playthings, uprooting another team from its community. This year, it's not just the end of another baseball season, but the end of the Athletics in Oakland.

Newark, New Jersey:

Newark Restaurant Stiffs Workers

Swahili Village Bar and Grill, a popular restaurant in Newark, New Jersey's fast-gentrifying downtown, was fined \$44,000 by the Department of Labor for "willful violations" of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. This mandates higher overtime pay after 8-hour days or 40-hour weeks. They were also forced to pay 84 workers a total of \$62,335 in pay owed, and another \$62,335 in damages. These violations occurred between 2022 and 2023.

The restaurant is the third in a chain, and the founder wants it to grow into the "most respected food, entertainment and hospitality brand in the world." Since he's willing to screw over his workers, he'll fit right in with the bigger capitalists he admires!



Baltimore, Maryland:

Curtis Bay: A Polluted Neighborhood Demands Safety

The State of Maryland is reviewing regulations for CSX's coal export facility in the Curtis Bay neighborhood. The enormous piles of coal that tower over the adjacent residential area are exposed, allowing coal dust to blow off and pollute the air, leaving a toxic black layer on homes, cars, a recreation center, an elementary school, and a community garden.

For over 100 years, Curtis Bay's working-class residents have experienced deadly levels of industrial pollution. Government officials have all but ignored the impacts on the neighborhood, prioritizing instead the profits of the companies responsible.

The people, however, have repeatedly united to demand a safe place to live. The proposed regulations are not enough. But the government pretends to acknowledge the community's protests. We know we can't trust the politicians, so we must fight to protect our community.

The Triangle, North Carolina:

Attacks on the Right to Vote

The GOP wants to make it harder for University of North Carolina (UNC) students to vote. They championed a law requiring registered voters to present a state-issued photo ID when voting, and now they've taken the assault further by challenging the validity of UNC student IDs in court. These laws impose a cost on people to get an acceptable ID. Requiring a government ID disproportionately shrinks turnout from low-income voters, especially low-income people of color.

The Republicans don't want certain populations to vote. They've taken up the torch of voter suppression, long carried by the Democratic Party. ID laws like these are a type of poll tax. It's a new page in a long history of both parties working to suppress votes by the majority: young people, people of color, and low-income people. This is no democracy.

***We Need to Organize!
Get in touch with us:***



speakoutsocialists.org

@sonsocialists

