

Defying Bans and Challenging False Narratives: Millions More Demonstrate in Solidarity with Palestine

As the Israeli and United States attacks on Gaza, the West Bank along with the entire region escalates, people are demanding a ceasefire and the end of the genocidal war

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For five consecutive weeks, hundreds of thousands of people in Britain have held demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle against the settler-colonial regime based in Tel Aviv.

Many of the participants are calling for a ceasefire while others want to express their support for the Palestinians resisting the onslaught of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) with the backing of the United States, Britain and other Western European states.

On Saturday November 11, the Metropolitan Police in London estimated the number of marchers to be 300,000. Organizers said that the crowd was at least 500,000. This turn out was the largest since the beginning of the siege of Gaza on October 9.

This mobilization was coordinated by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, a broad alliance of political and community organizations with affiliates throughout the country. The large numbers of demonstrators every week illustrates clearly the popular concerns over not only the situation in Gaza, it is a condemnation of the foreign policy of Conservative Party Prime Minister Rishi Sunak who is a staunch ally of the government of the State of Israel.

These demonstrations have been peaceful, and the only arrests made on November 11 were to apprehend a small group of right-wing counter-protesters who showed up to agitate the Palestine solidarity activists. There were news stories claiming that the pro-Israeli counter-protesters had attacked the police prompting the arrests.

Just a few days prior to the November 11 actions, **former British Home Secretary Suella Braverman** published an opinion piece in a leading newspaper, The Times, where she seemed to urge a ban on the demonstrations saying that the marches were pro-Palestinian mobs exuding hatred. Braverman noted in her diatribe that November 11 was Armistice Day, the 106th anniversary of the ceasefire at the conclusion of World War I.

The then Home Secretary accused the police of being lenient towards the Palestine solidarity marches. In response, the director of the police publicly rebuked Braverman and stated that there was no legal basis for placing a ban on the marches. Organizers of the demonstrations said that the latest mobilization coinciding with armistice day was quite appropriate for the existing war against the Palestinian people.



Gaza siege places journalists in danger (Source: Abayomi Azikiwe)

Braverman was relieved of her position on November 13 and replaced by **Foreign Secretary James Cleverly**. To replace Cleverly, Sunak appointed **former Prime Minister David Cameron** who resigned in 2016 after losing the referendum on Brexit. These changes in the British government are a reflection of the lack of a coherent policy for both domestic and foreign issues.

Just one day prior to the massive rally and march in Central London, a direct-action protest was carried out aimed at highlighting the military links between Britain and the State of Israel. According to [a report in the Arab News](#):

“UK trade union members on Friday blockaded a British military equipment maker in southeastern England, calling for a cease-fire in Israel’s offensive in Gaza. Demonstrators brandished banners and placards reading ‘no business as usual’ and ‘taxpayers have blood on their hands’ outside the gates of the BAE Systems factory in Rochester. Organizers said they were aiming to shut down the factory ‘which provides

components for military aircraft currently being used by Israeli forces in the bombardment of Gaza.’ They said it was part of an ‘International Day of Action for Palestine’ organized in response to a call by Palestinian trade unionists.”

In Western European states there has been a growth in participation for demonstrations against the IDF war on Gaza. Despite the bans placed on this protest activity in France and Germany, people have defied these orders by governments and the police to turn out in large numbers in solidarity with Palestine.

[Reuters news agency reported](#) on November 11 that:

“About 21,000 people took part in a pro-Palestinian rally in Brussels on Saturday, and in Paris, left-wing lawmakers were among some 16,000 protesters who marched with pro-Palestinian banners and flags to call for a ceasefire. Some French leftist politicians have welcomed President Emmanuel Macron’s call this week for a ceasefire and opposition to Israel’s bombing campaign.”

French **President Emmanuel Macron** did say in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that **he is in favor of a ceasefire. Nonetheless, Macron was one of the first western heads-of-state to travel to Tel Aviv and meet with Netanyahu pledging support to the Zionist state. The French president even went further calling for a coalition to fight “terrorism” while never condemning the blanket bombing of the Israeli Air Force (IAF) over Gaza.**

U.S. Backlash Against Growing Solidarity Movement

Since October 7, **there have been thousands of demonstrations across the U.S. calling for a ceasefire and expressing solidarity with the Palestinians. These actions have taken place in most major municipalities and on college campuses.**

The pro-Palestinian sentiment among students and progressive faculty members has drawn the ire of the supporters of the State of Israel. **At Columbia University in New York City, the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and the Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) have been banned on the campus.**

These efforts are obviously emanating from the U.S. ruling class and their functionaries. [Al Jazeera reported](#) in an article on November 12 that:

“A billionaire real estate tycoon in the United States is rallying support for a high-dollar media crusade to boost Israel’s image and demonize the Hamas armed group amid global pro-Palestinian solidarity protests. The media campaign — called Facts for Peace — is seeking million-dollar donations from dozens of the world’s biggest names in media, finance and technology, according to an email seen by news website Semafor. More than 50 individuals are being courted, including former Google CEO Eric Schmidt, Dell CEO Michael Dell and financier Michael Milken. They have a combined net worth of around \$500bn, Semafor said. Some of the individuals, such as investor Bill Ackman, have publicly threatened to blacklist pro-Palestine students who are critical of Israel. On October 10, Ackman wrote on X, formerly Twitter, that he and other business executives wanted Ivy League universities to disclose the names of students who are part of organizations that signed open letters criticizing Israeli policies in Gaza.”

The desire on the part of these groupings is to get ahead of the rapidly shifting public

opinion against the State of Israel and the administration of **Joe Biden**. However, they are horribly late in their efforts particularly since the politico-military posture of Washington and Tel Aviv have been characterized as war crimes and genocide.



Palestinians forced to flee their homes again (Source: Abayomi Azikiwe)

Moreover, many people view the policies of the U.S. in West Asia as inevitably leading to another major deployment of Pentagon troops in the region. The situation in the region coupled with the Biden proxy-war against the Russian Federation is quite costly for the working class and oppressed peoples in the U.S.

Corporate Media Bias Challenged by Journalists

To illustrate the degree to which many mainstream newspaper, radio and television workers have changed their positions on the Palestinian question, a large number of journalists have signed an open letter criticizing the corporate and government-controlled media houses for their unconditional commitment to protecting the economic, military and diplomatic status granted to Tel Aviv within the U.S. political system. The journalists cite the bias of the ruling class aligned newsrooms for their double standards in designating organizations such as Hamas as terrorists while justifying the actions of the Netanyahu administration and the IDF in their attacks on the Palestinians, characterizing this oppressed nation in terms which question their humanity and moral character.

Even the Times of Israel, which can in no way be considered antisemitic or anti-Zionist, covered this important development points to the concern over the shifting public opinion within the U.S. and Western Europe where ruling class endorsements of successive administrations in Tel Aviv is being challenged. The fact that these journalists and news

analysts would risk their careers to point out the biased and hypocritical editorial stances of the media agencies which have broad sway over influencing people of all generations and sectors of the population, is obviously a cause for concern among both dominant political parties and the ruling class interests which finance their operations.

The [Times of Israel](#) noted:

“Over 750 former and current journalists around the world have signed a petition calling on the media to begin using terms such as ‘genocide’ and ‘apartheid’ to describe Israel’s actions in the conflict with the Palestinians, while blasting international media coverage of the Israel-Hamas war. The petition, posted on Thursday (Nov. 9), urged an end to what it alleged was the targeting of journalists by the Israeli military in the Gaza Strip, citing the deaths of dozens of Palestinians working for foreign media outlets during the war.... Journalists from Reuters, The Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, The Guardian, and The Washington Post are among the signatories. Abdallah Fayyad, a former editorial board member at The Boston Globe and 2022 Pulitzer Prize finalist, told The Washington Post he hoped the letter would ‘push back on the culture of fear around this issue... and to make decision-makers and reporters and editors think twice about the language that they use.’”

These emerging trends in the political and intellectual culture of influential institutions within U.S. society could very well impact the foreign policy imperatives of Washington and Wall Street. As in previous imperialist wars in geopolitical regions encompassing Korea, Vietnam, China, Southern Africa, etc., the outlooks of millions within the U.S. can be transformed in a manner which will have a profound impact on the balance of forces within a global context.

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Featured image: Detroit Palestine solidarity activists block the entrance to Sen. Stabenow’s offices (Source: Abayomi Azikiwe)

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