

## Dems Won't Stop the Bombs, Fix Detroit

# Vote WCP Against Tlaib



Bill Clark/Getty

14 December 2023: UAW president Shawn Fain (fourth from right) chains workers to Representative Rashida Tlaib (center) and the Democratic Party of genocide.

The people of Michigan's 12th Congressional District have a choice to make in November: the Democrats or the Palestinian struggle. The district—centered on Dearborn and parts of Detroit—is home to the largest concentration of Arab Americans in the U.S. and has long been a Democratic stronghold. The Democratic Party is backing Israel's genocide in Palestine, invasion of Lebanon, bombing of Yemen and attacks on Iran. The 12th District's heavily Lebanese, Yemeni and Palestinian population is furious, but the imperialists' agents are doing their best to keep them chained to the party of genocide.

When Biden fully backed Israel's carnage and his popularity plummeted, Rashida Tlaib and her sister built the "uncommitted" swindle to corral discontent within party limits. When Harris—indistinguishable in policy or responsibility from the decrepit Biden—stepped in and made half-assed attempts to court Arab swing-state voters, community misleaders scrambled to convince them that something might have changed. Osama Siblani, publisher of the Dearborn-based *Arab American News*, assured Harris: "We are in listen-

ing mode." Dearborn mayor Abdullah Hammoud announced, "The door is cracked open." We don't need to listen to the siren songs of imperialists who have overseen the destruction of metro Detroit and the devastation of the Arab world. It's far past time to slam the door on those who push the Democrats and chart a viable course to victory.

### Committed Swindlers

Many area Arabs are embarrassed or incapable of holding their noses and voting for Harris. The hustlers heading up the "uncommitted" movement know this, so with a slimy spin they try to repackage support to the Democratic Party of genocide as necessary to stop Trump. They supposedly "cannot endorse" Harris ("at this time") but condemn "third party votes in key swing states," while calling for "anti-Trump votes and [to] vote up and down the ballot" and lauding the Democratic Party as supposedly rid of "hateful forces," like "segregationist," "anti-union," and other proponents. This is clearly a call for Michigananders to vote Democrat. Their attempt to paint the

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Democrats as progressive is a lie, which if imbibed will only impede the struggle for Palestine and every other struggle of workers and the oppressed here and around the globe.

In reality, the Democrats have long overseen black oppression in metropolitan areas like Detroit, the most segregated city in America. Biden/Harris spiked the 2022 rail strike with the help of “progressive” Democrats. They worked overtime to undermine the labor upsurge last year—bribing the ILWU and UPS Teamsters before labor struggle upset their cart, and UAW autoworkers as soon as bombs started dropping on Gaza. Democrats have also started or prosecuted nearly every major U.S. military conflict and are the main force fueling the current war in Ukraine.

Democrats invoke their personal identity to hide the material reality of their segregationist, anti-union, anti-woman, imperialist politics. It is a means to line voters up behind a capitalist party that represents a class whose interests are fundamentally counterposed to those of the oppressed. Harris is a black woman, Tlaib is Palestinian, and Walz used to be a teacher. But their personal identity and their statements of “empathy” do *not* mean that their political program will ever serve the interests of black people, women, Palestinians or workers. Any advances for workers and the oppressed will necessarily cut into capitalist profits and power, and it is the capitalists that these politicians represent.

The charlatans leading the “uncommitted” movement are correct that Trump must be fought. But it is clear that cannot be done while supporting Democrats. Democratic policy is nearly indistinguishable from Republican, even more so as the political spectrum shifts to the right. This is especially true of foreign policy regarding the Middle East. Furthermore, disgust with having been duped by Democrats’ liberal lies again and again continues to drive many toward the likes of Trump. While some delude themselves by reading tea leaves in Harris’s actions—hoping something might signal “empathy” for Palestinians—others draw different conclusions. Amer Ghalib, Yemeni Muslim mayor of Hamtramck, endorsed Trump largely because the Democratic Party obviously won’t budge on Palestine, despite the claims of passionate liars in the Democrat camp.

Rashida Tlaib has been a lightning rod for racist anti-Arab attacks, mostly because she simply acknowledges the reality of the genocide in Gaza. But she is also the most effective force attracting those outraged by the bloodbath back to the very party enabling it. Her passionate orations do nothing to advance the cause of Palestinian liberation, but they do bolster illusions in this imperialist party and institutions facilitating the extermination. Tlaib covers for her openly Zionist colleagues—like Sanders, Bowman and AOC—in the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism, which will never be a force for Palestine. Despite Tlaib’s pleas for peace, the UN—the imperialist tool used to carve the Zionist state out of Palestine in the first place—will never be a force to stop the imperialists from defending and advancing their interests. Tlaib’s role is simply to keep hope alive in these dead ends.

**For Working-Class Action to Free Palestine!**

The Republican and Democratic parties back Israel to the hilt. This is not because AIPAC has corrupted them or because the politicians don’t understand how hypocritical it is to support genocide while waxing poetic about freedom and democracy. It’s not a question of “empathy,” but of the political and economic interests of the American ruling class as a whole, which each party—as a whole—represents. The U.S. ruling class and their political representatives must be *fought* to advance the cause of Palestine and all the oppressed. This simply cannot be done while supporting their more palatable spokespeople and remaining under their spell.

The U.S. capitalist rulers seek to maintain their domination as they are increasingly wracked by turmoil and their hegemony begins to crack. Currently faced with another wave of labor unrest at home and the threat of wider war in the Middle East, they are

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not about to willingly abandon Israel, their most reliable prop in the region. The Zionist state serves them as a bulwark against hostile forces and a major weapons depot. The only way to advance the cause of Palestinian liberation from here, in the belly of the imperialist beast, is to land a major blow against the capitalist rulers. This will require mobilizing the working class against them and their parties based on workers' material interest in anti-imperialist struggle—for example, by refusing to produce and transport arms to Israel.

Workers here have every interest in fighting against the U.S. imperialist rulers. The very same capitalist masters funding the Israeli onslaught are grinding down workers at home. Workers in the Detroit area have felt the effects in their bones. For decades, the capitalists have shuttered auto plants, throwing them out of work, and even poisoned their water out of utter indifference to their plight. The rulers' imperialist machinations abroad led to the hollowing out of the economy and turned the Midwest into a rust belt plagued by misery and despair. The working class can and must be mobilized against the interests of the imperialist overlords if they are to advance their own cause, but this will require a fundamental break with the politics and parties of capital. This crucially includes their most liberal sheepdogs down ticket, like Tlaib.

### Vote Working Class!

In light of the horrors of Israel's current campaign and the Democrats' support to it, many in the Arab



Gary Walkowicz for Congress

community will not vote for Harris the genocidaire. Many have been driven to consider sitting out the presidential election, while others are looking to vote for a third party. While groups like “Abandon Harris” are critical of the “uncommitted” swindle and call for a vote to the Green Party, the truth is that not just *any* third party will do. The pro-capitalist Green Party sows illusions that more effective liberal mouthpieces

at the head of U.S. imperialism will solve the problems of the oppressed. “Abandon Harris” peddles the false notion that the Democrats might learn a lesson and abandon their class interests if they are “punished” at the ballot box. This is hopeless dreaming.

The best hope for November is to draw a line against both imperialist *parties* expressed explicitly in *class terms*. At the presidential level, Claudia De la Cruz and Karina Garcia of the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) provide a vehicle to do so. Their campaign is clear about opposition to capitalism, both its main parties and the genocide in the Middle East. The Spartacist League/U.S. has major disagreements with the PSL. Significant among these is their cheerleading of the “uncommitted” and other liberal movements, which undermines their own campaign. Nevertheless, even though Democrats have kept them off the ballot in Michigan, writing in the PSL candidates is the duty of all those who wish to fight for Palestine and the oppressed.

In Michigan's 12th Congressional District, Gary Walkowicz of the Working Class Party (WCP) is on the ballot opposite the imperialists' candidate, Tlaib. The WCP states that elections are “not the end goal” but “only the beginning—a lever to pry an opening through which working people could express their anger and their desire to organize for the benefit of their own class.” This is a starting point for strengthening the struggle against the capitalist rulers destroying the Middle East and exploiting workers at home. The WCP opposes both the Democrats and Republicans on a class basis. This is essential because the fight for Palestine and the fight for workers and the oppressed here must be cohered around *class* politics, against the *common enemy*, and for the *common cause of defeating U.S. imperialism* if either struggle is to advance.

### An Unfortunate Tool

However, it is a betrayal that the WCP does not put the struggle for Palestinian liberation and the need for an anti-imperialist working-class movement at the center of its campaign. Instead, Walkowicz's occasional utterances against the genocide mimic the impotent liberal pacifism of Tlaib. Any liberal con artist on the imperialist payroll can bemoan “war” and lament that military money does not instead fund schools. In fact, Tlaib can do this with more pizzazz herself, and does so in service of salvaging the Democrats appeal.

It is the duty of a working-class party to take up the cause of Palestinian liberation and to imbue workers with the understanding that the fight to free Palestine is their fight too. But the WCP, and the Spark group that supports it, utterly fails to do any of this. By confining itself to empty phrases “against war,” repeatable

by any pacifist capitalist politician, they undermine the possibility of building the international working-class solidarity necessary to defeat the enemy. So long as workers' leaders and declared socialists do not put the national liberation of Palestine front and center in the context of the current conflict, class solidarity is impossible between the workers of the oppressed and oppressor nations.

Given the 12th Congressional District's constituency and the appeal of its imperialist opponent, Tlaib, the WCP's capitulation is not only criminal, but also self-defeating. It is necessary to forthrightly confront and defeat the primary means by which the imperialists keep workers and the oppressed enthralled. However, rather than confront Tlaib, expose the bankruptcy of her program and put forward a perspective to cut through the divisions her party sows, Walkowicz isn't even forthright that he's running against Tlaib. In the same vein, his backers in Spark prettify Tlaib, including by burying her invaluable service to the Democrats.

A workers party must counterpose a perspective connecting the myriad of issues facing the working class—from black oppression and police violence to low wages and poverty to the imperialist destruction of Palestine, etc. A workers party must unify the class against the common source of oppression, capitalist class rule, by taking up the needs of the specially oppressed. It must be internationalist and a tribune of the people. By approaching issues on a purely economic basis with empty appeals for class solidarity, the WCP allows the bosses and their parties to divide the working class—e.g., black against Palestinian, native-born vs. immigrant, etc.

While voting for Walkowicz against Tlaib is unfortunately the only way to express a fledgling class independence in this election, Walkowicz's political track record falls miserably short on this very question. He has supported the UAWD, a union-suing outfit that brought the capitalist courts into the affairs of the UAW, and UAW president Shawn Fain, who misled the UAW strike because of his pro-capitalist perspective. While some, including Spark, later denounced Fain for embracing Genocide Joe, during last year's UAW strike many were duped by his militant rhetoric.

The UAW could have escalated the strike, fought for all the oppressed in the Detroit area and turned things around for the entire working class. But Fain is unwilling to cause a serious crisis for the ruling class. Now Fain is threatening a strike against Stellantis, but the authorization is conveniently scheduled for *after* the elections to avoid disrupting his imperialist buddies' campaigns. His aim is to find friends among the representatives of the class enemy like Biden and Tlaib. This is why, rather than wield labor's actual

*power to fight* for Palestinian liberation, Fain opts to push toothless ceasefire resolutions begging the imperialists to “be good” while staging photo ops with Tlaib. The bombs need to be stopped, but that will never happen in league with the party responsible for dropping them.

In the 2023 strike, the Democratic Party stooge Fain refused to take up the question of black oppression, which is the main weapon the bosses use to keep *all* workers down and divided—a fact painfully obvious in Detroit. When Israel launched its assault on Gaza, UAW workers were still fighting on the picket lines. Had Fain pushed for a serious confrontation at the heart of the U.S. economy, it could have thrown a wrench in the imperialist plunder of Palestine—strengthening workers' position. Instead, Fain sent workers home with a list of promises to be broken (e.g., Belvidere is still closed) and meager gains that will be consumed by inflation.

In response to these broken promises, Fain and Tlaib both present the problem as merely an economic one of workers receiving their “fair share”—a slightly larger piece of the pie within the capitalist framework. Walkowicz and the WCP are anti-capitalist, but they mirror Fain's narrow economism. In turn, they recoil from the necessary *political* fight against the likes of Fain and Tlaib. The problems facing the working class and oppressed will not be resolved through economic struggle alone. Workers and the oppressed require a revolutionary working-class party. Building that party requires a break with the parties, politics and politicians of the ruling class—including Tlaib.

This is why, despite the WCP's bankrupt politics and disgraceful sidelining of the Palestine question, it is essential that those wishing to advance the cause hold their nose and vote for Walkowicz against Tlaib. It is the *political stranglehold of the ruling class* that cripples both the workers movement and the pro-Palestine struggle. Obstructing the fight to free Palestine, Tlaib is the most effective imperialist agent—the noose around the movement's neck.

- **No to Tlaib! Vote WCP!**
  - **For working-class action to free Palestine!**
  - **For a revolutionary workers party!**
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