OMNI
GAZA NEWSLETTER NO. 5
BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE AND JUSTICE.

https://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=2151229136087998997#allposts

Compiled by Dick Bennett. (#1: 3-3-08; #2 Nov. 16, 2012; #3 Nov. 17, 2013; #4 May 31, 2014).

What’s at stake: The US propaganda system arises from the Complex—the Corporate-Pentagon-White House-Congress-Mainstream Media Complex. And from the public that permits Israel to receive $4 billion a year to make it the most militarily powerful in the Middle East. This newsletter offers an anthology of alternative views.

My blog: War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

My Newsletters:
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/

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THE ASSAULT

INVASION MASSACRE

Questions About Tactics and Targets as Civilian Toll Climbs in Israeli Strikes
Barnard writes: "The blast from the Israeli strike was so powerful that it threw an iron door clear over several neighboring houses. It came to rest along with a twisted laundry rack still laden on Monday with singed clothes and a child's slipper."
READ MORE
VIDEO OF BOMBING VICTIMS
Gladys Tiffany posted in Omni Center for Peace, Justice & Ecology

Gladys Tiffany 3:33pm Jul 20, 2014
Can't understand the Arabic, but the footage is clear.
Unarmed civilians, women, children, men on sidewalks.
Jewish friends I know this is painful to see. But it can't be hidden. It's wrong, and I know you feel that.
Palestinian friends, I can't even imagine how painful this is. Horrendous.

NationofChange, July 22, 2014

Latest Attack on Gaza Medical Site, IDF Shells al-Aqsa Hospital; 5 Dead, Dozens Hurt
Amy Goodman, Video Report

A hospital in Gaza was shelled by the Israeli Military yesterday killing and harming many.


PROTEST

COALITION MARCHES ON WHITE HOUSE
Aug. 2 National March on the White House
Stop the Massacre in Gaza!

We will be carrying symbolic coffins draped in Palestinian flags to the doorstep of the White House, representing the large number of civilians killed by Israeli airstrikes.

Saturday, Aug. 2, 1:00pm
Gather at the White House
Washington, D.C.

Transportation is being organized from all over the country. Join thousands of people in a National March on the White House on Saturday, August 2 at 1:00pm to condemn the Israeli massacre in Gaza.

We have been in the streets every day in cities around the country. What is needed now is a massive National March on Washington.

Israel receives $4 billion in “aid” from the United States each year. This money is being used to commit war crimes against the Palestinian people in Gaza. We are demanding that all U.S aid to Israel be ended now!

More than 200 people in Gaza have been killed and more than 1,500 have been wounded from Israeli bombs and missiles. This has to end!

Join us to demand:

• Stop the massacre in Gaza! End the blockade of Gaza!
• End all U.S. aid to Israel!
• End the colonial occupation!

Co-sponsors:
- ANSWER Coalition
- American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)
- Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
- American Muslim Alliance (AMA)
- Al-Awda: Palestine Right to Return Coalition
- Muslim Legal Fund of America
- MAS Immigrant Justice Center
- Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA)
- Code Pink

#2DC4Gaza #LetGazaLive #FreePalestine #Protest4Palestine

RSVP on Facebook
Click to become an endorser
Organize transportation to the National March

Please make an urgently needed donation to help us cover the many expenses associated
Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Take Part in National Day of Action for Gaza July 24

Dear Dick,

On Sunday, 25 members of the Abu Jame’ family were killed when Israel bombed their four-story building just as they were gathering for iftar, the meal that breaks Ramadan fasting for the day. Israel has killed more than 600 Palestinians since July 8.

While the U.S. continues to defend and fund Israel's assault, we must amp up our organizing to end all U.S. support for Israeli occupation, apartheid, and ethnic cleansing.

Congress and the State Department are getting many more calls from those supportive of Israel's assault than those opposed. CNN is reporting support in the U.S. for Israel's operation is at 57% with 34% opposed.

Dick, take these actions:

1. Join National Day of Action for Gaza this Thursday.
2. Sign this petition demanding a military embargo on Israel.
3. Find resources and action ideas to respond to Israel's latest aggression.
4. Share this alert with your friends on Facebook and followers on Twitter.
More than 35 local, regional, and national groups are calling for a National Day of Action for Gaza this Thursday, July 24. There have been so many demonstrations in support of Palestinians worldwide already, and the hope is that getting people to all do something on one day will highlight the breadth of the movement for Palestinians rights and send a clear message that there needs to be an end to Israel's impunity.

Whether you can get out a crowd or just a few people, please do something!

Some ideas:

- **Protest** at your local Congressional office and press them about why they are supporting Israel's attacks. Check out this example from CT.
- **Hold a rally or vigil** in a visible public space and invite local news media. Commemorate the dead by reading their names.
- **Organize** a letter writing campaign to media about their Gaza coverage.
- **Do direct action to reflect the urgency of the situation and attract media attention.** Examples here, here, and here.
- **Strengthen** your local BDS campaigns (boycott, divestment, and sanctions) and join 100 international figures calling for a military embargo on Israel.


It is more important than ever to strengthen our work for Palestinian rights.

Travel to Palestine This Fall with National Organizer Anna Baltzer!

Support Palestinian farming families.
Shop our fair-trade store:

Follow Us:
RSVP on Facebook to see what other actions you can take, and find resources at endtheoccupation.org/gazaunderattack.

- US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

PS- Two new academic associations- Critical Ethnic Studies Association and African Literature Association- have passed resolutions endorsing the boycott of Israeli academic institutions. If you are an academic worker, the US Campaign for the Academic & Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI) is encouraging you to join this substantive list of endorsers from U.S. universities and colleges- especially as Israeli academic institutions create the weapons and technologies being used on Palestinians in Gaza right now. Endorse here.

Palestinian artists have also issued a call in solidarity with Gaza and several famous artists have come out in support of Palestine. If you are a cultural worker, add your voice in support of Palestinian cultural workers by signing this statement.

PPS-- Although this letter is far from perfect, please thank the Members of Congress who
signed and encourage them to go farther in the future. Urge them to address the role of U.S. weapons and general lack of accountability for Israel's human rights violations.

The US Campaign aims to change U.S. policies that sustain Israel's 47-year occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, and that deny equal rights for all.

PROTEST ARTICLES BY JEWISH GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

Amira Hass reports on the 1000 Palestinians killed

Henry Siegman

Ponomarev, Gaza a Living Hell and Goya's “Third of May, 1808
Rabbi Yoffie on US Jews' Response to the Invasion

As of yesterday, over 1,000 fatalities in Gaza, 928 fatalities who had been identified by name as of 10 A.M. yesterday revealed that children and 118 women. Over 30 Israeli soldiers and 2 Israeli civilians have been killed. Israel rejected a proposed cease fire and furiously critiqued Sec. of State Kerry for proposing it without allowing Israel to continue (during the “cease fire”) to destroy Hamas tunnels, and Kerry backed down and apologized. Please read the articles below that provide some of the information and analyses you won’t find in Western media.

Rabbi Lerner.tikkun@gmail.com

Once the powerful director of the American Jewish Congress. In those days he refused to write for Tikkun or join our board—our insistence that Israel negotiate with the Palestinians was considered far too radical, and Siegman, who told me he personally agreed with Tikkun’s position, lacked the courage to challenge the major American Jewish mainstream of which he was a part. As has happened to so many people after they lose their positions of power, he became more forthright in his articulation of what needed to change. I imagine the same thing will happen with Obama after he leaves office. It’s a terrible shame that these people didn’t have the courage to do so when they had the power to make a difference. On the other hand, I understand the risks—Tikkun was at first welcomed as the liberal voice of the Jewish world when we began in 1986, but once we criticized Israel’s response to the First Intifada in 1988 (do you remember the Defense Minister at the time, Yitzhak Rabin’s famous order to his army about the Palestinian protesters: “Break their bones” or do you remember the way that Shimon Peres, when he became Prime Minister, refused to negotiate an end of the occupation with the Palestinians?), we lost our funding from the Jewish world and have been treated as traitors though we continue to defend Israel from those who believe it has no right to exist!!

Now we celebrate that Henry Siegman is speaking the truths that the mainstream institutions of the Jewish world, e.g. the Union of Reform Judaism and the American Jewish Committee and the ADL and the others that control huge amounts of money in the local Jewish communities, refuse to talk about or allow to be debated. And yet these institutions claim to be “open” and “reflective and ethically sensitive!!!” And their members rarely challenge their leadership to be more courageous.—Rabbi Michael Lerner

It’s up to President Obama to stop it.

The political and moral issues raised by Israel’s bombings and land invasion of Gaza: who violated the cease-fire agreement and whether Israel’s civilian population could have been protected by nonviolent means that would not have placed Gaza’s civilian population at risk. As of this writing, the number killed by the Israel Defense Forces has surpassed...
And if the president wishes to convince Israelis and Palestinians that Israeli-Palestinian peace is a cause worth taking risks for, should he not be willing to take some domestic political risks as well?

I'm sure the president's political advisers are telling him that a congressional election year is not the time to take on the Israel lobby. They are wrong, not only because it is always election time in the United States, but because

all" by turning the Palestinian people into "a fragmented, marginalized people," Laor writes. It is what the Israeli scholar Baruch Kimmerling described as "politicide" in a book by that name he wrote in 2006.

He's doing all of these things because, as suggested by

use the tragic kidnapping and killing of three Israelis as a pretext to destroy what institutional political (as opposed to military) presence of Hamas remained in the West Bank?

Why will he not allow it? Why did he undermine Kerry's round of peace talks? Why is he inciting against the Palestinian unity government? Why does he continue to expand illegal settlements in the West Bank, and why did he

self-determination and statehood, will never be allowed by Israel, he said.

Netanyahu said, would remain permanently in the West Bank. During the Kerry-sponsored negotiations, he rejected out of hand the American proposal that U.S. and international forces be stationed on the Israeli-Palestinian

will ever be able to claim in the future that [Netanyahu] didn't tell us what he really thinks. He made it explicitly clear that he could never, ever, countenance a fully sovereign Palestinian state in the West Bank.” The IDF,

But on July 12, as noted in The Times of Israel by its editor,

Netanyahu refused to recognize that border as the starting point for territorial negotiations in the terms of reference proposed by Secretary of State John Kerry.

unilateral alterations in the pre-1967 armistice lines that served as a border between the parties. This provision was consistently and blatantly violated by successive Israeli governments with their illegal settlement project. And

It is precisely Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's refusal to identify those borders that placed Israel's population at risk. And the reason he has refused to do that is because he doesn't want to reach a two-state agreement with the Palestinians. The Road Map for Middle East peace that was signed by Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the United States explicitly ruled out any

across their borders.

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The notion that it was Israel, not Hamas, that violated a cease-fire agreement will undoubtedly offend a wide swath of Israel supporters. To point out that it is not the first time that it has happened. The former commander of the IDF's Gaza Division, and not "leftist" critics, who said about the Israel Gaza war of 2009 that

of the calm to improve, rather than markedly worsen, the economic plight of the Palestinians in the [Gaza] Strip. … Yasser Arafat didn't tell us what he really thinks. He made it explicitly clear that he could never, ever, countenance a fully sovereign Palestinian state in the West Bank.”

Thrrall, Hamas is now seeking through violence what it should have obtained through a peaceful handover of responsibility. It is capable of destroying the infrastructure of Gaza, including power plants, hospitals, water systems, and sewage treatment plants. In the July 12

majority, who believe it is worth paying a heavy price to change a disastrous status quo.

that course was not available to protect Israel's civilian population — is (unintentionally?) implicit in the formulation of President Obama's defense of Israel's actions:

"Israel had a responsibility to ensure the safety of its civilians across their borders.

Why will he not allow it? Why did he undermine Kerry's round of peace talks? Why is he inciting against the Palestinian unity government? Why does he continue to expand illegal settlements in the West Bank, and why did he

Yitzhak Laor in Haaretz, he and his government are engaged in a frenzied effort to eliminate Palestinians as a political entity and to turn them into a fragmented, marginalized people," Laor writes. It is what the Israeli scholar Baruch Kimmerling described as “politicide” in a book by that title.

what is Obama prepared to do about it?

that a congressional election year is not the time to take on the Israel lobby. They are wrong, not only because it is a highly vote constantly and overwhelmingly Democratic for a wide variety of domestic and international reasons, but support for the Palestinians that Israeli-Palestinian peace is a cause worth taking risks for, should he not be willing to take some domestic political risks as well?

Project. He served as senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and non-resident research professor of the American Jewish Congress.
GAZA / A LIVING HELL WITH NO ESCAPE

in explosions at a UN school sheltering Gaza residents grieving over his body at a hospital.

The photos from Gaza are like a Goya painting depicting the desperation and frenzy of Palestinians existing in a living hell with no apparent escape ~ surrounded by solders with their guns pointed ~ while complicit Israeli's watch on hilltops from beyond their Iron Dome and celebrate with their neighbors their barely concealed ethnic cleansing in triumphal glee.

They most certainly have the right to their self defense:  Allen L Roland, Ph.D

Goya's masterpiece Third of May, 1808 fully captures the desperation and despair of an entrapped Spanish people facing their eminent death at the hands of their brutal French occupiers. To fully understand the significance of Goya's classic painting of repression as well as its similarities today, please watch this magnificent 12 minute piece - Goya's Third of May 1808 (2/4) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qu1iehzdDE

And when you watch this video, you will realize what that Spaniard is crying out to his French executioners ~ and it's the same cry the entrapped Palestinians are crying ~ WHY?

And it's a question that the world must soon find an answer ~ for this long festering cancer of illegal repression and apartheid is spreading and must end soon before it's illegal Israeli land grab must be turned from a stumbling block into a stepping stone toward world peace before the Palestinians are completely eradicated ~ which appears to be the long term goal of the Israeli Zionists. See evidence of this death yard of angels:
The recent invasion of Gaza testifies to the depraved and morally bankrupt character of the Zionist regime in Israel. The government headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu represents an isolated and demoralized ruling class that has lost its head and has no answer to the crisis it confronts except disorientated and violent and ethnic cleansing ~ which they laughingly call 'mowing the lawn'.

Miko Peled, shares that the current preoccupation of Israel with Iran is a smokescreen for Israeli military law and that only a bottom up American demand for human rights and democracy can change AIPAC supporters. See article: http://www.veteranstoday.com/2014/07/19/a-zionist-generals-son-shatters-the-myths/

The mass slaughter against a defenseless Palestinian population serves only to deepen the revulsion and hostility toward Jewish workers in Israel itself, What will this map look like in 2016 ~ particularly when occupied Gaza.

perhaps only poetry can adequately describe the living hell of occupied Palestine;

military zone, administrative detention, siege, preventive strike, terrorist infrastructure, the quiet technician.

the OPEN SKY, or any open street near to the gates of snipers tower. It means that you under military rule, and the constant threat of death, a quick death from a snipers bullet or bleeding death in an ambulance stopped for hours at a checkpoint. A dark death, at a torture table in an Israeli prison: just a random disease. A thousand small deaths while you watch your family dying around you.

and the world watches in silence. As if your death was nothing, as if you were a stone falling in the earth, water falling over
And if you face all of this death and indifference and keep your humanity, and your love and your dignity and YOU refuse to surrender to their terror, then you know something of the courage that is Palestine.” ~ Suheir Hammad

Please read the article by Rabbi Eric Yoffie to get a picture of how American Jews justify giving full support to Israel in the current struggle in Gaza:

Yoffie was president of the Union of Reform Judaism and remains one of the Reform movement's most influential spokespeople.

"Netanyahu's Operation Stupidity"

By Uri Avnery, CounterPunch.org, posted July 18  [from HAW]

July 25-27, 2014

Who is Winning in Gaza?

Netanyahu’s Operation Stupidity

by URI AVNERY

[Avnery is an Israeli insider. The first part of the article compares the assault on Gaza to the Nazi Blitz of London. --Dick]
What would history look like if it were written in the style of the “Solid Cliff (a.k.a. Protective Edge) operation?

For example:

Winston Churchill was a scoundrel.

For five years he kept the population of London under the unceasing fire of the German Luftwaffe. He used the inhabitants of London as a human shield in his crazy war. While the civilian population was exposed to the bombs and rockets, without the protection of an “iron dome”, he was hiding in his bunker under 10 Downing Street.

He exploited all the inhabitants of London as hostages. When the German leaders made a generous peace proposal, he rejected it for crazy ideological reasons. Thus he condemned his people to unimaginable suffering.

From time to time he emerged from his underground hideout to have his picture taken in front of the ruins, and then he returned to the safety of his rat hole. But to the people of London he said: “Future generations will say that this was your finest hour!”

The German Luftwaffe had no alternative but to go on bombing the city. Its commanders announced that they were hitting only military targets, such as the homes of British soldiers, where military consultations were taking place.

The German Luftwaffe called on the inhabitants of London to leave the city, and many children were indeed evacuated. But most Londoners heeded the call of Churchill to remain, thus condemning themselves to the fate of “collateral damage”.

The hopes of the German high command that the destruction of their homes and the killing of their families would induce the people of London to rise up, kick out Churchill and his war-mongering gang, came to naught.

The primitive Londoners, whose hatred of the Germans overcame their logic, perversely followed the coward Churchill’s instructions. Their admiration for him grew from day to day, and by the end of the war he had become almost a god.

A statue of him stands even today in front of the Parliament in Westminster.

Four years later the wheel had turned. The British and American air forces bombed the
German cities and destroyed them completely. A stone did not remain on a stone, glorious palaces were flattened, cultural treasures were obliterated. "Uninvolved civilians" were blown to smithereens, burned to death or just disappeared. Dresden, one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, was totally destroyed within a few hours in a “fire storm”.

The official aim was to destroy the German war industry, but this was not achieved. The real aim was to terrorize the civilian population, in order to induce them to remove their leaders and capitulate.

That did not happen. Indeed, the only serious revolt against Hitler was carried out by senior army officers (and failed). The civilian population did not rise up. On the contrary. In one of his diatribes against the “terror pilots” Goebbels declared: “They can break our homes, but they cannot break our spirit!”

Germany did not capitulate until the very last moment. Millions of tons of bombs did not suffice. They only strengthened the morale of the population and its loyalty to the Führer.

And so to Gaza.

Everyone is asking: who is winning this round?

Which must be answered, the Jewish way, with another question: how to judge?

The classical definition of victory is: the side that remains on the battlefield has won the battle. But here nobody has moved. Hamas is still there. So is Israel.

Carl von Clausewitz, the Prussian war theorist, famously declared that war is but the continuation of policy by other means. But in this war, neither side had any clear political aims. So victory cannot be judged this way.

The intensive bombing of the Gaza Strip has not produced a Hamas capitulation. On the other hand, the intensive rocket campaign by Hamas, which covered most of Israel, did not succeed either. The stunning success of the rockets to reach everywhere in Israel has been met with the stunning success of the “Iron Dome” counter-rockets to intercept them.

So, until now, it is a standoff.

But when a tiny fighting force in a tiny territory achieves a standoff with one of the mightiest armies in the world, it can be considered a victory.
The lack of an Israeli political aim is the outcome of muddled thinking. The Israeli leadership, both political and military, does not really know how to deal with Hamas.

It may already have been forgotten that Hamas is largely an Israeli creation. During the first years of the occupation, when any political activity in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was brutally suppressed, the only place where Palestinians could meet and organize was the mosque.

At the time, Fatah was considered Israel’s arch-enemy. The Israeli leadership was demonizing Yasser Arafat, the arch-arch-terrorist. The Islamists, who hated Arafat, were considered the lesser evil, even secret allies.

I once asked the Shin-Bet chief at the time whether his organization had created Hamas. His answer: “We did not create them. We tolerated them.”

This changed only one year after the start of the first intifada, when the Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin was arrested. Since then, of course, reality has been completed reversed: Fatah is now an ally of Israel, from the security point of view, and Hamas the arch-arch-terrorist.

But is it?

Some Israeli officers say that if Hamas did not exist, it would have to be invented. Hamas controls the Gaza strip. It can be held responsible for what happens there. It provides law and order. It is a reliable partner for a cease-fire.

The last Palestinian elections, held under international monitoring, ended in a Hamas victory both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. When Hamas was denied power, it took it in the Gaza strip by force. By all reliable accounts, it enjoys the loyalty of the large majority in the territory.

All Israeli experts agree that if the Hamas regime in Gaza were to fall, far more extreme Islamic splinter groups would take over and plunge the Strip, with its 1.8 million inhabitants, into complete chaos. The military experts don’t like that.

So the war aim, if one can dignify it as such, is not to destroy Hamas, but to leave it in power, though in a much weakened state.

But how, for God’s sake, does one do that?
One way, demanded now by the ultra-right-wingers in the government, is to occupy all of the Gaza Strip.

To which the military leaders again answer with a question: And then what?

A new permanent occupation of the Strip is a military nightmare. It would mean that Israel assumes the responsibility for pacifying and feeding 1.8 million people (most of whom, by the way, are 1948 refugees from Israel and their descendants). A permanent guerrilla war would ensue. No one in Israel really wants that.

Occupied and then leave? Easily said. The occupation itself would be a bloody operation. If the “Molten Lead” doctrine is adopted, it would mean more than a thousand, perhaps several thousands of Palestinian dead. This (unwritten) doctrine says that if a hundred Palestinians must be killed in order to save the life of one Israeli soldier, so be it. But if Israeli casualties amount to even a few dozens of dead, the mood in the country will change completely. The army does not want to risk that.

For a moment on Tuesday it seemed as if a cease-fire had been achieved, much to the relief of Binyamin Netanyahu and his generals.

But it was an optical illusion. The mediator was the new Egyptian dictator, a person loathed by Islamists everywhere. He is a man who has killed and imprisoned many hundreds of Muslim Brothers. He is an open military ally of Israel. He is a client for American largesse. Moreover, since Hamas arose as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, General Abd-al-Fatah Al-Sisi hates them with all his heart, and does not hide it.

So, instead of negotiating with Hamas, he did something exceedingly stupid: dictate a cease-fire on Israeli terms without consulting Hamas at all. Hamas leaders learned about the proposed cease-fire from the media and rejected it out of hand.

My own opinion is that it would be better if the Israeli army and Hamas negotiated directly. Throughout military history, cease-fires have been arranged by military commanders. One side sends an officer with a white flag to the commander of the other side, and a cease-fire is arranged – or not. (An American general famously answered such a German offer with “Nuts!”).

In the 1948 war, on my sector of the front, a short cease-fire was arranged by Major Yerucham Cohen and a young Egyptian officer called Gamal Abd-al-Nasser.
Since this seems to be impossible with the present parties, a really honest broker should be found.

In the meantime, Netanyahu was pushed by his colleagues/rivals to send the troops into the Strip, to try at least to locate and destroy the tunnels dug by Hamas under the border fence to stage surprise attacks on border settlements.

What will be the end of it? There will be no end, just round after round, unless a political solution is adopted.

This would mean: stop the rockets and the bombs, end the Israeli blockade, allow the people of Gaza to live a normal life, further Palestinian unity under a real unity government, conduct serious peace negotiations, MAKE PEACE.

* The first part of this article was published Wednesday in Ha’aretz.

URI AVNERY is an Israeli writer and peace activist with Gush Shalom. He is a contributor to CounterPunch’s book The Politics of Anti-Semitism.
Jewish Voice for Peace
Huge protest in Haifa against Israel's assault on Gaza
Image via Abbas Hamideh

Action Alert

You give me hope. The millions worldwide standing with Gaza give me hope. The values we share - the same values that are shining from Palestine - give me hope.
We must stand up - not just against this massacre, but for our values.

Dear Dick,

It's been a wrenching week. The desperate situation in Gaza - and throughout Israel and Palestine - is clearly escalating even further. I know there is talk of a ceasefire proposal from the US, but that seems, at best, an unlikely source of actual resolution.

It all feels like we're in a situation that is both shockingly uncharted, but also horrifyingly familiar.

The latest reports show over 815 dead in Gaza. My Jewish-Israeli friends in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem say that a true fascist mob mentality is settling in to Israeli society, beyond what they've ever experienced. And in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, tens of thousands of Palestinians marched for freedom last night - the largest political demonstration since the 1980s.

This is when I need the JVP community the most. JVP is rooted, of course, in values inspired by Jewish tradition. But it is more than that. JVP is rooted in the values we share with our allies and partners. With the values that are shining from Palestine, even amidst the horrific violence.

We value equality - for all people, under all circumstances.

We value justice - which is more than the false choice between Gaza being imprisoned or invaded.

We value courage - to speak out, to give voice, to shed light.

As you've likely seen, JVP chapters and members around the country are doing amazing work to put
those values into action. In Boston, JVP led a 2,000 person demonstration Wednesday - and focused the attention of every major Boston news source on the rising death toll in Gaza.

And in Washington D.C., our chapter's collaboration with CodePink dramatically interrupted Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer's keynote address at the far-right CUFI Conference.

As our values have taught us, we refuse to be silent. We refuse to allow racism and cruelty to go unchecked. We refuse to erase those who have been killed. We refuse to watch from the sidelines. We refuse to stop until the violence, and the occupation, end. We refuse to be lose hope.

Grace Paley z"l, the Jewish activist and author, once said: "the only recognizable feature of hope, is action." I've heard her words ring loudly in my ears these past few weeks. I am committed to doing everything I can to stop this bloodshed once and for all. And I want you - I need you - with me.

Click here for our form to let us know the next actions you have planned.

Click here for our toolkit with all you need to take to the streets.

Click here to email for support getting something organized.

The millions around the world standing with Gaza give me hope. You give me hope.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Alissa Wise
Organizing Director

Contact Info:

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Oakland, CA 94612
510.465.1777
info@jewishvoiceforpeace.org

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Become a 2014 JVP Member  |  Facebook  |  Twitter  |  Forward
"Who Bears More Responsibility for the War in Gaza: A Primer"


*Carefully detailed historical background. The author is a senior editor of The New Republic and author of a 2014 book on the Truman administration and the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict.* [from HAW]

Chris Hedges, *The Palestinians' Right to Self-Defense*

*Chris Hedges, Truthdig, Reader Supported News, July 26, 2014*

Hedges writes: "No nation, including any in the Muslim world, appears willing to intervene to protect the Palestinians. No world body, including the United Nations, appears willing or able to pressure Israel through sanctions to conform to the norms of international law. And the longer we in the world community fail to act, the worse the spiral of violence will become."

[READ MORE]

HAW statement on Gaza


The Hawblog

The weblog of Historians Against the War

Sign the Petition

Speakers Bureau
Friday, July 25, 2014

[haw-info] HAW statement on Gaza

The Steering Committee of Historians Against the War deplores the ongoing attacks against civilians in Gaza and in Israel. We also recognize the disproportionate harm being inflicted on the population of Gaza by the Israeli military, which the United States has armed and supported for decades.

We are especially disturbed that so many Palestinian children are being killed or wounded in the attack. And we regard as unacceptable the failure of American elected officials to hold Israel accountable for such acts.
As we watch the death toll mount and observe the terror of the trapped inhabitants in Gaza, we call upon our fellow historians to speak out now for a cease-fire, for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza, and for the suspension of all US military aid to Israel until the aid is no longer used for the commission of war crimes.

Please write letters to your local or national newspapers or magazines and contact your elected officials to express your opposition to U.S. funding of the Israeli military and its attack on people in Gaza.

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posted by Marc at 5:13 PM

The War on Gaza and the Cycle of Impunity

If Israel is not brought to justice, it will commit the same crimes again
Palestinians flee their homes in the Shajaiyeh neighborhood of Gaza City. July 16, 2014. (AP Photo/Lefteris Pitarakis)

As we go to press, Israel's third assault on Gaza in five years continues into its second week, with no end in sight. So far the Israeli military has killed nearly 200 Palestinians—some 80 percent of them civilians, according to the United Nations—and wounded more than 1,300. Israeli officials boast of their precision targeting, but the high civilian casualty rate, stemming from deliberate attacks on homes as well as a hospital, school, cafe, a rehab center for the disabled, mosques and other nonmilitary infrastructure, calls to mind the conclusion of Haaretz columnist Gideon Levy, who wrote, “The goal of Operation Protective Edge is to restore the calm; the means: killing civilians. The slogan of the Mafia
has become official Israeli policy.”

Of course, Hamas’s strategy of firing poorly aimed rockets—some 1,000 of them to date—at Israeli cities is just as atrocious as the far more deadly Israeli barrages; both are in fact violations of international law amounting to war crimes. But the wildly disproportionate casualty rate—one Israeli has been killed so far, and a few injured—exposes the true nature of this “war,” in which one of the world’s most powerful militaries uses F-16s, helicopter gunships, drones and heavy artillery against a nearly defenseless, imprisoned population with nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

Reflexive US support for Israel by politicians from both parties is of long vintage and no surprise to anyone. Even so, it was shocking and shameful to hear White House and US diplomats repeatedly voice support for Israel’s “right to defend itself” as it rained bombs and missiles down on the people of Gaza. Much of the US media repeated tired clichés about the “cycle of violence,” as if the conflict began when three Israeli teens were kidnapped and murdered. But lost in the media frenzy was the deeper context to this latest round of bloodshed. The collapse of the ill-starred peace process in the spring had created a dangerous vacuum. Secretary of State John Kerry mostly attributed the failure to Israel’s relentless settlement project. Israel, for its part, blamed the accord between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, which it was determined to destroy.

The government saw its opportunity in the kidnapping of the three teens: although Israeli police were almost certain within days that the teens had been murdered—and almost certainly by freelance thugs rather than Hamas operatives—the Shin Bet placed a gag order on the media so that it could round up hundreds of Hamas members. At the same time, the government ginned up a #BringBackOurBoys campaign—a cruel deception of the anguished parents, but also part of a strategy to foment public hysteria against Palestinians in general and Hamas in particular. It worked—perhaps better than intended, as an ominous, pogromlike atmosphere fell across the country when the teens’ bodies were found, with Netanyahu himself tweeting a cry of “vengeance for the blood of a small child.” The mob attacks culminated in the lynching of a Palestinian teen.

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Achieving a cease-fire will be difficult, given the regional upheavals—all the more reason for European and regional governments to step up their efforts. But unless the deeper issues are addressed, the cycle will continue—the cycle not of violence, but of impunity. Impunity is what happens when an aggressor fractures the norms of international law and basic human rights yet is never held to account, and so is free to commit the same crimes again and again. That is what we’re seeing now, and that is exactly what the Goldstone Report—the findings of the UN investigation of Operation Cast Lead in 2008–09—so presciently warned against. It said then that bringing to justice those who committed war crimes—Israel as well as Hamas—was perhaps the only effective way to prevent another round of violence.

It was the United States that prevented Goldstone’s recommendations from getting a fair hearing in the UN—and it’s the United States, the world’s sole superpower, the key bankroller of Israel’s military, and the unconditional defender of Israel in international forums, that bears deep responsibility for the continuation of the decades-long occupation. Congress and the White House may seem to be an impregnable fortress to those struggling for justice on this issue. But never underestimate the power of sustained grassroots action. The campaign to bring justice to Israel is small but steadily growing, and the media and politicians know it. The fact is, with groups like J Street and Jewish Voice for Peace on the scene, it’s no longer political suicide to stand up to AIPAC and its kin. It’s our job, as citizens of
America and citizens of the world, to force the politicians to do the right thing and compel Israel to end its occupation and, at long last, free Palestine.

Read Next: Mohammed Omer reports from his ancestral home in Gaza

Mouin Rabbani is a senior fellow at the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut and co-editor of Jadaliyya.

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Israel mows the lawn

Mouin Rabbani
In 2004, a year before Israel’s unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip, Dov Weissglass, éminence grise to Ariel Sharon, explained the initiative’s purpose to an interviewer from Haaretz:

The significance of the disengagement plan is the freezing of the peace process … And when you freeze that process, you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion on the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem. Effectively, this whole package called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed indefinitely from our agenda. And all this with … a [US] presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress … The disengagement is actually formaldehyde. It supplies the amount of formaldehyde that is necessary so there will not be a political process with the Palestinians.

In 2006 Weissglass was just as frank about Israel’s policy towards Gaza’s 1.8 million inhabitants: ‘The idea is to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger.’ He was not speaking metaphorically: it later emerged that the Israeli defence ministry had conducted detailed research on how to translate his vision into reality, and arrived at a figure of 2279 calories per person per day – some 8 per cent less than a previous calculation because the research team had originally neglected to account for ‘culture and experience’ in determining nutritional ‘red lines’.

This wasn’t an academic exercise. After pursuing a policy of enforced integration between 1967 and the late 1980s, Israeli policy shifted towards separation during the 1987-93 uprising, and then fragmentation during the Oslo years. For the Gaza Strip, an area about the size of Greater Glasgow, these changes entailed a gradual severance from the outside world, with the movement of persons and goods into and out of the territory increasingly restricted.

[Turning Gaza into a prison. --Dick]

The screws were turned tighter during the 2000-5 uprising, and in 2007 the Gaza Strip was effectively sealed shut. All exports were banned, and just 131 truckloads of foodstuffs and other essential products were permitted entry per day. Israel also strictly controlled which products could and could not be imported. Prohibited items have included A4 paper, chocolate, coriander, crayons, jam, pasta, shampoo, shoes and wheelchairs.

In 2010, commenting on this premeditated and systematic degradation of the humanity of an entire population, David Cameron characterised the Gaza Strip as a ‘prison camp’ and – for once – did not neuter this assessment by subordinating his criticism to proclamations about the jailers’ right of self-defence against their inmates.

It’s often claimed that Israel’s reason for escalating this punitive regime to a new level of severity was to cause the overthrow of Hamas after its 2007 seizure of power in Gaza. The claim doesn’t stand up to serious scrutiny. Removing Hamas from power has indeed been a policy objective for the US and the EU ever since the Islamist movement won the 2006 parliamentary elections, and their combined
efforts to undermine it helped set the stage for the ensuing Palestinian schism.

Israel's agenda has been different. Had it been determined to end Hamas rule it could easily have done so, particularly while Hamas was still consolidating its control over Gaza in 2007, and without necessarily reversing the 2005 disengagement. Instead, it saw the schism between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority as an opportunity to further its policies of separation and fragmentation, and to deflect growing international pressure for an end to an occupation that has lasted nearly half a century. Its massive assaults on the Gaza Strip in 2008-9 (Operation Cast Lead) and 2012 (Operation Pillar of Defence), as well as countless individual attacks between and since, were in this context exercises in what the Israeli military called ‘mowing the lawn’: weakening Hamas and enhancing Israel's powers of deterrence. As the 2009 Goldstone Report and other investigations have demonstrated, often in excruciating detail, the grass consists overwhelmingly of non-combatant Palestinian civilians, indiscriminately targeted by Israel's precision weaponry.

Israel's current assault on the Gaza Strip, which began on 6 July with ground forces moving in some ten days later, is intended to serve the same agenda. The conditions for it were set in late April. Negotiations that had been going on for nine months stalled after the Israeli government reneged on its commitment to release a number of Palestinian prisoners incarcerated since before the 1993 Oslo Accords, and ended when Netanyahu announced he would no longer deal with Mahmoud Abbas because Abbas had just signed a further reconciliation agreement with Hamas. On this occasion, in a sharp departure from precedent, US Secretary of State John Kerry explicitly blamed Israel for the breakdown in talks. His special envoy, Martin Indyk, a career Israel lobbyist, blamed Israel's insatiable appetite for Palestinian land and continued expansion of the settlements, and handed in his resignation.

The challenge this poses to Netanyahu is clear. If even the Americans are telling the world that Israel is not interested in peace, those more directly invested in a two-state settlement – such as the EU, which has started to exclude any Israeli entities active in occupied Palestinian territory from participation in bilateral agreements – may start considering other ways to nudge Israel towards the 1967 boundaries. Negotiations about nothing are designed to provide political cover for Israel's policy of creeping annexation. Now that they've collapsed yet again, the strategic asset that is American public opinion may start asking why Congress is more loyal to Netanyahu than the Israeli Knesset is. Kerry had been serious about reaching a comprehensive agreement: he adopted almost all of Israel's core positions and successfully rammed most of them down Abbas's throat – yet Netanyahu still balked. Refusing even to specify future Israeli-Palestinian borders during nine months of negotiations, Israeli leaders instead levelled a series of accusations at Washington so outlandish – encouraging extremism, giving succour to terrorists – that one could be forgiven for concluding Congress was funding Hamas, rather than Israel, to the tune of $3 billion a year.

Israel received another blow on 2 June, when a new Palestinian Authority government was inaugurated, following the April reconciliation agreement between Hamas and Fatah. Hamas endorsed the new government even though it was given no cabinet posts and the government’s composition and political programme were virtually indistinguishable from its predecessor’s. With barely a protest from the Islamists, Abbas repeatedly and loudly proclaimed that the government accepted the Middle East Quartet's demands: that it recognise Israel, renounce violence and adhere to past agreements. He
also announced that Palestinian security forces in the West Bank would continue their security collaboration with Israel. When both Washington and Brussels signalled their intention to co-operate with the new government, alarm bells went off in Israel. Its usual assertions that Palestinian negotiators spoke only for themselves – and would therefore prove incapable of implementing any agreement – had begun to look shaky: the Palestinian leadership could now claim not only to represent both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip but also to have co-opted Hamas into supporting a negotiated two-state settlement, if not the Oslo framework as a whole. There might soon be increased international pressure on Israel to negotiate seriously with Abbas. The formaldehyde was beginning to evaporate.

At this point Netanyahu seized on the 12 June disappearance of three young Israelis in the West Bank like a drowning man thrown a lifebelt. Despite clear evidence presented to him by the Israeli security forces that the three teenagers were already dead, and no evidence to date that Hamas was involved, he held Hamas directly responsible and launched a ‘hostage rescue operation’ throughout the West Bank. It was really an organised military rampage. It included the killing of at least six Palestinians, none of whom was accused of involvement in the disappearances; mass arrests, including the arrest of Hamas parliamentarians and the re-arrest of detainees released in 2011; the demolition of a number of houses and the looting of others; and a variety of other depredations of the kind Israel’s finest have honed to perfection during decades of occupation. Netanyahu whipped up a demagogic firestorm against the Palestinians, and the subsequent abduction and burning alive of a Palestinian teenager in Jerusalem cannot and should not be separated from this incitement.

For his part, Abbas failed to stand up to the Israeli operation and ordered his security forces to continue to co-operate with Israel against Hamas. The reconciliation agreement was being put under serious pressure. On the night of 6 July, an Israeli air raid resulted in the death of seven Hamas militants. Hamas responded with sustained missile attacks deep into Israel, escalating further as Israel launched its full-scale onslaught. For the past year Hamas had been in a precarious position: it had lost its headquarters in Damascus and preferential status in Iran as a result of its refusal to give open support to the Syrian regime, and faced unprecedented levels of hostility from Egypt’s new military ruler. The underground tunnel economy between Egypt and Gaza had been systematically dismantled by the Egyptians, and for the first time since seizing control of the territory in 2007 it was no longer able regularly to pay the salaries of tens of thousands of government employees. The reconciliation agreement with Fatah was its way of bartering its political programme in exchange for its own survival: in return for conceding the political arena to Abbas, Hamas would retain control of the Gaza Strip indefinitely, have its public sector placed on the PA payroll and see the border crossing with Egypt reopened.

In the event, the quid pro quo Hamas hoped for was not permitted to materialise and, according to Nathan Thrall of the International Crisis Group, ‘life in Gaza became worse’: ‘The current escalation,’ he wrote, ‘is a direct result of the choice by Israel and the West to obstruct the implementation of the April 2014 Palestinian reconciliation agreement.’ To put it differently, those within Hamas who saw the crisis as an opportunity to put an end to Weissglass’s regime gained the upper hand. So far, they appear to have the majority of the population with them, because they seem to prefer death by F-16 to death by formaldehyde.

Among all the sanctimonious howls – this time including a lily-livered Cameron’s – about Israel’s right to self-defence, and in the face of the categorical rejection of the Palestinians’ equivalent right, the fundamental point that this is an illegitimate attack is often lost. As the lawyer Noura Erakat has cogently argued, ‘Israel does not have the right to self-defence in international law against occupied
Palestinian territory.’ Its argument that it no longer occupies the Gaza Strip has been dismissed by Lisa Hajjar of the University of California as a self-generated ‘licence to kill’.

Once again, Israel is ‘mowing the lawn’ with impunity, targeting civilian non-combatants and civilian infrastructure. Given its continual insistence that it uses the most precise weapons available and chooses its targets carefully, it is impossible to conclude that the targeting is not deliberate. According to UN agencies, more than three-quarters of the more than 260 Palestinians killed so far have been civilians, and more than a quarter of them children. Most were targeted in their own homes: they cannot be described as collateral damage under any definition of the term. Of course Palestinian militants have also been recklessly targeting Israeli population centres, though their attacks have resulted in just a single death: a man handing out sweets to the soldiers pulverising the Gaza Strip. Human Rights Watch has criticised both sides but, true to form, has accused only the Palestinians of war crimes.

18 July

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**US Stands Alone in Vote Against UN Inquiry Into Gaza Assault**

by Sarah Lazare, Common Dreams, July 26, 2014

'The U.S. is the reason why the United Nations is not able to play the role its charter requires, which is to stop the scourge of war,' said Phyllis Bennis.

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**AMY GOODMAN, DEMOCRACY NOW: GAZA AND CONTEXTS**

_A Daily Independent Global News Hour with Amy Goodman & Juan González_

**Friday, July 25, 2014**

democracynow.org
Stories

Sharif Abdel Kouddous: In Gaza, Unrelenting Israeli Assault Causes "Grave Humanitarian Crisis"

Amidst talk of a potential ceasefire, the Palestinian death toll has passed 815 in Israel's relentless bombings of the Gaza Strip. On Thursday, at least 16 civilians died and more than 200 were ... Read More →

"No Safe Place": After Deadly Attack on Gaza School, U.N. Warns 150,000 Seeking Shelter are at Risk

At least 16 people were killed and more than 200 injured Thursday when a school used as a United Nations shelter came under fire in Gaza. Palestinian families displaced by the assault ... Read More →

Turning Point? Largest West Bank Protest in Decades Raises Spectre of a 3rd Intifada

Israel's assault on the Gaza Strip has triggered the largest West Bank protest in years, with more than 15,000 people marching Thursday from Ramallah toward Jerusalem. Two Palestinians ... Read More →

Doctor: After "Losing Everything," Gazans Cling to Hope That Conflict Will End Crippling Siege

We are joined from Gaza City by Dr. Belal Dabour of Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza. Dabour
describes how Shifa has been stretched beyond capacity since the Israeli military assault ... Read More →

Headlines →

- U.N. School Shelling Kills 16 Civilians, Wounds 200 in Gaza
- 2 Killed in West Bank’s Largest Protest in Decades
- Kerry Submits New Ceasefire Proposal
- Over 1,000 Protest U.S. Military Aid to Israel in NYC
- 116 Killed in Mali Plane Crash
- Arizona Pauses Executions Following Botched Lethal Injection
- Judge Strikes Down Colorado Same-Sex Marriage Ban
- Iran Detains Journalists with U.S. Ties
- Appeals Court Rejects Lawsuit Against Chiquita for Colombia Paramilitary Murders
- Canadian Activists Deliver Water Convoy to Detroit

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Insidious Myth Prevents Peace in Gaza

by Erin Niemela, Common Dreams, July 26, 2014

There’s really only one myth that needs busting and it’s this: “Violence is
"Nowhere to Run": Israel Fires Over 500 Strikes in Gaza, Civilian Toll Grows in Humanitarian Crisis

Sunday, November 18, 2012

By Mohammed Omer

Source: Democracy Now

Mohammed Omer's ZSpace Page
Join ZSpace

"Nowhere to Run"

Israel is continuing to pound the Gaza Strip with air strikes amidst fears that Israel could soon launch a ground invasion into Gaza. Israeli troops, tanks and armored personnel carriers are now massing near the Palestinian territory. Earlier today, 85 missiles exploded within 45 minutes in Gaza City, sending black pillars of smoke. At least 21 Palestinians have died in the most recent round of violence, while three Israelis died on Thursday. Israel said it launched 150 air strikes overnight, while Palestinians fired a dozen rockets into Israel. Israel has started to draft 30,000 reserve troops in a sign the assault may soon widen. Among the casualties of Israeli violence was the 11-month-old son of a BBC Arabic journalist, Jihad Misharawi. Egyptian Prime Minister Hisham Kandil traveled to Gaza today to condemn the Israeli attack. For more, we get a report from Rafah by Palestinian journalist Mohammed Omer, who says, "One thing that we ought to talk about here is the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. This is a situation of targeting a population of civilians, exactly like Israel is shooting in a fishbowl. And there is no shelter, and there is nowhere to run for the general population. Gaza is living in a very dire situation." We also speak with Gershon Baskin, the
founder of the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information, who was the initiator of the secret talks between Israel and Hamas for the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

"Who Bears More Responsibility for the War in Gaza: A Primer"

By John B. Judis, New Republic, posted July 25

Carefully detailed historical background. The author is a senior editor of The New Republic and author of a 2014 book on the Truman administration and the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

AMY GOODMAN, DEMOCRACY NOW

What Does Hamas Really Want? Israeli Journalist Gideon Levy on Ending the Crippling Blockade of Gaza & How the West Chose War in Gaza: Crisis Tied to Israeli-U.S. Effort to Isolate Hamas & Keep the Siege & Israeli Writer Gideon Levy: If Netanyahu Wants to Stop the Rockets, He Needs to Accept a Just Peace & "Unimaginably Catastrophic": As Gaza's Displaced Top 100,000, Israel Reportedly Shells U.N. School

Democracy Now! Daily Digest

A Daily Independent Global News Hour with Amy Goodman & Juan González

Tuesday, July 22, 2014
democracynow.org

Stories

“A Place of Indescribable Loss”: As Ceasefire Talks Begin, Israel Bombs Hospital, Mosques and Homes

The Israeli assault on Gaza has entered its third week as the Palestinian death toll has topped 600, mostly civilians. More than 100 of the dead are children. More than 3,700 Palestinians have ...Read More →

What Does Hamas Really Want? Israeli Journalist Gideon Levy on Ending the
Crippling Blockade of Gaza

As the Israeli assault on Gaza enters its third week, a new push is underway for an internationally brokered ceasefire. Speaking earlier today, Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni said there is "no ...

How the West Chose War in Gaza: Crisis Tied to Israeli-U.S. Effort to Isolate Hamas & Keep the Siege

While many trace the Israeli assault on Gaza to the series of events that began with the kidnapping and subsequent murder of three teenage Israelis in the occupied West Bank, we look at how ...

Israeli Writer Gideon Levy: If Netanyahu Wants to Stop the Rockets, He Needs to Accept a Just Peace

Joining us from Tel Aviv, Israeli journalist Gideon Levy argues that Middle East peace will never come until the Israeli government drops its rejection of basic Palestinian rights. "Sure ...

"Unimaginably Catastrophic": As Gaza's Displaced Top 100,000, Israel Reportedly Shells U.N. School

The United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees says the number of people seeking refuge at its sites in Gaza has soared to more than 100,000. According to unconfirmed reports, one of ...

July 22, 2014, The Time to Stand with Gaza is Now

On July 8th, Israel unleashed a brutal and sustained military offensive on the people of Gaza, who have already been confined to an open-air prison by the decade-old Israeli blockade and sealing of Gaza's borders. Bombardment from air, land and sea is killing hundreds,
displacing tens of thousands more and targeting hospitals as well as other infrastructure crucial for survival. The reports on the atrocities are horrifying and the resistance and resilience of the Palestinian people continues to provide global inspiration.

In the Palestinian spirit of steadfast commitment to freedom and dignity we call not just for an end of the current Israeli assault on Gaza, but for an end of the Israeli occupation of Palestine along with its Apartheid regime. We are joined in this call by people of conscience around the world, including those in South Africa, where War Resisters International recently held their triennial conference. Last week in Cape Town, 40,000 people took to the streets in solidarity with Palestinians in the footsteps of their own freedom struggle against Apartheid. There have been funeral processions and protests around the world where people are coming together to mourn their dead, restore a sense of humanity to those treated only as either victims or targets, and say that we will not be silent when governments carry out ethnic cleansing.

Mass murder and Israel's use of force is neither defensive nor exceptional. As in all settler regimes, including the U.S., massacre and displacement are more than outcomes; they are a central strategy for Israeli dominance over land and resources.

In the face of this naked cruelty, Palestinian resistance continues, in ways ranging from art to hunger strikes and civil disobedience, to the fundamental resistance of survival with dignity. This resistance is rooted in a generations-old grassroots, nonviolent, civil society movement. It is this civil society that has called for a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions of Israel, and to which the War Resisters League adds our voice. With the U.S. government's decisive financial, military, and diplomatic support enabling Israel's violence, it is time for a powerful movement response. Take action now to end the siege of Gaza and call for the end of Israeli apartheid.

Things you can do:

1) Take part in Palestine Solidarity demonstrations happening in your local community.

2) Join BDS campaigns that are organizing for the long-haul work of liberation, beyond ending this immediate crisis in Gaza: "9 Ways to effectively support Gaza Through Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions."


(Image above by Amir Schiby)

Take Action: No U.S. Support for War Crimes by Israel!
Dear CCR Supporter,

The scenes from Gaza are indescribable. Whole families killed inside their homes. Hospitals attacked with the wounded still inside. Those trying to flee have nowhere to go, due to Israel’s and Egypt’s long-standing closure of Gaza’s borders. The Palestinian Center for Human Rights described this weekend’s Israeli military attack in the Shuja’iyah neighborhood as a “massacre.” United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon called it an “atrocious action.”

Collective punishment and targeting civilians are prohibited under international law. Further, the U.S. Leahy Law bars the U.S. from funding foreign military units and individuals where there is credible evidence that they took part in gross violations of human rights.

Please contact the White House and your representatives to protest the U.S. government’s continued support for Israel during an onslaught that has already killed hundreds of civilians, and to which there is no end in sight. Demand immediate enforcement of the Leahy Law in response to all reports of human rights violations, including war crimes, by the Israeli military in Gaza.

Thank you for taking action.

P.S. Please see CCR’s statement, last week, on Gaza. For those in the United States protesting Israel’s actions in Gaza, see CCR and Palestine Solidarity Legal Support’s legal and tactical “Know Your Rights” guide.
AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL TRUST ACTION ALERT

ACTION ALERT
July 14, 2014

In addition to the list below from the Washington Report, we wish to add:
Send Help to Gaza

Bloody violence has descended once again on the Palestinians living in Gaza. American-made Israeli jets have dropped bombs on Palestinian homes, businesses, a mosque, and even a rehabilitation center for the disabled, threatening the already-tenuous existence of Gazan families. Despite the pleas of the United Nations, UNRWA, UNICEF, the Arab League, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and British Foreign Secretary William Hague the Israelis and Hamas have not agreed to a ceasefire. Innocent civilians of Gaza are paying the price for this violence.

According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA):

- 175 Palestinians have been killed since July 7.
- 80 percent of those killed were civilians.
- 36 children have died as a result of Israeli attacks.
- $60 million is needed to pay for medical supplies and medical referrals out of Gaza.
- 25,300 children have been traumatized by the bombing and need psychological support.
- 1,140 Palestinians have been injured. Of those, 296 are children and 233 are women.
- 5,600 Palestinians have been displaced due to damage to their homes.
- Another 16,000 Palestinians are taking shelter in UNRWA schools.
- 32 fishing boats, a source of income for impoverished Palestinians, have been damaged, burned, or destroyed by Israeli attacks.
- In one airstrike, Israelis killed 18 Palestinians from a single family, including six children and three women, one of whom was pregnant.

The Palestinian people, who have endured so much, need your help in this time of trial.

What Can You Do?

1. Send a financial contribution to an organization working to help Gazans survive this latest catastrophe. Here are some suggestions (in alphabetical order):

American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) 1522 K St. NW, Suite 202 • Washington, DC 20005-1270 • (202) 347-2558 • www.anera.org • Sponsors ongoing programs in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan and provides
emergency relief.

Helping Hand for Relief and Development (Helping Hand USA) 12541 McDougall St • Detroit, MI 48212 • 1 (888) 808-HELP • www.HHRD.org • A global humanitarian relief and development organization responding to human sufferings in emergency and disastrous situations anywhere all over the world.

Islamic Relief USA P.O. Box 6098 • Burbank, CA 91510 • 1 (888) 479-4968 • www.irw.org • Works in more than 30 countries to alleviate hunger, illiteracy and diseases, provides rapid relief to victims of man-made and natural disasters.

Jerusalem Fund 2425 Virginia Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20037 • (202) 338-1958 • www.thejerusalemfund.org • Provides grants to hospitals, orphanages, clinics, schools, universities and civil society organization.

Kinder USA P.O. Box 224846 • Dallas, Texas 75222-9785 • (972) 664-1991 • www.kinderusa.org • Supports relief and development programs in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan.

Life for Relief and Development P.O. Box 236 • Southfield, MI 48037 • (248) 424-7493 • www.lifeusa.org • Provides medicines and medical equipment and supports infrastructure development in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iraq and Palestine.

Médecins Sans Frontiers /Doctors Without Borders 333 7th Ave., 2nd Floor • New York, NY 10001 • (212) 679-6800 • www.doctorswithoutborders.org • Global organization that provides emergency medical relief across the Arab and Muslim world.

Near East Foundation 230 Euclid Ave. • Syracuse, NY 13210 • (315) 428-8670 • www.neareast.org • Supports community development and provides humanitarian and emergency assistance in more than 16 countries.

Oxfam America • 226 Causeway Street, 5th FL. • Boston, MA 02114-2206 • (800) 77-OXFAM • www.oxfamamerica.org • An international confederation of 17 organizations working in approximately 94 countries worldwide to find solutions to poverty and what it considers as injustice around the world.

Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS) • P.O. Box 450554 • Atlanta, GA 31145 • (404) 441-2702 • www.pmrs.ps • U.S.-based support group which receives tax-free donations for this grassroots, community-based Palestinian health organization.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) American Friends of UNRWA Association, Inc. • 1666 K St., NW • Suite 440 • Washington, DC 20006 • (202) 223-3767 • www.friendsunrwa.org • This U.N. agency aids Palestinian refugees through emergency relief such as food and health care, as well as long-term assistance through education and
finance programs.

**United Palestinian Appeal** (UPA) 1330 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Suite 104 • Washington, DC 20037 • (202) 659-5007 • [www.helpupa.com](http://www.helpupa.com) • Sponsors health, education and community development programs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

**World Vision** P.O. Box 9716 • Federal Way, WA 98063-9716 • (888) 511-6598 • [www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org) • Global Christian humanitarian organization providing relief in many countries in the Arab and Muslim world.

**The Zakat Foundation of America** P.O. Box 639 • Worth, IL 60482 • (708) 499-6151 • Fax (708) 499-6154 • [www.thezakat.org](http://www.thezakat.org) • Sponsors programs for emergency relief, orphan sponsorship, education, development and health in 10 countries.

2. Urge U.S. government officials and United Nations representatives to call for a ceasefire. Contact:

- John Kerry, U.S. State Department: Call (202) 647-6575, select option 8.
- Your elected officials: Visit “Vital Activist Resources” on our Web site to contact your member of Congress, or call Congress at (202) 224-3121, or e-mail by visiting [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).
- President Barack Obama: (202) 456-1111 or e-mail [http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments)
- Office of Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, e-mail [sgcentral@un.org](mailto:sgcentral@un.org)

3. Call or write your local newspaper or radio station and ask it to cover the crisis in Gaza.

- Write the editor a letter. Make it brief and to the point.
- Add comments about Gaza at the end of any article you read in that newspaper about the Middle East.
- Google a photo about the Gaza crisis. Put the picture on Facebook and get people to like it.
- Send out tweets using the hashtags #GazaUnderAttack, #Palestine, #FreePalestine, #PrayForGaza, #Israel, #Unite4Gaza, #Gaza2DK, and #Gaza
- Ask any groups that you work with to take on the cause of getting relief into Gaza.
- Hold a teach-in about Gaza at your local college or library.
- Organize a demonstration.

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AET is a non-profit foundation that publishes the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*([www.wrmea.org](http://www.wrmea.org)) and maintains the AET Bookstore
REMEMBERING GAZA’S ARK

OCTOBER 2013

[I received the following from Ann Wright. –Dick]

Israel attacked Estelle one year ago.

As the building of Gaza’s Ark continues, despite the difficulties caused by the Israeli blockade and made worse by the Egyptian regime’s closure of most of the tunnels (sign petition: http://goo.gl/WpVPru), today we commemorate one year since Israel’s piracy of the peaceful aid ship, the Estelle.
The Estelle was the latest of the Freedom Flotilla ships to challenge the illegal blockade of Gaza. On this day we salute everyone who has worked on or supported the Estelle campaign (including former Canadian MP Jim Manly* who was on board), and assure you and the world that we will not stop our efforts till the blockade ends and all Palestinians can realize their human rights.

Please continue to support Gaza’s Ark so we can continue our work.
Your generous financial contributions are what keep the project going: http://www.gazaark.org/donate/

In solidarity
Gaza’s Ark Steering Committee

[Gaza’s Ark was destroyed during the Israel invasion of July 2014. --Dick

* To interview former Canadian MP Jim Manly who was on the Estelle and was imprisoned by Israel and then deported call +1-250-758-0966

Here is the press release issued by the Estelle campaign on the anniversary of the Israeli attack:
One year since the hijacking of Estelle
PRESS RELEASE: 2013-10-19 21:04

It has been a year since the hijacking of Ship to Gaza Sweden’s sailing ship S/V Estelle. The hijacking took place in international waters, 38 nautical miles off the coast of the Gaza strip.

Thirty people from eight countries were on board, firmly decided to non-violently challenge the illegal blockade of Gaza. Gaza, the port of Palestine, was the destination, as was the 1.7 million Palestinians who by then had lived under siege for over six years. A reception of the boat was prepared. Estelle symbolized hope for an end of isolation and politics of separation, and an end to the devastating consequences on living conditions and freedom of movement.

The Israeli military chose to once again board a civilian vessel, loaded with humanitarian cargo and symbolic gifts from the many people who welcomed and supported Estelle’s travel from Scandinavia through Europe. The boarding was a military operation, and the operation was needless to say not peaceful. According to the IDF seventy soldiers boarded the ship. Thirty people were taken as prisoners and, against their will, taken to Israel. All activists without Israeli citizenship were deported and banned from entering Israel. Israel kept S/V Estelle and the ship is now under threat of confiscation. The whereabouts of Estelle’s cargo remains unknown to its rightful owners: Donors as well as recipients.

Estelle was the latest of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition ships to challenge the blockade. The blockade is now running on its seventh year, and has through the actions of the Egyptian regime lately even worsened its grip on the lives of the people in Gaza. We are perpetuating our fight for human rights and freedom for the Palestinian people.
Dror Feiler, Ann Ighe, Victoria Strand, spokespersons for Ship to Gaza Sweden

Link to picture and a list of passengers and crew on the last leg of Estelle’s journey: [http://shiptogaza.se/sv/node/1052](http://shiptogaza.se/sv/node/1052)
Link to a movie about Estelle’s journey through Europe, made by filmmaker and activist Laura Arau: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2bNcDe_tI0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2bNcDe_tI0)
Link for the support campaign that emerged on Facebook during the days before and after the boarding: [https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.451936291514720.94643.195473957160956&type=1](https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.451936291514720.94643.195473957160956&type=1)

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Gaza’s Ark mailing list. To unsubscribe from this list please send e-mail to: gazaark-unsubscribe@lists.riseup.net

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**The President Wants to Hear from Us**

**From the White House: Write or Call**

President Obama is committed to creating the most open and accessible administration in American history. That begins with taking comments and questions from you, the public, through our website.

Call the President

**PHONE NUMBERS**

Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
TTY/TTD

Comments: 202-456-6213
Visitor's Office: 202-456-2121

**Write a letter to the President**

Here are a few simple things you can do to make sure your message gets to the White House as quickly as possible.

1. If possible, email us! This is the fastest way to get your message to President Obama.

2. If you write a letter, please consider typing it on an 8 1/2 by 11 inch sheet of paper. If you hand-write your letter, please consider using pen and writing as neatly as possible.

3. Please include your return address on your letter as well as your envelope. If you have an email address, please consider including that as well.
4. And finally, be sure to include the full address of the White House to make sure your message gets to us as quickly and directly as possible:

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

END GAZA NEWSLETTER #5

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Dick Bennett

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