

DATED MATERIAL



Join Us! 23rd Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Justice Program and March

Monday January 15 at 1:00 pm
St. Francis of Assisi Church | 1927 Vel R. Phillips Ave, Milwaukee

Contact: Brian Verdin, 414-241-4608

- 1:00 pm - Program
- Reflections by Milwaukeeans who knew and worked with Dr. King.
 - Recognition of Groups working for peace in Israel/Palestine.
(Jewish Voice for Peace, MKE Muslim Women's Coalition, UWM and MU Students for Justice in Palestine.)
 - Performances by musicians Pansy Williams, David Nunley, Mike Arndt, and actor Andre Lee Ellis reading the words of Dr. King.

2:30 pm - March to Dr. King's Statue
1700 block of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive (just north of Walnut St.)

Sponsored by the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Justice Coalition (which has been endorsed by 36 wonderful local peace and justice organizations)

JOURNALISTS KILLED IN GAZA WAR

by Ann Batiza

As of December 16, the Committee to Protect Journalists has documented the deaths of 64 journalists and media workers in the past two months of the Israeli-Gaza war. Fifty-seven of these were Palestinian, four were from Israeli media, and three were Lebanese. Three more are missing, 13 have been reported injured and an additional nineteen have been arrested.¹

On December 15, the Al Jazeera cameraman Samer Abudaqa was hit by a drone strike in Khan Younis, just six miles north of Rafah, and left to bleed out for five hours while an ambulance trying to reach him was bombed. Al Jazeera is referring this incident to the International Criminal Court.

Samer and the Al Jazeera bureau chief for Gaza, Wael Dahdouh, had been covering the effect of Israeli nighttime shelling of a UN school, where refugees from the north and central parts of Gaza had taken shelter. The wounded Dahdouh, who had escaped on foot, kept pleading for his colleague to be rescued.

Perhaps some of you are already familiar with Wael Dahdouh, who was on air October 25 when he found out that his home had been hit by the Israelis. He helped to dig out three of his children, including a 7-year-old daughter who died shortly after. Then, on air, he visited the hospital to which the bodies of his wife, son, and grandson had been taken.

To escape shelling in the north, his family had moved to the Nuseirat refugee camp in the middle of Gaza.

In the article from December 16, the Committee to Protect Journalists documented the killings of several journalists at work, but often they have been killed at home along with multiple family members. For example:

“[Mohammed] Abu Hassira, a journalist for the Palestinian Authority-run Wafa news agency, was killed in a strike on his home in Gaza along with 42 family members ...”

As in the case of Wael Dahdouh, several other journalists have suffered the deaths of their family members. For example, veteran Palestine TV journalist Nidal Hamida lost his 10-year-old daughter Mayar, herself an aspiring journalist, and his son and wife after their home was struck by the Israeli military. According to the online news outlet BNN, “An insidious pattern of violence has emerged, targeting media professionals and their families.”²

According to Wikipedia, citing Reporters Without Borders, a total of 63 journalists were killed during the Vietnam War, with the caveat that “media workers were not counted then.” Regardless, this has been an extremely deadly war for journalists – and their families - in a viciously short amount of time. ³



Image of Wael Dahdouh, Al-Jazeera bureau chief in Gaza whose family members and cameraman were killed by the Israeli military, reporting from the funeral of his colleague. SOURCE: Screen shot by Ann Batiza of <https://twitter.com/thrasherxy/status/1736043884470263941>

1 <https://cpj.org/2023/12/attacks-arrests-threats-censorship-the-high-risks-of-reporting-the-israel-hamas-war/>

2 <https://bnnbreaking.com/breaking-news/war/gaza-war-claims-the-lives-of-aspiring-journalist-mayar-and-countless-others/>

3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_journalists_killed_and_missing_in_the_Vietnam_War

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ANTISEMITISM CHARGES: THE NEW MCCARTHYISM

BY Harry Targ

In early December three university presidents, all women, were called before a House of Representatives Committee on Education to explain their defense of academic freedom and the first amendment on their campuses.

President Claudine Gay, Harvard, was asked whether claims of the calling for “the genocide of Jews” on her campus violated Harvard’s rules. She responded, “it depends on the context.” Of course, the claims about the calls on campus were never verified, and the politicians ignored the fact that President Gay was merely defending academic freedom and the first amendment’s right to freedom of speech.

While President Gay correctly was defending the hallowed right of free speech and the university as a haven for the “marketplace of ideas,” she correctly implied about the campus and free speech in general that there were limits (the “context”).

As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes suggested in regard

to the first amendment to the constitution, freedom of speech is not absolute. As he wrote in the famous Schenck versus the United States case in 1919, speech may be restricted when “shouting fire in a crowded theater,” where there was a “clear and present danger” that such speech could cause harm. In short, if words are contentious and stimulate debate on campuses they should be protected. If, however, they have the potential to incite action endangering people, they can be restricted.

In the current case, the corporate media and lobby groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) are seeking to squash debate concerning Israel’s war on Gaza and the US three-billion-dollar-a-year perpetual military aid to Israel. They are claiming that any criticism of Israel’s brutal bombing of Gaza is threatening to Jewish students on campuses and constitutes antisemitism. We must be wary of this move toward a new McCarthyism on campus and in society in general.

HARRY TARG AND CRAIG MOKHIBER: REFLECTIONS ON A LASTING PEACE

by Ann Batiza

Longtime peace activist and member of Peace Action of Wisconsin, Harry Targ, recently used his “Diary of a Heartland Radical” blog to espouse a series of reflections on the current war on Gaza “in the spirit of the eight nights of Chanukah!”¹ Given their perceived staying power beyond the holiday season, his reflections are discussed below as exhortations to all of us.

For context, Craig Mokhiber, who “has investigated human rights in Palestine since the 1980s, [and] lived in Gaza as a UN human rights advisor in the 1990s,” resigned as Director of the New York office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights on October 28.² His resignation letter noted the “genocide unfolding before our eyes, and the Organization [the UN] that we serve appears powerless to stop it.” Mokhiber’s letter proposes a “U.N.-norm-based position” that recognizes the historical occupation that underlies the current Israel-Gaza war. He says, “This is a text-book case of genocide. The European, ethno-nationalist, settler colonial project in Palestine has entered its final phase, toward the expedited destruction of the last remnants of indigenous Palestinian life in Palestine.”

After Targ calls on us to “continue to demand, through words and actions, a complete ceasefire in

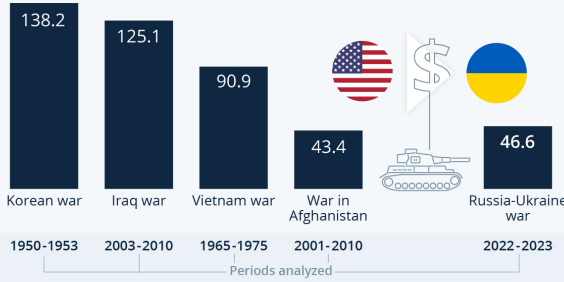
Gaza,” he asks that we “assess the enormous role the United States is playing in fueling this violence . . .” Mokhiber concurs. He says, “[T]he governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and much of Europe, are wholly complicit in the horrific assault. . . they are in fact actively arming the assault, providing economic and intelligence support, and giving political and diplomatic cover for Israel’s atrocities.”

Targ also asks us to “mobilize against a ‘new McCarthyism,’ . . . particularly in educational institutions, [which are] claiming that criticisms of Israeli policy are in fact manifestations of antisemitism.” Mokhiber addresses this by noting, “[I]n spite of Israel lobby smears to the contrary, . . . criticism of Israel’s human rights violations is not antisemitic, any more than criticism of Saudi violations is Islamophobic, criticism of Myanmar violations is anti-Buddhist, or criticism of Indian violations is anti-Hindu. When they seek to silence us with smears, we must raise our voice, not lower it.”

Both Targ and Mokhiber support a fully secular, one-state solution. Please access the links below to learn the reasons why and to read each of these thoughtful missives.

Ukraine: U.S. Military Aid Exceeds Costs of Afghanistan

Annual average U.S. military spending, by war vs. U.S. military aid to Ukraine (in billion U.S. dollars, in 2022 prices)*



* Military aid to Ukraine does not include weapons and equipment.
Source: Kiel Institute for the World Economy

statista

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Thank you all for help with our Annual Meeting, organizing storage space and mailings:

Brian, Joy and Inga Bunzel, Mary Laan, Ken Gass, Sue Cotrell, Jim Morrell, Jim and Eldeen Carpenter, Samir Moukaddam, Bruce Ware, Tom Rodman, Trish Beausang, Ann Batiza, Tom and Carol Seery, Chris Breihan, Babette Grunow, David Lindberg, and Ruth Zubrensky.

TELL CONGRESS:
STOP THE GAZA GENOCIDE!
CALL 202-224-3121
for the Congressional Switchboard

Say you support the Resolution for Deescalation and Ceasefire in Israel and Occupied Palestine submitted by Rep. Cori Bush or go to www.congress.gov/members
Urge our senators to sponsor a companion resolution.

Call the White House at
202-456-1111
Tuesday-Thursday between 10am - 2pm CT
You can leave a message on the public comment line.

NO TO GENOCIDE!
CEASEFIRE NOW!

OUR 2023 AWARD WINNERS

• Mark Foreman was named Peacemaker of the Year in recognition of his hard work to end war and dedication to nonviolence. Foreman has led Veterans for Peace, Milwaukee Chapter 102, for many years.

• Special Thanks went to Samir Moukaddam for many years of assistance to Peace Action WI. Samir will be serving on the Peace Action WI Steering Committee.

• A Special Award honored the memory of Stand for Peace member, Jim Martell, who passed away several years ago. Many thanks to his wife, Marilyn Meyerhofer Martell, for keeping his legacy alive with many contributions.

JOIN US / RENEW

____ New Member ____ Renewal
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

____ \$30 individual ____ \$10 limited income
____ \$50 household ____ \$100 supporter
____ \$1000 lifetime membership
Additional donation of support \$ _____

Make checks out to Peace Action of Wisconsin
P.O. Box 11126 • Shorewood, WI, 53211

Call office for information on monthly sustainers.

If you are not receiving our *Peace Action Email Alerts* please email us your email address so you can keep in touch with current activities.

1 Harry Targ’s “THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY AND THE SPIRIT OF CHANUKAH (and two interviews)” can be accessed here: <http://heartlandradical.blogspot.com/2023/12/the-middle-east-today-and-spirit-of.html>
2 Craig Mokhiber’s resignation letter can be accessed at: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24103463-craig-mokhiber-resignation-letter>



January 8-12 - Defuse Nuclear War Week of Action, Stopping the Cycle of Violence in the Middle East. See <https://defusenuclearwar.org/>.

January 12, Friday and January 13, Saturday - Emergency Summit for Gaza: Ceasefire, Saving Lives, Building Peace. In Chicago, with Jesse Jackson, Rabbis Arthur Waskow & Phyllis Berman, & more. Register to attend in person or online on the Peace Action of WI online calendar.

January 15, Monday at 1 PM - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. See ad on page 8 for details.

January 22, Monday - Third Anniversary of the UN Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Special Stand for Peace on January 20, Saturday, at NOON at Farwell and Brady St.

February 20, Tuesday and February 21, Wednesday – Day X. Day now set for a decision on whether or not Julian Assange’s final appeal will be heard by the High Court in the UK. Assange Defense MKE will hold a special event. See our online calendar for details.

February - Webinar with updates on issues of the Indigenous Nations of Wisconsin and our region. Time and date to be announced.

Check the Peace Action of WI online calendar for webinars and upcoming events in 2024.

End the Wars Coalition - on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 7 PM. Zoom link will be provided. Please email pamrichard35@gmail.com to be put on our email list.

Wisconsin Coalition for Justice in Palestine - See website at <https://www.wisconsinforpali.org/about>

Milwaukee Anti-War Committee - on the first Saturday of every month. See Facebook for locations and time.

WI Cuba Coalition - Next meeting is on Thursday, January 11 at 7 PM. Email artheitzer@gmail.com to get on the email list.

United Nations Association of Milwaukee- Public forums with topics of interest to Peace Action members are held every third Saturday at 10 AM. Next meeting is January 20 at Zao Church MKE (new location)

Friends Committee on National Legislation, meetings on the first Wednesday of the month. For information about joining the Milwaukee Advocacy Team, contact Roger Hansen at johnroger1@sbcbglobal.net

350 MKE- This group works to end climate change and the use of fossil fuels. Meets on the second Tuesday of the month. <https://350milwaukee.weebly.com>

PEACE ACTION HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

by Chris Breihan

Every November, Peace Action of Wisconsin invites its members to come together for food, music, the election of the next Steering Committee, and presentations by guest speakers on some of the issues confronting us. This year’s meeting was held the evening of November 16 at ZAO Church.

Songs of inspiration by Julie Anne Lovely and Doug Esty and musical parody by the Raging Grannies accompanied our potluck chili dinner. Office manager Pam Richard presented a brief retrospective of the past year’s achievements as well as challenges, including our move to new office space at ZAO. The 2024 Steering Committee was approved by acclamation. Members are: Ann Batiza, Christy Breihan, Babette Grunow, Laura Kukor-Shea, James Morrell, Samir Moukaddam, Thomas Seery, Harry Targ, and Bruce Ware. The Committee will hold its organizational and strategy/vision meeting on Saturday, January 13th, in the afternoon.

Next, the fifty -or-so members present at ZAO or following on Zoom heard from two highly respected speakers, David Swanson of World Beyond War, and Janan Najeib of the Wisconsin Coalition for Justice in Palestine.

David Swanson spoke of the terrible devastation that has been visited upon both Ukraine and Gaza, by the US-funded military operations in both countries. The highly profitable war manufacturing industry has no interest in seeking peaceful resolution to these conflicts. It is up to us, people committed to advancing the cause of peace, to show that wars do NOT end the next war, but rather sow

its seeds. Non-violence, negotiations, and diplomacy can lead us to a better world.

Janan Najeib, the president of the Milwaukee Muslim Women’s Coalition, convened the Wisconsin Coalition for Justice in Palestine to call for a non-violent resolution to the unjust circumstances imposed on the people of Gaza as well as to condemn the violent attack by Hamas on innocent Israeli civilians. The world has watched in horror as Israel has used the attack by Hamas to try to justify an all-out assault on all the people of Gaza that has killed between 15 and 20,000 human beings in Gaza, at least 7,000 of them children.

The numbers of the dead are shocking, but Najeib shared not just numbers, but personal connections to victims of the Israeli bombings. She told the story of a family she knew as university professors in the US, who went back to Gaza to teach at the university there, whose home in Gaza was hit by Israeli bombs, killing some family members instantly. Some of the children survived the bombing, and ran out of the house into the street where they were shot to death by the Israeli army. The entire family that she knew as academics working for the betterment of humanity, was wiped out by the army of Israel with weapons from the US.

That image of children being killed with our tax dollars, with the endorsement of our government, with profits flowing to our weapons industry, sent us out the door as committed as ever to working for a non-violent, but also a just, resolution to these conflicts.

LABOR UNIONS AND CITY COUNCILS JOIN CALL FOR CEASEFIRE

by Chris Breihan

At a rally outside the US Capitol on December 14, United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain added the voice of the UAW to the growing movement calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Addressing a gathering of union and anti-war activists as well as a few progressive members of Congress, Fain joined the Postal Workers Union and the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers in calling for an end to Israel’s war on Gaza.

“The world has seen enough slaughter and devastation. Peace is the only path forward,” proclaimed the leader of the 400,000-member union. Fain also condemned

“antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Arab racism,” which he said are a growing problem and “must be stopped.” (as reported by Brett Wilkins in Common Dreams, Dec. 14, 2023)

The city councils of Wilmington, Delaware, and Madison, Wisconsin, have also passed resolutions calling for an immediate ceasefire to end the carnage in Gaza. As of this printing, the only congressional representative from Wisconsin to add his name to a call for ceasefire is Rep. Mark Pocan of Madison.



January 6 : 27th/Oklahoma

January 13 : King/Locust

January 20 : Brady/Farwell

January 27 : 76th/North

February 3 : 27th/National

February 10 : Port Washington/Silver Spring

February 17 : Sherman/North

February 24 : Howell/Howard

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PEACE ACTION OF WISCONSIN JOINS THOUSANDS IN MADISON

by Jim Carpenter

On December 9, thousands gathered at the state capital to demand that Biden and Wisconsin’s senators and representatives call for an immediate ceasefire to end Israel’s genocidal slaughter in Gaza. The all Wisconsin rally was sponsored by the Wisconsin Coalition for Justice in Palestine, with over 50 organizations including Peace Action WI. (wiscoforpali.org)

Sadly, in WI, only Mark Pocan has called for a ceasefire although nationwide more than 60 members of congress have done so. Call your member of congress at 202-224-3121.

The rally was extremely diverse with the young, old, students, different races, different religions and labor activists. Inspiring speeches included a representative from Jewish Voice for Peace. (JewishVoiceForPeace.org). Janan Najeeb, a lead organizer of the coalition, gave the startling statistic that the number of children murdered in Gaza now equals the total population of all children 5 years old and younger living in Milwaukee (about 7,000). Total murdered in Gaza now exceeds 20,000.

RULING IN THE CASE AGAINST THE CIA

by Ann Batiza

As discussed previously in the Mobilizer, lawyers and journalists who visited Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian Embassy filed a lawsuit against the CIA, Mike Pompeo (former CIA director) and those who provided security at the Embassy. The lawsuit alleges that during the lawyers and journalists’ visits with Assange, the contents of their phones and computers were surreptitiously downloaded and turned over to the CIA. They also allege that their conversations with Assange were recorded and shared with the CIA.

In response to this lawsuit, the CIA filed a motion to dismiss. Although that would normally be the end of such proceedings, unaccountably Judge John Koeltl decided to hear oral arguments regarding that motion on November 16. I was fortunate to be in the courtroom in lower Manhattan for that hearing.

While three lawyers from the Roth Law Firm were present to represent the plaintiffs, only one attorney, Jean-David Barnea, represented the CIA and Pompeo.



Ann Batiza stands with Nathan Fuller, director of Assange Defense, outside of the Pearl Street courtroom in the Southern District of New York.

Chants accusing Biden of genocide were popular in Madison as they are in Milwaukee. “Free, free Palestine” is also popular as is “Not another nickel, not another dime, no more money for Israel’s crimes.” U.S. taxpayers give \$4 billion to Israel annually and Biden is pushing for an additional \$14 billion.

PBS News Hour reported that according to Crowd Counting Consortium there have been over 1,800 pro-Palestinian rallies in the U.S. as of Nov 28. Recent polls indicate that Biden’s stance on Israel could cost him voters.

Personally, a highlight for me was leaving a rest stop and by sheer luck hooking up with the car caravan headed to Madison. All four occupants of my car agreed that a mutual ceasefire, an end of aid to Israel and a negotiated political solution was the only sane path forward. Like the Ukraine War, war is not the answer.

The Secretary General of the U.N., Antonio Guterres, and the General Assembly have called for a ceasefire. The U.S. has blocked calls for a ceasefire by the U.N. Security Council. Guterres said “This is urgent. The civilian population must be spared from greater harm. With a humanitarian ceasefire, the means of survival can be restored, and humanitarian assistance can be delivered in a safe and timely manner across the Gaza Strip.”

I was rather shocked to hear Mr. Barnea argue that American citizens have no expectation of privacy in public buildings because of the ubiquitous surveillance now in place. He said, “[b]ecause government buildings and the like so commonly have security cameras and other surveillance equipment in them, ...there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in such a facility, unless the person is given explicit assurances of privacy.”

But Judge Koeltl’s questions zeroed in on the fact that the contents of the visitors’ electronic devices were alleged to have been downloaded and turned over to the CIA. Therefore, it was not surprising that his December 19 decision found that the US Government’s motion to dismiss, while accepted in part, was also denied in part. As one of the plaintiffs, lawyer Deborah Hrbek, emailed me, “Motion to dismiss denied in part – which means the case continues and we can proceed with discovery.”

If it stands, this case has the potential to embarrass the CIA - to expose its excesses in going after Assange. Such exposure might influence the Biden administration’s pursuit of Assange or at least generate publicity so the American public can begin to evaluate what is at stake here. But this is true only if the media do their job.



MARIN WEBSTER DENNING AND MEDEA BENJAMIN SPEAK AT ARMISTICE DAY CELEBRATION

Peace Action of Wisconsin was one of four sponsors of the Veterans for Peace Armistice Day celebration at the Milwaukee City Hall Rotunda on November 11. The first plenary speaker was Marin Webster Denning of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, an educator and curriculum specialist in Native American history and culture. The second speaker (by Zoom) was Media Benjamin, co-founder of the women-led peace group CODEPINK, the human rights group Global Exchange, the Peace in Ukraine Coalition, and more; and author with Nicholas J.S. Davies of War in Ukraine: Making sense of a senseless conflict.

Denning used an iconic image of Tom Cruise in the cockpit (from the original Top Gun) to illustrate “influences that glorify war” especially “when you’re handsome and young.” He discussed how the indigenous American tribal names and symbols have been used by “the dominant culture” to name machines of war. For example, the Ute Electronic Intelligence Plane, the Black Hawk helicopter, the CCH-47 Chinook helicopter and the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile. He later returned to this theme and noted the indigenous names for series of US government tugboats, incorporating a multitude of tribal names such as Kiowa

BELLY OF THE BEAST TOUR

by Chris Breihan

The Wisconsin Coalition to Normalize Relations with Cuba brought the award-winning Cuban journalist and filmmaker Liz Oliva Fernandez to Milwaukee for three showings and discussions of her film, Uphill on the Hill, a Belly of the Beast production.

In the film, Fernandez exposes the disproportionate power wielded by a few members of Congress who have ties to the corrupt pre-revolutionary power-brokers who ruled Cuba. While most Americans have no desire to continue the vicious US blockade—in fact, many express surprise that it is still in place—this handful

and Seneca and the naming of a Lakota aircraft and a Squaw (a derogatory name) submarine. The “509 Geronimo” is a paratrooper patch and most are familiar with the 101st airborne “screaming eagles” a bird that has special significance to his people. He noted that in fact, contrary to the imagery used by “the dominant culture,” the Oneida think of peace, not war.

Medea Benjamin spoke about both the Ukraine War and War on Gaza. Because of her position on that war, she said she has been called a “Putin apologist” and several of her talks have been cancelled. She began her talk about the war in Ukraine by saying that “context matters” and mentioned the promise given to Gorbachov - that NATO would not expand one inch east. That promise has, of course, been broken many times over and was a major factor that influenced Putin’s illegal invasion of Ukraine. Benjamin later discussed the efforts of CODEPINK in confronting members of Congress about war in Gaza, including unsuccessfully attempting to persuade Representative Gwen Moore to sign a cease fire resolution. As described in the previous Mobilizer, Jim and Eldeen Carpenter, Jerry Hills and I had met Medea in Washington DC earlier and had taken part in a major demonstration with CODEPINK in Senator Bernie Sanders’ office.

A video of the event will be posted on our Peace Action of WI website. The red dots in the timeline delineate each speaker.

of politicians has managed to not only maintain, but actually intensify the US economic war on the people of Cuba. With a style reminiscent of Michael Moore’s “Roger and Me,” Fernandez reveals the atmosphere of intimidation that protects their influence and discourages other journalists from questioning it.

The screenings, held at the Milwaukee Liberation Center on Mitchell Street, MATC, and UW-M, were attended by about 75 people. Many signed up to receive more information about how they can help end the blockade. The films by Belly of the Beast media outlet can be viewed on their website, bellyofthebeastcuba.com. Their next documentary will be an expose of Sen. Bob Menendez, titled Hardliner on the Hudson.