

US: Pittsburgh protest against atrocities in Gaza

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On Saturday, 200 people came out in sub-freezing temperatures in Pittsburgh to a rally and “March of the Dead” to symbolize the more than 1,000 Palestinians killed in Israel’s assault on Gaza. The rally and march was called by the newly formed Coalition for Peace & Justice in the Middle East (CPJME), comprised of a number of university and local groups.

While speakers at the rally told those in attendance not to trust Obama, there was no explanation of the incoming Democratic president’s role as a representative of US imperialism and supporter of Israel’s policies in the Middle East.

Speakers at the rally called for continued protest centering on United Nations action to force the Israeli government to accept a cease-fire and reopen the borders. A Green Party speaker called for US and UN personnel to take control of the borders between Gaza and Egypt, to ensure that weapons are not being smuggled into Gaza through Egypt.

After the rally participants, dressed in black and wearing white masks, marched on the sidewalk and carried coffins and placards bearing the names of Palestinian civilians who have been killed in Israel’s bombardment of Gaza.

Counter-demonstrators, wearing and carrying Israeli flags, walked on the opposite side of the street with signs and placards. There was no confrontation between the two groups.

Nabulungi Muhangi, a University of Pittsburgh student, told the WSW, “I am here to support the

people in Gaza. This is the first demonstration that I have come to. I think it is important to be here to show everyone that the killing in Gaza is wrong, that the occupation is wrong.

“I think it is wrong for the Israelis to look to the Holocaust and to say that whatever they do is right, when what they are doing to the Palestinians is like a holocaust. I have looked through the Palestinian art gallery that we have here, and you can see that they are killing children and women and people who are not doing anything wrong.

“I don’t believe that Israel has to be doing this. There is so much more that they could be doing. They could be talking with them. I don’t believe that killing people should ever be done. This is an occupation. Israel is not doing this to stop rockets, but because they want to take over this land.

“The US has been supporting Israel for a long time. I am not surprised about it. Our tax dollars should not be going to kill innocent people. I think Barack Obama should speak on this. I supported him and I voted for him, but now he is totally silent. He said he was for change, but he is totally silent. It is sad for me that I supported him, and he has been totally silent. I expect that he is going to continue to support Israel and things won’t change.”

Khalipha Misurra, a high school student, said, “I am here to show my support for the people of Gaza and to voice my opinion that the atrocities being carried out by Israel with the support of the United States are wrong. The way they have done things has caused so much

destruction. Children are dying in the street for what cause, what purpose did Israel have to go in there?

“I don’t think the Israelis have any justification for what they are doing. They are firing into heavily populated areas. Where are people going to run when they bomb them, destroy their homes, their way of life, their families—destroy their friends?

“Every single person in the Israeli government that is doing this needs to be tried and locked up for doing this. They support genocide of innocent Palestinian people. Our government is responsible too. Without US support Israel would not be able to do what they are doing.”



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