

Hundreds march in Dearborn, Michigan against Israeli crimes

Kevin Martinez
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As part of the global protests against Israel's invasion of Gaza, hundreds of workers and young people attended a rally called by Muslim-American groups in front of the city hall in Dearborn, Michigan. Many came to express their outrage at Israeli war crimes as well as complicity of the US government in the ongoing slaughter.

Entire families, mostly of Middle Eastern descent, came with homemade signs and Palestinian flags denouncing US-Israeli aggression, and many cars honked their horns in support on the busy adjacent street. Dearborn is home to the largest Arab-American community in the country and the largest mosque in North America.

The rally was held directly across the street from the Arab American National Museum. Many in the crowd led chants denouncing the war on Gaza including, "from the river to sea, Palestine will be free" and "Gaza, Gaza, don't you cry, Palestine will never die." Islamic prayers in Arabic were sung, poems were read, and a moment of silence was held.

However, the political perspective of the organizers and many of the speakers was one of pressuring the Obama administration, which has backed the slaughter throughout. Imam Mohammad Mardini, a religious leader from the American Muslim Center, called on the demonstrators to "pressure the decision makers to stop" the war and urge Secretary of State John Kerry to "stand tall against aggression."

The general sentiment among the demonstrators was to the left of the speakers. Many were explicit that their hostility was not directed at Jews or the American people, but at Zionism and the governments of Netanyahu and Obama. Many also called not just for a "two-state solution" but an end to nationalism in general.

Zana Makki and her sister Maya are students from Windsor, Ontario, Canada. "There is a second holocaust going on against the Palestinians," Zana said. "We are saying no Anti-Semitism, just anti-Zionism. There is a lot of protest in Canada, on social media; it's all over the world."

"Instead of going to education, money is going to Israel's military," Zana said. When asked about anti-war protests in Israel she remarked, "I don't think it's the whole population of Israel that supports the invasion, just the government."

Jinan is a fundraiser for a non-profit group in Toledo, Ohio. She commented on the war saying, "It's horrifying. A war would mean you have two armies. What you have is a rebel force that was forced into creation against the most advanced military in the world. The US government is silent even though our tax money goes to help genocide."

"I'm Palestinian; I have family in the West Bank. We're lucky in the US to protest without fear of being shot. They say there is much tension in the West Bank; they don't even know what to do. I can't even imagine."

Jinan noted the essential unity between the Arab and Jewish masses saying, "There are stories of Jews in Palestine that are comforting the families in Gaza. We have friends in Toledo that have kids in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces), the mother just donated to a Palestinian charity. Only love can drive out hate."

Sayed is a software engineer born in Saudi Arabia to parents of Indian descent. He was accompanied by Rachida, who was born in France to Moroccan parents. Sayed said the situation in Gaza is "horrific." He added, "In the last 12 hours of the ceasefire they found the bodies of 70 kids. Where are people going to go? Egypt is blocking them off. That's another stupid

regime I hate.”

Rachida added, “The US government is pathetic, the French government as well. The governments do not reflect how the people feel. French President Hollande was elected in part because he said he was going to fight Israel’s occupations. That was a lie.” Sayed added, “It’s not the Jewish people that are bad, it’s Zionism.”



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