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By Minnie Bruce Pratt  
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## *In U.S., thousands support heroic Palestinian fightback*

Palestinian resistance continues against the state of Israel's destruction of their homes, seizure of their land, assassination of their leaders and slaughter of their people. This genocidal attack was first made possible by the might and sponsorship of European colonialist powers. The onslaught on Palestine has since been protected and propped up by U.S. military funding for the promotion of U.S. economic and political interests.

Recognition of the Palestinian struggle as an Indigenous, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist struggle is growing in the U.S., as seen in recent demonstrations of thousands supporting the current heroic Palestinian fightback. Rallies took place May 15 to coincide with the anniversary of the 1948 Nakba, when Israel expelled over 700,000 Palestinians from their homes and razed as many as 600 Palestinian villages.

Protests stretched from coast to coast and deep into the U.S. heartland. In Memphis, Tenn., a crowd of hundreds chanted: "Occupation is a crime from Memphis to Palestine!" while marching to the National Civil Rights Museum. In Louisville, Ky., a student organizer said, "We have a duty to speak up because our own tax dollars are funding the Israeli military." In Phoenix, Ariz., a marcher emphasized the protest was to "reaffirm our commitment to the Palestinian people's struggle, for justice, return and liberation." ([tinyurl.com/yw86wyjs](http://tinyurl.com/yw86wyjs))

Here are on-the-ground reports from just a few of the many marches.

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In **Boston**, thousands of Palestinians, Muslims, Jewish supporters and all religious groups joined with prison abolitionists, Black Lives Matter, im/migrant rights, union, LGBTQ2S+, disabled and military veteran activists for a spirited rally and call to action. Beginning in Copley Square, protesters expressed their organized grief, rage and growing determination to bring an end to the U.S.-backed Israeli regime's war and occupation of Palestine.



Young women leaders from Students for Justice in Palestine welcomed the crowd. Protesters, young and old, waved Palestinian flags and twirled keffiyehs in the air. Banners and signs expressed international solidarity with Palestine from Colombia, Kashmir and the Philippines. Art exhibits commemorated International Nakba Day, and posters linked Palestinian liberation with that of Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples in the U.S.

People moved into the streets to march on the Israeli Consulate while dancing, drumming and chanting: "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!" At the consulate, Palestinian youth scaled light poles and the balcony over the entrance and boldly unfurled Palestinian flags to mighty cheers from the chanting crowd.

Tens of thousands took to the streets in rallies in **Bay Ridge, Brooklyn**, May 15, organized by Within Our Lifetime, and in **Paterson, N.J.**, May 16, organized by American

Muslims for Palestine. Aerial footage showed the militant rallies stretched for many blocks, halting traffic for hours. Crowds in both protests were overwhelmingly young Palestinian people, including children waving the Palestinian flag. **Buffalo** for Palestine held an inspiring demonstration of resistance against the recent Israeli attack on Gaza and the apartheid inflicted on the Palestinian people since 1948. The crowd was significantly young and radical, with political messaging that reflected years of struggle against Zionism, white supremacy and imperialist genocide.

A solidarity demonstration kicked off in Rittenhouse Square in Center City **Philadelphia** May 15, as cars and trucks waving Palestinian flags circled the park. Thousands of people occupied the city streets. While a majority of participants were Palestinian, there was significant turnout of Black activists and progressive whites. Chants were in English and Arabic, and signs referred to police brutality in the U.S. and Palestine.

As the march got underway, response from people in the packed outdoor Center City dining areas was generally positive. At the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, marchers took over all lanes and blocked traffic. At the Philadelphia Museum of Art, protesters ran up with a block-long Palestinian flag they draped along the famous 72 steps.

At the final rally at the steps, speakers denounced U.S. support for Israel and stressed the need for solidarity with Palestine from Black and Brown communities as part of confronting white supremacy. Connections were made between the anniversary of the Nakba and May 13 as the anniversary of the City of Philadelphia dropping a bomb on the MOVE family 36 years ago. Speakers included Palestinian author/activist Susan Abulhawa, YahNé Ndgo with Black Alliance for Peace, Krystal Strong from Black Lives Matter Philadelphia and Nicki Kattoura, a Palestinian activist with the Black and Brown Coalition. That coalition initiated the rally along with others in the Philadelphia Free Palestine Coalition. Workers World Party-Philadelphia provided sound for the event.

About 1,000 people marched May 15 through downtown **Raleigh, N.C.** They demanded an end to the apartheid Israeli occupation of Palestine and protested Israel's recent attempted eviction and assault on Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem — a traditional Palestinian area. Speakers connected the struggle against racism and police brutality in the U.S. with the struggle of the Palestinian people against the occupation. They rejected the false equivalency of “violence on both sides” as a lie to

cover up Israeli crimes of occupation. They condemned the current renewed brutal repression by Israel and demanded an end to the occupation of Palestine.

Led by Palestinian youth, 1,000 people marched through downtown **Atlanta** to commemorate the Nakba and to call for an end to the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Palestine by U.S.-backed Israeli settlers.

Over 2,000 people marched in downtown **Cleveland, Ohio**, to support the fighting people of Palestine. The march was called by Al-Awda: the Palestine Right to Return Coalition. The Palestinian community and supporters filled the streets to demand: no more ethnic cleansing, the end of Israeli occupation now and a stop to U.S. funding for the Zionist settler state.

On the 73rd anniversary of the Nakba, roughly 1,000 people assembled in downtown **Portland, Ore.**, to call for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. As cars honked in solidarity, over a dozen Palestinian speakers testified to the hardships their families in Palestine are experiencing from the recent violent onslaught by Israeli armed forces. Poems and stories of suffering since 1917 — when Great Britain took colonial control of Palestine — brought tears to the crowd, who chanted: “From Palestine to Mexico, border walls have got to go!” The event was organized by the Center for Study and Preservation of Palestine, which collected donations for the people of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

On May 15, 10,000 people took to the streets of **San Francisco** to support the Palestinian struggle against continued occupation and Israeli terrorist attacks. In the morning, hundreds gathered in the Mission District to paint a powerful street mural, “We Will Return,” in both Arabic and English. The day ended at Dolores Park, after a dynamic march past the mural, as the streets shook with chants of “Free, free Palestine!” and “Long live the Intifada!”

Palestinian youth, multigenerational Palestinian families with their children, and allies from a broad spectrum of the anti-occupation and anti-imperialist movement overflowed the streets in front of the park. Demonstrators were united in demanding an immediate return of Palestine — from the river to the sea — to the Palestinian people. A coalition of

organizations, including the Palestine Action Network, AROC (Arab Resource and Organizing Committee) and the Palestinian Youth Movement, organized the day's actions.

*Contributing to this article were Sara Flounders, Judy Greenspan, Monica Moorehead, Christian Noakes, Betsey Piette, Susan Schnur, Maureen Skehan, Carlos Splitstoser, Hadley Willow, Workers World Durham bureau.*

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