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By Joe Piette

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Philadelphia: Week of actions shows solidarity with Palestine



Nov. 19, 2023, Philadelphia. On the Rocky Steps for Palestine. Credit: WW Joe Piette
Philadelphia

Opposition grows to Israel's war on Palestinians. Below are reports and photos from one week of protest actions in one major U.S. city, Philadelphia:

Nov. 13. "Cease-fire now!" and "Stop military aid to Israel" were the themes as community activists rallied outside Senator John Fetterman's office in Philadelphia. To

criticize the mass murder Israel is currently carrying out against Palestinians, one elderly woman carried a sign with the name of her uncle killed in Auschwitz concentration camp by the Nazis.



Credit: WW Joe Piette

Nov 14. Students, professors and members of the community took over space Nov. 14 in Houston Hall to witness the beginning of the University of Pennsylvania Freedom School for Palestine. At a time when the UPenn administration has done everything possible to stop the free flow of information representing Palestine's struggle to withstand the genocidal occupation and Nakba in Gaza and Palestine, people took it upon themselves to found a school on the issues involved. Ongoing class agendas can be found @freedomsschoolpalestine.



Credit: WW Joe Piette

Nov 16. Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith leaders carried a large “Cease-fire now” banner at the front of a march. At rush hour, hundreds of people went to the intersection where Sen. Bob Casey’s office is located in Philadelphia. There they stayed for over an hour as Imams recited the Janazah, the Islamic prayer said at funerals. To express grief for the over 11,400 people killed by Israel in Gaza since Oct. 7 with U.S.-supplied weapons, the imams read some of the names of the thousands of children murdered so far by the Israeli armed forces.



Credit: WW Joe Piette

Nov 17. Students from Temple University, Drexel University and Community College of Philadelphia joined together in a march that converged on City Hall for a rally to call for a

cease-fire and a free Palestine and to end the siege of Gaza, and the occupation. They followed up with a march to the offices of the Philadelphia Inquirer, the city's main daily newspaper, where speakers denounced the complicity of the mainstream press in genocide. Many participants joined a "die-in" on the street while others read a long list of names of children murdered by Zionist forces.

At 11:00 p.m., NBC News reported the demonstrators sat down on Sixth Street near Market, saying they were making a statement "in the shadow of the Liberty Bell." This report distorted the demonstrators' real target, the Inquirer. (NBC, Nov. 17)

Nov. 19. "Gaza is 1.2 miles shorter than this marathon and more than 12,049 Palestinians have been killed there in 45 days with \$3.8 billion of our taxes." That was the message on a shirt worn by a runner from start to finish in the 26.2 mile Philadelphia Marathon Nov 19. The runner's race bib number was 12049. As they and 28,000 others ran in the race, Palestine activists showed up with a banner and flag on an overpass that was visible to the runners at the 2.5 mile mark.



Credit: WW Joe Piette

Later, over a hundred activists organized by the Philadelphia Palestine Coalition took over part of the Rocky steps at the Philadelphia Art Museum overlooking the finish line, chanting slogans and holding signs for over three hours. Meanwhile, dozens of Palestinian and Jewish people visited five large churches in Philadelphia, reaching out to thousands of churchgoers against the mass murders in Gaza and for an end to the occupation.

Photos by Joe Piette.

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