

Despite all the pressure and threats, the moral courage of the organizers in Chicago broke through, by persistent work toward what might *seem* like an impossible task. This was accomplished by normal people making phone calls during work breaks and taking time off to attend demonstrations, and by students dropping their books and organizing. Yet these normal people had at

the same time become extraordinary when they chose to act on the conviction that humanity is worth fighting for. Optimism doesn't come from wishful thinking or a "positive mindset." It comes from a decision within yourself that you will do everything within your power to create the good that is necessary.

The meek shall indeed inherit the Earth.

A Jewish Statement in Support of a Ceasefire Resolution

The following letter was signed by over 1,000 Jews in Chicago, and circulated to all the City's Alders. EIR was given permission to publish its contents in full.

We as Jewish Chicagoans raise our voices to urge the Chicago City Council to pass SR2023-0006422, a resolution introduced by Aids. Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez and Daniel La Spata that calls for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and the freeing of all hostages and detainees.

As members of a people that has survived genocide and mass pogroms, we stand against the war crimes, mass displacement, and dehumanization suffered by the Palestinian people. International human rights groups, UN experts, Israeli historians and politicians, prominent academics, and most importantly, the Palestinian people themselves have described Israel's actions in Gaza and the Occupied Territories over the past three months as ethnic cleansing and genocide. Even based on the numbers claimed by the Israeli government, the majority of those killed in Gaza are non-combatants, including over 10,000 children. Collective punishment of a trapped civilian population is illegal and keeps no one safe.

Some of us are the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors; we firmly reject the idea that calling for peace in Palestine/Israel is anti-Semitic.

Jewish Chicagoans, along with Jewish Americans from coast to coast, have flooded the streets on a weekly basis since October, demanding a ceasefire now because this massacre cannot be done in our name. On November 13th, over 1,000 Jews and allies from across the Midwest shut down Ogilvie Transportation Center to call for a ceasefire. Local Jewish elected officials have also taken a stand: three of the six Jewish Illinois

state legislators who represent parts of Chicago (Will Guzzardi, Kelly Cassidy, and Robert Peters) support a ceasefire.

Condemning the actions of the most right-wing government in Israel's history as it carries out ethnic cleansing does not amount to a condemnation of the Israeli people themselves. Indeed, our call for a ceasefire is also rooted in our care for Israelis, many of whom are friends and family of members of our community. Tellingly, some families of hostages are also calling for a ceasefire and for an "everyone-for-everyone" hostage-for-prisoner exchange because they understand that continued war puts the safety of them and their kidnapped relatives at risk. Additionally, the idea that this resolution does not express concern for the lives of Israelis is plainly false. The resolution specifically mentions the need for a ceasefire in order to facilitate the release of Israeli hostages, and recognizes the deaths of more than 1,200 Israelis on October 7.

With an understanding that a ceasefire is the only path forward for all people in the region, we also commend the resolution for giving special attention to the harm done to Palestinians in Israel's grossly disproportionate response to Hamas's October 7th attack. In light of the fact that the Chicago City Council already passed a resolution that condemned the October 7th attack but made no direct reference to violence against Palestinians, it is imperative that the Council acknowledge the pain and humanity of Chicago's Palestinian American community, which is the largest in the country.

Chicagoans stand for justice: if our City Council cannot call for an end to the unjust killing of over 10,000 children, how can they claim to represent the values of their constituents? We demand that our City Council call for a ceasefire now.