

Dear friend,

River Valley for Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace W. MA, and other community organizations have been trying to persuade the **Daily Hampshire Gazette** to improve its coverage of the Israeli/U.S. genocide in Gaza and to publish editorials condemning it. We have asked that when the Gazette provides news from Gaza from other media sources, they precede reprinted articles with an editor's caveat that the news piece provided may contain pro-Israel bias and propaganda. We are also disturbed that the Gazette publishes opinion pieces containing debunked Israeli atrocity propaganda about 10/7/23 designed to manufacture consent for the genocide in Gaza.

We have not succeeded in persuading the editors & publisher to meet our requests.

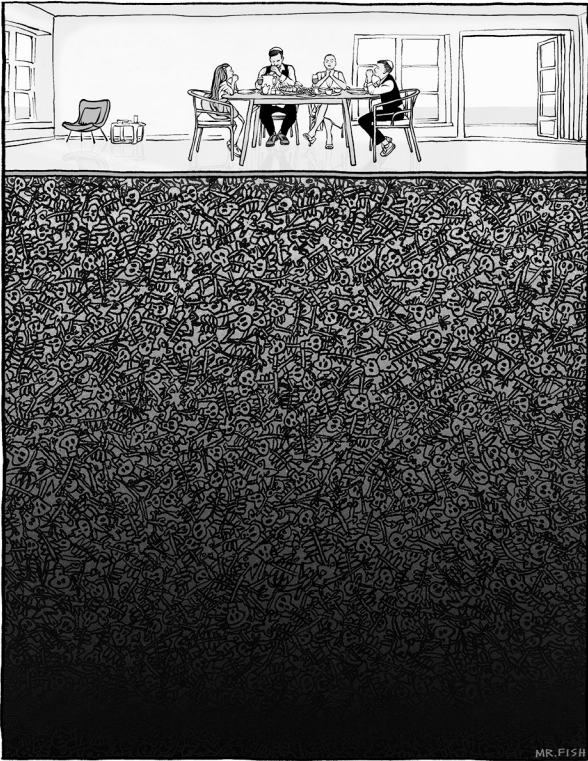
Since the Gazette is failing its readership on this topic, we are now publishing an (alt)ernative version of the paper containing material that we wish it **WOULD** include. This is the paper (edition #3) that you hold in your hands. We hope you find it interesting and helpful as you seek reliable news and opinion about the Gaza genocide, Israel's occupation of Palestine, and local campaigns for Palestinian liberation and for all people fighting empire, militarism, colonization, and exploitation.

River Valley for Palestine ~ rivervalley4palestine@gmail.com

EDITORIAL

On October 10, River Valley for Palestine held its weekly Friday standout for Gaza at Northampton City Hall. We're accustomed to receiving all sorts of comments, from "Free Palestine" to "free the hostages" to "you're terrorists, Hamas started it." But most pedestrians pass silently or give a quick thumbs up. On average, one vehicle in ten honks in approval.

But on this particular Friday, the mainstream media was full of reports that there was, at long last, a "ceasefire" in Gaza. As a result, many passersby seemed confused by our presence, asking, "Isn't it over?" And so we saw a need and an opportunity for more dialogue with our neighbors. Imagine, we said to willing listeners, that this "ceasefire" actually holds. Humans do not live by peace alone. They are also political beings. They organize in self-determining social, political, cultural societies.



"And finally, God, please continue to bless and protect all the brave leaders of the Free World® whose unwavering support of Israel and tireless dedication to peace, freedom, and justice gave us this beautiful new home by the sea, which will be perfect once we figure out where that horrible stench of lost humanity and proto-fascist entrenchment is coming from."

It is no different for the Palestinian people, and specifically, the people of Gaza, who have endured a rapid genocide for two years and oppression, apartheid, and occupation for nearly a century. Yes, the people need physical survival: food and water, medicine and doctors, shelter. But they also must have the dignity entailed in the fundamental human rights to justice, equality, resistance to occupation, sovereignty, and self-determination. So even if the "ceasefire" were to hold, and Israel were to stop slaughtering people and "permit" the basic necessities of human existence, the struggle against Palestinian oppression and for Palestinian liberation would not have ended.

In the meantime, we pointed out, history and the past two years teach us that Israel will not end its genocides – slow- and fast-moving – against Arab peoples in Palestine, in Lebanon, in Yemen, in Iran, unless forced to do so. As of this writing, it should be abundantly clear that Israel continues to be intent on killing the people of Gaza – blowing up carloads of children, shooting people who unknowingly approach invisible military demarcation lines, resuming airstrikes, keeping the Rafah border crossing closed, allowing in just 89 of 600 mandated aid trucks per day. The trucks contain flour, oil, and food coupons, not the full range of supplies needed for a starving, wounded, ill, besieged, unhoused population of two million.

As tens of thousands of Palestinians lie buried beneath the rubble of two years of Israeli airstrikes, Israel stamps its foot and demands the return of a small number of hostages killed by those airstrikes, using food aid as collateral for precious Israeli bodies, while dehumanized Palestinian bodies rot beneath their homes.

This is how British journalist and writer Jonathan Cook describes the current realities:

It was never a Gaza 'war'. The 'ceasefire' is a lie cut from the same cloth. Ceasefires stick because the two sides in a war have reached military stalemate - or because the incentives for each side in laying down their arms outweigh those of continuing the bloodshed. None of this applies in Gaza. The past two years in the enclave have been many things. But the one thing they have not been is a war, whatever Western politicians and media wish us to believe.

Which means the current narrative of a 'ceasefire' is as much a lie as the preceding narrative of a 'Gaza war'. The ceasefire is not 'fragile,' as we keep being told. It is non-existent, as evidenced by Israel's continual violations - from its soldiers continuing to shoot dead Palestinian civilians to it blocking promised aid.

Trump's 'peace plan' is doomed. No people in history has ever resigned itself to permanent servitude and oppression. The Palestinians will prove no different.

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MAYOR SCIARRA TILTS TOWARD WEALTH AND WAR INDUSTRY

By Nick Mottern

At the October 16, 2025 Northampton City Council meeting, the writer Phil Wilson, a city resident, demanded the resignation of Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, citing, among other things, her decision to give "the notoriously destructive landlord, Eric Suher, \$3.175 million in taxpayer funding for a decaying church that has no use for the town."

Indeed, Mayor Sciarra, and her largely obedient city council, continue to ignore evidence that they caused Northampton residents to pay more than twice the market value for the boarded up, unusable former First Baptist church, standing prominently in the city's downtown as a monument to municipal mismanagement and breach of trust with Northampton's citizens.



Northampton Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra

While the church was allegedly procured as a "resilience hub" for Northampton's growing unhoused population, the mayor's true feelings toward the unhoused became apparent on October 11, 2024 when her chief of staff, Alan Wolf, ordered Northampton police to break up an encampment at Lake Fitzgerald where people were staying with the permission of the developer, "Habitat for Humanity." The police confiscated the possessions of this tiny community, thus assuring that many would be without blankets or warm clothes over a freezing cold three-day weekend.

Another profoundly troubling aspect of Sciarra's conduct in this time of the normalization of the two-years-old genocidal slaughter of Palestinians by Israel and the U.S., is her refusal to explore ways to evict from the city the local plant of the global, genocidal war industry profiteer L3Harris Technologies.*

Sciarra stated recently in a public debate that the city can do nothing to rid itself of the local L3 Harris factory at 50 Prince Street, where it manufactures periscopes for U.S. submarines equipped with nuclear missiles capable of killing all life on earth.

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A Report From the Captain of the Global Sumud Flotilla Boat, 'Mikeno'

By Adnaan Stumo

I got the call while balanced on a ladder installing air conditioners for a new youth center in southern Palestine. There was going to be a new flotilla to Gaza - bigger than all the others combined - and they desperately needed sailing captains. I'd have to be in Barcelona in three weeks. My friends at the youth center didn't want me to go, insisting there was so much that needed doing within Palestine; if I joined the flotilla, I might be banned from ever returning.

My mind was made up though. The work in the West Bank and the Naqab was important, but meanwhile hundreds of people were dying every day in Gaza. I could always keep installing air conditioners, teaching self-defense classes, and doing protective presence work on farms - but my real skills lay elsewhere. I had a captain's license and a dozen years working on the ocean. The Global Sumud Flotilla was sailing to Gaza. If I joined, they could bring one more vessel.



Adnaan Stumo at the wheel of the 'Mikeno' surrounded by crew

From the first, it felt inevitable.

I hit the ground in Barcelona at a run. Well, sort of. I spent the first afternoon upside down in a quarter berth fixing hydraulics, skinning my knuckles in the familiar poses of boat yoga. That night, a bunch of captains fanned out to other ports to sail more vessels to our central hub. The workload increased every day as more and more boats arrived, and folks showed up from every corner of the world to help. We quickly established teams, and a frenzied camaraderie emerged that would bind us together for life. Then, we sailed.

"It was the Storm of the Century!" my seasick passenger was wailing at me. "I wanted to do this to have an adventure, to go to Gaza, not to take RISKS!" I stared at her. "Not to take risks?" She realized how ridiculous that sounded. "Well, I'm willing to take risks with the occupation forces, but not with the ocean," she amended.

It wasn't the storm of the century, just a nasty little gale - but it did cause our untested flotilla an outsized number of problems. Hasty fixes done in port by volunteers don't always hold up in bad weather at sea. Things broke at an alarming rate on all the vessels, and some were forced to turn back immediately. On the 'Mikeno', we had our share of small issues, and all our participants were down below vomiting. My two crew managed a heroic bucket brigade and kept the fish food splashing over the side until dawn broke clear and beautiful over the Balearic Islands.

Luckily, that was the worst bit of wind Poseidon threw at us during the whole trip. We faced firebombs in Tunisia, drone attacks with explosives and mysterious chemicals off Crete, and constant threats from the occupation government. By the time we finally got to the Eastern Mediterranean and had a clear course laid for Gaza's shore, those of us who remained were hardened and determined. One last boat, the Johnny M, sank in calm weather on that stretch. I sailed over to them, picked up their crew, and we kept forging ahead.

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Why I Protest at L3Harris

By Dodi Melnicoff

I was born of Eastern European Jewish ancestry, now living in Greenfield where I moved to be closer to my children and grandchildren. Three generations of family living together. My family and my heritage are important to me. It is these relationships that anchor me to this star craft, earth. The complexities of interactions with sisters, daughter, son and the flock of grands, inform my sensibilities as a human being. Through them I've learned to be kind, to put others first and to respect life. Following in my mother's footsteps I studied to become a nurse. She, a World War II army nurse, taught me, "There are no winners in war."

Gigi, my grandmother, fled her home in Russia due to the violent pogroms that drove many Jews to the U.S. As a young man, my father joined the Socialists in fighting against fascism in Spain. He later enlisted three times before being accepted in the U.S. military to stop Hitler. In the 1960s, my sisters and I became active in the anti-war and civil rights and justice movements. The saying, "no one is free until everyone is free," echoed in my synapses, until finding a home in my soul. The struggle of today sadly is all too recognizable. The old playbook of divide, conquer, and cast blame on others remains tactical. The institutional corruption borne by a nation built with stolen labor on stolen land remains shameful.

Palestine's fight for freedom has made more visible the insidious, deep erosion of humanity. Those of us who are cast away represent what is called "surplus humanity." The "woke" crowd no longer believes the lies of power or falls for capitalist ideologies.



Dodi Melnicoff, center, with bullhorn, at August 20, 2025 protest at L3Harris in Northampton. Photo: Dan McGlynn, The Shoestring

The propaganda destroying our humanity, our civility, our souls, and our spiritual essence appears as a generational curse haunting our children and theirs. It's the rolling lies perpetuated by the Zionist movement especially since 1947; when Israeli Zionists stole homes and land from Palestinians in what has become known as the Catastrophe. None of us who worship private property and ownership could ever imagine such a scene, men with guns ordering us out of our homes within minutes.

The prolonged agony and efforts to dehumanize and humiliate an entire population in Gaza, the largest open-air

prison in the world, have failed to conquer and subdue. The Palestinian resistance has ripped the veil revealing the truth of settler colonialism decorated as Jewish freedom but created in negotiations with Hitler's cronies.

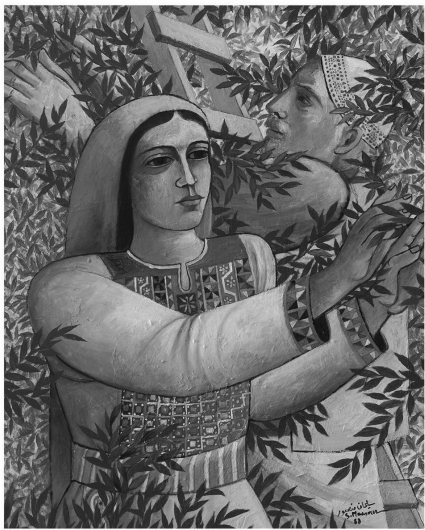
Drawing on past wisdom, Buddha taught us – Life is Suffering. This is totally relatable. NEXT, he taught that we (humans) are to live in such a manner as NOT to increase suffering, and to do what and where we can to RELIEVE suffering. The burden of suffering is great; it is a heavy feeling most of us are experiencing on one level or another. It threatens to suffocate and poison us in its own failures.

The prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, taught that all life is sacred, that we are to care for our neighbors as we do ourselves. In this way, we affirm the connection we have to each other and to the sacred. Wasn't it Jesus, peace be upon him, who taught us to love beyond our friends and family, to love the stranger among us, and to love even our enemies?

So why am I here protesting at L3Harris in Northampton since October 12, 2023, and onward? It's because I understand how important it is to sit and laugh with family, to have dreams and a hope for the future. What the U.S. bombs destroyed in Gaza is a rich, relevant past, a shattered present, and a broken future for Palestine. Yet it's the faith and perseverance of Palestine that finds air and gasps for breath under the rubble. We must get out in the street and shout at the top of our lungs. Stop the death toll that not only rings for Palestine but for all of our humanity. It's our civic responsibility and our very lives depend on it.

Free Palestine.

Dodi Melnicoff was arrested on August 20, 2025 at a protest at L3Harris Technologies in Northampton. The first hearing in her case was held at Northampton District Court on October 16, 2025.



The Work of Sliman Mansour

Sliman Mansour is a Palestinian painter, sculptor, author, and cartoonist, and a leading figure among contemporary Palestinian artists. He is an artist of the Palestinian intifadas — the Arabic term for uprisings, resistance. His work captures timeless concepts of Palestinian identity, family, and connection to the land, as well as the vital cultural concept of 'sumud' — steadfastness, resilience, persistence. (Olive Harvest)

EDITORIAL Continued...

In an effort, at this critical juncture, to explain to friends and neighbors why we continue to protest and struggle for Gaza and for all of Palestine despite the "ceasefire" and "peace plan," we've written the following statement and are distributing it on flyers:

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We – River Valley for Palestine – understand that the global uprising for a FREE PALESTINE is crucial to the success of the Palestinian people's long struggle against Israeli & Western oppression. We are part of that uprising for liberation.

1. A ceasefire was declared in Gaza on 10/10/25. As a matter of policy, Israel routinely breaks ceasefires and blames the victims. Without an end to U.S. military and economic support to Israel (our tax dollars), the genocide will resume.
2. We protest and educate for Palestine's liberation for as long as necessary:
  - a) to stop the genocide in Gaza, the West Bank, and east Jerusalem
  - b) to counter the neocolonial Israeli/U.S. 20-point "peace plan," and
  - c) until Palestine is free from the river to the sea

We call for:

- dismantling Israel's occupation, apartheid, and colonial violence throughout Palestine
- disarming Israel, sanctioning Israel, and removing Israel from the UN
- escalating efforts to defend and liberate Palestinians in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, whose land and lives are targeted by paramilitary settler mobs alongside Occupation soldiers and Tel Aviv ministers
- ensuring the decolonization and permanent liberation of Palestine under Palestinian rule. This entails Palestinian sovereignty, self-determination, the freeing of all 9,000+ Palestinian hostages, and full human rights. We uphold the right of Palestinians to determine their political representation free from any external dictates, including by those committing and partnering in the carnage and destruction in Gaza
- ensuring that the Palestinian people receive reparations for decades of occupation, violence, and displacement
- ensuring the right of return for all Palestinians displaced by Israeli settler colonialism and violence
- ensuring the end of racist, settler-colonialist, Jewish-supremacist Zionism
- ensuring that ALL those responsible for war crimes against the Palestinian people are brought to justice

Written by Alt-Daily Hampshire Gazette editorial board member Jennifer Scarlott.

## CONNECTING WITH PALESTINE IN WESTERN MA:

- » See the W MA Coalition for Palestine calendar for local standouts & events: <https://tinyurl.com/4zxjetvc>
- » To sign up to receive weekly newsletters detailing action for Palestine, email to: W MA SURJ: [westernmasssurj@gmail.com](mailto:westernmasssurj@gmail.com) & JVP W MA: [westernmass@jewishvoiceforpeace.com](mailto:westernmass@jewishvoiceforpeace.com)
- » Recommended reading: The Electronic Intifada, Mondoweiss, Drop Site News

## Mayor Sciarra Continued...

In fact, it appears that the city can get rid of L3Harris by changing the zoning on the L3 site and/or by declaring L3 a public nuisance.

Apparently, Sciarra is simply happy to have the L3 taxes, amounting to about \$282,600 in fiscal year 2024, flowing into the city's treasury. She seems unconcerned with the L3 moral burden weighing heavily on many city residents. Nor is there any sign that she has considered that other uses of the L3 site might generate more income for the city. Sciarra is quite focused on pushing a misbegotten downtown gentrification project while ignoring cries that she is shortchanging the city's schools.

Indeed, the mayor is notoriously stingy with desperately needed educational funding, evidenced in part by a recent finding by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that a significant number of students with disabilities were not being adequately served. The Northampton Association of School Employees (NASE), the union representing teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses and other employees, has endorsed Jillian Duclos, Sciarra's opponent in the November 4, 2025 election.

Sciarra's uncritical comfort with the war industry is also evident in her 2022 approval of a \$49,000 five-year contract with Motorola Solutions to provide Northampton Police with dashcam technology, a contract signed over the objection of civil rights protectors.

Motorola Solutions sells surveillance systems to ICE, militaries, jails, prisons, immigration detention centers, and police departments.\*\* Since Motorola stores data in the cloud, ICE has access to local police data to use in illegal/unconstitutional roundups.

A comprehensive report by *The Shoestring* on the public controversy surrounding the Motorola contract, noted: "The company is also currently on a United Nations watchlist for its role in providing surveillance equipment to illegal Israeli settlements and checkpoints in occupied Palestinian territories." *The Shoestring* report emphasized that the contract endangers citizens' rights in allowing Motorola to provide data to unknown third parties.

Mayor Sciarra did not mention the genocide against the Palestinian people when she spoke at the Northampton "No Kings" rally on Saturday, October 18, 2025. We are all Palestinians.

\*The world's ninth largest weapons manufacturer, L3Harris manufactures components that are integrated into multiple weapons systems used by the Israeli military in Gaza, including Boeing's JDAM kits, Lockheed Martin's F-35 warplane, Northrop Grumman's Sa'ar 5 warships, ThyssenKrupp's Sa'ar 6 warships and Israel's Merkava battle tanks. – American Friends Service Committee – "Companies Profiting from the Gaza Genocide."

\*\*See Investigate.org – Motorola Solutions Inc. – American Friends Service Committee.

## A Report From the Captain Continued...

When the interception forces began to hit us 75 miles from Gaza's shores, we were well drilled in nonviolent resistance tactics. It took the IOF (Israel Occupation Forces aka IDF) 12 hours to capture us all, despite hammering us with water cannons, skunk water, and sending their special forces to board and arrest us. In prison, we went on hunger strike, sang revolutionary songs all night, and refused to bow to their guns and dogs. Some of us were seriously beaten, many were deprived of critical medicines, and legal representation was almost nonexistent. But our comrades around the world stood up, blocked ports, shut down cities on many continents, and inundated the Zionist consulates with calls and emails.

So here we are, free again and ready to escalate the struggle.

*Editors' Note: The Global Sumud Flotilla is an international movement of coordinated, nonviolent action—by land, sea, and across borders—working to end Israel's illegal siege on Gaza and the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. The author of this piece, Adnaan Stumo, was captain of the boat 'Mikeno,' one of 44 vessels of this Flotilla. His brother, Tor Stumo, was on another vessel. For some time, before being intercepted and its crew kidnapped by the Israeli Navy, the Mikeno successfully withstood an assault by one of two Israeli high-pressure water cannons, thereby helping other vessels proceed towards Gaza.*



l-r: Mandla Mandela, grandson of Nelson Mandela, unidentified woman, Tor Stumo, Adnaan Stumo