

## Eliminating Apartheid Around the World.

With the recent death of former Congressman and Oakland mayor Ron Dellums we are reminded of his role as a leader in the peace movement and in the campaign to end U.S. support for Apartheid South Africa. The state of Connecticut and in particular its African American population also took a leading role in combatting this form of institutionalized discrimination against the indigenous South African population by divesting state funds from companies that did business with Apartheid institutions and boycotting them. The global movement to end South African Apartheid succeeded. While many disparities remain, all South Africans gained their liberty.



Our own country was born with a Constitution that formalized white supremacy and racism: African and Native American slaves had no more rights than a horse or a shack. The U.S. Civil War and the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment ended slavery. But even though legislation has improved equal rights, serious discrimination still continues in housing, education, jobs, respect and most importantly the right to life. While the arc of history may bend toward justice, to paraphrase Martin Luther King, Jr., it also sometimes bends backward.

Case in point is the “nation-state” law just passed by the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, that officially denies equal rights to 21% of the Israeli population who happen to be Palestinian, non-Jewish Arabs. Israel’s Jewish majority is formally denying Palestinians the right to self determination, to their own language, to land, housing, education, jobs and equality, by enshrining rejection of democracy in basic law. Such discrimination is actually not new and has in past been acknowledged even by Israel’s supporters.

In 2008, major U.S. Jewish organizations sent a delegation, including Jewish leaders from greater New Haven, to examine how Palestinian citizens of Israel were treated. Looking at the human needs of the Palestinian population, they wrote *“contrary to the Israeli Declaration of Independence, we learned that there is a significant amount of discrimination and neglect of the Arab community in Israel and that many members of the Arab community feel, with some substantial*

*justification, that they are treated both officially and unofficially as second-class citizens. Most importantly, much of the treatment of the Arab citizens can be directly attributed to official government policy.”* The full report is so damning that it has been hidden away.

Palestinians, of course, have known since 1948 that they were being treated as second-class citizens. What has changed is that Israel’s anti-democratic policies are now constitutional, thus closing the opportunity to use the legal system to stop this discrimination but at the same time revealing Israel’s discriminatory policies to all the world. On August 19<sup>th</sup>, residents of greater New Haven heard Aida Touma-Sliman, a Palestinian member of Israel’s Knesset who described what this law bodes for Palestinians under Israeli control and for the Middle East. A video of her entire talk can be seen here:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEux0KHe2oU>.

*What can we in the U.S. do to promote justice in the Middle East?* First of all let’s insist our elected officials stop sending billions of our tax dollars annually to Israel’s government: Use our taxes to fund education, infrastructure jobs, affordable housing, health care programs desperately needed here. Tell your member of Congress to co-sponsor **H.R. 4391: Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act.** “This bill prohibits U.S. assistance to Israel from being used to support the military detention, interrogation, or ill-treatment of Palestinian children in violation of international humanitarian law.” None of Connecticut’s 5 House members is a co-sponsor. Call the Capitol switchboard, 202-224-3121, to urge your representative to sign on.

*This flyer was written by Jewish Voice for Peace New Haven ([www.jvpng.org](http://www.jvpng.org)) and the Greater New Haven Peace Council (<http://uspeacecouncil.org/?cat=7>), and distributed at the New Haven Sunday Vigil on Sunday, August 26, 2018. We welcome JVP members who join this vigil once a month.*

*Since 1999, the New Haven Sunday Vigil has been held here every week from 12-1pm at Broadway, Park and Elm Streets in New Haven, CT, to emphatically say NO to the state of permanent, ongoing war against the world being waged by our government and its allies- a war which is terrorizing the planet and destroying lives in order to consolidate enormous power and wealth in the hands of a very few people.*

**JOIN US TO RESIST THIS ENDLESS WAR!**

<https://newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com>