

# P is for Palestine

## The Scene

The scene outside the Highland Park, NJ library last Sunday, Oct. 20 was anything but the peaceful. Author and educator Golbarg Bashi had arrived for a reading of her 2017 book *P is for Palestine*. The reading, originally scheduled for May 18, had been postponed because a group of hateful right wingers had, according to Mondoweiss, threatened Dr. Bashi and the library “with legal action for ‘violation of federal law, including the anti-discrimination provisions of the civil rights acts,’ as well as the ludicrous charge of ‘aiding and abetting terrorism’”.

A crowd of Zionist protestors formed a cordon around the library, at times chanting “long live Trump”. Private bookstores where Dr. Bashi has held readings also have come under attack.

## The Book



The book, as described on Amazon, is the “world’s first-ever English-language ABC story book about Palestine, told in simple rhythmic rhyme with stunning illustrations to act as an educational, colorful, empowering reference for children, showcasing the geography, the beauty and strength of Palestinian culture”. Pages describe “A” is for

Arabic, “B” is for Bethlehem, “F” is for falafel.

## What does I stand for?

As reported by members of the Central Jersey chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace (JVPCJ), “It is no secret that protesters of the reading have dwelt on the alphabet letter “I,” which reads:

**‘I is for Intifada. Intifada is Arabic for rising up for what is right, if you are a kid or a grownup!’**”

JVPCJ continues “It is hard to make a persuasive argument against ‘rising up for what is right,’ one might even argue that **intifada is the touchstone of the modern 21st century**, as we continue to feel the cultural impact of movements such as **Occupy Wall Street, Black**

**Lives Matter, #MeToo, March for Our Lives**, teacher strikes and labor strikes, among other uprisings. Intifada is a quintessential part of Palestinian history, too, when Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank rose up against their Israeli military occupiers and conducted an economic boycott of Israel between 1987 and 1993 — the longest sustained boycott in recorded history.”

## The Support

Palestine Legal (PL) is an independent organization dedicated to protecting the civil and constitutional rights of people in the US who speak out for Palestinian freedom and human rights. PL assisted Dr. Bashi and the Highland Park library in this case. PL has documented and fought numerous cases of “false and inflammatory accusations of antisemitism and support for terrorism”. Frequently, these attacks are accompanied, as they were in this case, by lawsuits and legal threats.

## The Hypocrisy

Banned Books Week (**#bannedbooks**), typically the last week of September, is an annual event celebrating the freedom to read. It was celebrated last month by booksellers and libraries nationwide. Yet Dr. Bashi reports that her book is basically banned. “Bookstores are afraid of stocking it, because of the physical intimidation their staff and management will face.” Barnes and Noble celebrated this September with a proud display of once-banned books, but refuses to stock her books. Dr. Bashi says she tried for two years to have the Barnes and Noble chain stock her book, but they refused.

## No Exception

It’s time to stop making an exception when it comes to supporting free speech for supporters of Palestine human rights. No exceptions in the law, on campus, in bookstores, and in public discourse. None.

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*This flyer was written by Jewish Voice for Peace New Haven ([www.jvpnh.org](http://www.jvpnh.org)) and distributed at the New Haven Sunday Vigil on Sunday, October 27, 2019. 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>