

# Trans activist urges: All out for Palestine!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

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Palestine solidarity on display at Oct. 7 National March to Protect Trans Youth in Orlando, Florida. Photo: Lexi Webster / CCR

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SLL photo: Melinda Butterfield

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Oct. 13 – Palestinians in Gaza are facing genocide. Now, today.

Anti-Semitic conspiracy theorists claim that Israel controls the U.S. government. Just the opposite is true. The U.S. funds, arms, and politically shields Israel, which is, in fact, a U.S. military outpost in the Middle East. Israeli policy is nothing but U.S. policy.

What does this mean? It means that those of us who live in the U.S. have the power to stop the [impending genocide of Palestinian people in Gaza](#). We must make it clear to our rulers, the capitalists and politicians who pull the strings in Washington and Wall Street, that they will pay a very high price if Israel's ethnic cleansing of Gaza goes forward.

That could mean a lot of different things in the coming days. Right now, TODAY, it means EVERYONE needs to take to the streets and join the International Day of Solidarity with Palestine actions happening all across the country from Oct. 13-15. We must make it impossible to ignore through sheer numbers and visibility.

Trans people in the U.S. are also facing genocide. Right now, it's confined mostly to the political arena and acts of street violence. But the pieces are being swiftly moved into place for other forms of violence and suppression.

We trans people should be the first and loudest in solidarity with the Palestinian people, who are facing immediate genocide by military force. For anyone fearful that some people in that Palestinian community may not be accepting of us, let me tell you what I have learned over many years of activism: People who are facing the unthinkable are glad for solidarity, whoever it comes from.

A very important side-effect of solidarity is building understanding between marginalized groups. And we have much to learn from the Palestinian people's determination and unceasing will to resist and survive.

Trans people and all people of conscience must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Palestinians today.

The people of Gaza have survived many years living in the world's largest open-air prison, subject to regular murderous bombings and deprived of the most basic necessities of life. They have resisted heroically, and we owe them, in turn, to do everything we can to stop the racist massacre being prepared by Washington and Tel Aviv.

*Melinda Butterfield is an initiator of the [National March to Protect Trans Youth & Speakout for Trans Lives](#) held in Orlando, Florida, on Oct. 7, a member of Women in Struggle and co-editor of Struggle-La Lucha.*



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# Trans youth leader: 'Fear and apathy are the oppressor's greatest tools'

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

*Talk by Samira Burnside at the Oct. 7 National March to Protect Trans Youth in Orlando, Florida. Burnside is editor of [TheQueerNotion.com](https://thequeernotion.com).*

Good afternoon everybody, thank you so much for coming out. It's one thing for trans youth stuck in Florida to see thousands gathered in Washington, but it's another for them to see them gathered back home, for them to know that people care right here.

My name is Samira Burnside, I'm a 17-year-old trans woman, I'm one of the organizers of this march, I'm the founder of The Queer Notion, and today, Oct. 7, is my birthday.

This year I have taken two trips to Washington, D.C., I have become a Google search result, I have done interviews for Time Magazine and spoken in front of crowds much larger than my 5th grade Tropicana speech competition.

In this work I have found immense joy. I have found community in the struggle. I used to sit at home and watch as the news rolled with cynical apathy, saying to myself, "Well, nobody cares, nothing will change, activism is far too dangerous to be worth it. Look at what happened to everyone who's ever stood up before me, to Malcolm X, to Fred Hampton, to Dr. King, to the many whose names we don't know because their flames were snuffed out too early."

But that fear, that apathy, is the death of every movement, it is the greatest tool of the oppressor. If you can put down a movement before it's started, then there is no need for real action – the threat will do.

That fear has thoroughly suffused itself throughout Florida. Organizations like Equality Florida and the Human Rights Campaign have put out statements advising trans people against traveling to Florida, urging them to uproot their lives and flee. Tampa Pride this year was quiet. Queer events have started hiding their addresses out of fear, becoming invite-only, insulating themselves from the wider community.

Organizations like Metro Inclusive Health and many others felt the way the wind was blowing way back in December and abandoned trans kids to predatory online HRT scams and out-of-state care before the laws even told them they had to.

### **'Fear suffused the queer community'**

There are buses that take kids up north to safer homes. There is a new class of political migrants. Every day, another one of my friends resolves to flee. Most folks I know at least have escape plans, many have abandoned their in-state dream colleges for the ability to live their lives.

This fear has suffused every single level of the queer community in Florida. Lovers afraid again to hold hands in public, rainbow flags quietly taken down, flashing signs on roadsides calling for our deaths.

But the Nazis advertise their events brazenly: details, dates, times. It's all intimidation, it's all intentional. They want us scared.

And by they I mean DeSantis;

And by they I mean Republican legislators who vote along quietly with their venomous allies on hypocritical platforms;

And by they I mean the Democrats up in Washington who sit around and pay their dues to the Rainbow Caucus and have meetings with trans youth like ME, that leave halfway through and take a few pictures for social media and that talk about how much their heart aches for us before sending me back home and not taking a single action to protect kids like me;

When I say THEY I mean the Democrats who campaign on our tears;

When I say THEY I mean the Democrats who fuel this endless cycle of legislative violence against us so that they don't have to make any real change, because the other side will kill us and at least THEY will keep things the same, but complacency is violence too, it's just a little quieter.

But we can't be complacent. We can't let them skate by on fear alone any more — we need to pressure them into real, direct action for our community if they want our votes. And to do that, we need action from our communities.

We need formidable, resilient, PRIDEFUL queer communities that commit to the grassroots organizing that this community was founded upon, so that one day maybe some queer kid won't have to.

## **'Live in a burning house'**

I've thought a lot, as I have thrown myself further and further into this work, about the lives I could have lived if I didn't HAVE to do this. I think about my yesterday art school dreams and my love of film and direction, I think about all of the out of state colleges I could have considered. I think about the many different lives that could have sprung out ahead of me as I enter adulthood and the way that this fight has narrowed my options so severely.

I can't leave this place. To be trans and to not be an activist is to live in a burning house and to ignore the smoke. I've said it before. I can't leave all the people who can't leave, I can't leave all the people who can't get their medicine, I can't leave all the poor trans people who could NEVER just pack up and go, I can't leave all the people, like me, who have known and loved this place since before they were even born.

And it's in this resolution that I contend with this simple fact: that Ron DeSantis and those like him are trying to steal my future and trying to steal yours too, you just can't see it.

They are systematically trying to snatch away the future of every trans person now unable to transition, of every trans youth forced to stay with an unwelcoming parent, of every trans person who has watched their friends leave, of every trans person who has had to leave the place that they love and grew up in behind, they are stealing the future of every person whose lives would have been irrevocably changed by the presence of that person in it, he has stolen the future of every one of our siblings found dead by suicide induced by state-led hate campaigns, and if we do not stop him and the ideology that fuels him and fills his campaign coffers he will steal the future of everyone here today and everyone who watches this tomorrow too.

Will you stand for that? Will you allow that?

Or will you stand against hatred, against intolerance, against bigotry and against authoritarian edicts that threaten our very existence?

And will you stand up for FREEDOM, in all of its beautiful and highly individual manifestations?

Will you stand up in the name of our siblings who lived and died before us, who were unable to breathe the air of equality and walk in dignity as who they were?

And will you stand up for the future generations so that they will only need to hear old stories of a world that would not have embraced them but live unafraid to be their most authentic selves?

And will you stand up for YOU! For YOUR inalienable right to be and voice and express EXACTLY who you are?

We can't let fear pigeonhole us into terrible futures anymore, our future is our own to design and that starts TODAY.

I want Every. Single. One of you to leave here today with a future action in mind and a plan in motion. This march started because Melinda approached me in a crowd and asked me to join her and I sent an email.

I want you to find someone, anyone in the crowd, and I want you to start talking, and I want you to start planning, and I want you to start laying the bricks for future actions. It's just as easy as talking to your neighbor. This, this today, it doesn't change anything, it doesn't move the needle, but what you do, no, what WE do tomorrow? That changes things.

So tell me, are you gonna fight for your future?

Say it with me: I'm GOING to fight.

Say it with me: It WILL be hard.

Say it with me: But we're going to WIN!



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# **Webinar: What's next after Oct. 7 Nat'l March for Trans Youth, Oct. 23**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

## **What's next after the very successful Oct. 7 National March to Protect Trans Youth?**

Webinar: Monday, Oct. 23

8 pm Eastern / 7 pm Central / 6 pm Mountain / 5 pm Pacific

Register at <http://tinyurl.com/TransYouthSolidarity>

JOIN US: Discuss next steps in building a national fight-back movement

- Building solidarity with ALL communities under attack

- Understanding the causes of the anti-trans campaign & how to fight it
- Latest on our legal challenge to Florida's bathroom ban
- How to get involved in local organizing

Register at <http://tinyurl.com/TransYouthSolidarity>



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## **New York City: International Day of Action for Palestine, Oct. 13**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

# ALL OUT FOR PALESTINE

HANDS OFF PALESTINE!

NO ARMS TO "ISRAEL"!

END COLONIZATION & GENOCIDE IN PALESTINE!

FRI 10.13, 3PM

Times SQ

BTWN 42 & 41ST  
ON BROADWAY



MAJLIS ASH-SHURA  
Islamic Leadership Council of New York



Friday, October 13 – 3:00 pm

Times Square (Broadway between West 41st and 42nd Streets), Manhattan



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## **Baltimore: Stand with Palestine solidarity rally, Oct. 13**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
October 13, 2023

# STAND WITH **PALESTINE**

**NO TO U.S./ISRAEL WAR ON PALESTINE! U.S. DOLLARS FOR  
HEALTHCARE & EDUCATION, NOT ISRAEL'S WAR CRIMES!  
END ISRAELI OCCUPATION & APARTHEID!**

## **FRIDAY OF AL-AQSA FLOOD SOLIDARITY RALLY**

Friday, October 13, 2023, 6pm  
MLK Blvd. & Howard St., Baltimore MD

**PEOPLES POWER ASSEMBLY – PALESTINIAN YOUTH MOVEMENT DMV  
– SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY Baltimore – WOMEN IN STRUGGLE / MUJERES  
EN LUCHA – Anti-Imperialist Action (AIA) UMBC – Black Alliance for Peace  
(BAP) Baltimore – CPUSA Baltimore Club – Friends of Latin America (FOLA)  
– International League of People's Struggles (ILPS) Mid-Atlantic Region**

**Text (301) 327-4799 to receive notice for upcoming actions**

Friday, October 13, 6 p.m.

STAND WITH PALESTINE - solidarity rally  
MLK Blvd. & Howard St., Baltimore

The crimes of Israel are the crimes of the United States and its allies. Israel is a loyal dog on a leash firmly held by the U.S. military-industrial complex.

The people of Palestine are now the ones who require and deserve solidarity from the entire planet, people, and governments alike. Unions, religious institutions, community centers, and student organizations all must come together to demand an end to Israeli apartheid and no U.S. military intervention against the Palestinian people.



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## **Biden lied about seeing photos of beheaded Israeli children**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

The White House confirmed on Wednesday evening that President Joe Biden's claim that he had seen photos of Israeli children beheaded by Hamas fighters is false.

"I've been doing this a long time. I never really thought that I would see, have confirmed pictures of terrorists beheading children," Biden said to leaders of US

Jewish organizations at the White House on Wednesday evening.

The president was echoing lurid claims by the Israeli government that women and children had been beheaded by Hamas fighters who took over an Israeli settlement across the boundary from Gaza in recent days.

But the administration quickly backtracked on the president's seeming confirmation of a story Israel has been using to justify its ongoing mass slaughter of Palestinians in Gaza.

"A White House spokesperson later clarified that US officials and the president have not seen pictures or confirmed such reports independently," *The Washington Post* [reported](#). "The president based his comments about the alleged atrocities on the claims from Netanyahu's spokesman and media reports from Israel, according to the White House."

*Clarification from the White House regarding Biden's remarks*  
<https://t.co/8fXaf5Bpn> <https://t.co/zsEf93bH0g> [pic.twitter.com/N7ci2jHXf2](https://pic.twitter.com/N7ci2jHXf2)

— Evan Hill (@evanhill) [October 12, 2023](#)

## **Journalists spread unverified claims**

As Israel pursues its indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza, it is exploiting unverified claims of atrocities to lay the justification for its campaign of mass destruction and starvation of its 2.3 million people - half of them children - who are cut off from food, water and electricity.

In the absence of a full, independent investigation of what took place since Hamas fighters launched their offensive across the boundary on Saturday, the Israeli military and political leadership have been feeding world leaders and media with

shocking claims that have not been independently verified.

The claims that Hamas fighters had beheaded 40 children in the Israeli settlement of Kfar Aza near the Gaza boundary were splashed all over the front pages of British newspapers, Israeli media and circulated widely on social media.

*Britain's biggest newspapers are all leading with unsourced atrocity propaganda that even the IDF refuses to confirm.*

*The battle for public opinion is every bit as important as the fighting on the ground.* [pic.twitter.com/BVZ4gdVKfJ](https://pic.twitter.com/BVZ4gdVKfJ)

— Alan MacLeod (@AlanRMacLeod) [October 11, 2023](https://twitter.com/AlanRMacLeod/status/144631110300000000)

*"They chopped heads of children and women," says David Ben Zion, Deputy Commandee of Unit 71 to our @Nicole\_Zedek, while reporting from the massacre in Kfar Aza in southern Israel* [pic.twitter.com/IHSB0ywMbF](https://pic.twitter.com/IHSB0ywMbF)

— i24NEWS English (@i24NEWS\_EN) [October 10, 2023](https://twitter.com/i24NEWS_EN/status/144631110300000000)

It was [amplified](#) by a spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who asserted that women, children, toddlers and elderly people were "brutally butchered in an ISIS way of action."

However even the Israeli army – normally not slow to accuse Palestinians of any crime – [refused to confirm](#) the report.

## Unchallenged

[According to Mondoweiss](#), the story "can be traced back to an article by Bel Trew," a

reporter for the British newspaper *The Independent*.



Trew went to Kfar Aza on 10 October and  published a video with her article in which Israeli army Major David Ben Zion makes the lurid claim that people in the settlement including women and children were beheaded.

Trew never says in the video that she saw such sights nor does she challenge Ben Zion's claim. She says she saw bodies lying around Kfar Aza, but they were those of Palestinian fighters.

In her [article](#) she quotes Ben Zion asserting that "When Hamas came here they cut the heads of women, they cut the heads of children."

Trew wrote that "*The Independent* did not see evidence of his claims."

Oren Ziv, an Israeli journalist who went to Kfar Aza with other reporters, wrote on Twitter on Wednesday that "we didn't see any evidence" to back up the claims of beheadings "and the army spokesperson or commanders also didn't mention any such incidents."

[https://twitter.com/OrenZiv\\_/status/1712038436910055925](https://twitter.com/OrenZiv_/status/1712038436910055925)

Trew herself later [tried to backtrack](#), but by then the damage was done.

Other atrocity stories with no evidence behind them have included claims that

Hamas fighters raped several Israeli women. At least one publication, *The Los Angeles Times* retracted the assertion.

*LA Times retracts allegations of rape & concludes "such reports have not been substantiated".*

*The unproven rape allegations can only cause pain to the families of detained Israelis & fan the flames for flattening Gaza & killing scores of civilians... Reality is ugly enough! [pic.twitter.com/OblZ9hncXT](https://pic.twitter.com/OblZ9hncXT)*

— Muhammad Shehada (@muhammadshehad2) [October 10, 2023](#)

But despite the lack of evidence, as *The Intercept* [noted](#), Biden in remarks on Tuesday repeated the claims that women had been “raped, assaulted, paraded as trophies.”

*“We cannot confirm it officially, but you can assume it happened and believe the report,” the IDF told me.*

*“We don’t have the time to check every report.”* <https://t.co/4kD5xju2eS>

— Alice Speri (@alicesperi) [October 11, 2023](#)

## **Deadly lies**

It should be recalled that the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, ending and destroying millions of lives, based on lies about “weapons of mass destruction” - lies that then Senator Joe Biden had himself [pushed for years](#).

In an earlier notorious incident used by the United States government to justify its

1991 war to expel Iraqi occupation forces from Kuwait, the American public were fed totally fabricated stories of Iraqi troops tossing hundreds of Kuwaiti babies out of incubators.

*This atrocity propaganda is designed to justify genocide. We don't know what Israel showed Biden, and Biden is a known liar, as is the United States which killed a million people based on lies about "weapons of mass destruction."*

<https://t.co/QjUxaVkFKa>

— Ali Abunimah (@AliAbunimah) [October 11, 2023](#)

Biden himself is a notoriously unreliable source, having regularly fabricated significant parts of his own life story.

During the 2020 election campaign, Biden repeatedly claimed that he had been arrested in the 1970s while trying to visit Nelson Mandela, the resistance leader then imprisoned in apartheid South Africa.

Biden later acknowledged the story was false.

As the latest atrocity stories have spread, Sarah Leah Whitson, the former Middle East director for Human Rights Watch, warned, “unless you’ve got some hard facts (not more allegations) to support gruesome allegations of decapitated babies and mass rape – which [the] Israeli army says it can’t confirm – please take a pause from asserting it has happened.”

*Folks, unless you've got some hard facts (not more allegations) to support gruesome allegations of decapitated babies and mass rape -which Israeli army says it can't confirm – please take a pause from asserting it has happened.*

*Recall the allegations of mass rape in...*

— Sarah Leah Whitson (@sarahleah1) [October 11, 2023](#)

“Recall the allegations of mass rape in Libya and Syria all turned out to be false, though that did not stop media from repeating it,” Whitson, who now heads the human rights advocacy group DAWN, added.

Source: [Electronic Intifada](#)



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## Historic march for trans youth sweeps Florida city

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

A historic march for transgender rights took place in Orlando, Florida, on Oct. 7. Organized by a trans-led, ad hoc coalition of groups and individuals from across the country, the [National March to Protect Trans Youth and Speakout for Trans Lives](#) drew hundreds of people from across the state, from Georgia and Louisiana, and as

far away as California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana and New York.

Young trans people, parents and families of trans youth, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and allies rallied outside Orlando City Hall. Under blazing blue skies, they marched through downtown Orlando's Seneff Arts Plaza, waving Trans Pride and Progress Pride flags, holding protest signs, and chanting, "DeSantis says get back, we say fight back!" and "HRT, HRT, over the counter and all for free!"

"Rallies like this are important to us," declared **Miss Major Griffin-Gracy (she/her)**, a veteran of the Stonewall Rebellion and a lifelong fighter for trans rights. "We need each other. We have gone through this before. We've gone through it time and time again. And we're not going to give up now.

"Whatever you do, don't give up," she urged. "We've got to fight, fight, fight!"

It was the first national mobilization against the current wave of anti-trans hate to take place in one of the states at the epicenter of the attack on trans lives - Florida, where Republican governor and presidential candidate Ron DeSantis has signed numerous laws and administrative measures aimed at driving trans people from public life and depriving them of health care, especially targeting young people.

Orlando-area activists expressed great enthusiasm for the march, welcoming trans and cis activists from across the country to stand with them. For many, it was a welcome act of solidarity, in contrast to mainstream LGBTQ+ nonprofits and liberal figures that have urged people to flee or stay away - something many people, especially youth, simply cannot and don't want to do.

### **We keep us safe**

Women in Struggle-Mujeres en Lucha, the initiator of the march, together with several protest organizers and speakers, was the plaintiff in a lawsuit seeking emergency relief from Florida's so-called bathroom ban, which makes it illegal for

trans people to use the restroom that aligns with their gender in public buildings and facilities, including airports, rest stops, libraries, schools, and colleges.

The Center for Constitutional Rights and Southern Legal Counsel attorneys represented the plaintiffs. A federal court refused to grant a hearing before the march, dismissing the case on procedural grounds at 5 p.m. the night before. Nevertheless, organizers said the case brought attention to the protest and helped build excitement for Saturday's march.

"We filed the case in the middle district of Florida," said CCR attorney **Zee Scout (she/her)**. "Last night, we learned that a judge disagreed with our case and dismissed our appeal for emergency relief.

"That doesn't mean we're done. Today's march is everything, but above all, it is a message that this movement will continue."

In the days leading up to the march, the event was targeted on social media by anti-trans hate groups. Organizers of the National March prepared a robust people's defense plan to keep the pro-trans crowd safe.

Only a handful of bigots actually showed up to counter-protest, and they were effectively blocked by protest signs and members of the Umbrella Brigade, an Orlando-area abortion-rights group, wielding their rainbow umbrellas. A few locally known white supremacists who showed up to menace the crowd were chased off by the security team.

"The security preparations for the rally and march were very comprehensive," **Anaïs Kochan (she/her)** told Struggle-La Lucha. "I was proud to join the group securing the march. But the most useful aspect were the incredibly talented people, local groups and organizations, who came to us with their skills and intelligence, ready to help us pull off a safe event. I loved working with them."

## 'I can't leave'

The Oct. 7 rally and speakout was co-chaired by **Samira Burnside (she/her)**, editor of The Queer Notion, from Tampa, Florida; **Andie Albanito (they/them)** of the Umbrella Brigade in Orlando; **Tsukuru Fors (he/they)** of Red Berets for Queers, from Los Angeles; and **Sally Jane Black (she/her)** of the Louisiana Women's Action Committee, based in New Orleans.

Seventeen-year-old Samira Burnside was a leading organizer of the National March. She said: "There are buses that take kids up north to safer homes. There is a new class of political migrants. Every day, another one of my friends resolves to flee. Most folks I know at least have escape plans. Many have abandoned their in-state dream colleges for the ability to live their lives.

"To be trans and to not be an activist is to live in a burning house and to ignore the smoke. I can't leave all the people who can't leave. I can't leave all the people who can't get their medicine. I can't leave all the poor trans people who could never just pack up and go. I can't leave all the people like me who have known and loved this place since they were born.

"And it's in this resolution that I contend with this simple fact: That Ron DeSantis and those like him are trying to steal my future and trying to steal yours too."

Another Florida activist, **Lindsey Spero (they/he)**, works to support trans youth. In February, they boldly injected their testosterone hormone therapy during a protest in front of the Florida Board of Medicine. Spero said: "Despite the hostility that brings us here, I am surrounded by some of the most brilliantly kind and beautifully bold humans this world has to offer.

"Each person in this space is changing the world simply by breathing. Every day of life, you are defying a state that says you should not exist.

“Trans liberation is a collective goal we share as we seek to heal our bodies, nurture younger generations, and build healthy, lasting communities while we pursue bold, creative love. But we still gotta fucking pee! Access to bathrooms is a basic human right.”

### **‘Trans people are part of the working class’**

**Melinda Butterfield (she/her)**, a member of Women in Struggle and co-editor of Struggle-La Lucha, said: “We aren’t alone in our struggle. Many other communities are being targeted. We have to work to create unity, solidarity, and cooperation. That’s why the demands of our action aren’t limited to those issues specific to trans people but include the fight against racism, for reproductive rights, for workers’ rights, against censorship. Trans people are part of those communities. We are part of the working class.

“We are health care workers, service workers, teachers, tech workers, sex workers. We are Teamsters and Auto Workers, Amazon delivery drivers and Starbucks baristas, screen actors and screenwriters. All too often, we are underpaid and unemployed. We live the reality of intersectionality every day.

“Standing up for trans people is an act of self-defense for all workers. An injury to one is an injury to all.”

**Christynne Lili Wrene Wood (she/her)** is a trans woman who was targeted by a national hate campaign that started earlier this year in the San Diego suburb of Santee.

She asked the crowd: “How would one go about destroying a civilization? Here’s what I would imagine: Destroy legitimate public education and dedicated teachers and administrators who have sworn their lives to the ethical and honest portrayal of history, whether it hurts certain feelings or not!

“Point number 2: Replace qualified and ethical medical professionals with ‘doctors’ that shouldn’t even be allowed to attend to houseplants much less human beings, and then threaten the legitimate medical professionals with imprisonment for speaking the truth!”

### **‘We have a common enemy’**

**Emmett Santisi (he/him)** of the Teamsters National LGBTQ+ Caucus said: “Connecticut, where I come from, is seen as a safe space for trans people, and I’m seeing a lot of people moving there from places like Florida. But this is a false sense of security, as we are seeing a steady increase in transphobic and fascist propaganda cropping up all over the state.

“Any rights that the queer community has enjoyed were won as a result of grassroots organizing over the course of decades, involving huge numbers of ordinary people like you and me, who refuse to stay in the closet.”

Santisi announced that the Pride Caucus of Teamsters Local 1150 was holding a simultaneous trans rights rally in New Haven.

“The same capitalists who are funding DeSantis here are funding Jeff Landry’s gubernatorial campaign in Louisiana,” explained Sally Jane Black. “The same people who fund them are also funding the Democrats across the country. The same people are funding the anti-trans laws, the anti-abortion laws, the attacks on our immigrant siblings, and they’re attacking all of our social programs and all workers’ rights, which we’ve won over the years. And the same people are responsible for endless war and climate change.

“We all have this common enemy, the capitalist class,” she said. “They’re very organized, and so far, they have been successful at keeping us divided. That’s the purpose of these laws and the attacks upon us: to make us hate each other instead of

standing united against them.

"But there are more of us than there are of them. We outnumber them greatly. Today we've shown them: We're certainly outnumbering the fascists here today. Today has to be the start of building a movement that remains united," Black concluded.

### **'DeSantis is the snake's head'**

**Adria Jawort (she/her)** is an Indigenous Two-Spirit trans woman from Montana and executive director of Indigenous Transilience: "People asked: Why are you going all the way down to Florida? Because DeSantis is like the snake's head of anti-LGBTQ and transphobia. Whatever happens here is like a contagious disease; it starts spreading out to all the other states, including my state, Montana.

"I love giving lectures on Indigenous LGBTQ Two Spirit history," Jawort said. "I got an email from the library where I was scheduled to speak at the start of Pride Month saying, 'We have to cancel your lecture over the new drag law.' I had testified against the anti-drag bill, saying this law could be used to target trans people. The proponents said, 'Oh no, it won't.'

"I knew there had been complaints about my lecture the week before. I figured it was white nationalists. Sure enough, they posted on Reddit, 'After our campaign of complaints we got this event canceled.' So the county catered to the whims of actual Nazis. When your policies are on the side of Nazis, you're on the wrong side of history."

Tsukuru Fors said: "When we talk about states like Texas and Florida, we Californians sometimes say things like, 'Oh, they are horrible states,' but they are not. Coming here and interacting with all of you, I see this is a beautiful place. It's just that there are people who want to rule by fear and hate.

"In my antinuclear work, I've worked with many displaced people. No one should be displaced. This is your home. You should be able to live here, be safe, be loved, and pursue dreams as who you are. That is why we fight."

Other speakers included: Andrea Montanez, an immigrant trans woman from Colombia; Gina Davila and Laura Rodriguez of the Tampa 5, student protesters facing felony charges; youth organizer Zander Moriczon; Tatiana Quiroga, executive director of Come Out With Pride Orlando; Simon Rowe, a young trans member of Teamsters Local 79 in Tampa; and Jamila Nicole, Orlando for Gender Equality.

Also: Serena Sojic-Borne, New Orleans Real Name Campaign; Joseph Rosenzweig, Workers Voice Socialist Movement; Lizz Toledo and Gregory E. Williams, Socialist Unity Party; and Karla Correa, Party for Socialism and Liberation. Musical performances were given by Leo Roger and Milo Paul.

"I met a young trans woman who traveled to Orlando by bus from the small Florida town where she lives," Melinda Butterfield told SLL. "It was her very first protest. She stayed the whole day. When I spoke to her again at the end of the rally, she was very enthusiastic and grateful for the sense of community she found with us. Her bravery was so inspiring to me.

"Providing hope and solidarity to the next generation of fighters is everything. That's the guarantee that we will win."



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# **Melinda Butterfield: 'Trans people will continue to resist'**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

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*Talk given by Melinda Butterfield at the Oct. 7 National March to Protect Trans Youth in Orlando, Florida. Butterfield is a member of Women in Struggle-Mujeres en Lucha and co-editor of Struggle-La Lucha.*

I have a message for Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature: Woke doesn't come to Florida to die. Woke is alive and well and coming to kick your ass.

Trans people have always been here. No matter what laws you pass, no matter what lies you tell, trans children will continue to be born. Trans youth will continue to find

ways to survive. Trans people will continue to resist.

We are the children of Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and Leslie Feinberg. We will not be silenced.

Bigots say get back; we say fight back!

We aren't alone in our struggle. Many other communities are being targeted. We have to work to create unity, solidarity, cooperation. That's why the demands of our action aren't limited to those issues specific to trans people but include the fight against racism, for reproductive rights, for workers' rights. We are part of those communities. We are part of the working class.

We are health care workers, service workers, teachers, tech workers, sex workers. We are Teamsters and Auto Workers, actors and writers, and all too often, underpaid and unemployed workers. We live the reality of intersectionality every day.

Standing up for trans people is an act of self-defense for all workers. An injury to one is an injury to all.

As trans people, we aren't afraid to say what the real enemy is: capitalism. Not just DeSantis and Greg Abbott, not just the Republican Party - the system that enriches their billionaire patrons, who fill their election coffers, that use divide and conquer tactics to set us against each other. They've been doing it for centuries. No wonder DeSantis doesn't want young people to learn any true history!

But the young people see through them! They want a future that puts people and the planet first instead of profits. The truth is, the bigots are afraid of us - not for any of the absurd reasons they claim, but because we herald the end of their rotten system.

I can't stand here in Florida and not say a few words about Cuba. I visited Cuba last spring with a queer delegation to learn about the country's new Families Code that expands queer rights and elevates chosen families to equality with blood families.

Schools and parents are obliged to provide young people with sex education, including education on sexual and gender variance. If a child feels their rights are not being respected, they have recourse to appeal to the authorities. What a contrast with Florida!

Queer Cubans and all Cubans are suffering because of the U.S. blockade. Our community needs to demand that President Biden end the blockade and take Cuba off the list of state sponsors of terrorism.

In 1963, Gov. George Wallace of Alabama stood in the schoolhouse door to prevent desegregation. President John F. Kennedy ordered the National Guard to remove him and enforce integration.

Today, Ron DeSantis and many others are standing in the door of the schoolhouse, the doctor's office, the restroom, and the library. President Joe Biden has not lifted a finger to stop him and shows no inclination to do so.

The difference has nothing to do with the "character" of the president in question. The difference is that in 1963, there was a mass movement for Civil Rights - one that the capitalists and their politicians feared and were unable to control. This is the example we have to look to.

When the bosses and politicians fear the people, then we will see a roll-back of the anti-trans attacks. When the fascists who invade our streets know they will be met and confronted by a united people's movement, then they will scurry back into the holes they came from.

Today is about taking the first steps toward building that kind of movement - the

kind that can win.



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# **Greetings from Cuba: Message of solidarity to the U.S. LGBTQ+ community**

written by Struggle - La Lucha

October 13, 2023

*On the day of the National March to Protect Trans Youth - held on Oct. 7 in Orlando, Florida - the U.S. Friends Against Homophobia and Transphobia Delegation received this solidarity message from our friend, Aylen, at Norteamérica ICAP.*

Greetings from Cuba, a country that is advancing in the defense and deepening of equal opportunity rights for homosexuals and transsexuals. It is a privilege for me to learn about social problems you face on a daily basis.

Our struggles will be guided by achieving full rights for all people. That is why we defend the right to solidarity, respect, and tolerance. We reject the imposition of

patriarchal dogmas, discrimination, and transgression of personal rights. We defend - as a right - the access to health and education without discrimination based on sexual orientation, skin color, social or religious status.

The right to health constitutes a fundamental right for all human beings.

I am an advocate for all social justice for all people, which also depends on respect for free and responsible sexual orientation and gender identity.

Cuba is moving forward in the implementation of the Family Code. We know that law alone does not achieve transformation. But in Cuba, love is the law.

A hug, and let us continue in struggle.

Lesmes Bonachea Aylen, Norteamérica ICAP

North American Division of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples

### **Un saludo desde Cuba: un mensaje de solidaridad a la comunidad LGBTQ+ en EE.UU.**

*El día de la Marcha Nacional para Proteger a la Juventud Trans - celebrada el 7 de octubre en Orlando, Florida - la Delegación de Amigos Estadounidenses Contra la Homofobia y la Transfobia recibió este mensaje de solidaridad de nuestra amiga Aylen, en Norteamérica ICAP.*

Un saludo afectuoso desde Cuba, país que avanza en la defensa y profundización de los derechos por la igualdad de oportunidades para homosexuales y transexuales. Es un privilegio conocer los problemas sociales que enfrentan ustedes en la vida diaria.

Nuestras luchas están guiadas siempre por alcanzar todos los derechos para todas las personas. Por eso, defendemos los derechos de la solidaridad, el respeto, y la

tolerancia. Rechazamos la imposición de dogmas patriarcales, la discriminización, la transgresión, de los derechos personales. Defendemos - como derecho - el acceso a la salud y la educación sin discriminaciones por orientación sexual, color de la piel, estatus social o religioso.

El derecho a la salud constituye un derecho fundamental de todos los seres humanos.

Soy defensora de todas las justicias sociales para todas las personas, que dependen también del respeto a la libre responsable orientación sexual e identidad de género.

Cuba avanza en la implementación de un Código de las Familias. Sabemos que solo la ley no lo logra. Pero, las transformaciones con el amor son posibles.

Un abrazo, seguimos en lucha.

Lesmes Bonachea Aylen, Norteamérica ICAP

División Norteamericana del Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos



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# **George Habash on morality and the Palestinian revolution: 'Our code of morals is our revolution'**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
October 13, 2023



In June 1970, after the Western-backed regime in Jordan had shelled Palestinian refugee camps in the country, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), under the leadership of its Secretary General, George Habash, took a group of nationals from the USA, West Germany and Britain - Israel's primary sponsors - hostage at two hotels in the capital, Amman.

In return for their safe release, the PFLP demanded that 'all shelling of the camps be ended and all demands of the Palestinian resistance movement met'. Shortly before the hostages were all safely released a few days later, on June 12, 1970, Habash addressed them in person at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel in Amman and thoughtfully explained the group's actions from a Palestinian revolutionary perspective.

Habash's words - published in full below - should be listened to very carefully,

especially by those who sympathize with the Palestinian cause but waver in their solidarity when the Palestinians [dare to fight back](#). The unprecedented armed resistance launched by the united factions in Gaza recently - of which [the PFLP is one](#) - must be understood in the context that Habash so eloquently describes:

For 22 years our people have been waiting in order to restore their rights, but nothing happened... After 22 years of injustice, inhumanity, living in camps with nobody caring for us, we feel that we have the very full right to protect our revolution. We have all the right to protect our revolution...

The urgency that underlines his message is even more palpable half a century later, for the Palestinians - consistently refusing passive victimhood - have now lived in the wretched conditions Habash depicts for 75 long years, not 22.

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Ladies and gentlemen;

I feel that it is my duty to explain to you why we did what we did. Of course, from a liberal point of view of thinking, I feel sorry for what happened, and I am sorry that we caused you some trouble during the last 2 or 3 days. But leaving this aside, I hope that you will understand, or at least try to understand, why we did what we did. Maybe it will be difficult for you to understand our point of view. People living in different circumstances think on different lines. They cannot think in the same manner, and we, the Palestinian people, and the conditions we have been living for a good number of years, all these conditions have modeled our way of thinking. We cannot help it. You can understand our way of thinking when you know a very basic fact. We, the Palestinians, for 22 years, for the last 22 years, have been living in camps and tents. We were driven out of our country, our houses, our homes, and our lands driven out like sheep, and left here in refugee camps in very inhumane conditions. For 22 years, our people have been waiting in order to restore their

rights, but nothing happened. Three years ago, circumstances became favourable so that our people could carry arms to defend their cause and start to fight to restore their rights, to go back to their country and liberate their country. After 22 years of injustice, inhumanity, living in camps with nobody caring for us, we feel that we have the very full right to protect our revolution. We have all the right to protect our revolution. Our code of morals is our revolution. What saves our revolution, what helps our revolution, what protects our revolution is right, is very right and very honorable and very noble and very beautiful, because our revolution means justice, means having back our homes, having back our country, which is a very just and noble aim. You have to take this point into consideration. If you want to be, in one way or another, cooperative with us, try to understand our point of view.

We don't wake up in the morning to have a cup of milk with Nescafe and then spend half an hour before the mirror thinking of flying to Switzerland or having one month in this country or one month in that country. We don't have the thousands or millions of dollars that you in America and Britain have. We live daily in camps. Our wives wait for the water, whether it will come at 10 o'clock in the morning, 12 o'clock, or 3 o'clock in the afternoon. We cannot be calm, as you can. We cannot think as you think.

We have lived in this condition, not for one day, not for two days, not for three days. Not for one week, not for two weeks, not for three weeks. Not for one year, not for two years, but *for 22 years*.

If any one of you comes to these camps and stays for one or two weeks, he will be affected. He cannot think and handle things regardless of the conditions he will be living.

When our revolution started three years ago, so many attempts were planned to strike our revolution. Actually, all commando organisations after June 1967, a very well-known date to you, started and their eyes aimed at the conquered land. But

when the revolution went on, so many forces - our enemies - put so many plans to beat this revolution. America is against us. We know this very well. We feel this very well. We felt it last year from the aid of the [Phantoms](#). America is against our revolution. They work to crush our revolution. They work through the reactionary regime in Jordan and the reactionary regime in Lebanon. They tried on the fourth of November in 1968 to crush the revolution. Nevertheless, during events here, all of us were aiming for the conquered land. This was the first attempt on the 4th of November 1968. A second attempt, four months ago, on the tenth of February, and during the last week, we lived the 3rd attempt. Actually, they are working daily against the revolution, every day. These dates are the peaks only when their attempts reached a certain high level. Every time we lose men, we lose blood; we give sacrifices. On the 10th of February, there was something like 50 casualties, at least. Regarding this third attempt from the reactionary regime to smash the revolution - and people who live here in Jordan know it very well and feel it very well - the reactionary regime started this. Anybody who lives in Jordan knows this very well. We cannot base our revolution on lies. I am talking facts here.

Last Saturday, there was an incident here in Amman. On Sunday, there was an incident in Zerqa, and then things flared. This time we felt, to be frank with you, that this attempt, at least from their own point of view, seems to be the final attempt. I mean to say, we felt that this time they are determined to smash the revolution no matter what level the sacrifices were.

Here, we felt that we have all the right in the world to protect our revolution. We remembered all the miseries, all the injustices, our people and the conditions they lived, the coldness with which world opinion looks at our case, and so we felt that we will not permit them to crush us. We will defend ourselves and our revolution by every way and every means because - as I told you - our code of morals is our revolution. Anything that protects our revolution would be right. This is our line of thinking. So we put counterplans deciding that we should win.

One of the items in this plan was what happened here. We felt that we have the full right to make pressure here on the reactionary regime and in America and all forces, and this will be a winning card in our hand. I am talking very frankly, and I have also to be frank and tell you something. We were really determined. We were not joking.

I am so glad that things and conditions went the way they should because - to be frank - we were fully determined that, in case they will smash us in the camps, we will blow all this building and the Philadelphia [Hotel] all over. We were really determined to do this: Why? Because we know that our revolution will continue even if they crush us here in Amman, and we want your governments to know that from now on the Front will mean every word it says.

We were fully determined to blow this hotel and the Philadelphia Hotel on one condition and in one circumstance. We were very keen not to lose our nerves. We were very keen not to lose our nerves. They were very determined, by their tanks, artillery, and airplanes, to smash us. You are not better than our people. In the last incidents, there were something like 500 casualties, the least number, believe me, the least number.

Yesterday I was in one hospital only, where the doctors told me that there are 280 wounded and 60 dead. Dead fighters.

Ladies and gentlemen;

I feel so much released now that we were not put in the corner and forced to do all that we were determined to do in case conditions went in that way.

I know the liberal way of thinking. I know it very well. I know how much it would be difficult to convince you. I know that some of you will be saying at present: "What have I to do with these conditions? This is very unfair and very unjust and rude and selfish." All right.

Conditions in which people live - these conditions actually determine their way of thinking and code of morals.

We tried our best - and I hope we succeeded in this - that during your presence in the hotel under the auspices of the Front, that you would be treated the best way we can.

This is the first time we manage a hotel. Our men, I am sure, know how to fight very well, but I don't know to what extent they were good at managing the hotel. But instructions were very clear. I hope they succeeded in this. I think we always helped you by keeping our nerves. The day before yesterday, [Al-Wahdat Camp](#) was shelled for more than half an hour. Anyone of you can go to Al-Wahdat Camp and see the places affected. It is very natural to start thinking [at] that time of executing the item. We held our nerves very well.

Ladies and gentlemen;

You have to excuse my English. From the personal side, let me say; I apologize to you. I am sorry about your troubles for three or four days. But from a revolutionary point of view, we feel, we will continue to feel that we have the very, very full right to do what we did.

Thank you very much.

[George Habash](#)

