

Notes on Anti-Apartheid Forum

Sept 1, 2024

Support crew: Tom Munk, Dottie Heninger, Alice Carlton, Astra Titus, Wendy Michener
12 people were present at the start of the Forum. Quickly grew to 20 people. At 9:39 there were 27 people.

Astra opened with the ground rule that this will be, not a safe space, but a brave space. She read the Pledge. It was placed up on the screen. Everyone was asked to read it and hold the silence.

WE AFFIRM

our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;

WE OPPOSE

all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and

WE DECLARE

ourselves an Apartheid-free community and to that end,

WE PLEDGE

to join others in working to end all support to Israel's Apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

Comments

Neither of USA political parties support the end of the current Israel official policy concerning Palestinian.

Settler colonialism, as used in the Pledge, is a standard term among historians. The USA is a clear example of eliminating an indigenous people to make way for a more powerful immigrant population. Also Australia.

Apartheid is an appropriate term for the situation in Israel/Palestine. Much documentation exists to support this.

The one state solution is a democratic state without a state church.

The resolution does not address the fear of the people who are living in the country. The fear is not addressed by the Pledge. It does not speak to the Israeli people. It looks like support for only the Palestinian people. Can we add an addendum stating that we wish for the end of violence towards all people in the country?

The first sentence does include all people under the non-violence pledge. The pledge is the starting point, not the end. How we choose to follow up on the pledge is up to us. This is an opportunity for us to act.

From Chat: When considering whether to adopt this pledge, my question to myself is whether I think that this aligns with truth. Is it true that we believe in the equality and freedom of Palestinians? I think yes. Is it true that we oppose racism and bigotry? I think yes. Is it true that we oppose apartheid? I think yes. Is it true that we oppose military support to Israel, military occupation in general, and settler colonialism in general? Given our existing minutes on the war and on indigenous people in NC, I think yes. To that end, given these truths, it is right to publicly speak to these truths by signing. It does not ask us to affirm a particular political resolution re: the existence of Israel.

This is not just signing the Pledge What do we do after?

We could send our commentary with our notice of signing.

We could add the word PEACE to the Pledge.

From AFSC www site: AFSC

Organizations who take the pledge also commit to take action to help end apartheid, including educational and advocacy efforts, faith-based initiatives, and divestment actions.

Hesitancy because things can be misconstrued. Whenever we criticize Israel, be sure that it is not anti-semitic. Students at Carrboro High created a zine that had statements that created a major tumult in the community. Be sure of how we speak. The cycle of violence based on past violence is a real problem.

Every stand in a controversial situation requires explanation - every sentence of the Pledge is clear. Our Minutes are hard to find on our website! My relatives find comfort in our Minutes and our unity.

The fight between Jews and Muslim goes back to the 1920s. I cannot think of a single country that has been made stronger by having a state church. I believe that they need to be one, democratic country.

Numerous Palestine people have educated me on the oppression of their people in the country. AFSC has shown me that the fear of the Israeli people is not acknowledged.

Can we ask that "settler colonialism" be removed?

Event upcoming this Tuesday

Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting & Fellowship

Hosting a Panel of Friends on Palestine-Israel

Tuesday, September 3, 2024, 7:00-8:30 pm (via Zoom)

How do we, as Quakers, face the challenge of living our values and principles as we respond to the violence in Palestine-Israel?"

PANELISTS

Vernie Davis (Raleigh Friends), moderator; Mark Davidson (Raleigh Friends); Jane & Max Carter (New Garden Friends); Kathy Kamphoefner & Paul Pierce (Raleigh Friends/Cairo, Egypt)

My experience of AFSC was different. I witnessed some 20 delegations to Israel/Palestine. They spent equal time with all sides. (There are many!) We always met with Settlers (because there is that of God in everyone). AFSC put into action that all voices need to be heard.

I have reservations, we have to deal with other people's reactions. Say "in the West Bank" so as to not include eliminating Israel by inference.

We are not just working in the Quaker community, we are working with the world community. Can we model what we seek? Counting hands for the pledge: 8 yes, more for yes to the pledge with addendum, 4: only if it has an addendum.

There are events on Tuesday and Thursday (in the Enews) and there will be a P & J meeting on Sunday at 1:30 using the Forum link.

We need to take the time that we need, to mull over this issue and discern what we need to do.

If we could have a signing statement with the Pledge, I believe that Meeting would agree to sign.

P&J will be discussing this issue on Sunday.