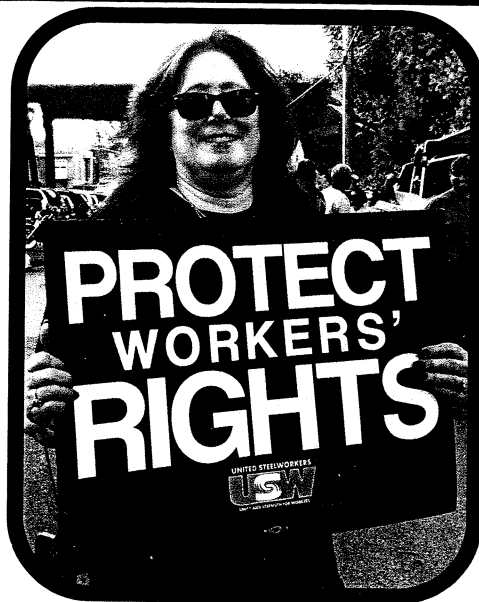
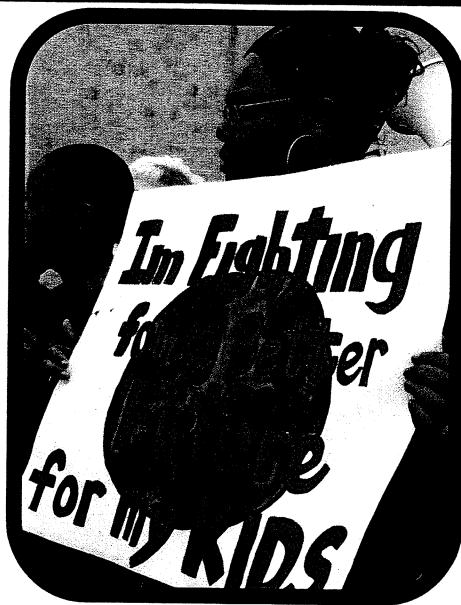


OCTOBER 29 - 30, 2015

Connecticut AFL-CIO 11th Biennial Constitutional Convention



Stronger Together!

RESOLUTION 7

SUPPORTING JUSTICE AND PEACE FOR THE PEOPLES OF PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela said: “We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians”; and
WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO has an historic relationship with the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) forged during President Sweeney’s historic visit to Palestine in year 2000; and

WHEREAS, the PGFTU has expressed their deep gratitude for the AFL-CIO affiliated Solidarity Center’s assistance to strengthen the Palestinian labor movement and to enhance peace and understanding between countries; and

WHEREAS, for the past three years the Connecticut AFL-CIO and its affiliates have supported the human rights efforts of the Tree of Life Educational Fund in promoting a deeper understanding of the ongoing Israel/Palestine conflict, including engaging with PGFTU in response to their call for help to achieve a just peace in Israel and Palestine; and

WHEREAS, the PGFTU has informed us of the worsening conditions suffered by Palestinian workers and their families as a result of the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories including the indignities caused by Israeli checkpoints, unsafe working conditions and exploitation of workers; and

WHEREAS, in response to an invitation from the PGFTU, Executive Secretary Treasurer Pelletier encouraged a labor delegation to witness first-hand the effects of the Israeli occupation on Palestinian workers and their families; and

WHEREAS, a delegation including CT AFL-CIO President Emeritus John Olsen and Connecticut Building and Construction Trades Council President Dave Roche along with Tree of Life representatives and representatives from the Machinist Union, the Steelworkers Union (Indiana) and the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers Union traveled to Palestine and Israel; and

WHEREAS, worker eyewitnesses like this returning delegation can provide first-hand accounts of the inhumane and declining conditions of Palestinians and encourage passage of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Israel has illegally occupied Palestinian lands since 1967 and the Israeli policy of building settlements, separation walls and by-pass roads on Palestinian lands undermine a viable two-state solution; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations (OCHA) reports that over 600,000 Israeli settlers now live in the occupied Palestinian Territories including East Jerusalem and these settlements deprive Palestinians of their land and divide Palestinians communities; and

WHEREAS, the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation are subject to Israeli military law while the Israeli settlers living in the illegal settlements in the Palestinian territories are subject to Israeli civil law; and

WHEREAS, almost 300,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem are considered “residents” without the rights of Israeli citizens and face insurmountable obstacles to buy or build homes and open businesses and face daily pressures to leave, while Israeli presence in East Jerusalem continues to expand; and

WHEREAS, the unresolved conflict has resulted in war four times during the past 9 years between Israel and Gaza with Palestinians bearing the overwhelming costs in lives and property; and

WHEREAS, the International Labor Organization (ILO), reports that the Israeli occupation and settlement activity have produced a generation of young Palestinians without work or hope for a better future; and

WHEREAS, Israel’s right to defend itself from rocket attacks and tunnels should not result in the collective punishment of the civilian population such as in 2014 where more than more than 2,100 Palestinian civilians were killed, including 500 children and 250 women, and twenty thousand housing units were destroyed adding to a pre-existing shortage; and

WHEREAS, despite this ongoing tragedy, Israel remains the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II to date having received \$124.3 billion in bilateral assistance that continues at the rate of 3.3 billion per year; and

WHEREAS, there is growing awareness that the world must act to help end this ongoing human rights tragedy and in this regard UNI Global Unions, an international Labor organization to which many U.S. Unions belong, endorsed the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) statement that reads as follows:

“We denounce the occupation of Palestine by Israel, and will mobilize for a just and sustainable peace between Israel and Palestine, in accordance with the legitimacy of international law and in particular Resolutions 242 and 338 of the UN Security Council. We call for: An end to the construction of illegal Israeli settlements and removal of existing settlements; Israel’s withdrawal from all Palestinian lands, in line with the 4th of June 1967 borders; and the dismantling of the Illegal separation wall. These demands will support equity, justice and the achievement of a comprehensive peace confirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-

determination and the establishment of a free and independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital"; and

WHEREAS, UNITE, the largest union in United Kingdom and Ireland, endorsed the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign (BDS), specifically supporting the boycott of any goods produced from illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank; divestment from financial holdings in any companies, funds or organizations complicit in the ongoing illegal occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people; and sanctions against Israel for its continued illegal occupation, flouting of international law, and construction of an apartheid regime; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of labor organizations have joined with global human rights groups to demand an end to the extreme oppression of Palestinians and sustained efforts to build a fair and lasting peace; so

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Connecticut AFL-CIO and its affiliates call upon the national AFL-CIO:

1. to demand that our Government diligently apply all diplomatic and economic tools to bring an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and to support a fair and just peace in which the people of Israel and Palestine can live in peace and security in accordance with International law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and
2. to adopt the strategy of Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) in connection with companies and investments profiting from or complicit in human rights violations arising from the occupation of the Palestinian Territories by the state of Israel, and to urge its affiliates and related pension and annuity funds to adopt similar strategies; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Connecticut AFL-CIO and its affiliates work to oppose anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and all acts of racism, human rights violations and the exploitation of workers.

Submitted by:

David Roche, President, Connecticut Building and Construction Trades Council

John Harrity, President, Connecticut Council Machinists

Convention Action:

APPROVE

REJECT