

# **BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK + JEWISH VOICE FOR PEACE**

## **WHY ARE WE STANDING HERE TODAY IN SILENCE?**

June 5, 1967 marked the beginning of the Israeli Military Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Today is the 38th anniversary of that Occupation. These decades of Israeli military rule have devastated Palestinian society, denied their human rights and shattered our hopes that Israel would be a society of peace, justice, and equality.

We stand in silence committed to a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians, inspired by the Jewish tradition of working in the service of peace, social justice, and human rights.

## **THE COURAGE TO REFUSE**

### **From Combatants' Letter of Refusal**

"...We, who understand now that the price of Occupation is the ...corruption of the entire Israeli society...We shall not continue to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve and humiliate an entire people..."

### **From Pilots' Letter of Refusal**

"We, who were raised to love the state of Israel ... refuse to take part in Air Force attacks on civilian population centers. We refuse to continue to harm innocent civilians."

### **From High School Students' Declaration of Refusal**

"We, boys and girls, citizens of Israel... will refuse to take part in the policy of occupation and repression...The Occupation ...affects the basic rights of millions of persons and causes daily killing and suffering ... [and] corrupts Israeli society..."

## WHAT ISRAELIS OF CONSCIENCE ARE SAYING

“What is being done is being done in the name of the Jewish people...If we do not stand up and say ‘enough’, then we are all guilty of a morally shameful chapter in the life of Israel.”

~ *Rabbi David Forman, Rabbis for Human Rights, Israel*

“The Israeli nation today rests on... foundations of oppression and injustice... There may yet be a Jewish state here, but it will be different, strange and ugly...Diaspora Jews for whom Israel is a central pillar of their identity must pay heed and speak out.”

~ *Avraham Burg, Israeli Knesset Member, former Speaker of the Knesset*

“For me, the enemy is not the Palestinian people. For me the struggle is not between Palestinians and Israelis, nor between Jews and Arabs. The fight is between those who seek peace and those who seek war....Our brothers and sisters in the refugee camps and under occupation, deprived of ...all their human rights, should not be forsaken now.”

~ *Dr. Nurit Peled-Elhanan,*  
*whose 13 year old daughter was killed in a suicide bombing*

“We must once and for all admit that there is another side, that it has feelings and that it is suffering, and that we are behaving disgracefully.”

~ *Avraham Shalom, former Israeli Security Chief*

“...Our demonstrations are like a synagogue. In those terms, we are one of the most observant people I know.”

~*Professor Hannah Safran,*  
*speaking of the Haifa Women in Black vigils against the Occupation*

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**JEWISH VOICE FOR PEACE** is a diverse and democratic community of activists inspired by Jewish tradition to work together for peace, social justice, and human rights. We support the aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians for security and self-determination. <http://www.JewishVoiceForPeace.org>

**BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK**, a group of Jewish feminists and allies, stands in solidarity with Israeli Women in Black who have held vigils weekly since 1988 to protest the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, and to mourn the Israeli and Palestinian lives that have been lost. <http://www.bayareawomeninblack.org>