

Jews Say Ceasefire Now: Calls for Ceasefire Are Growing Rapidly, and the Mainstream Media Has Noticed.

By [Jewish Voice for Peace](#)

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[Jewish Voice for Peace](#)

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Over 5,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed by unrelenting Israeli airstrikes. This is genocide, and as U.S. Jews, we say: Never again. Not in our name. The only way to stop the killings — and free Israeli hostages — is an immediate ceasefire.

On Wednesday, October 18, thousands of Jews and allies rallied at the Capitol to demand a ceasefire in Gaza. As huge crowds gathered outside, hundreds of activists held a sit-in inside one of the Capitol buildings. We sang, we yelled, and we made our voices heard. It was the largest Jewish protest in solidarity with Palestinians in U.S. history. Hundreds were arrested.

Below, you'll find a roundup of media coverage related to the October 18 rally, which was organized by JVP and our comrades at IfNotNow.

[About 300 protesters pleading for a cease-fire were arrested on Capitol Hill, organizers say.](#), *The New York Times*, October 18, 2023

“Several dozen protesters who say they are from Jewish Voice for Peace, a Jewish anti-Zionist group, have been arrested after entering the Cannon House Office Building. The demonstrators, most of whom are wearing black T-shirts that read ‘Jews say cease-fire now’ and ‘not in our name,’ are being restrained with zip ties and led into police vans.”

[300 arrested as Jewish protesters in D.C. demand Israel-Gaza cease-fire](#), *The Washington Post*, October 18, 2023

“‘We are here to say, ‘Not in our name,’ Jay Saper said. ‘We are here as Jews — many descendants of survivors of genocide — to stop a genocide from unfolding in real time.’”

Inside the House building, the protesters wore black shirts that said, 'Not in our name' on the front and 'Jews say cease fire now' on the back, as they sang and cheered over police warnings to disperse. The crowd inside Cannon included 400 American Jews and 25 rabbis who are against Israeli occupation and are demanding that Congress pass a cease-fire resolution, said Sonya Meyerson-Knox, a spokeswoman for Jewish Voice for Peace, a national Jewish anti-Zionist organization."

[Jewish Voice for Peace leader to Biden, lawmakers: 'Tell Israel to implement cease-fire right now'](#), *MSNBC*, October 20, 2023

"Jewish American groups demanding a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war protested at the White House and Capitol this week, with hundreds arrested. Stefanie Fox, the executive director of Jewish Voice for Peace, one of the Jewish groups that organized the protests, joins Joy Reid to discuss.

'This week we brought together 5,000 Jews in a massive demonstration demanding that Joe Biden and other American lawmakers tell Israel to implement a ceasefire right now. We believe this is the largest demonstration in history of Jews in solidarity with Palestinians.'

[Protesters on Capitol Hill call for Gaza ceasefire](#), *MSNBC*, October 18, 2023

"Certainly no matter the arrests, you can see that this has not stopped the protesters from being here, from being loud. And this comes, of course, as President Biden is overseas in Israel, where he met with Netanyahu this morning [and] pledged continued support of Israel."

[Protesters on Capitol Hill call for Gaza ceasefire](#), *ABC News*, October 18, 2023

"You can see demonstrators starting to get removed now by U.S. Capitol police These are just the second round of demonstrators that we've seen forcibly removed. Another group was occupying this place where I'm standing at the moment, and capitol police removed them...there were actually some, because they refused to move, that were dragged out of here."

[Protesters on Capitol Hill call for Israel-Gaza cease-fire, hundreds arrested](#), *CBS News*, October 18, 2023

"'Biden really is the only one that has the power to pressure Israel right now and he needs to use that power to save innocent lives,' Hannah Lawrence, 32, who came from Vermont.

Linda Holtzman, 71, a rabbi from Philadelphia, demanded an immediate cease-fire and urged Biden to 'open your eyes.'

'Look at what's happening in Gaza. Look at the [devastation in Gaza](#)," said Holtzman. "If you want to be able to live with yourself, you need to stand up and end the genocide. I demand a cease-fire right now.'"

[Inside the chaos on Capitol Hill as hundreds of pro-Palestinian Jews arrested: 'A moral catastrophe'](#), *Fox News*, October 18, 2023

“We were raised saying ‘Never again.’ Never again is right now. It’s this very moment,’ Liv, a member of the activist group Jewish Voice for Peace, told Fox News as demonstrators sang and clapped in the background.”

[The Jewish Justice Movement Is Being Reborn](#), *The Nation*, October 19, 2023

“Jewish Voice for Peace organized the rally on just a few days notice, and protesters came ready to be heard. The arresting officers kept asking people if they were going to give up their right to remain silent, and it was as if everyone shouted back, ‘Hell yeah!’

In many places, Jewish silence on the oppression of Palestinians has reigned for too long. But at this moment of crisis, protesters said what perhaps had gone unspoken at family gatherings or in places of worship: that we have had enough, that we will no longer allow the suffering of our people—the pogroms, the Holocaust, or the Hamas killings—to be weaponized against others. Our history gives us an extra responsibility to speak out for those facing the specter of genocide.”

-Dave Zirin

[Jews Say “No” to War Crimes in Their Name](#), *The Nation*, October 18, 2023

“We’ve been devoting every waking second over the past week and a half to doing everything we can to stop the bombings. When we woke up to the news last Saturday [October 7, the day of the Hamas massacre], at the Simchat Torah celebration in Brooklyn that so many members of our community participate in, with over 20 congregations showing up to practice our ancient ritual, the rabbi who led that stated that she was turning it into a ‘stand with Israel’ rally. So that day, we immediately got into organizing an alternative space for our people to grieve, but transform grief into action.”

[Major Jewish-Led Protest in Capital Calls for Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza](#), *Democracy Now!* October 18, 2023

“Here in the U.S., Jewish Voice for Peace and other groups are rallying in Washington, D.C., today to demand an immediate ceasefire. Two dozen rabbis are leading prayers and mass civil disobedience.”

[Thousands of protestors turned out in Washington, D.C., to support Palestinians](#), *NPR*, October 18, 2023

“I’ve been to Gaza as part of a humanitarian medical delegation, and I saw up close and personal what Israel has been doing to Gaza for the last 16 years. You know, I took an oath as a medical doctor to support health and life. And so I’m out here doing this as a doctor, as a Jewish person.”

-David Sperber



Source: [Jewish Voice for Peace](#)

[Hundreds arrested after Pro-Palestinian demonstrators flood Cannon Rotunda, Capitol complex](#), *Fox 5 DC*, October 18, 2023

“Fencing went up overnight around parts of the U.S. Capitol ahead of the protest organized by the group [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) but the demonstrators were able to work their way into the building and by 3 p.m., it was packed with JVP members in black t-shirts reading “Jews say ceasefire now!”

JVP claimed on social media that at least 10,000 people were outside the Capitol while 500 made their way inside the rotunda, all there to ‘challenge the Israeli government’s ongoing ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.’”

[Multiple arrested at pro-Palestinian protests on Capitol Hill](#), *Fox 5 DC*, October 18, 2023

“We’re a group of Jewish Americans who have come here to call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the genocide in Gaza. And that is in Congress’s hands...we are here to have our voices heard by Congress, to make sure that everybody knows that the most important thing is a ceasefire.”

-Malkah Bird, JVP member

[Ceasefire Now! Rashida Tlaib, Naomi Klein Join Thousands in Jewish-Led D.C. Protest Against Gaza War](#), *Democracy Now!*, October 18, 2023

“Thank you all for being here. I have never seen anything like this in my history of Jewish anti-Zionist activism. It’s been decades. We used to be tiny. We are huge and growing.

We have a sacred responsibility to engage with our parents, our grandparents, our uncles, our brothers and sisters, and try to save their souls, to keep them from indulging in this quest for bloody vengeance. We are here because we will not let our fears of antisemitism be manipulated in this way, as cover for war crimes and colonial land grabs and to foreclose on the possibility of a political solution, which will only come with an end to occupation, with an end to apartheid, with true Palestinian freedom and self-determination.”

-Naomi Klein addresses the crowd at Wednesday’s rally

[Thousands Of Jewish Protesters In Washington Call For Cease-Fire In Israel-Hamas Conflict](#), *HuffPost*, October 18, 2023

“Nearly 300 people were arrested out of thousands of demonstrators who took part in a Jewish-led protest Wednesday on Capitol Hill to demand a cease-fire in the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict.

Hundreds of demonstrators also staged a sit-in at the Capitol’s Cannon House Office Building and chanted, ‘Cease-fire now!’

Jewish Voice for Peace, which organized the efforts, said dozens of rabbis were among the protesters. The activist group is also calling for humanitarian assistance to be allowed to enter the embattled Gaza Strip amid the war.”

[The Jews Pushing Israel to Stop the War](#), *Slate*, October 18, 2023

“‘Jewish grief is being used as a weapon to call for the imminent destruction of Gaza—by politicians, by so-called justice organizations. And mainstream media largely conveys the false narrative that all Jewish people support the state of Israel and its actions,’ explained Hannah Wolfman-Arent, the baker behind Velvel Breads.”

[Jewish activists arrested at US Congress anti-Israel protest amid Gaza war](#), *al-Jazeera*, October 18, 2023

“‘It has never been more important for Jews and all people in the US to rise up with literally everything we have,’ said Jay Saper of Jewish Voice for Peace. ‘The way that we would have wanted others to rise up for our ancestors.’

At the rally, a Jewish protester who said his grandparents had survived the Holocaust told Al Jazeera that he was honouring his family’s history by taking to the streets.

‘I see my job as carrying on their legacy as Jews who see their role as standing up for stateless and oppressed people all throughout the world,’ Sam Thorpe said. ‘I see no better way to do that than fighting for a ceasefire and peace in Gaza today.’”

[Jewish group on Capitol Hill calls for ceasefire; 300 arrested](#), *News Nation*, October 18, 2023

“We are proud Jewish people standing in solidarity with Palestinians, demanding a ceasefire immediately...A genocide is underway and everyone has to know. We’re here supporting Rashida Tlaib’s resolution for an immediate ceasefire. We’re here with a message for Biden, who’s meeting with Netanyahu right now. I’m looking right at you, President Biden. Are you going to be the president that funds and enables a genocide?”

-Liv Kunins-Berkowitz, Media Coordinator, Jewish Voice for Peace

[“Not in Our Name”: Jewish Activists Take Over Capitol to Demand Ceasefire in Gaza](#), *The New Republic*, October 18, 2023

“Hundreds of Jewish activists protested inside the Capitol on Wednesday, demanding a ceasefire in Gaza. And just as quickly, Capitol Police began arresting them.

The Jewish-led protest involved thousands more protesting outside the Capitol, as well as about two dozen rabbis leading a prayer inside the halls of Congress. Organizers of the event estimated that 500 protesters were arrested, including the rabbis.”

[Protesters Of Israel-Hamas War Enter Congressional Building — Leading To More Than 300 Arrests](#), *Forbes*, October 18, 2023

“350. That’s how many people—including two dozen rabbis—were at a sit-in at the Cannon House building, according to a [tweet](#) from Jewish Voice for Peace. The organization said the protestors wouldn’t leave ‘until Congress calls for a ceasefire in Gaza.’ Jewish Voice for Peace calls itself the ‘largest progressive Jewish anti-Zionist organization in the world,’ and the group also claims to be the only ‘major Jewish group’ in support of the ‘Palestinian civil society call for boycott, divestment and sanctions.’”

[Providence City Council to hear dueling resolutions on Israeli-Palestinian violence](#), *The Providence Journal*, October 18, 2023

The Rhode Island chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace, one of the progressive [groups protesting in Washington](#) for a Gaza ceasefire, on Wednesday called on council members to reject Goncalves’ resolution.

“By failing to also address the thousands of Palestinians killed by the Israeli military during its ongoing siege of Gaza, this Resolution contributes to escalating conflict and the dehumanization of Palestinians,” a news release from Jewish Voice for Peace – Rhode Island said.

[Capitol Police arrest Gaza ceasefire protesters who entered House office building](#), *Roll Call*, October 18, 2023

“‘We’re here because we’re in an incredible emergency, the worst I’ve seen in my lifetime, where Gaza is being decimated as we speak,’ said Rebecca Vilkomerson, a member of Jewish Voice for Peace, as chants rang through the echoey rotunda and people were handcuffed and escorted out by Capitol Police.”

[‘Not In Our Name!’ Hundreds Arrested at US Capitol as Jewish-Led Protest Demands Gaza Cease-Fire](#), *Common Dreams*, October 18, 2023

“‘We’re here to say: not in our names, and never again,’ JVP [declared](#). ‘And we’ll continue our civil disobedience until Congress calls for a cease-fire in Gaza, or until they force us to leave.’

‘Cease-fire is the first step to stop the ongoing genocide by the Israeli military of the over 2 million Palestinians in besieged Gaza, unable to leave,’ the group continued. ‘In the past week, over 3,000 Palestinians, including 1,000 children, were murdered by

Israeli and U.S. bombs. Over 1 million people are displaced. We have the power to stop this violence.”

[Jewish Voice for Peace Holds Massive Rally at Capitol for Israel-Gaza Ceasefire](#), *Truthout*, October 18, 2023

“What we know from past Israeli state atrocities against Palestinians is that the bombs only stop once there is a sufficient mass outcry from the international community,’ said JVP member Eliza Klein. ‘It’s on us to build that outcry — as fast as we possibly can.”

[Protesters calling for Israel-Hamas ceasefire arrested in House office building](#), *The Hill*, October 18, 2023

“Reps. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) and Cori Bush (D-Mo.), who have been calling on Biden to work toward an [immediate ceasefire](#), spoke to the crowd of demonstrators before they entered the Capitol Building.

‘I wish all the Palestinian people would see this. I wish they could see that not all of America want them to die. That they are not disposable, that they have a right to live,’ [said Tlaib](#), the only current Palestinian-American member of Congress.”

[Hundreds arrested at Jewish US Capitol rally calling for Gaza ceasefire](#), *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 18, 2023

“‘We shut down congress to draw mass attention to the U.S. complicity in Israel’s ongoing oppression of Palestinians,’ JVP [posted on X](#). ‘Just as we demand an end to genocide in Gaza, we must put the same effort into dismantling the systems of Zionism, apartheid, and colonialism that brought us to this moment.”

[While Biden pledges support to Israel, calls mount on Capitol Hill for Gaza cease-fire](#), *National Journal*, October 18, 2023

“Mother Agapia Stephanopoulos, a Greek Orthodox nun who lived in Jerusalem for a decade, said she attended Wednesday’s demonstration because she had witnessed—and opposed—the ‘slow encroachment’ of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. She hopes Congress will do something to stop the violence.

‘The problem is the occupation,’ she said. ‘You can’t keep people pinned up in a prison, both in Gaza and the West Bank, and expect there to be peace. I pray we can get to a time of peace.’

Dona Boyce Manoukian and Lorraine Nagy, two nurses aged 84 and 73, said they have been demonstrating for peace for more than five decades.

‘How many children have we lost, both in Israel and in Palestine?’ Nagy asked. ‘We want a cease-fire. We want there to be peace, the end of the occupation, and the saving of lives, which is intrinsic to my profession as a nurse.”

[Jewish groups protest at U.S. Capitol, demand Gaza cease-fire](#), *Public News Service*, October 18, 2023

“Scout Bratt, a member of Illinois [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), said they are opposed to

waging war against the Palestinians who live in Gaza, most of whom are not affiliated with Hamas.

‘There is no military solution to this,’ Bratt argued. ‘We need to address root causes, which include the Israeli military occupation in apartheid, and again, our own government’s role in funding this oppression.’”

[US: Jewish Activists Protest in Solidarity with Palestine, Demand Ceasefire in Gaza](#), *The Wire*, October 19, 2023

“In live updates during the protest on X, Jewish Voice for Peace posted, ‘While we were inside, an Israeli airstrike bombed the entrance of a school in Khan Younis, where Palestinians were forced to evacuate to. These are atrocities. This is why we demand a ceasefire now!’”

[MTG Tries to Spin Israel-Gaza Peace Protest at Capitol as ‘Insurrection’](#), *Rolling Stone*, October 18, 2023

“‘The only path to peace and safety — for everyone — is through ensuring justice and equality for everyone. And that means ending the Israeli government’s illegal occupation of [Palestine](#). To end genocide against Palestinians in [Gaza](#), we’re demanding a #ceasefirenow,’ Jewish Voice For Peace [wrote on X](#) (formerly Twitter).”

Republicans in Congress jumped at the opportunity to claim that the protest was equivalent to the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, in which Trump supporters angered by his election loss violently forced their way into the building and attempted to prevent the certification of President Joe Biden’s election.”

[No, the Pro-Palestinian Protest on Capitol Hill Was Not an ‘Insurrection’](#), *Newsweek*, October 19, 2023

About 500 Jewish people, including 25 rabbis, gathered in the building, said Sonya Meyerson-Knox, a spokesperson for Jewish Voice for Peace.

American Jews ‘held a peaceful, prayerful sit-in at the Cannon House Office Building,” Meyerson-Knox added. ‘Led by over two dozen rabbis, they sang, taught and prayed—demanding that Congress call for an immediate ceasefire.’

‘An anti-war group of multigenerational Jews calling for a ceasefire is, simply, civil disobedience—following in the long line of civil disobedience protests that progressive causes have undertaken throughout history.’”

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