

PIN Bulletin For Local Organizers

Special Edition

*Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?*



AN OPEN LETTER TO THE EPISCOPAL BISHOPS WHO VOTED AGAINST RESOLUTION A101 IN LOUISVILLE

JUNE, 2024

My name is John Heermans. I'm a 77 year-old retired forester in Vermont, and the primary author of the **Resolution on Israel's Occupation of Palestinian Lands and Apartheid Policies toward Palestinian People** that was adopted in 2018 during the Vermont diocese's 186th Convention in Burlington, Vermont.

I spent most of my adult life living and working in African countries, managing forestry and agriculture development projects. It was in Africa that, through my Muslim counterparts, I was first introduced to the reality and cruelty of Zionism and America's complicity in participating in a systematic ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people.

I take sole responsibility for all the words in the following paragraphs, and they do not necessarily reflect the position of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's Palestine-Israel Network, nor that of Vermonters for Justice in Palestine, two groups to which I belong. Although I did not witness your discussions before voting against Resolution A010; but, based on my past experience of working with the churches in Vermont on speaking out against the ongoing nightmare in Palestine, I would guess that you caved in to the same dark powers that conspired to bring down Congressman Jamaal Bowman of New York this week. He actually visited and witnessed the day-to-day misery that Palestinians face from the brutal apartheid system imposed by Israel. Bowman had the audacity to

stray from the AIPAC-mandated line on Israel: he asked for a ceasefire and demanded that we stop giving arms to a country accused of committing genocide.

Jamaal Bowman is a very unusual politician in that he has genuine moral conviction, genuine moral courage, and a willingness to put his political life at risk. AIPAC and other right-wing Zionist organizations spent millions of dollars to defeat him and they succeeded. But when Israel collapses -- and it will -- and the Palestinians are set free -- and they will one day be free -- Bowman will be recognized as a hero for his courage and integrity.

Where will *your* place in history be when, as 2.2 million people in Gaza (made in God's image) were suffering through genocide, you refused to declare a truth that is beyond doubt: that Israel is an apartheid state? Your spineless vote against Resolution A010 is shameful; it is a blatant sacrilege of a duty that you swore to uphold in your Baptismal Covenant: "To strive for human dignity and freedom for all people." Moreover, you dishonored the late Bishop Desmond Tutu, who visited Palestine many times and declared that the cruel apartheid system perpetrated by Israel is far worse than anything he ever experienced in South Africa....

To read John's entire letter, this link will download the document into your personal computer:

<https://epfnational.org/pin/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Open-letter-to-Episcopal-Bishops-JH-June-2024.docx>

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