**Expanded Minute For Palestinian Children Spurs Quakers To Further Action Here At Home**

While urging Friends everywhere to engage wholeheartedly with American Friends Service Committee’s *No Way To Treat A Child* program, Quakers in northwestern New England—originally Abenaki/Pennacook land—committed themselves to address systemic racism within our own meetings and communities in Vermont and western New Hampshire: “We recognize our own involvement in the incarceration of children and youth, most of them black and brown, here in the United States.”

The March 7th decision followed earlier approval that Northwest Quarterly Meeting had given *No Way To Treat a Child* when it convened in Middlebury on December 8, 2019 and again in Burlington on March 8, 2020. This month’s expanded endorsement was an essential and courteous "assist" to New England Yearly Meeting's presiding clerk who is preparing for Quaker’s upcoming annual meeting in August 2021.

Friends recognized that it is important work that could not wait for three months until their next Quarterly Meeting to continue. The path to their March 2021 decision began 15 months earlier when Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting urged Northwest Quarterly Meeting to endorse AFSC’s rights-based campaign, *No Way to Treat a Child*—“which seeks to challenge and end Israel's prolonged military occupation of Palestinians by exposing widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system.”

Consequently, Friends acknowledged the enlargement of what we had already approved a year ago by including five action steps. One of these urges local Quakers to apply what they are learning about settler colonialism here in the States, transnationally with Israel Palestine.

Earlier the yearly meeting’s presiding clerk, Bruce Neumann, had urged Northwest Quarter Friends to be as specific as possible—while waiting for the new House Resolution that replaces HR 2407— about naming steps that describe how Friends can “endeavor to end these violations of children's human rights” as AFSC has urged for a number of years.

**Northwest Quarterly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**

**March 7, 2021**

2021-03-10  We recognize our own involvement in the incarceration of children and youth, most of them black and brown, here in the United States. Whether in prisons or cages for recent immigrants, this is no way to treat children. We ask New England Yearly Meeting to begin to join in this work.

Spirit leads Northwest Quarterly Meeting to ask New England Yearly Meeting to engage wholeheartedly with American Friends Service Committee's *No Way to Treat a Child* campaign “which seeks to challenge and end Israel's prolonged military occupation of Palestinians by exposing widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system.”  This rights-based effort to halt ongoing infringement of children's human rights stems from Friends’ belief that no child should be denied due process or tortured.

NEYM Minute 2019-36 urged monthly and quarterly meetings to live into Minute 2017-46, particularly as it applies to Gaza and the West Bank. Consequently, Northwest Quarter requests that New England Yearly Meeting embrace *No Way to Treat a Child* by calling upon Friends everywhere to endeavor to end these violations of children's human rights by:

a.    Learning how placing children in military prisons violates international law and impedes the [right to a childhood](https://www.dci-palestine.org/right_to_a_childhood);

b.    [Talking with](https://www.afsc.org/blogs/news-and-commentary/how-to-talk-to-your-representative-about-palestinian-child-detention) Members of Congress to co-sponsor the bill that replaces H.R. 2407 [–](https://issuu.com/dcips/docs/h.r._2407_to_promote_human_rights_f) “Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under the Israeli Military;

c.    Writing letters in local newspapers as one of [many ways](https://www.afsc.org/story/how-quakers-can-join-no-way-to-treat-child-campaign) of How Quakers can join *No Way to Treat a Child*;

d    [Accompanying](https://www.afsc.org/story/attributes-empatheticprincipled-accompaniment)  American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)—as led locally, nationally, and internationally—in that Quaker organization’s [effort to end](https://www.afsc.org/friends-engage) “the Israeli occupation of Palestinians by exposing the systematic ill treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention;”

e.    Connecting what Friends learn about settler colonialism, [here](https://neym.org/news/2020/10/support-available-local-meetings-seeking-right-relationship-native-peoples) in the States, transnationally with Israel Palestine.

--approved Northwest Quarterly Meeting March 7, 2021