# Normalizing Genocide

By Teresa Gutiérrez

"Normalizing" is a concept frequently used these days. Internet sources define it in society and culture as "Normalizing behavior or ideas so they are viewed as standard, accepted, or "natural".

Without a doubt, this is exactly what Israel and US imperialism desire about the heinous genocide in Gaza. In fact, on April 29 —"Lawmakers in Jerusalem approved a 2026 national budget that includes roughly $730 million for public diplomacy, more than four times allocated the year before."

"The unprecedented expenditure comes as survey after survey show declining support for Israel in the US. A poll released this month found 60% of Americans now view Israel unfavorably, up seven points in a single year, with only 37% viewing it favorably."



Worldwide coalitions are calling for the boycott of *Chevron*. In San Antonio, a local chapter has been formed: @sajp1948.

Clearly the worldwide movement that demands an end to the genocide has had an effect. That movement will not and cannot stop.

But it is easy to become numb to the slaughter. Humanity has never experienced a live streaming of a genocide. Children crying, burning, dying. Scenes of Palestinians running from bombs and fire, or hungry and cold. It is understandable to want to avoid these posts in order to be able to sleep at night. But as one individual posted "If they live it, we must see it."

Dr. Richard Hill and Dr. Gideon Polya published a report on the slaughter in Gaza. They wrote: "479,00 children killed, 360,000 infants under five killed."

On May 3, *Doctors Without Borders (MSF)* reported: "the food crisis caused by the Israeli blockade in Gaza has had a devastating effect on Palestinian pregnant women, newborns and infants. Between October 2024 and December 2025, *MSF* teams treated 513 children under six months old, of whom 91% were at risk of growth and development problems."

In the November 2025 issue of *Jacobin,* Abe Asher wrote: "What is clear is that the …genocide has cost Palestinians at least three percent of the Gaza population and there is no education, electricity, homes, health, safety, security, or water. Mass trauma is a pathetically inadequate word for what Palestinians have experienced since October 7."

The statics are daunting. Yet most U.S. politicians continue to back Israel, either applauding or ignoring its horrific slaughter campaign in Gaza.

This is no surprise because since 1948, the US government has aided and abetted Israel. In fact, without US backing, Israel could not exist. According to the *Council on Foreign Relations,* the US provides Israel "with approximately $3.8 billion in military aid annually." That money could be spent instead on healthcare, education, or combating climate change.

In fact, Trump and his mob of bloodthirsty billionaires are looking to cash in.

*Democracy Now* wrote "On top of the slaughter and starvation of civilians, the Israeli military is ethnically cleansing Gaza City, a city of one million people, leveling it. The *BBC* reported that Israel's far-right finance minister said…that Gaza could be a "real estate bonanza; 'we've done the demolition phase… Now we…build.'"

At one point "Trump posted a bizarre AI-generated video of a rebuilt Gaza complete with belly dancers, Elon Musk throwing fistfuls of bills into the air, and Trump and Netanyahu lying shirtless on beach chairs." This bizarre post is one of many that demonstrate that Trump should not be in power. His world outlook spells nothing but doom and gloom for humanity.

Fidel Castro stated in 1967 "What is Israel? It is an instrument of Yankee Imperialism. And the United States is the instigator. The protector of that state.".

So what can the people do now? Since the beginning of the genocide in October 2025, the anti-war movement in this country has been inspiring. Students and unionists and healthcare professionals and many others have carried out extraordinary challenges to US support of Israel. Disruptions, tent cities, and many local and national demonstrations occurred.

Most striking has been the upsurge in Jewish solidarity with Palestine. Shelley Ettinger, an anti-Zionist Jew, says, "Zionism's stranglehold on U.S. Jews has finally been broken as the horror of the Gaza genocide

has raised consciousness about what Israel really is: a settler-colonial Jewish-supremacist apartheid state that serves as a fortress against the Arab masses on behalf of Big Oil." As for the efforts to brand Palestine solidarity as anti-Semitism, Ettinger says, "Nothing could be further from the truth. It's a beautiful thing to see so many Jewish young people taking a stand with Palestine."

While the movement has waned, the spirit remains and there are still ongoing actions for Palestine. Worldwide coalitions for example are calling for the boycott of *Chevron*. A local chapter in San Antonio has been formed. For info visit @sajp1948.

But more is needed. Additionally, solidarity with the people of Gaza and all of Palestine must be long range.




At the end of the genocide, the world must assure that the children who have been cruelly traumatized have the support they will need. We must not only help with supplies but doctors, psychologists and specialists have to be sent to help Gaza recover from this cruel genocide.

For decades the people of Palestine have fought for their right to exist in their homeland. This yearning will not be defeated.

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BIO: *Teresa Gutiérrez is a life-long activist from the south side of San Antonio. She lived in NYC for years before coming home with her wife. She was fortunate to participate in countless campaigns for peace and justice and organized humanitarian aid to Cuba, Colombia and elsewhere. Sources for this article can be obtained from lavoz@esperanzacenter.org*

# Silvia Palacios Torres de Benavides

*11 April 1940 - 14 April 2026.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Dulce Benavides has been a long-time supporter and Buena gente of the* Esperanza Peace & Justice Center. *Her mom did wonderful job in bringing up a beautiful, caring individual who speaks up for justice and continues being who she is, out and proud! Our deepest condolences y muchos abrazos, Dulce. May her memory be eternal.*





My mother Silvia died yesterday. Although we knew this day was coming, the news still took my breath away. I am happy that she is free from this purgatory of consciousness that is dementia. It is a cruel disease. I won't remember how she died but how she lived. She liked to wear coordinated outfits—shoes, purse, jewelry. I teased her about it all the time.

She liked birds and kept a parakeet she named *'Pepe'*. She loved her bougainvilleas. She had an excellent green thumb—a trait that I did not inherit. I remember the garden she had in the backyard, with peppers, tomatoes, and sunflowers. My mother liked coffee with a slice of cake after dinner and loved chinese food—traits I did inherit . She came from a family of teachers and was a teacher herself in her hometown in Mexico. Her students would call her *'Maestra Silvia'* a title she wore with pride. She was a very smart lady. She was funny, too, had a good sense of humor and laughed at my father's poor ability to tell a joke. I would always tease her about that time she locked herself in a restaurant bathroom. We thought we had to call 911 to get her out. She loved her sisters. I have great memories of family gatherings that she enjoyed coordinating. She loved her kids, my sister, Sylvia and my brother and adored her grandkids, Calen and Analise. I knew she loved me very much, and that's all that matters.

Thank you mamá for being mine.

—Dulce Benavides