



[Walberg Becomes the Latest Republican Congressman to Draw Rebuke for Alarming Remarks on Gaza](#)

During a recent town hall meeting in Michigan, U.S. Representative Tim Walberg (R-MI) made controversial and reprehensible comments regarding the War on Gaza when he suggested that the besieged Palestinian enclave should be treated “like Nagasaki and Hiroshima” rather than be provided with much-needed humanitarian aid. In doing so, Walberg regrettably became just the latest Republican Congressman to elicit condemnation from civil rights and social justice groups for shocking statements about what is taking place in Gaza. Other federal elected officials such as U.S. Representative Andy Ogles (R-TN) and U.S. Representative Brian Mast (R-FL) have also made heinous remarks over the past six months since the onset of the War on Gaza, dehumanizing the Palestinian civilian population and the immense suffering that they have endured due to Israel’s indiscriminate bombardment. In response to Walberg’s town hall comments, organizations including both The Council on American–Islamic Relations (CAIR) and The American Human Rights Council (AHRC) denounced the deeply troubling remarks.

Video footage began to circulate online this past weekend which was taken at the town hall meeting. In it, Congressman Walberg can be seen discussing the War on Gaza. Upon being asked a question from an attendee regarding President Biden’s plans to build a temporary Mediterranean pier to provide humanitarian aid to civilians in Gaza, Walberg can be heard saying “It’s Joe Biden’s reason [that] we need to get humanitarian aid into Gaza. I don’t think we should...We shouldn’t be spending a dime on humanitarian aid. It should be like Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Get it over quick,” a clear reference to the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan during World War II. Regardless of whether or not Walberg was directly insinuating usage of atomic bombs on Gaza, the mere disregard that his remarks show for the humanity of Palestinians and the value of their lives is abhorrent. He is callously expressing that not a sliver of humanitarian aid should be provided to a civilian population that is suffering the horrendous consequences of a brutal military assault, through no fault of their own, particularly when there is ample evidence that Israel is committing egregious war crimes and human rights violations in Gaza.

Sadly, Walberg is far from the only Republican Congressman to make dehumanizing remarks towards Palestinian civilians in the time since Israel’s destructive War on Gaza began. Back in November of last year, U.S. Representative Brian Mast (R-FL) disturbingly compared Palestinian civilians to Nazis and implied that they are all guilty for the actions of Hamas, adding that “It is not a far stretch to say there are very few innocent Palestinian civilians.” Then in February, Mast even questioned the innocence of babies killed in Gaza when confronted by Code Pink activists outside of his office, saying that Palestinian babies killed in Gaza “are not innocent civilians.” U.S. Representative Andy Ogles (R-TN) also evoked outrage back in February when he responded to an activist’s question about the deaths of Palestinian children in Gaza by remarking that “we should kill them all.” The activist had stated that “I’ve seen the footage of shredded children’s bodies...That’s my taxpayer dollars that are going to bomb those kids,” and Ogles replied “You know what? So, I think we should kill them all if that makes you feel better.”

Dehumanizing and dismissive comments like those of the aforementioned elected officials are dangerous, as they fuel bigotry and create a hateful narrative regarding the value of Palestinian lives. Attempting to conflate Palestinian civilians, including even children, with factions like Hamas is wrong, and it only serves to incite more

intolerance and numb people to the colossal degree of Israel's human rights violations in Gaza. Many of those that have been killed and injured are civilians that have been trapped in unimaginable circumstances beyond their control, and thus the statements from Walberg, Mast, and Ogles exhibit a complete indifference to human suffering. Thankfully, there are rights and social justice organizations that are doing their part to condemn these types of remarks, but federal lawmakers themselves should formally censure their colleagues who engage in this behavior in order to send a strong message that harmful rhetoric like this will not be accepted.