

End Massachusetts Collaboration in the Israel-U.S. Palestinian Genocide

A Campaign proposal from the Public Education and Action Team of MAPA's Gaza/Palestine Middle East Campaign



In Massachusetts, we live far from the Middle East but are actively engaged in Israel's attempt to annihilate Palestine. How? Too many Massachusetts elected politicians, institutions and executives support Israel's occupation of Palestine and its brutal violence, war, mass incarceration and torture of Palestinians. And too many Massachusetts leaders silence - and even criminalize - those in our state who stand-up and say "No More". There are many organizations throughout the state working to end Israel's genocide of Palestinians. This campaign would highlight this activism in Massachusetts and systematically work to end our collaboration in Israel's erasure of Palestinians and to insist on the right of Palestine's people to life and self-determination.

Here are some of the Massachusetts pillars of the genocide that would be challenged in such a campaign.

- MA Governor Healey welcomed (with millions of dollars in tax breaks) Israel's Sheba, an Israeli government-affiliated hospital system to Massachusetts where it can "show the beautiful face of the State of Israel". In reality that Israeli state has been accused of the attempt to exterminate the Palestinian nation, and arrest warrants have been issued for several of its leaders for war crimes. (Governor Healey also announced a \$47 million subsidy for increasing military development in the state which will likely end up benefiting Israel)

- The State retirement fund (PRIT) fills its coffers with blood money from the hundreds of millions of dollars invested in Israeli bonds and military contractors who sell Israel its weapons of annihilation
- The Massachusetts state legislature refused to even vote on a bill divesting from military companies supplying Israel.
- Six MA Legislators flew to Israel last fall – fully funded by Israeli government -- during the height of the bombing and destruction of Gaza. The stated goal was “to strengthen the Commonwealth’s partnership with Israel”.
- The MA legislature established a so-called “antisemitism” committee that ended up perverting the fight against antisemitism into a weapon used to subdue opposition to Israel. The Committee agreed to bring its false perspectives on antisemitism into Massachusetts schools to make sure teachers toe the line when it comes to Israel.
- Harvard also adopted the definition of antisemitism as provided by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (that labels “claiming the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor” or “drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis” as antisemitic).
- Major military companies that make money selling weapons to Israel have major facilities here in Massachusetts, Raytheon being the largest in the state.
- Boston Financial District firms control stock of many major military companies.
- Harvard, Emerson, MIT and other MA colleges suppressed pro-Palestinian speech, suspending students, and terminating Middle Eastern courses that teach about Palestine. And soon after terminating its only collaboration with a Palestinian university Harvard launched a new collaboration with Ben- Gurion University.
- Harvard Divinity School ended its Middle East Studies program and fired its director
- Boston Consulting Group (founded in Boston in 1963, now worldwide, generating more than \$14 billion annually) led the militarized “feeding program” in Gaza where Israeli soldiers shot and killed hundreds of starving Palestinians seeking food.
- In Boston, the New England Consulate of Israel is 0.4 miles from the MA Statehouse, comfortably carrying out its business of supporting Israel

Overall, major institutions including our universities, business leadership, and even our hospitals and non-profits play a big part in crushing dissent, distorting the narrative and shaping a culture conducive to the destruction of Palestinian people.

The Message of this campaign: “The genocide of Palestinians is not far away. It is a direct result of what is happening right here, in Massachusetts, where we live.” We can ignore this reality and go down in history in the company of the “good Germans” during the Holocaust. Or we can raise our voices in whatever ways best reflect our talents, our stations in life, our capacities and our best selves. It is time to face the fact, in the words of the MA Governor: “Massachusetts remains a leader in the defense industry.” Our campaign would question what that means for Palestinians, all peoples of the Middle East, and beyond.

Action Proposal:

1. Write articles in MA media and letters to movement organizations and leaders announcing the campaign and seeking “buy in”
2. Launch the campaign with a press conference and rally at the state house or some other significant symbol of Massachusetts collaboration
3. Hold webinars, forums and public actions of all sizes to promote the campaign and its various components (that are focused on one such institution within the overall campaign) and to involve both more sectors of the movement against genocide in Massachusetts and broader parts of the public
4. Organize public actions that communicate the depth of our state’s involvement in the genocide (e.g. forming a human chain around the state house; marches or tours from one complicit institution to another, such as a march from the Israeli consulate to the State House and other complicit locations, etc.)
5. Organize strategic non-violent civil disobedience when appropriate