

# Campus Times

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## *Special Edition: Israel-Palestine*



In the campus tradition, the tunnel under Eastman Quad continues to serve as a site of student expression.

MICAH BETTENHAUSEN / PHOTO EDITOR

## Note on the Israel-Palestine Special Edition

We at the Campus Times want to thank you for taking the time to pick up this special edition of the paper centered on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly the ongoing war in Gaza, and its impacts on our University community.

We put this together with a dual aim. On the one hand, we wanted to assemble students' opinions to advance the current discourse on campus and to serve as a historical snapshot of this moment. On the other hand, we also wanted to empower students to speak. It is the official opinion of the CT that the speech-chilling effects of the widespread concerns about doxxing and retribution against people who talk openly about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are deplorable.

Free and open discourse is the bedrock of a vibrant society, and we hope this edition helped some students and community members feel empowered to speak their mind with confidence, no matter their opinion. If you didn't get a chance to submit a piece about Israel-Palestine to this special edition, then fear not. We will absolutely be accepting opinion articles about the topic moving into the future, and we will absolutely continue to cover related news as well.

Given the sensitivity of this topic, we assembled this edition with a lot of care, but we are students too. We ask you to proceed through these pages with charity for both the decisions we've made and the opinions of others. We hope most of all that you encounter something in this paper that you've never thought about before.

If you have any corrections at all, please email them to [ct\\_editor@u.rochester.edu](mailto:ct_editor@u.rochester.edu). If you want to comment on anything you read, we vigorously encourage you to do so. Reach out to [ct\\_opinions@u.rochester.edu](mailto:ct_opinions@u.rochester.edu) with a letter to the editor or a proposal for an opinion article of your own, and we can help you get your thoughts published.

With love,  
Campus Times management

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Protestors on Eastman Quad on Nov. 17.

HENRYLITSKY/SENIOR STAFF



Former S.A. President Sabeet Kazmi '23 speaks outside Wilson Commons on Nov. 17.

HENRYLITSKY/SENIOR STAFF



A UR SJP member speaks outside Wilson Commons on Nov. 17.

HENRYLITSKY/SENIOR STAFF



Protestors outside Wilson Commons on Nov. 17.

HENRYLITSKY/SENIOR STAFF



A UR SJP member speaks at the Nazareth University protest on Nov. 16.

SARAHWOODAMS/PUBLISHER



Protestors chant outside Wallis Hall on Nov. 9.

ALYSSAKOH/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Protestors head towards Graham Smith Plaza on Nov. 9.

ALYSSAKOH/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Protestors at the entrance of Gleason Library on Nov. 9.

ALYSSAKOH/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

# CAMPUS

## War in Gaza Hits UR Campus

BY ALYSSA KOH  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

BY JUSTIN O'CONNOR  
MANAGING EDITOR

After weeks of marching, chanting, and drumming against the ongoing war in Gaza, pro-Palestinian demonstrators kicked off their Nov. 17 protest at noon outside Wilson Commons by laying out the meaning of their chants.

The question has become an international lightning rod. Chants like “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” “from New York to Gaza, globalize the intifada,” and “resistance is justified when people are occupied” have polarized two camps. One, which includes prominent Jewish organizations like the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), contends the chants are a call for violence against Israelis and Jewish people more broadly.

The pro-Palestinian protestors at the University, firmly in the other camp, rebuke these accusations. Their calls, they say, are for the end of Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories and for the end of Israel’s alleged apartheid system that disadvantages Palestinians.

Most protests don’t kick off with exercises in linguistics, but this moment is unusual. A magnifying glass has been thrust over college campuses as demonstrations, both for and against the war, have kicked off nationwide — prompting loads of discourse about protestors’ intentions, the responsibilities of college administrations, antisemitism, and Islamophobia.

Amid the release of several administrative statements about the war — vigils, protests, and counseling sessions have hit UR’s campus alongside other colleges in the area. Read on for a full breakdown of the last month.

### The wake of the Oct. 7 attacks

On Oct. 7, Palestinian militants belonging to Hamas — the group that governs the Gaza Strip — and several other Gazan armed groups launched a surprise attack on civilians and soldiers in the south of Israel. They killed over 1,200 people — 845 of them civilians — and kidnapped about 240. Among the dead were babies, children, and women, and their brutal assault included the rape and mutilation of many of their victims, according to Israeli responders to the scenes.

That same day, Israel began bombing Gaza in response to the attacks, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu formally declared

war on Oct. 8.

The next day, the UR President’s Office released its first official statement on the war via email and the University’s Facebook, Instagram, and X (the site formerly known as Twitter) accounts.

The statement, titled “Message on the conflict in Israel and Gaza,” broadly addressed “the recent escalations within Israel and the Gaza Strip and the ensuing violence.” It was signed by President Sarah Mangelsdorf, Provost David Figlio, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion Adrienne Morgan, and University Medical Center CEO Mark Taubman.

“The University of Rochester stands in support of our community, especially with those with ties to the region and those who have lost loved ones,” the statement read. “As a place of healing and higher learning, we denounce violence, hatred, and prejudice in favor of a world that embraces diplomacy and discourse.”

The statement was met with outrage on social media — primarily for its lack of open condemnation of the Hamas attack on Israel, for its lack of any mention of the state of Palestine, and for its lack of recognition of Israel’s ongoing occupation of the Palestinian territories.

“Not recognizing the state of Palestine is crazy, and ignoring all the trauma, murder, and destruction done by Israel on Palestine for more than 50 years is worse,” wrote Instagram user @alyarndrscr.

“It is extremely disappointing that my alma mater won’t come out and unequivocally condemn Hamas terrorists and the thousands of innocent Jews they have killed and kidnapped,” wrote Instagram user @cantorstef. “Shame on you, @uofr. I stand with all the Jewish students, faculty, staff, and alumni of @uofr @uofralumni @jewofr @hillelatuofr.”

The next day, UR Hillel announced a student-run vigil to be held on Oct. 11 to “remember and honor the victims of terror in Israel,” according to Hillel’s Instagram. They additionally shared a community night hosted by Rochester Students for Israel (RSI) slated for after the vigil.

On the day of the vigil, the University administration broadcast a “follow-up” to their message on Israel and

Gaza. The message was included in the next day’s @Rochester, which was titled “Partial eclipse on Saturday; Indigenous population health equity (October 12, 2023).”

The follow-up statement apologized for the lack of consolation provided by the initial University response and then stressed the University’s stance against the “act of terrorism” committed against Israeli citizens by Hamas. The statement made a single reference to Palestine:

“We are also devastated by the ensuing loss of lives among Israelis and Palestinians alike, and we continue to hope for a non-violent resolution to this terrible conflict.”

The University’s statement was met with mixed reactions on social media. Some community members with initial concerns about the University’s failure to condemn Hamas commented with thanks and support, while others expressed disappointment for the administration’s failure to condemn the killings of Palestinians by the Israel Defense Forces.

“Thank you for this apology. As an alumna, and as a daughter, wife, mother, cousin, sister and aunt of many alumni, I was deeply ashamed by the original statement,” said Instagram user @rabbibeth.

“Why is there still no acknowledgement of the disproportionate response from Israel?” asked Instagram user @roaczcoarms. “Acknowledging the obvious fact that Hamas committed acts of terrorism is the bare minimum that the University should be doing right now on one front, but to have no condemnation for the retaliatory attacks on civilians and committing of war crimes by Israel is not acceptable.”

To address the traumatic conflict, the University Counseling Center began hosting virtual, drop-in, group counseling sessions. The first set of these sessions, which have always been separated for students mourning the deaths in Israel and the deaths in Gaza, took place on Oct. 20. The first “Grief for Israel” session was held from 3 to 4 p.m., and the first “Grief for Gaza” session being held from 4 to 5 p.m.

Subsequent group sessions have been promoted on @Rochester every other week. The most recent “Grief for

Israel” session was held on Nov. 14 and “Grief for Gaza” on Nov. 16, as of the publication of this article.

### On-campus schisms emerge

On Oct. 18, UR Hillel promoted an online conversation titled “Israel/Gaza: Learning and Reflection” via their newsletter. The conversation was scheduled for Oct. 22 and featured a talk by Joy Getnick, UR Hillel’s executive director, about the history of Israel and Gaza and the current war. Those on the email list were asked not to invite people outside of the Hillel community, as they would be asked to log off and schedule a separate time to chat.

“We’ll also provide space for students to ask questions, and reflect on what all of this - the Hamas attack on Israel, the subsequent war, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the unknown future - means to us as individual American Jews,” the email announcement read.

An event in the Interfaith Chapel titled “Understanding and Healing: the Palestinian genocide” was hosted on Oct. 20 by UR’s chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), the Student Association for the Development of Arab Cultural Awareness (SADACA), the Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students (MAPS), and the Muslim Students’ Association (MSA). The event was promoted on Instagram as a place to “discuss the history of Palestine and honor the lives lost during the war in Gaza.”

A week later, UR SJP released a statement on Instagram about the University administration’s response to the event.

“On Thursday, October 19th, the day before our event, the event organizers were made aware of the University Leadership’s attempt at shutting down the event, given that it would be held at the Interfaith Chapel around the same time as Shabbat services,” the statement read. “When the organizers requested another venue for the event, the University Leadership did not help. Additionally, we were told that the use of the word, ‘genocide,’ was inflammatory and insinuated the instigation of violence.”

The healing circle’s timing was shifted to “accommodate the concerns posed by the University,” according to the UR SJP statement. During

the event, UR SJP members noticed a plainclothes Public Safety officer near the chapel’s lobby. UR SJP claims he was one of three at the event, and the Office of the Provost later said they authorized the officers’ monitoring of the event. According to UR SJP, the administration approved the presence of Public Safety officers without the knowledge or consent of the club — unsettling both attendees and organizers alike.

Dean of the College Jeffrey Runner apologized on Nov. 12 for his comments to the Minority Student Advisory Board about UR SJP’s use of the word “genocide” in a Read This newsletter titled “Thanksgiving shuttles | spring registration.” A speaker at several UR SJP-organized protests said Runner compared the use of the word “genocide” in reference to Israel’s killing of Palestinians in Gaza to waving a Confederate flag in a Black person’s face.

“I was wrong to suggest what a Black person might feel when confronted with a confederate flag or how a Jewish person might react to the word genocide,” his apology read. “As a linguist I know that the intention behind words is only a small part of the power and impact of language, and I was not careful in my choice of words, nor thoughtful in a moment that requires thoughtfulness and sensitivity.”

On Oct. 27, the same day they released their statement about the administrative response to the healing circle, UR SJP held an afternoon protest on Eastman Quad. The protest, promoted on Instagram under the name “SILENCE IS VIOLENCE,” pushed back against the lack of a University statement on the “humanitarian crisis and genocide happening in Palestine.”

On Nov. 6, UR Hillel sent an email to their mailing list promoting their weekly events, including a conversation scheduled for Nov. 8 called “Israel, Gaza, and All The Words.” The conversation was intended to focus on “different ways to think about and possibly respond” to online and on-campus rhetoric concerning the conflict, according to the email. Similar to the Oct. 18 talk, the event was only open to signups for Hillel-affiliated students.

The email also highlighted President Mangelsdorf’s attendance at the Hillel Shabbat dinner on Nov. 3, and it said Provost Figlio would attend a future Shabbat.

<b>Oct. 7</b> Hamis and other Gazan groups attack Israel	<b>Oct. 9</b> UR President's Office releases first official statement on the war
<b>Oct. 11</b> UR Hillel hosts vigil on Eastman Quad — UR President's Office releases follow-up statement	<b>Oct. 20</b> First set of drop-in virtual group grief sessions hosted by UCC — UR SJP, SADACA, MAPS, and MSA host event at Interfaith Chapel
<b>Oct. 22</b> UR Hillel hosts online conversation for Hillel-affiliated students concerning the war	<b>Oct. 27</b> UR SJP releases Instagram statement about administrative action at Oct. 20 event — UR SJP protest on Eastman Quad
<b>Nov. 6</b> SJP holds second protest on River Campus pushing for public apology from administration	<b>Nov. 7</b> UR Hillel releases newsletter statement advocating for students feeling unsafe on campus to fill out Bias-Related Incident Report forms
<b>Nov. 8</b> UR Hillel hosts second online conversation — Office of the Provost releases statement about administrative authorization of Public Safety presence at Oct. 20 event	<b>Nov. 9</b> UR SJP and FTP ROC host protest alongside national strike — University update on same-day protest
<b>Nov. 11</b> Unofficial JVP chapter releases statement calling for ceasefire on Instagram	<b>Nov. 13</b> Pro-Palestine demonstration hosted at RIT
<b>Nov. 14</b> Three UR students attend Jewish Federation's "March for Israel" in Washington, D.C. with UR Hillel compensation for transit	<b>Nov. 16</b> Pro-Palestine demonstration hosted at Nazareth University — UR Alumni for Palestine releases first Instagram statement lambasting administration — Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester releases security alert
<b>Nov. 17</b> Fourth SJP protest on the River Campus (most recent to date, as of publication)	

"The University is very committed to supporting Jewish student life on campus - as they are for all students of all backgrounds and identities," the email read. "They hope you know and feel that, even if you can't always see the work happening behind the scenes."

On Nov. 6, that very same day, UR SJP posted another update on the University's handling of the Oct. 20 event and pushed for a public apology from the administration.

"They did not apologize or offer any sympathy for the way their words have perpetuated racist and Islamophobic stereotypes," the statement said. "Additionally, during this conversation, administrators made numerous insensitive remarks that made students feel increasingly marginalized, uncomfortable, and were blatantly offensive."

The statement was accompanied by another on-campus demonstration advocating for support against administrative pushback. The several-dozen protestors — brandishing Palestinian flags, signs, a drum, and a speaker — proceeded up the steps leading to Gleason Library and then through the library itself to Douglass Commons before heading to Hirst Lounge.

At that point, the Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health reported that Israel had killed over 10,000 Palestinians in Gaza — including over 4,000 children — and that figure didn't include the several thousand people they suspected were trapped under the rubble. Israel had bombed civilian homes, hospitals, refugee camps, and schools, justifying the targets by claiming that Hamas was using protected civilian sites as "human shields."

At each site, the protestors — which included community members — gave speeches blasting Israel's bombing campaign in Gaza as a genocide, calling for students to demand an end to the U.S. government's support for the war, and decrying the administration's response. They shouted chants — mostly "free, free Palestine," but they also used the three chants (mentioned at the start of this article) alleged by many prominent Jewish institutions to be antisemitic, prompting a response from UR Hillel.

On Nov. 8, the Office of the Provost released a statement titled "Ensuring campus safety and respectful discourse" that explained the Public Safety presence at UR SJP's Oct. 20 demonstration. They said the plainclothes officer's presence was due to "the likely size of the gathering and the potential for non-student disruptors," according to the statement.

"We made a mistake by

not communicating this in advance to the event's organizers, who consequently and understandably felt marginalized and othered by the University. Our intent to keep our students safe, with a particular concern about outside agitators, made some students feel profiled," the email read. "We acknowledge the offense and fear this may have caused, and we regret that we made some of you feel this way."

In an email to the CT, Provost Figlio elaborated on the administration's "mistakes" in handling the pro-Palestinian protests.

"We recognize that some of our actions have led Palestinian students to feel devalued over the past six weeks," he wrote. "We have publicly admitted our mistakes and we have changed our language to make clear that we believe that the tragic loss of life of an innocent Palestinian as just as important as the tragic loss of life of an innocent Israeli."

**Discourse about protests grows**

UR Hillel's email statement in response to UR SJP's Nov. 6 protest directed students feeling unsafe in public campus spaces to submit a Bias-Related Incident Report Form. Students were also encouraged to reach out to a newly-established national campus antisemitism hotline run by ADL, Hillel International, the Brandeis Center, and Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP International Law Firm.

"We are actively working with the University to understand their plans for future protests, as well as big picture thinking about community member access to Wilson Commons, if that should be a location in which protests are allowed (which it currently is), how to prevent a group from blocking the entrance to a location like Douglass, and more," the email read. "Universities are places for free speech, but when free speech becomes hate speech (or an incitement to violence, imminently or broadly), or makes other students feel unsafe or unwelcome in central community spaces, that's a problem."

The email also endorsed the Jewish Federation's "March for Israel" at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 14. While UR Hillel did not directly participate in the march, the organization offered students compensation for their bus tickets to Washington. Three students ended up attending via this offer, Getnick confirmed in an email to the *Campus Times*.

The march featured demonstrators from across

the country — including Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries — with many wearing or carrying Israeli flags in support. Speakers and the crowd voiced support for Israel's war in Gaza, chanted against a cease-fire, and called for the release of the hostages being held by militant groups in Gaza, particularly Hamas. A heavy security presence guarded the event.

UR SJP and off-campus organization Free The People Rochester (FTP ROC) urged their followers to participate in a national academic and work strike on Nov. 9, and they organized a protest for noon that day. The demonstration also began at the steps leading up to Gleason and continued through the tunnel system, stopping at the Rush Rhee Library entryway for additional speeches. Protest facilitators in high-visibility vests kept watch to make sure attendees kept spaces clear enough for passersby.

The protest then stopped in Hirst Lounge with more speeches and chants before the demonstrators headed to the final location — Wallis Hall. The last speakers delivered their criticisms of the University's response to their protests outside the building's doors, focusing particularly on the Office of the Provost's Nov. 8 apology for the handling of the Public Safety officers' presence at UR SJP's event. Speakers noted the doors to Wallis, which houses the Provost's office, were closed — something uncommon for a workday.

The University published yet another update on the protest in the next day's edition of @Rochester. The statement said the protest was allowed to proceed due to organizers' adherence to University policy "with a few exceptions."

"The activities taking place on our campus have been orderly," the statement read. "We have not seen the incidents of vandalism, property damage, or physical injuries that have taken place elsewhere in the country. We're thankful for that, and we expect all members of the University community to commit to making sure that remains the case."

The University further maintained in the statement its right to review its codes of conduct in order to maintain the safety of those on campus while balancing University community members' rights to peacefully protest and freely express their convictions.

**Local pro-Palestine organizing strengthens**

On Nov. 11, a newly-founded local chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), which is not formally affiliated with the University, called for a cease-fire via Instagram and

pushed back against concerns about UR SJP protests threatening the safety of Jewish individuals on campus.

"We recognize the presence of Jewish fear and grief within our campus community," the post said. "We also recognize that this fear is deeply misplaced when it is turned towards people advocating for Palestinian liberation."

At this point, pro-Palestinian protests resounded throughout Rochester's collegiate sphere, with a demonstration at RIT on Nov. 13 and another at Nazareth University on Nov. 16. UR SJP-affiliated students from the River Campus spoke at both events. Members of both universities' public safety departments were in attendance.

The backlash against the University's administrative response continues, both on campus and online. On Nov. 16, a statement from an Instagram account called UR Alumni for Palestine criticized the University's senior leadership group and the Board of Trustees for their actions towards the pro-Palestinian protests, for their statements, and for supporting Israel financially.

**Nov. 17 demonstration preceded by tension**

UR SJP's most recent protest on Nov. 17 — which was mentioned at the start of this article and which was co-sponsored by Rochester's Democratic Socialists of America chapter, FTP ROC, Roc Committee to End Apartheid (RCEA), ROC Voices for Palestine, and the Finger Lakes chapter of the Party for Socialism and Liberation — was preceded by a litany of statements.

The day prior to the protest, UR SJP and RCEA posted an informational graphic on their Instagram accounts reminding protesters to adhere to a list of conduct standards. The list dissuades protesters from using hate rhetoric "of any kind towards any group" and further advocates for kind and respectful behavior to all.

"We are here to honor Palestinians and amplify voices of the oppressed," the post reads. "Don't give anyone a reason to delegitimize the Palestinian liberation."

On that same day, a "security alert" concerning the "Anti-Israel Rally at the University of Rochester" was issued by Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester President Dan Kinel and CEO Meredith Dragon to the Federation's newsletter recipients. The email advised readers to take security measures such as avoiding confrontations with protesters and mentioned that the organization was "working closely with local authorities to protect our Jewish

students, faculty, and staff.”

“While we respect the right to freedom of expression and assembly, it is crucial to recognize that the anti-Israel protest tomorrow, like the several that have already happened, promote an unsafe atmosphere on campus and its environs,” the email said. “These rallies call for intifada and genocide against Israel and the Jewish people. We are deeply concerned about the safety of our Jewish community on the University campus.”

Also before that Nov. 17 protest, University administration released a statement online and in that day’s @Rochester expounding on the University’s specific protocol for protests occurring within public campus spaces.

The statement, titled “University reiterates campus policies and expectations for campus events,” raised concerns about “behavior on campus that disrupts classes or other University activities,” which the statement called “unacceptable.” Such behaviors include chanting, shouting, and drumming — in particular, within campus buildings without advance reservation of the space. According to the notice, “such disruptive behavior violates University policy and will be reviewed for possible disciplinary action as appropriate.”

“We continue to affirm students’ ability to protest Israeli (or Palestinian) actions, US policies toward Israel and Palestine, and University actions,” Provost Figlio said in an email to the *CT*. “We just need to ensure that this does not disrupt University activities and operations, and that protesters abide by our request to not use specific protest language when we make an explicit reasonable request and direct them not to.”

The administration also said in its statement that they are “instituting new access protocols for campus buildings.” These procedures — which potentially include new swipe access requirements and restrictions on the time, place, and manner of future protests to avoid academic spaces — will be implemented on an as-needed basis to “reduce the potential for disruption.”

In an email to the *CT*, Provost Figlio said administrators met with students in UR SJP before the Nov. 17 rally to discuss their use of the “globalize the intifada” chant, which he said is the only chant that the University thinks is outside the bounds of free speech because of how it can be construed as advocating for violence locally.

“We met with protest organizers on multiple occasions prior to Friday’s

demonstration to explain why this specific slogan causes such distress, as many interpret it to call for violence against Jewish people here,” he said. “That’s what differentiates this particular slogan from other widely-criticized slogans that we consider to be acceptable protest speech.”

The demonstration, like all the others before it, proceeded peacefully, though the demonstrators continued to use the allegedly antisemitic chants after explaining their intentions at the start of the event.

After verbal squabbles with University officials — including fire marshals, Director of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs John DiSarro, and Assistant Dean of Student Life Operations Laura Ballou — about access to the Wilson Commons interior, the protest started outside on the Wilson Commons porch. On that rainy day, healthcare workers, alumni, and current students gave speeches while protest marshals donning high-visibility vests kept demonstrators from blocking the entrance to Wilson Commons.

The protest moved to the center of Eastman Quad, where one student read a spoken word poem lamenting Israel’s killing of innocent civilians in Gaza and another student, who was Jewish, spoke about their experience growing up in Jewish cultural institutions that pushed them to identify with Israel despite having no connections to the country. They also talked about how Jewish principles compelled them to speak out against Israel’s war in Gaza.

As the demonstrators spoke around the meridian, a faculty member sang the Israeli national anthem from the balcony of a nearby building.

This protest too ended on the steps of Wallis Hall. The crowd of about 100 people waved their Palestinian flags, wore their keffiyeh, and continued yelling their chants. Speakers made it clear that it won’t be the last pro-Palestinian protest at the University this year.

*Koh and O’Connor are members of the Class of 2024.*

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# OPINIONS



EDITORIAL BOARD

## Cease-fire Now

It's been over a month since Israel launched its siege of Gaza in response to Hamas and other groups' Oct. 7 attacks on civilians and soldiers in Israel. The war has brought devastation, and these past few weeks have revealed how painful and difficult the conflict has been for us and our peers.

As representatives of our campus' student-run newspaper, it is our responsibility to speak up on issues that affect our student body and to write the first draft of history for our present moment. This war has implications for all of us, regardless of how direct our connections to the region are. Whether it's having family members in Gaza or Israel, identifying as part of a diaspora, supporting friends, or criticizing those in power, this terrible situation has touched all of us in some way or another.

We here on the Editorial Board of the Campus Times demand an immediate cease-fire. Below, we lay out our position — touching on the war's history and delving into its injustices. Our argument against the war is split into three essential points divided by subheadings. We hope our arguments are clear and that they are accessible even to those without intensive knowledge of the intertwined history of Israel and Palestine.

***'As representatives of our campus' student-run newspaper, it is our responsibility to speak up on issues that affect our student body and to write the first draft of history for our present moment.'***

Lastly, we spell out a series of actionable steps you can take — either as a University student, administrator, or trustee — in the face of this crisis that can seem so disempowering, in the face of the horror, the bloodshed, and the sheer inhumanity we have all witnessed over the past month.

### 1. This war is illegal

Several elements of this war butt up against the limits of international law.

Some constitute clear and obvious violations, while other elements are merely questionable, but this shroud of illegality means this war must end.

We will start with the obvious violations. Israel has indiscriminately targeted Gaza's civilian population. There is no plausible deniability, no "human shields" defense at this point: Israel's rain of bombs on civilian infrastructure and slaughter of children and noncombatants en masse — no matter what their purported target may be — is a barbaric transgression against international law and humanity itself.

We've watched and listened as the death toll has slowly climbed. The Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry says Israel has killed over 12,300 people since Oct. 7, and they fear that over 2,000 more are buried under rubble. The Ministry doesn't differentiate between combatant and non-combatant deaths, but over 5,000 of the dead have been children, and over half have been women and children (though killing male civilians should bring no less shame).

Don't let the inhumanity of the numbers shield your heart from this tragedy. These were over 12,300 people who laughed and loved and sang, who were parents and siblings, who were humans just like any of us. They were murdered because they were in Gaza at the wrong time.

Like fish in a barrel, Gaza's civilians have nowhere to go. Israel's bombardment and directives pushed those civilians southward — via a purported "humanitarian corridor" (an Orwellian nightmare-phrase) — to areas the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) haven't stopped bombing. And now the IDF is saying they plan to escalate their operations in southern Gaza despite the immense civilian risk. Israel is outwardly admitting they don't care about this risk.

"One of the more challenging situations is the simple fact that most of the people of the Gaza Strip are now concentrated in the south," Giora Eiland,

a former head of Israel's National Security Council, told Reuters Saturday. "There will probably be more civilian casualties ... It is not going to deter us or prevent us from moving forward."

It may be the case that Hamas' operations are embedded in civilian sites, and they too should face the full brunt of international law for that crime, but, as people have pointed out time and time again, the use of human shields doesn't permit the slaughter of the human shields. It demands a heightened caution.

***'Don't let the inhumanity of the numbers shield your heart from this tragedy.'***

Israel's siege of Gaza has been anything but cautious, and there is plenty of evidence that their "recklessness" may actually be an intentional vindictiveness intended to collectively punish Palestinians for the Oct. 7 attacks. And our monetary support of Israel's siege means that we are culpable for the IDF's acts, not Hamas'.

On top of this,

Israel has repeatedly targeted UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) shelters and healthcare facilities in flagrant violation of the Geneva Conventions. They conducted their siege of Al-Shifa Hospital under the pretense that the hospital complex, Gaza's largest, housed a Hamas command-and-control center.

Despite Israel having yet to surface definitive evidence of that purported command-and-control center, the siege rendered the hospital inoperable, killed numerous patients, and has left even more at risk of death — including dozens of premature babies.

And that is just one of the several hospitals they've targeted. Things have gotten so bad that Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director-general of the World Health Organization, took to X (the site formerly known as Twitter) yesterday to demand a cease-fire himself.

"We continue to call for protection of health and of civilians. The current situation is unbearable and unjustifiable," he wrote. "Ceasefire. NOW."

His post joined similar cries from the American

Public Health Association, Doctors Without Borders, SEIU's Committee of Interns and Residents, the California Nurses Association/National Nurses United Organizing Committee, and many other healthcare organizations worldwide.

Israel's war on Gaza has also, to our immense concern, killed 48 journalists. Reporters are public servants who deserve to be protected in combat zones. Israel has admitted to targeting them instead.

These are just aspects of Israel's acts of warfare that are illegal. It is also the case, it must be pointed out, that the legality of the war itself is murky at best.

This is not a war between two totally independent nations. Israel is occupying Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, and, under international law, Israel's professed right of self-defense against these occupied territories is less clear than people often make it seem. Occupation — including Israel's 16-year blockade of Gaza — is an act of offensive warfare, and belligerent occupying forces don't have a right to defend themselves against the territories they occupy.

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## Campus Times

SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SINCE 1873

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**ED-BOARD CONT.**

Francesca Albanese, UN special rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories, most recently advanced this argument during a Nov. 14 address to the National Press Club of Australia.

***‘It is also the case ... that the legality of the war itself is murky at best.’***

“Israel cannot claim the right of self-defense against a threat that emanates from a territory it occupies, from a territory that is under belligerent occupation,” the Hindustan Times quoted her as saying.

“What Israel was allowed to do was to act to establish law and order, to repel the attack, neutralize whomever was carrying out the attacks and then proceed with law and order measures ... not waging a war,” she also said, as reported by the Hindustan Times.

This argument has been laid out more meticulously elsewhere — particularly in chapter seven of political scientist Dr. Norman Finkelstein’s 2018 book “Gaza: an Inquest into Its Martyrdom” and in a 2017 Al-Jazeera opinion piece written by attorney and political activist Stanley Cohen. Suffice to say, every ounce of international law points to Israel having a relatively narrow latitude for action in Gaza. Despite this, through the course of this war they have acted as though international law doesn’t apply to them whatsoever.

***‘Through the course of this war Israel has acted as though international law doesn’t apply to them whatsoever.’***

This is just the tip of the iceberg. We could print thousands of words about this, but what we’ve already referenced is enough: For humanity’s sake, we need a cease-fire now. If this war is allowed to continue, we shouldn’t delude ourselves into believing that we have anything resembling an international legal system. We need international legal accountability for the groups and people who have committed and abetted atrocities in the name of this war.

***‘If this war is allowed to continue, we shouldn’t delude ourselves into believing that we have anything resembling an international legal system.’***

**2. The end conditions of this war are uncertain**

This war’s objectives are also unclear, and allowing it to continue in this foggy state is extending far too much trust to Benjamin Netanyahu’s government.

Israel contends publicly that its two goals are to eliminate Hamas and to free the hostages being held in Gaza.

On freeing the hostages, reporting by The Guardian revealed Netanyahu struck down an early deal that might have freed “dozens” of hostages in favor of escalating the war with a ground invasion. The entire siege, The Guardian reports, has highlighted a schism between Netanyahu’s camp and the Mossad officials tasked with negotiating the hostage release deals. And it appears that Netanyahu’s camp has, at least at that early negotiating juncture, subverted the aim of hostage releases to the aim of appearing hawkish and unrelenting publicly.

***‘Israel contends publicly that its two goals are to eliminate Hamas and to free the hostages being held in Gaza.’***

On the issue of “stamping out” Hamas, we question whether anyone knows what this means. Does it mean the elimination of every Hamas commander, including the ones who have fled to Lebanon? Does it mean kicking Hamas back enough to establish control over Gaza? Is it a longer-term objective that will be used to justify perpetual suppressive force as Israel rules over Gaza? This aim hasn’t been clarified whatsoever, and it gives dangerous room for the violence to continue unabated.

Postwar rule over Gaza is another unsettled issue that has caused a very public chasm between Netanyahu and Joe Biden’s administration. Biden announced in a Washington Post opinion piece that he favors Palestinian Authority control over Gaza, while Netanyahu has said, according to Reuters, “Israel must maintain ‘overall military responsibility’ in Gaza ‘for the foreseeable future.’”

It is unclear how Israeli administration over a rightfully hostile postwar population would make the world safer for either Palestinians or Israelis, and it certainly would decimate the idea of a serious long-term peace process, as that process would necessarily require self-determination for Palestinian people. Israeli administration over Gaza would be a step backwards. This absurd prospect remains a real possibility, but the U.S. is still shoveling money to this war effort without

any critical thought.

Allowing this destructive freight train to continue unabated to its uncertain destination has already reached an unthinkable level of irresponsibility. We need a cease-fire now, and we need to settle on a reasonable plan for the post-war administration of Gaza that will not undermine the goal of a lasting peace. This means no occupation, no blockade, and legitimate self-determination for the Palestinian people in exchange for fair security enforcement to protect Israeli civilians.

***‘It is unclear how Israeli administration over a rightfully hostile postwar population would make the world safer for either Palestinians or Israelis.’***

**3. This war is undemocratic**

This shouldn’t have to be an aside point, but most Americans don’t support the continuation of this war.

***‘Most Americans don’t support the continuation of this war.’***

A Reuters/Ipsos poll from Nov. 15 shows nearly 70% of Americans agree that “Israel should call a ceasefire and try to negotiate.” Americans’ belief that the U.S. should be backing Israel dropped from 41% to 32% over the course of the prior month. The most popular view, with 39% support, is now that the U.S. should be a neutral mediator.

Our government should be accountable to the people, especially on matters as sensitive as war, and especially when the public is in such resounding agreement. A cease-fire is morally right, legally sensible, and the will of the American public, so the American government ought to push for an end to the hostilities rather than continue down its current path of backing Israel’s escalation.

***‘Our government should be accountable to the people.’***

**Our calls to action**

We will end this piece with several calls to action. Some of them are pipe dreams we’re desperately tossing in the vague direction of the federal government (as it is our right to do), and others are more actionable directives aimed at the University’s administration and students. We hope all of them can prompt further conversation and advance the goals of the worldwide cease-fire

movement that has courageously opposed these hostilities.

First and foremost, we call on the U.S. government to cease sending military aid to Israel, to apply pressure and demand a cease-fire, and to leverage its power in the United Nations to ensure Palestinians are allowed to rule over the Gaza Strip in the wake of the fighting. And we call on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to exercise its jurisdiction over the occupied Palestinian territories by prosecuting the violations of international law that were committed in the course of this war.

Hopefully Biden and the ICC read the Campus Times.

We now want to address the University administration. We appreciate that our student body has been given wider room to protest, speak freely, and organize in the face of this war than many other student bodies in the country. But the administration has, predictably and defensibly, come out in opposition to disruptive protests.

We believe that — if administrators really want to avoid disruptive protests — they should facilitate actual dialogue about small-scale actions the University can take to support Palestinian students and the people of Gaza at large rather than just sending ominous emails about code of conduct policies.

***‘We appreciate that our student body has been given wider room to protest, speak freely, and organize in the face of this war than many other student bodies in the country.’***

If you want students to cease disruptions, stop sending waffling statements that refer to “the deaths of Palestinians” in carefully-deployed and dehumanizing uses of the passive voice. We recognize the criss-crossing monetary responsibilities of the administration, but we plead: Have some moral courage, please, and give students a chance to explain the action items you can take to lend support to justice.

***‘We believe that — if administrators really want to avoid disruptive protests — they should facilitate actual dialogue about small-scale actions the University can take.’***

Next, we call on the University’s Board of Trustees to engage in a similar act of moral courage. We plead for you all

to take your boatloads and trainloads of dollars and divest them from this war. Your wealth and your positions give you an outsized influence in this world and in this country, and we beg you to use that power in the pursuit of justice.

***‘We beg you to use that power in the pursuit of justice.’***

At the very least, we ask that you not pressure the administration into acting hastily and in ways that might undermine our right to speak freely and learn. In short, please recognize your power, and please wield it with humanity.

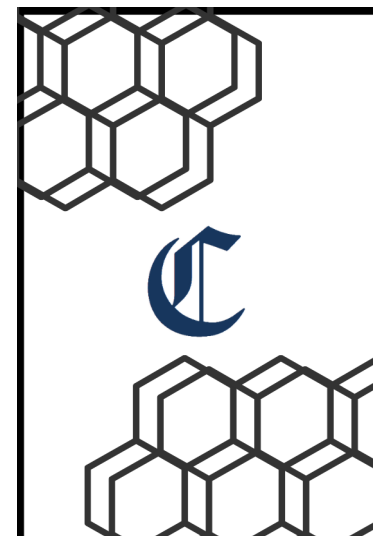
Finally, we call on everyone, particularly students, to join us in our demands by taking some simple steps.

***‘It is easy to scoff at the idea of public pressure in the face of a war that seems to have so much inertia.’***

Call and fax your representatives and senators to demand they come out in support of a cease-fire. It is easy to scoff at the idea of public pressure in the face of a war that seems to have so much inertia, but issuing these demands for action is the least we can do as U.S. residents to defend the lives of those abroad.

Engage in acts of monetary protest. Call out sources of war funding and demand public accountability. Follow the guidelines of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, at least for the course of this war. Store your money in a bank that engages in ethical lending practices, like Amalgamated, for example. Do everything you can to strictly keep your money from funneling towards the war effort: Your taxes are already supporting it enough.

We’ll close with our simplest call. Don’t stop protesting. Don’t let anyone shut you up. Keep advocating for humanity and justice even as the world turns away from it. Remain steadfast in your calls: **Demand a cease-fire now.**



## UR Protests Aren't a Threat to Jews

BY HENRY LITSKY  
SENIOR STAFF

No, University of Rochester students are not calling for a genocide of all Jewish people.

On Thursday, the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester issued a security alert warning Jewish community members of an anti-Israel rally occurring at the UR. "These rallies call for intifada and genocide against Israel and the Jewish people," the alert said, painting some UR students as rabid antisemites eager to resume the pogroms from which my family fled so many years ago.

The statement was striking and portrayed the University as a dangerous place for Jewish students and a refuge for antisemitism and vitriol. The CEO

of the Jewish Federation of Rochester, Meredith Dragon, went so far as to tell Spectrum News that UR should ban its Students for Justice in Palestine chapter like Brandeis, Columbia, and George Washington Universities have done.

***'Were my peers calling for a massacre of Jews?'***

I was shocked to see my campus community portrayed as a dangerous place for Jewish students and decided to attend Friday's protest to see for myself. Were my peers calling for a massacre of Jews? Did these organizers actively pose a threat to my safety on campus?

No, my peers and community members were not

calling for a genocide of Jews. They gathered calling for the Israeli government to stop indiscriminately bombing the Gaza strip, a campaign that has killed over 11,100 civilians — one of every 200 people living in Gaza. Some of the speakers were Jewish themselves and echoed the sentiments of the majority of Americans in calling for a ceasefire.

Conflating any criticism of the Israeli government, which the majority of Israelis disapprove of, with criticism of Jews themselves is itself an antisemitic trope equating the state of Israel and the Jewish people. Does every person with French heritage agree with Emmanuel Macron? Does every person with British heritage blindly

agree with Rishi Sunak?

Outside of a temple or family gathering, I feel safest as a Jew at UR. It is one of the few places I feel comfortable enough to wear my chai necklace outside of my shirt, and this has not changed with the protests on campus. I'm not sure where the Jewish Federation got the idea that all Jewish students live in fear here, as the experiences of both my Jewish friends and myself contradict that narrative.

***'Outside of a temple or family gathering, I feel safest as a Jew at UR.'***

Jews across the world are primed to live in fear due to our traumatic past of persecution. We are quick

to worry about suspected antisemitism to ensure that "never again" really means "never again" and to stop hate before it spills over to bloodshed. I hope that the Jewish Federation of Rochester recognizes the power of their speech and is more careful with future alert messages so as to not dilute real threats against Jewish life with these disingenuous communications. It is not appropriate to fan the flames of fear when a threat is not real.

No, UR students are not calling for a genocide of all Jewish people.

*Litsky is a member of the Class of 2024(e5).*

## "Tikkun Olam" and the Jewish Quest for Justice

BY NORA GOODMAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I grew up in a pretty progressive synagogue. We had a gay clergy member, and some of the others smoked pot. We were taught that there were few strict requirements to be a Jew and that Judaism was more about continuing traditions, keeping a community, and repairing the world (the principle known as "Tikkun Olam"). We were taught that you could be a member of this community even if you had a gay interfaith marriage, even if you'd enjoy shrimp on occasion, or even if you didn't believe in G-d.

My community would read the Torah as a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, but it was not at all a literal set of laws to us. My mom believed in G-d but didn't fast on Yom Kippur, and my dad was an atheist but would lie hungry in bed until the breakfast. The interpretation of the Jewish rules and traditions is personal and always changing, and nobody else can tell you the right way to be Jewish.

***'Nobody else can tell you the right way to be Jewish.'***

As a child, I mostly met my synagogue community with reluctance (try bringing any 10-year-old to Sunday school to learn Hebrew), but there were ways that my family got me to appreciate it. One of these ways was going to an overnight summer camp run by the Union for Reform Judaism every year.

Summer camp became my favorite week and a half out of the year. I made friends who would later travel

across the country for each other's B'nai Mitzvah (coming-of-age) ceremonies. We played Gaga ball and Capture the Flag all day, we sang songs in both English and Hebrew, and we had Shabbat services that felt relevant to a 12-year-old.

But, in hindsight, I am realizing now that so much of the institutions that keep Reform Judaism alive are the same ones that are propagandizing my community into support for the Israeli state.

The camp intertwined Jewish culture and Israeli culture. We would celebrate two "Israel Days" every session, where we would learn Israeli slang and how to cook falafel, a food with origins that have drawn immense controversy. We had a large group of Israeli camp counselors.

I took an elective called "Start Up Nation" to learn about business and innovations. The week consisted of learning about how the Israelis invented flash drives and Waze and drip irrigation. I took a model rocketry elective led by engineers from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). We learned how the Israelis "made the desert bloom" with their innovations of agriculture and water management. We played card games about "Israeli landmarks" — from the Western Wall to the Golan Heights to the West Bank barrier.

The word "Palestinian" was never said in any presentation, and any mention of Palestine was always glossed over. That, of course, would be "too political." You could question any Jewish value you wanted — except for the Jewish connection to Israel.

As I became a teenager, I started to attend some

North American Federation for Temple Youth (NFTY, pronounced "nifty") events. These were a couple hundred Jewish teenagers renting out the local Jewish summer camp for a week-end retreat. They never stuck with me as much as summer camp did, but they were a fun way for teenagers to stay involved with Judaism after our B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies.

***'You could question any Jewish value you wanted — except for the Jewish connection to Israel.'***

The Friday nights were spent singing nostalgic camp songs, and the Saturday mornings were very filled with short and sweet Shabbat services. Again, the Israeli pride never stopped, and so much of the messaging from NFTY was advertising birthright trips.

Here's the thing about the Israeli pride that was pushed down my throat, though: I am not Israeli. My ancestors, and the ancestors of most of the people at these summer camps, are ethnically Ashkenazi. They were from eastern Europe, not the middle east. They did not eat falafel or engage in any other part of Israeli culture. My great-grandparents did not speak Hebrew; they spoke Yiddish. While there are Mizrahi and Sephardi Jews who may have a more nuanced connection and history in this land, I do not hold a claim to this heritage. And yet, as an American Ashkenazi Jew, I have more of a "right" to go to Israel than the Palestinian families who have been kicked out of their land.

I am not only eligible for a free birthright trip: Organizations like the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) are begging me to go on it. For free, I can spend 10 days touring the land, visiting the museums, swimming in the Dead Sea, and drinking my heart away. Maybe after that trip, I'd feel such a connection to the land I'm "indigenous" to that I could apply for Israeli citizenship and steal someone's house in the West Bank.

***'And yet, as an American Ashkenazi Jew, I have more of a "right" to go to Israel than the Palestinian families who have been kicked out of their land.'***

Meanwhile, the Palestinians who have spent their entire lives in the West Bank or Gaza — who have a direct, multi-generational family lineage there — require bureaucratic permission just to go to an Israeli hospital or to visit their family in another zone. They are victims of a US-supported occupation, ethnic cleansing, and genocide, all under the guise of establishing and protecting a Jewish state. In what world is this fair? In what world does this align with the progressive views that I was taught in my family and community?

When I was a teenager, I went with my grandparents and cousins to the Yiddish New York festival. My grandpa speaks a little bit of Yiddish, but his parents didn't fully pass it down to him. We took Yiddish language classes in the mornings and learned to play

Klezmer music in the afternoon. The violin I grew up learning to play became a fiddle, and I played it alongside my cousins' band, "The Pachechies" (Yiddish for "complainers").

The experience felt drastically different than going to a URJ event or something run by its affiliates. This is the culture that belongs to my family, this is the culture that I am proud of, and this is the culture that I want to pass on from generation to generation.

I am not Israeli, nor do I claim to be. After Oct. 7, I received more support and sympathy from this University than the Palestinian students who have family in Gaza or the West Bank ever will. It makes me sick that the University would sneak secret Public Safety officers into their space to grieve. It makes me sick that the University thinks I need protection from my fellow students. It makes me sick that the oppression of Palestinians, both on campus and abroad, has been done with the manufactured consent of my community.

***'It makes me sick that the University thinks I need protection from my fellow students.'***

I hope to see more Jewish spaces at this University that actually host honest discussions about the apartheid and ethnic cleansing, spaces that are honest about the history of our people and culture, and spaces that actually care about Tikkun Olam.

*Goodman is a member of the Class of 2026.*



# Violence Will Not Solve What Violence Created

BY FINN ABBEY  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I could not forgive myself if I didn't write this piece. Undoubtedly now is a time of horrific tragedy and a time for mourning. The loss of innocent life is always horrific, and we should all be invested in seeking ways of being that uphold the value of life.

Right now I am also sick with worry. I worry because I see the pain and suffering so many people feel being used to justify actions that will beget so much more anguish and so many more broken families. I cannot be silent about the violence that Israel is unleashing on Gaza right now. I cannot pretend that it is in any way justifiable.

Bombing hospitals, regardless of flimsy justifications about theorized Hamas occupation, is a human rights disaster. Cutting off food, water, and electricity is unconscionable. Israel's use of white phosphorus on Gaza and Lebanon is a war crime. I cannot be silent as thousands of innocent men, women, and children are burned in effigy as revenge for the suffering of a few, no matter how great the collective anguish may be. I cannot pretend that drone strikes are a more ethical way to snuff out the lives of children than guns.

***'I cannot be silent about the violence that Israel is unleashing on Gaza right now.'***

I'm not posting this just to grandstand; I am an American, and like all Americans, my tax dollars in some small part go into the \$3-5 billion a year Israel receives in United States aid, which includes 80% of their weapons supply. Back in October, leaked U.S. State Department emails cautioned against discussing "de-escalation" in Gaza. Flatly, the idea that the U.S.' highest organ of diplomacy would shun the idea of seeking a less bloody end to this saga is sickening.

In the aftermath of the Oct. 7 attack, I saw a

number of commentators draw comparisons between it and 9/11. I really don't think it's sensitive to rank tragedies, but for once it may be instructive. If there is anything to be learned from 9/11, 20 years on, it is that it is unwise to mourn through aggression. The invasion of Iraq was a mistake. And as was the case in Iraq, any violence Israel may enact in the occupied Palestinian territories will bring no man, woman, or child back into their family's arms, and it will make no single person safer, save perhaps embattled politicians like Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister.

Just as in the 2000s, we as Americans must be especially vigilant in looking out for propaganda in service of powerful militaries, be they American or Israeli. President Biden claimed recently to have seen photos of 40 babies decapitated by Hamas, a statement the White House later walked back when it became obvious the viral narrative originated from an unverified report from a French television journalist. We are witnessing the same media ecosystem that took the government at its word on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq fall hook, line and sinker for Israel's president claiming nonsensically that Hamas fighters were carrying instructions for making chemical weapons. Why would a fighter need instructions for making chemical weapons while going out to attack? Did he leave it in his pocket by accident? That's not to mention the constant implication of collaboration that the IDF has attempted to draw between Hamas and ISIS — two groups that openly hate each other and have killed each other's fighters.

***'Cutting off food, water, and electricity is unconscionable.'***

We have to be vigilant about misinformation because it distracts from an important reality of the situation: Oct. 7 occurred despite decades of Palestinians being among

the most surveilled and deprived people on Earth, and it was committed against an extraordinarily well-armed and funded state. For all of Israel's hegemonic power, it could not prevent these attacks. The myth that Israel can keep Gaza captive has been violently disproven, and innocent people have lost their lives because of it. More violence against Palestinians — from the military, from settlers, from economic discrimination — will not lead to the development of the peaceful society that all parties deserve.

***'If there is anything to be learned from 9/11, 20 years on, it is that it is unwise to mourn through aggression.'***

The best way to mourn the victims of violence is to say never again. Business as usual cannot continue. Now is the time to fight for a radical peace. It's the time to seek a ceasefire and to exchange hostages on both sides, as so many families have called for. More bombs will harm hostages, Palestinians, and Israeli soldiers alike. The end of apartheid will free both Israelis and Palestinians from this nightmare.

***'Now is the time to fight for a radical peace.'***

My biggest hope in writing this, the same as every time I have discussed this issue with people I know, is to promote understanding and compassion. Putting this forward makes me more nervous than anything else I've done in college, but if I can help at least one person to see differently, it will be worth it. We cannot remain silent as innocent people suffer. I urge everyone to contact their representatives and demand a ceasefire, and to carefully interrogate claims urging us to support a deeper plunge into humanitarian disaster.

*Abbey is a member of the Class of 2025.*

# What Antisemitism at UR Looks Like

BY GABE HART  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I was recently asked by a friend whether I thought there was antisemitism on our campus. I have certainly encountered a lot of language that has made me as a Jewish student uncomfortable. In the wake of Oct. 7, I saw many of my peers using the term "resistance" in reference to a violent terrorist attack, praising it as some kind of noble feat of progress.

As more details of the attack became known, and organizations and public figures backed down from statements specifically praising the attack, language calling for more "resistance" has remained prominent in campus discourse. This, in conjunction with calls to "globalize the intifada," reads as a call for violence against supporters of Israel around the world — especially considering the prominence of terror attacks against civilians during the Second Intifada of 2000 to 2005.

Now, I do not believe this is the imagery most of my peers have in mind when making these statements. Rather, it is my understanding that my peers are trying to raise criticism of Israel and its government and bring global attention to a humanitarian emergency — two goals which are not inherently antisemitic.

It is not necessarily antisemitic to disagree with a Jewish person. What I take issue with are the responses given to the Jewish community when we try to discuss how certain rhetoric is hurtful or problematic. Specifically, I am troubled by a pattern of excluding Jewish voices from conversations about which language is harmful to Jews.

Some responses have been dismissive. I have been told that what sounded to me like support for Hamas' terror attacks was "not meant that way." What that exactly meant was not made clear. Others have tried to compete in the Trauma Olympics and argue that the magnitude of loss in Gaza somehow invalidates grieving for Israeli victims.

Specific Jewish voices have also been used as tokens and shields. For example, people have pointed to Instagram posts by an organization called Jewish Voices for Peace (JVP) to validate their use of the phrase "from the river to the sea." They do so even though there is no consensus in the Jewish community in support of many of JVP's positions.

To the contrary, prominent Jewish organizations like the Anti-Defamation League have voiced strong opposition to JVP.

Many people hold that marginalized groups should be the primary arbiters of what is offensive to them. However, I see many of my peers who believe in this approach failing to apply the same standard now that the Jewish community is the group in question. People do cite specific Jewish voices supporting their positions. However, cherry picking which Jewish voices to listen to based on what they are saying is not the same as actually considering Jewish perspectives.

***'I am troubled by a pattern of excluding Jewish voices from conversations about which language is harmful to Jews.'***

When this subject comes up, members of our University community have accused Jews of weaponizing the "antisemitic" label to silence free speech. Sure, these community members ask, maybe some of these phrases are hurtful, but do they really cross the line into speech that should be banned on campus?

This question misses the point entirely. I am not advocating for externally imposed censorship; I am upset that people decline to change their own speech when they are told it is hurtful. We have pretty strong protections for free speech on campus. Thus, when you knowingly say something hurtful, that reflects a free choice over which you have full ownership. Responding to concerns of antisemitism with concerns about free speech is a kind of whataboutism. It is a way of dodging personal accountability for speech by deflecting the conversation to a different matter.

***'Yes. There is antisemitism on our campus.'***

So, to answer my friend's question: Yes. There is antisemitism on our campus. It takes the form of dismissing Jewish concerns, invalidating Jewish grief, disregarding Jewish perspectives, using selective Jewish voices as a license to ignore others, and running away from any serious discussion of these issues.

*Hart is a member of the Class of 2025.*

**DO YOU HAVE AN OPINION YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?**

Write to  
**ct\_opinions@u.rochester.edu**

# The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Tale of Historical Grievances and Human Cost

BY RABINA AQA JAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In a world often clouded by biased narratives and propaganda, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stands as a stark testament to the complex interplay of history, rights, and justice. The conflict, deeply entrenched in history, centers around the land historically known as Palestine, which has long been viewed as a shared homeland by Muslims, Jews, and Christians.

***‘This region, imbued with significant religious and cultural importance ... has been a focal point of both contention and coexistence over centuries.’***

This region, imbued with significant religious and cultural importance for these three faiths, has been a focal point of both contention and coexistence over centuries. The modern conflict traces its roots to the late 19th century amidst shifting imperial powers and the rise of nationalistic movements.

The Jewish community, viewing this land as their ancestral and religious homeland, and the Palestinian Arab population, comprising Muslims and Christians who have also historically regarded it as their home, have both staked their claims on this territory. Key historical developments like British rule over Palestine and the subsequent Balfour Declaration of 1917 — which supported the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine — were crucial in escalating the disputes around these claims.

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the resulting Arab-Israeli wars, particularly the Six-Day War in 1967, further intensified the conflict, leading to significant displacement and suffering.

Today, the conflict remains unresolved and laden with deep-rooted issues, such as territorial disputes, the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and security concerns. These all exist within a complex tapestry of historical, religious, and cultural narratives that shape the identities and aspirations of the involved communities.

This article will lay out the chronology of these events and focus on the

conflict’s injustices, the human rights violations, and the critical need for discerning truth amidst widespread misinformation.

Today, the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip — regions with a predominantly Palestinian population — continue to endure Israeli military occupation, highlighting a significant aspect of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and sovereignty. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) exercise control in various disputed areas and markedly impact the lives of Palestinians. Primarily tasked with ensuring Israel’s national security, the IDF’s activities extend into several contentious aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In the West Bank, regarded under international law as occupied territory since its capture in the Six-Day War, the IDF’s presence is a daily reality for Palestinians. The IDF oversees checkpoints, border crossings, and security operations, all of which affect the mobility and lives of the Palestinian residents.

***‘Today, the conflict remains unresolved and laden with deep-rooted issues, such as territorial disputes, the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and security concerns.’***

Additionally, the IDF’s control extends to the borders of the Gaza Strip. Despite Israel’s disengagement in 2005, the Israeli military retains control over its airspace, maritime boundaries, and most land crossings, limiting Gaza’s access to the outside world and contributing to the region’s severe humanitarian issues.

The IDF also provides security for Israeli settlements in the West Bank, which are widely considered illegal under international law, are a source of significant tension and conflict, and often contribute to the displacement of Palestinian communities. The IDF’s actions underscore and exacerbate the complexities and hardships faced by Palestinians in their daily lives and in their broader struggle for self-determination and statehood.

The governance of these territories is characterized by a distinct division:

Hamas, an organization that arose as a response to the occupation, administers the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority, which aims to secure Palestinian statehood through diplomatic efforts, manages parts of the West Bank, on the other hand. This split governance is a challenge for Palestinians in their quest for political unity and independence. The Israeli presence in these territories drives tension and conflict due to Israel’s imposition of restrictions on movement, economic freedom, and basic human rights onto the Palestinian population.

***‘The Israeli presence in these territories drives tension and conflict due to Israel’s imposition of restrictions on movement, economic freedom, and basic human rights onto the Palestinian population.’***

The continued expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank — considered illegal under international law — further complicates the situation. There is a critical need for a just and viable solution that addresses the rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people — including their right to self-determination, freedom, and the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state.

***‘The continued expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank — considered illegal under international law — further complicates the situation.’***

The human impact of this enduring conflict is profoundly distressing, especially in its toll on the Palestinian people. Reports by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reveal the harrowing scale of this tragedy: From 2008 through September 2023, approximately 6,400 Palestinians and 300 Israelis lost their lives. The situation in Gaza is especially grave, where the Israeli bombing campaigns have resulted in the deaths of over 12,000 people since Oct. 7. Palestinian children bear the brunt

of this conflict in an especially heartbreaking way: Since 2000, over 10,000 Palestinian children have been detained by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, and over 5,000 children have been killed during Israel’s ongoing siege of Gaza.

***‘Palestinian children bear the brunt of this conflict in an especially heartbreaking way.’***

This continuous cycle of violence and oppression against Palestinians, particularly children, calls for urgent international attention to and empathy for the Palestinian people, especially the most vulnerable and innocent among them.

Efforts towards peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including initiatives like the Oslo Accords and the Camp David Summit, have been fraught with complexities and significant setbacks. Potential solutions, particularly the two-state model, are deeply contentious, marred by skepticism over their feasibility and concerns about fairness and equity. Many Palestinians fear that Israel will continue to undermine Palestinian rights and sovereignty under a two-state solution.

***‘Potential solutions, particularly the two-state model, are deeply contentious, marred by skepticism over their feasibility and concerns about fairness and equity.’***

The sidelining of Palestinian rights and aspirations must not be replicated in any future peace endeavors. Instead, a genuine and sustainable solution should be sought — one that guarantees the Palestinian people their right to live in peace with their human rights fully respected and their aspirations for a sovereign state realized. This is not just a matter of political negotiation; it is a fundamental issue of human dignity and justice.

It seems as though humanity has strayed from its moral compass, with many either oblivious or apathetic to the usurpation of Palestinian lands and the killing of innocent individuals.

Currently, there is a persistent endeavor to obliterate their very existence. This is a harsh reality

that, although difficult to accept, must be acknowledged. In facing such overwhelming adversity, the question arises: Where do we find the fortitude to continue hoping and striving for change?

While the answer remains elusive, the search for it is crucial. We must persist in discussing these issues, elevating awareness, and advocating for action. We, the students of this university, must come together to uphold the principles of justice, human rights, and freedom of speech, guided by the spirit of “Meliora,” which means “ever better.”

Every voice deserves to be heard, and every individual should feel safe expressing their opinions and participating in peaceful forms of protest.

***‘Let us unite to embrace “Meliora” in our pursuit of justice and peace, working tirelessly to promote awareness and constructive discussions.’***

We need to address the ongoing crisis affecting the Palestinian people and advocate for the protection of their rights and dignity. Let us unite to embrace “Meliora” in our pursuit of justice and peace, working tirelessly to promote awareness and constructive discussions. Through collective efforts, we can contribute to a brighter and more equitable future for all, where everyone’s rights and voices are not only respected but protected.

***‘Often, the narrative is distorted, portraying the aggressor as the victim and the actual victims as perpetrators.’***

There is a concerning aspect in the media portrayal of this crisis. Often, the narrative is distorted, portraying the aggressor as the victim and the actual victims as perpetrators. This misrepresentation further complicates the situation by influencing public perception and obscuring the reality of the events. It is vital to look beyond these narratives to grasp the true dynamics at play and recognize the genuine nature of the injustice occurring.

Aqa Jan is a member of the Class of 2027.

## A Call For Nuance

BY ELISE GENDRICH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To the editor,  
I am writing this letter to express my anxieties over sharing any of my opinions, and I'm hoping that it will resonate with others reading this. It feels like, whether praising or criticizing Israel, I must add "but..." so as not to appear too firmly opinionated.

***'It feels like, whether praising or criticizing Israel, I must add "but..." so as not to appear too firmly opinionated.'***

My perspective as a Jew is that I have always supported the existence of Israel. I continue to believe in a Jewish state. This, of course, must be qualified, because I want peace for every human. I like the idea of a two-state solution, where there is peaceful interaction and not bitterness and prejudice.

Though the current governing bodies involved in

the conflict do not see that as an option, I know that government officials are not representative of their average citizen. Moreover, both states still have the right to exist in some form. One can push for change without elimination.

***'I like the idea of a two-state solution, where there is peaceful interaction and not bitterness and prejudice.'***

I see a lot of discourse online reflecting all-or-nothing mentalities. It appears to be written by people who are very firmly opinionated towards only one side or another. This makes me worry that what I say may be misconstrued to look black-and-white when it's not.

If I speak in favor of Israel — because I mourn for their soldiers, or feel that Jews need someplace to live in safety — people might think that I support Israel with no sympathy

for Palestinians. If I speak against Israel — because war is horrific and they go too far in causing destruction — people might think that I don't support the concept of Israel, and they might think that they have all the more right to promote anti-Zionism that verges on antisemitism.

***'I yearn for a way out of this fighting as soon as possible, and I hope that along the way there is compassion for everyone in harm's way.'***

I yearn for a way out of this fighting as soon as possible, and I hope that along the way there is compassion for everyone in harm's way. I also yearn for open-mindedness on everyone's behalf and allowance of nuance in everyone's stance. That includes you, readers.

*Gendrich is a member of the Class of 2024 (T5).*

## Israel-Palestine: From A Jewish Staff Member

BY TRAVIS COVITZ  
URMC STAFF

To the editor,  
Nearly every day for the past month, I have been having long back-and-forth text arguments with my dad. I don't even know what the argument is about anymore. — I don't even know if we both want peace. We just keep sharing articles and debunking the details.

***'I don't even know what the argument is about anymore. — I don't even know if we both want peace. We just keep sharing articles and debunking the details.'***

In mid-October, I joined a phone bank encouraging left-leaning Americans to call their congressional representative and demand a ceasefire in Gaza. At the beginning of the event, we were given some background about the current situation, and I decided to share it with my dad to ask for his interpretation. Although we have diverged a bit politically since I went to college, we generally have good discussions, and I wanted his input as someone who had lived on a kibbutz for a few years as a young adult. He quickly dismissed all of my sources.

But I saw post after post of Palestinian suffering. I constantly shared the content I saw in my social media feed to help him to understand what kind of information I was surrounded by. He nitpicked details. I would spend a couple hours researching to give him a response, and he would immediately rip it apart, sending me on another wild goose chase for the argument that would prove "Travis is right."

My dad is not the only one I have been arguing with. Most of my Jewish friends, the ones I am closest to, agree with my political views. But there are two people from my college days who are earnestly afraid of the destruction of Israel. Both know people who have been killed by Hamas (either years ago or in the past two weeks). Both want peace and are critical of the far-right Israeli government. But they balk at the claims that Israel has no right to exist, that it is a settler-colonial project, and that there is no nuance.

My younger sibling is much more knowledgeable about politics than I am.

They have actually read several books on political theory, whereas I tend to get my information from Instagram infographics. But they have had a much more difficult time than I do talking to our dad. My sibling feels deeply embroiled in a narrative of "good" vs "evil," and sees Zionism as evil. Although I am not even two full years older, I am much more capable of holding human complexity and having difficult conversations.

***'My sibling feels deeply embroiled in a narrative of "good" vs "evil," and sees Zionism as evil. Although I am not even two full years older, I am much more capable of holding human complexity and having difficult conversations.'***

I do sometimes feel infuriated, but I am able to step back and disengage when I am not listening in good faith. I am also sorely aware that this ability to disengage is not afforded to Palestinians — including those in the diaspora who have to constantly worry about friends and family and argue that they are human, those in the West Bank currently being assaulted by settlers, and those in Gaza fleeing for their lives.

Personally, I have no allegiance to Israel. I am not even part of a congregation that provides material support to Israel. But Israel commits violence in my name, my tax dollars are sent to fund the violence, and my alma mater is invested in companies that build Israel's war machine.

***'Israel commits violence in my name, my tax dollars are sent to fund the violence, and my alma mater is invested in companies that build Israel's war machine.'***

I stand for Palestinian self-determination and safety for all peoples.

Consider sharing your thoughts with our Rochester representative, Congressman Joe Morelle.

## "I Cannot Condone The Protests Against Israel"

BY DANIEL EVANS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To the editor,  
My name is Daniel Evans, and I am not only a proud half-Israeli, fully-Jewish American student at the University, but I also attended the March for Israel rally in D.C. on Oct. 14 alongside hundreds of thousands of other Jewish people who support not only an end to the evil antisemitic terrorism of Hamas but also an end to the rampant antisemitism that has emerged in the U.S. in the wake of Hamas' massacre of 1,200 Israelis on Oct. 7, a massive increase from the last month.

***'My opinions on the anti-Israel protests on campus are as follows— while I fully support freedom of speech, I cannot condone the protests against Israel.'***

My opinions on the anti-Israel protests on campus are as follows — while I fully support freedom of speech, I cannot condone the protests against Israel. Aside from launching false accusations of genocide against Israel, the "pro-Palestinian" protesters against Israel have:

1. Refused to condemn

Hamas' rape and slaughter of Israelis or their kidnapping of roughly 240 innocent people, Israeli and otherwise and refused to condemn Hamas for using Palestinians as human shields or not allowing democratic elections in Gaza for almost 20 years.

2. Used antisemitic rhetoric such as "from NYC to Gaza, globalize the intifada," "resistance is justified," glorifying Hamas murdering, raping, torturing, and kidnapping innocent Israelis, and "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," a saying used by Hamas that refers to the destruction of the Israeli state and subsequent massacre of Israelis, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

***'I went to the D.C. rally in support of both Israel's war on Hamas' terror and in support of an end to antisemitism.'***

I went to the D.C. rally in support of both Israel's war on Hamas' terror and in support of an end to antisemitism, and I truly believe that the "pro-Palestinian" protesters on the River Campus are shamelessly and remorselessly fostering antisemitism and intimidating the many Jewish students on

campus.

I am personally worried about if I would be at risk of violence were I to wear one of my shirts with Hebrew letters on it near these anti-Israel protesters.

***'I truly believe that the "pro-Palestinian" protestors on the River Campus are shamelessly and remorselessly fostering antisemitism and intimidating the many Jewish students on campus.'***

I believe that these anti-Israel protests will remain a danger to Jewish students on campus unless the University decides to fulfill its promise to combat religious hatred and ban these protests from the University's campuses.

*Evans is a member of the Class of 2024.*

# UR Racist and Complicit: Sustaining Racism at Rochester's Finest Institution

BY SABEET KAZMI  
ALUM

To the editor,

The administrators at the University of Rochester refuse to treat innocent civilians in Israel and those in Palestine (both in the West Bank, and Gaza) symmetrically. Throughout their messaging to the community, they have referred to the killing of Palestinians who live under Israeli apartheid by Israeli bombing and military campaigns as a “humanitarian crisis.” In contrast, they have consistently referred to the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel as a “terrorist attack” where 1,200 people — Israelis and otherwise — were “killed and kidnapped.”

It requires no complex action to reiterate facts presented by mainstream media that everyone — including the Israeli government — agree on, which is why the University's inability to acknowledge that over 12,000 Palestinians living under Israeli apartheid have been killed by Israel's indiscriminate military attack on Gaza reflects a glaring double standard rooted in ethno-national and racial prejudice.

This is a prejudice that continues to harm the UR community and that perpetuates anti-Palestinian and Arab hate and Islamophobia — all of which are contributing to the erasure of the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians through intentional obfuscation and misrepresentation of facts. This prejudice enables their refusal to acknowledge the findings of globally-trusted human rights organizations such as Amnesty International — which published a comprehensive report highlighting that Israel is committing the international crime of apartheid against Palestinians, calling it “a cruel system of domination and crime against humanity.” This prejudice has fueled their incessant vilification of Palestinian and pro-Palestinian students on campus, a vilification that manifested itself, for example, in the deployment of Public Safety Officers in civilian clothing who have audio-visually recorded at least one Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)-sponsored event.

Now, it could not be that each of the decision makers and varying signatories across recent administrative communications — including President Sarah Mangelsdorf, Provost David Figlio, Dean of the College Jeffrey Runner, CEO of the Medical Center Mark Taubman, Dean of Students Anne-Marie Algier and Vice President for Equity and Inclusion Adrienne Morgan — or that

the leaders of the Board of Trustees — such as Jeffries CEO Richard Handler — are all racially prejudiced against Palestinians, right?

Although it is hard to speak to each of their hearts, at the very least, their latest actions and articulations must be viewed as an act of racial discrimination against Palestinian students. If you buy that racism is a sustained set of actions and systems imposed by individuals and institutions to discriminate against people from a particular race or ethnic group, it is perhaps not that hard to see that this institution is indeed racist. Additionally, it is not hard to see that this University is complicit in the dissemination of misinformation intended to harm Palestinian and pro-Palestinian students, and that it propagates lies and propaganda about Palestinians, pro-Palestinian advocates, and Muslims that are currently being used by the Israeli military to justify the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

***‘An institution can only be as moral as those who run it.’***

As an institution can only be as moral as those who run it, we must subsequently consider how members of the University's senior leadership team, like Jeffrey Runner, have weaponized threats of antisemitism and anti-Black hate in order to intimidate pro-Palestinian voices. At a student-admin meeting some weeks ago, Runner compared the use of the term “genocide” in front of Jewish students (in reference to what is happening to Palestinians) with the waving of a Confederate flag in front of a Black person.

Runner initially denied this statement, but he later issued a rushed pseudo-apology buried underneath a series of unrelated University notices — one in which he didn't even acknowledge the students and communities he directly harmed. All of this occurred only after an Equal Opportunity Investigation was initiated against him. A white man speaking on behalf of Black people when he has, in fact, not lived a single day as a Black person. Truly a classic.

Runner's words might just seem to reflect a subconscious bias; however, it would be naive to believe so. Such subtle mechanisms to silence people have long been employed by powerful people to gaslight individuals below them in a hierarchy with the hope of achieving a situation where the internal conflict of being identified as a “racist,” or the perceived fear of being labeled one, serves to censor

voices that do not suit the interests of those in power. I have no doubt that Runner is employing the same tactics here.

But this administrative discrimination does not stop here.

***‘Mangelsdorf and Figlio have struggled to find time to meet with Palestinian students.’***

Mangelsdorf and Figlio have struggled to find time to meet with Palestinian students even after a month of relentless bombings in Gaza, but they have both met continuously with Israeli and Jewish students since Oct. 7 and attended UR Hillel Events.

Figlio even partook in a photo-op with some Jewish students — who were meeting with him to discuss their fears and concerns around pro-Palestinian rallies on campus — for a Spectrum News report that actively misrepresented the peaceful and calm rally on Nov. 9 as one driven by antisemitism. This portrayal came despite the rally organizers and participants repeatedly reiterating their explicit stance against antisemitism and all forms of oppression. Figlio had time to walk all the way from his office to welcome these students at the front doors of Wallis Hall for the photo-op, but he did not have time to set up a meeting with Palestinian students for weeks.

From Figlio's latest gestures to the University's continued investments in — and refusal to divest from — Israel's apartheid state, the actions of this institution's leaders reflect its beliefs about the murder of innocent civilians. It is condemnable terrorism if the civilians killed are mostly Israelis who share a skin color with the 11 out of 12 white members of the University's senior leadership team. However, it is a “humanitarian crisis” if the civilians are Palestinian and do not share their skin tone. This is regardless of Israel's use of white phosphorous across Gaza, Israel's indiscriminate bombing of schools, residential buildings, hospitals, refugee camps, water sources, generators, and bakeries, and Israel's blocking of water, food, electricity, and basic healthcare necessities from entering Gaza have directly killed over 6,000 Palestinian children.

Quod erat demonstrandum, UR Racist and Complicit.

*Kazmi graduated with the Class of 2023.*

## Revelations in The Ruins

BY GREGORY LEBENS-HIGGINS  
CO-CHAIR ROC DSA COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMITTEE

To the editor,

In the past weeks, we have seen local rallies in support of Palestinian liberation grow from dozens of people to hundreds. While #CeasefireNOW is the unifying call to end the immediate bloodshed, there is a recognition that we cannot return to the status quo. We must work toward an end to Israel's occupation and the dismantling of colonial structures.

These weeks have revealed the hollow reality of the liberal order. Its ideals of democracy and human rights are quickly sacrificed on the altar of power. Senator Chuck Schumer and Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries — leaders of the Democratic Party, which presents itself as our protector from Republican fascism — appeared on stage at the pro-war “March for Israel” alongside election deniers and bigots. Censorship has been accepted by CNN and other news networks as the price of access ride-alongs with the lie-prone Israel Defence Forces (IDF). And international law has been thrown to the wind.

***‘These weeks have revealed the hollow reality of the liberal order. Its ideals of democracy and human rights are quickly sacrificed on the altar of power.’***

These weeks have also revealed the promise of new structures destined to replace this decrepit system. Political forms capable of challenging power have been solidifying in the resurgent student movement, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the labor movement, and other allies. (Note: the author is a member of Rochester DSA.) In spite of censorship and assassinations, journalism has been leaking out of Gaza and circling around independent media. Internationally, we are witnessing a renewed recognition of our intertwined struggles. Imperialism, policing, and race are all tied up in the continuation of Israel's apartheid regime.

So what can we do? First, we must educate. The rapper Macklemore, an unexpected speaker at the National March on Washington for Palestine, said:

“They told me to do my research. ... In the last three weeks I've gone back, and I've done some research, and I'm teachable;

I don't know enough, but I know enough that this is a genocide.”

By providing context for the ongoing genocide, we see that these events did not start on Oct. 7, rather they are a continuation of the nakba — the “catastrophe,” the forcible removal of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland for the creation of the Jewish state.

***‘By providing context for the ongoing genocide, we see that these events did not start on Oct. 7, rather they are a continuation of the nakba — the “catastrophe,” the forcible removal of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland for the creation of the Jewish state.’***

Second, we must continue to rally and march to show strength and ensure that genocide does not happen in complicit silence. Third, we must continue to call on representatives for a ceasefire, as DSA has done through its No Money for Massacres campaign. Over 30 members of Congress have now been convinced to do so. Importantly, a ceasefire will only succeed if backed up with the threat of boycotts, divestment, and sanctions. Finally, we must take direct action by using our bodies to stop the gears of war.

***‘We must grasp the connected struggles of the working class ... we will overcome systems of oppression and domination premised on the extraction of profit.’***

Ultimately, we must grasp the connected struggles of the working class. By organizing as a mass movement, we will overcome systems of oppression and domination premised on the extraction of profit. A better world is possible, and the actions taken now will usher in a new era in which all lives are valued.