



FEDERAL TASK


FORCE TO

COMBAT

ANTI ZIONISM

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Let's get everybody who's been criminalized together and figure out how we can undo this state of affairs.

—Ruth Wilson Gilmore ^[1]

At the time of this writing, the U.S. Department of Justice (D.O.J.) has announced it is launching a “major civil rights investigation” into the University of California, based on claims that it allowed pro-Palestine anti-war and anti-genocide protests to create an allegedly “hostile antisemitic work environment” on several campuses during the 2023-2024 schoolyear. Such investigations serve as a high-profile example of the primary narrative strategy of victim-reversal deployed by defenders of Israeli Zionist settler colonialism: the dubious charge that to oppose “Israel” as it actually exists—a European Jewish settler nation based on land theft, occupation, native population displacement, and anti-Palestinian genocide-warfare—is to be categorically “anti-Semitic.” This intellectually and historically dishonest defense mechanism also hinges on the equally deceptive premise that to be against Zionism—the western imperialist ideology that spiritually animates the (white) Civilization and nation-building project of “Israel”—is to be an anti-Semite. The Zionist entity of Israel thrives on this fabricated aura of vulnerability and the ruse of “innocence” that is generated by this ploy of victim reversal.

The current D.O.J. probe of the University of California underway is part of a larger campaign organized by the Trump-Vance “MAGA” bloc, in lockstep with the far-Right Israeli government, to exert intensifying political-legal pressure on the administrative, industrial, and financial structure of U.S. universities where strong movements against Israeli apartheid exist and/or popular support for Palestinian liberation is growing. ^[2]

as the U.S. government hides its hand and acts as if it has no control over Israel's war of extermination in Gaza and the West Bank. Itself a move toward “innocence,” this performative incapacity and concealment of decisive agency in shaping Israeli military policy is no more than a fabrication—the posture play of “good cop, bad cop.” The United States government is the predominating funder of the Zionist entity's nation-building and war-waging capacities, and will remain so because its fledgling military-political hegemony in the region is dependent on Israel as its proxy command and forward base. This is despite the fact that U.S. settler empire maintains bases scattered across every continent. The United States of Amerika and Israel-Zionist entity are thus symbiotic and mutually constitutive, hence my conceptualization of both forming a singular apparatus. The former can no longer maintain its dominance without the latter, while the latter may not be capable of operating at all in the form of a settler colonial nation-state without the extensive financial support and relentless military-industrial backing of the former. This civilizational codependence will become increasingly apparent (and desperate) over the next several years if the revolutionary anticolonial insurgency of the Palestinian resistance and global solidarity movement continue to persist in the face of ongoing, gratuitous and massively fatal settler terror-reaction. Such symbioses also explain why the reaction to Operation Al-Aqsa Flood from settler colonizers on both sides of the Atlantic has been (and continues to be) so intense.

[7] As Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire describe in Worker-Student Action Committee, France, May '68 (Olympia: Detritus Books, 2020 [1969]): to abolish the university is not a vaporous idea but a concrete horizon and specific set of objectives and revolutionary activity that concrete people struggle toward together. That is, “an abolition of the university as a specialized institution restricted to a special layer of society (students),” where, “the ex-university becomes socialized,” now, “public, open to everyone.” (103) After all, what is a campus without its relation to capital? Without the “student” and “worker” alienated from their sense of collective power? In absence of administrative power and policing? Is it not just a grip of buildings with tremendous resources, technology, and infrastructure available for the taking and repurposing, the redistribution of access, the reassignment of meaning based on socially necessary function instead of work, profit, and prestige?

[8] Dan Berger, “The Real Dragons: A Brief History of Political Militancy and Incarceration, 1960's to 2000's” in Let Freedom Ring: A Collection of Documents from the Movements to Free U.S. Political Prisoners, edited by Matt Meyer (Oakland: PM Press, 2008): 3.

ENDNOTES

[1] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, with Jenna Loyd. "Race, Capitalist Crisis, and Abolitionist Organizing." In *Abolition Geography: Essays Toward Liberation*, edited by Brenna Bhandar and Albert Toscano (New York: Verso, 2022 [2012]): 469.

[2] The absurdity of it all is that, following the spring 2024 uprising on the college campuses, leadership of the University of California engaged in the largest increase of its police department budget in over a decade, and each campus implemented new policies disallowing the use of masks or covering of the face, as well as new rules mitigating the obstruction of walkways and against encampments. U.C. Berkeley added drones and new weaponry, and some campuses acquired tanks, new surveillance tech, and other military-grade resources.

[3] Quote from article by Molly Gibbs, "Feds Opening Probe into U.C." *East Bay Times*. (March 6, 2025).

[4] For an analysis of this "material equation of force" see: Bikrum Gill, "Two Logics of War" (2024). For a critical examination of the insurgency that

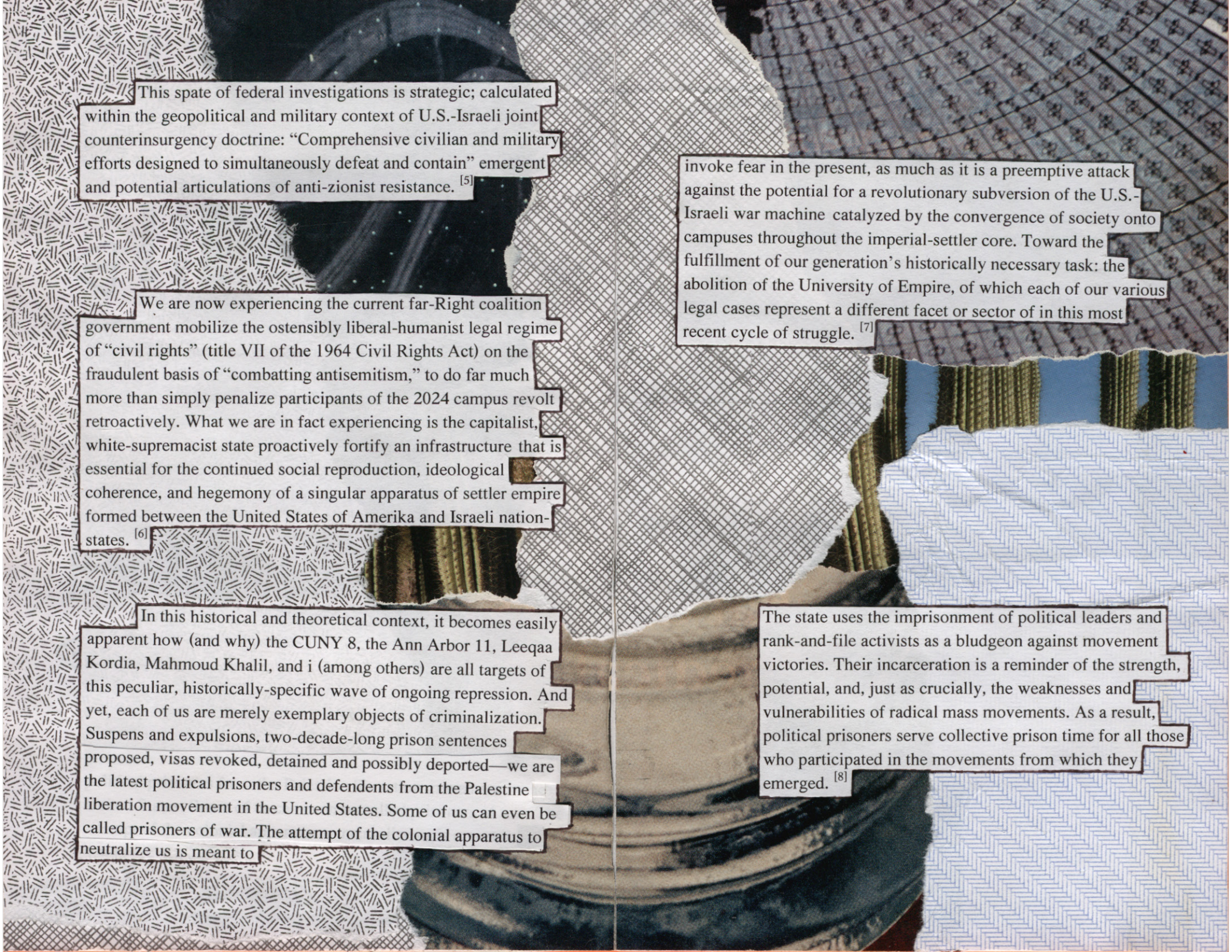
overtook over one hundred college and university campuses last spring, and its larger place within the revolutionary Palestinian resistance to settler-empire after October 7, 2023, see the following: Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group, "The Student Intifada and the Revolution to Come" *Radar Journal* (2024); Research and Destroy, "The Student Intifada" *Verso* (2024) [Blog Post]; Faisal Al-Assad, "Reflections on the 'Global Student Intifada'" *Ebb Magazine* (2025).

[5] Martin Schoots-McAlpine, "Anatomy of a Counterinsurgency" *Monthly Review* (2020).

[6] The Zionist colonial entity "Israel" is not merely an ally of U.S. settler empire but its social-historical extension and military-political appendage; inseparable parts of a singular apparatus of land occupation, population displacement, and warfare. The assumed autonomy of the Zionist entity from U.S. geopolitical interests is largely superficial, always overdetermined in the final instance by the dictates and imperatives of American statecraft and national-economic needs. This remains the case even in the current conjuncture,

The so-called Federal Task Force to Combat Antisemitism, since February, has multiplied its counter-offensive attack on the Palestine solidarity movement in what appears to be a "shock-and-awe" approach to coercing the entire social ecosystem of Higher Education back into the normative conduct and disciplinary constraints of Zionist conformity. All funding from the federal government "will stop for any college, school or university that allows illegal protests," writes Donald Trump proudly from his personal social media platform; "agitators will be imprisoned/ or permanently sent back to the country from which they came," or if it is an "American student," they will be "permanently expelled or, depending on the crime, arrested."^[3]

U.S. American-Israeli Zionist settler empire is approaching the 2024 Intifada on the university campuses from the perspective of international geopolitics, domestic counterinsurgency, and modern warfare. Meanwhile, our Palestine solidarity movement still overwhelmingly organizes itself according to liberal-pacifist and reformist terms of engagement. Far from some irrational retributive campaign by the government to punish university institutions where dissent and support for Palestine has become most pronounced, such measures against the U.C. system (and similar institutions) are the expression of a more general urgency from (global) settler empire to realign the material equation of force that last Spring was momentarily thrown into crisis by the convergence of anticolonial insurgency on campuses across the country—an equation that was first upended in Palestine on October 7, 2023. That is, the material equation of force that underpins colonialism and the larger imperialist world order in which the Zionist entity of Israel is a lynchpin and forward base.^[4]



This spate of federal investigations is strategic; calculated within the geopolitical and military context of U.S.-Israeli joint counterinsurgency doctrine: “Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain” emergent and potential articulations of anti-zionist resistance. ^[5]

We are now experiencing the current far-Right coalition government mobilize the ostensibly liberal-humanist legal regime of “civil rights” (title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act) on the fraudulent basis of “combatting antisemitism,” to do far much more than simply penalize participants of the 2024 campus revolt retroactively. What we are in fact experiencing is the capitalist, white-supremacist state proactively fortify an infrastructure that is essential for the continued social reproduction, ideological coherence, and hegemony of a singular apparatus of settler empire formed between the United States of Amerika and Israeli nation-states. ^[6]

In this historical and theoretical context, it becomes easily apparent how (and why) the CUNY 8, the Ann Arbor 11, Leeqaa Kordia, Mahmoud Khalil, and i (among others) are all targets of this peculiar, historically-specific wave of ongoing repression. And yet, each of us are merely exemplary objects of criminalization. Suspens and expulsions, two-decade-long prison sentences proposed, visas revoked, detained and possibly deported—we are the latest political prisoners and defendents from the Palestine liberation movement in the United States. Some of us can even be called prisoners of war. The attempt of the colonial apparatus to neutralize us is meant to

invoke fear in the present, as much as it is a preemptive attack against the potential for a revolutionary subversion of the U.S.-Israeli war machine catalyzed by the convergence of society onto campuses throughout the imperial-settler core. Toward the fulfillment of our generation’s historically necessary task: the abolition of the University of Empire, of which each of our various legal cases represent a different facet or sector of in this most recent cycle of struggle. ^[7]

The state uses the imprisonment of political leaders and rank-and-file activists as a bludgeon against movement victories. Their incarceration is a reminder of the strength, potential, and, just as crucially, the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of radical mass movements. As a result, political prisoners serve collective prison time for all those who participated in the movements from which they emerged. ^[8]