

Students for Justice in Palestine at Rutgers suspended as part of right-wing witch hunt against opponents of Gaza genocide

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14 December 2023

The suspension of the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) club at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, marks another escalation in the attack on the democratic rights of students and takes place amid a state-organized witch hunt led by the Democrats and Republicans against opponents of the Gaza genocide.

At Rutgers, as is apparent at other universities, the highest levels of the administration were involved in the suspension along with the corporate media who were aware of a Rutgers Administration letter on the planned suspension before either the SJP or their club advisor were made aware.

The letter accused the SJP of “disrupting classes, a program, meals, and students studying” and vandalism at Rutgers Business School. The SJP at Rutgers responded in a statement on Instagram that “None of the allegations are substantiated by date, testimony, or description of incidents” adding that the “leaked” administration letter “only strengthens our belief that the suspension was given based on external pressures rather than any actual violation of student conduct policies.”

The SJP club’s Instagram account was also suspended at the same time, indicating coordination between the administration, far-right Zionist groups and Meta, the company that owns the platform. The SJP at Columbia University also had its Instagram account taken down, and a graduate art student at Brooklyn College was forced to remove pro-Palestinian signs, while a University of Rochester student was arrested Tuesday by campus police during a “Justice for Palestine” event.

The suspension of the SJP club at Rutgers is part of

the broader witch hunt campaign in US academia that has led to the forced resignation of University of Pennsylvania President Liz Magill on December 9 and is aimed at suppressing the mass opposition of student youth and faculty to the genocidal war being waged by the Israeli government with the full backing of the Biden administration against the Palestinians in Gaza.

Magill’s resignation was the result of a McCarthyite campaign waged by an alliance of right-wing billionaire donors, fascist Republicans, the Biden White House and the Democratic Party, as well as the military-intelligence apparatus. Magill and both of the presidents of Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology were subjected to a demagogic questioning in the House of Representatives last week over the alleged failure of universities to address a supposed wave of antisemitism on college campuses.

The US House of Representatives passed a bipartisan resolution on Wednesday calling for Harvard President Claudine Gay’s resignation. This campaign against the presidents has been spearheaded by Republican Representative Elise M. Stefanik, a proponent of the antisemitic Great Replacement Theory which claims Jews are attempting to replace “white” Americans with non-white immigrants.

As the SJP at Rutgers noted in a statement denouncing the suspension of their club:

This suspension comes at a time of heightened censorship and incitement against Palestinian student groups across the nation; SJP and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) chapters at Columbia University; SJP at Brandeis

University, and SJPs across the state of Florida were subject to silencing. Concerningly, it is important to note that Rutgers is the first public university to join this growing list of universities deliberately targeting their pro-Palestine student groups with such an extreme suppression measure as a suspension. SJP at Rutgers New Brunswick now finds itself temporarily terminated and under threat by the University administration in circumvention of university policy, due process and in obvious violation of the right to free, political speech.

To the list could be added the SJP members targeted at UC Irvine and at Brown University, where forty-one students were arrested for protesting against the shooting of their Palestinian classmate by a libertarian gunman in Vermont amid the genocide, to name a few attacks on students.

There are material economic interests at stake for the university in the suspension of the SJP. As an Alumni Letter to the Administration linked on the SJP's Instagram noted, "Universities across the United States are closely partnered with and heavily invested in weapons manufacturers—and Rutgers is no exception. Rutgers is invested in Hewlett Packard, Motorola, and Azrieli Construction Group to name a few."

Azrieli Group is Israel's leading real estate company and operates gas stations and stores in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem. According to *Haaretz* it has donated to the Zionist right-wing Im Tirtzu Movement which plays a major role targeting the anti-Zionist left in Israel and internationally. The headline of an article on the group by the *Times of Israel* reads "Right-wing group deemed to have fascist characteristics."

Motorola is a leading manufacturer in communications equipment for both the US and Israeli military. It was previously placed in a risk category by Chicago investment ratings firm Morningstar (though this was later reversed under Zionist pressure) for its role in facilitating the "supply of equipment that can be used for surveillance and population control, a common controversy and human-rights concern for telecom/tech companies around the world, and the fact that there is a related lawsuit."

HP has a large presence in Israel, having provided the "Basel" biometric sensors to monitor the border with the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, which was financed by the US government, according to Who Profits.

Rutgers University also has extensive ties to the military and intelligence agencies, maintaining a Navy ROTC center and conducting covert studies for the Central Intelligence Agency.

The university's relationship with the CIA goes as far back as the 1950s when studies were conducted involving Hungarian refugees in order to facilitate US imperialism's intrigues against the USSR. This relationship with the blood-drenched spy agency continued with professors receiving \$25,000 from the CIA to conduct similar research aimed against the USSR and Warsaw-Pact countries.

The Rutgers administration also cooperates with the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), being one of 17 institutions hosting a Command, Control and Interoperability Center for Advanced Data Analysis (CCICADA), which is aimed at data mining—i.e., spying on the American population.

These companies and government agencies are implicated in the genocide in Gaza, but more importantly benefit from the suppression of free speech, which facilitates their more open and effective operations on campuses against the opposition of the vast majority of students who oppose militarism and war.

The drive to censor opponents of genocide is aimed at fully subordinating schools and universities to the interests of US imperialism. The fight against the genocide in Gaza and the drive to militarize universities in preparation for world war can only be carried out on the basis of a turn to the working class and by building a revolutionary socialist movement to end the root cause of war—capitalism.



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