



**WW COMMENTARY**

# Growing condemnation of Israel

By Monica Moorehead, June 12, 2023

There used to be a time when to publicly raise the name Palestine and the Palestinians' right to their homeland was considered almost taboo. It was all but forbidden in imperialist centers like the United States.

But after the various heroic Intifadas (mass uprisings) that the Palestinians began in the late 1980s up until the current resistance to the heinous brutality of the Zionist settler state of Israel, the world view of the Palestinian struggle has radically and dramatically shifted. Not even the banning of the Palestinian flag by the Israeli government has stopped this growing solidarity.

No longer is it the prevailing view that to protest Israel's existence is to be anti-Semitic. Being anti-Israel is proudly being anti-Zionist and anti-racist.

Speaking out against Israel, however, still arouses controversy and retaliation. Consider what happened when 24-year-old Yemeni-American graduate student, Fatima Mousa Mohammed gave a powerful, moving talk opposing Israel during the City University of New York (CUNY) Law School commencement May 12.

Mohammed unapologetically spoke out against "Israeli settler colonialism" and how it continues "raining down bullets and bombs on worshippers, murdering the old, the young ... encouraging lynch

mobs" and "expelling Palestinians from their homes." (tiktok.com/@muslingirl/video) Many in the audience interrupted her remarks with cheers.

While praising CUNY's support for the movement to boycott, divest and impose sanctions (BDS) on Israel, she also denounced CUNY's collaboration with the New York Police Department — which she characterized as "fascist" — and stated "that daily, Brown and Black men are being murdered by the state at Rikers [Island prison]."

Days later, Mohammed's speech was virulently criticized as "hate speech" and "divisive" by Fox News, the New York Post and even New York Mayor Eric Adams, an advocate of big real estate interests that are gentrifying so much of the city.

Hitting back on June 1, anti-Zionist Jewish students defended Mohammed against racist anti-Arab and misogynistic attacks by disrupting a CUNY Board of Trustees meeting. They stated that Israel has nothing to do with their Jewish identity and that Judaism is being used to justify crimes against the Palestinian people.

The group said that the CUNY Board does not speak in their name, and they want the Board abolished so that CUNY can be run by its workers and students. They promoted #WeStandwithFatima. (mintpressnews.com)

## Legendary singer refuses to be silent

Another example of standing up to Israel's policies occurred when world famous musician, Roger Waters, founder and former member of Pink Floyd, faced repression. The German government recently tried to ban Waters from performing in Frankfurt, due to his outspoken solidarity with the Palestinian people. Fortunately, that ban failed.

The Berlin regime had recently banned demonstrations in Berlin in late April/early May commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Nakba, which is what Palestinians call the 1947-48 forced displacement and massacres that led to the establishment of Israel.

After Waters visited the Israeli-occupied territories in 2006 and saw the conditions for Palestinians, he refused to perform in Tel Aviv. Since then, he has denounced Israel as a settler state and a racist apartheid regime. Members of the British Parliament are now attempting to ban Waters from performing in England, falsely labeling him anti-Semitic.

Waters also denounced the murder of prominent Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, killed by an Israeli army sniper in 2022, and also that of Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old woman from Washington state crushed to death by an Israeli bulldozer when she tried to stop the uprooting of a Palestinian home in 2003.

In the U.S., Waters has also been an avid supporter of Black Lives Matter, protesting with his music the police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Philando Castile.

These two examples of Fatima Mohammed and Roger Waters are just the tip of the iceberg, when it comes to the growing numbers of activists and just ordinary people who are speaking out in the streets globally against the horrific treatment of the Palestinian people, who have been fighting to regain their homeland.

The fact that these two outspoken individuals have gained national and international attention will no doubt deepen the condemnation and isolation of the Zionist state and its supporters like U.S. imperialism. This deepening is richly deserved and will eventually help return Palestine to its rightful owners. □



GRAPHIC: PALESTINE LEGAL



Roger Waters

PHOTO: AL JAZEERA

# Boston groups reject Zionist pinkwashing

By Workers World Boston bureau

*In Boston, corporate Pride has been replaced with Zionist Pride. The organizers of Boston Pride 2023 collaborated with the Israeli consulate and other Zionist organizations on a screening of the film "The Holy Closet," which is described as a "celebratory, poignant and often funny presentation of the lives of queer Jews who are reshaping Orthodoxy in Israel." Many organizations in Boston and beyond are acting in solidarity with Boston's Palestinian LGBTQ+ community and resisting the "pinkwashing" of the Israeli apartheid state. Their joint letter is posted below.*

June 21 – We are writing as queer, trans, Two Spirit, non-binary, Palestinian, Arab, Black, Indigenous, white, Latinx, and Jewish people living in the Boston area on occupied Massachusetts, Wampanoag, Nipmuc, and Wabanaki lands.

We were disappointed to learn that Boston Pride for the People chose to co-host a Pride event with the Israeli consulate and other Zionist organizations. This event, framed as a celebration of the experiences of queer Jewish community members, centers the experiences of queer Israeli settlers living on top of Palestinian villages stolen through violent expulsion and colonialism.

This event is part of a broader strategy of recruiting support for the Israeli state by rebranding itself as queer-friendly in an effort to mask the Israeli state's ongoing violence against Palestinians — known as "Brand Israel." The Brand Israel campaign intentionally markets Israel as a "gay-friendly" country and a gay tourism destination, a strategy that queer Palestinians and those in solidarity have termed "Pinkwashing."

The Pinkwashing narrative that Israel is gay-friendly is not only harmful to Palestinians, it is also disingenuous and false. LGBTQ+ marriages are not legal in Israel. Egregiously, the Israeli military threatens and attempts to extort Palestinians based on private information about their gender, sexual history, and medical needs. This practice, which can include threatening to "out" LGBTQ+ Palestinians, displays the violent character of Zionism that is antithetical to queer liberation.

As Al-Qaws, a queer Palestinian organization, writes: "The open inclusion of gay officers in the Israeli occupation army is used as proof of liberal forward-mindedness, but for Palestinians the sexuality of the soldier at a checkpoint makes little difference. They all

wield the same guns, wear the same boots, and maintain the same colonial regime." (alqaws.org, Oct. 18, 2020)

Despite being told why this event would be harmful, Boston Pride for the People (BP4TP) still chose to co-sponsor it with the Israeli Consulate. While professing to be progressive and inclusive of oppressed communities, BP4TP has chosen through its sponsorship of this event to exclude Palestinian queers and their allies, including other Indigenous people, members of other communities of color, and anti-Zionist Jews from the local LGBTQ+ community.

The harm behind this event is further illustrated by the actions of its cosponsors.

For example, Combined Jewish Philanthropies actively funds Israeli settlement projects and has provided \$661,100 to the Boston Police Foundation. Wider Bridge, whose events have been protested across the country, explicitly aims to build support for the state of Israel among queer communities in the U.S.

## Daily violence against Palestinians

This event, along with all pinkwashing and Brand Israel events, obfuscate the daily violence committed against Palestinians. This week, nearly 100 Palestinians were wounded and six were killed by Israeli forces invading Jenin (in the occupied West Bank).

Just last week the Israeli state raided the Ein Beit Al-Mai refugee camp in the city of Nablus, demolishing a home, injuring six Palestinians, and killing 20-year-old Palestinian Khalil Yahya Anis. At least 170 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since the start of this year, at least 21 of them children.

As queer and trans people, and colonized people who are allies of the queer and trans struggle, we know that our history is a history of struggle and resistance. We are still resisting attacks on trans youth and violence against Black and Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Our struggle is also against imperialism and colonialism.

Upon their arrival to Turtle Island, European colonizers not only attempted to destroy Indigenous connections to the

land; they violently criminalized Two-Spirit, non-cisnormative, non-heteronormative, non-nuclear, non-monogamous experiences, reframing these natural ways of being as "deviant." Resisting transphobia and homophobia means resisting colonialism, solidarity with Indigenous peoples, and rejecting these ideas that have been forced on us.

As Marsha P. Johnson (a leader of the 1969 Stonewall uprising) said, there can be "No Pride for some of us without Liberation for all of us." We cannot claim to support queer and trans liberation while passively or actively supporting Israeli violence and colonialism.

## Organizations supporting this letter:

Adalah Justice Project  
Al-Awda New York  
Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine  
Boston Revolutionary Socialists  
Brown Students for Justice in Palestine  
Catalyst Project  
Communist Workers League  
Eyewitness Palestine  
Falastiniyat  
Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice  
IJAN Spain  
Jewish Voice for Peace Boston  
Jewish Voice for Peace Ohio  
Malaya Movement Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Bail Fund  
Massachusetts Trans Political Coalition  
MIT Coalition Against Apartheid  
Muslims for Just Futures  
North American Indian Center of Boston  
Occupation Free DC  
Palestinian Feminist Collective  
Palestinian Youth Movement Boston  
San Diego Leonard Peltier Defense Committee  
Socialist Unity Party  
Stonewall Liberation Organization  
Students United for Palestinian Equality & Return at University of Washington  
Tufts Students for Justice in Palestine  
United American Indians of New England  
U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights  
Wellesley Students for Justice in Palestine  
Women In Struggle – Mujeres En Lucha  
Workers World Party Boston ☐



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[workers.org/tag/palestine](https://workers.org/tag/palestine)

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