



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

Repression used to cover up Tulane's University's role in stealing Gaza's natural gas

written by Workers Voice Socialist Movement
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Protest against Israeli genocide in Gaza at Tulane Univeristy, Oct. 26. Photo: WVSM

On Oct. 26, hundreds of students — as many as half of them Jewish — held a strong rally against Israeli genocide in Gaza, where now over 15,000 Palestinians have died, half of them children. Some faculty, alums, and community supporters also attended. Across the street, a couple dozen Zionists shouted racist chants like “Death to Palestinians.”

A truck passed the rally with passengers waving the Palestinian flag. Zionist thugs provocatively hurled an Israeli flag into the truck only so they could charge the truck with the pretext of retrieving it. When the truck came back around, the Zionists attacked.

A member of Jewish Voice for Peace was arrested on the spot when he attempted to defend the Palestinians. In the next few days, four more arrests were made, including two Palestinians and two students.

Among the Tulane 5, at least one faces a felony hate crime charge. No Zionists were arrested. The arrests created headlines, intimidation, and a green light to assault and harass Arab and Muslim students.

These arrests were premeditated, designed to smear peaceful pro-Palestine demonstrators as violent and anti-Jewish. The day before the rally, the president of Tulane, Michael Fitts, violence-baited the anti-Zionists in a letter sent to all Tulane students, faculty, and staff. The letter stated that Tulane “will not tolerate any threats to the safety and security of our Tulane community.”

His effort to stop attendance backfired, with many Palestine solidarity demonstrators saying they came because of the letter.

<https://nolaworkers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/TU-Israel-Gas.mp4>

Tulane colludes with Israel to steal natural gas from Gaza

With funds from the U.S. Department of Energy, the Israel Ministry of Energy, and the Israel Innovation Authority, Tulane University heads a \$14.2 million project to exploit offshore gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean. Twenty miles off the coast of Gaza, the Gaza Marine Field is estimated to hold over 1 trillion cubic feet of natural gas at an estimated value of \$4.592 billion. Israel cleared the reserve for development in June 2023.

So-called “natural gas” is a significant contributor to global warming. [Just one of Louisiana’s LNG \(Liquified Natural Gas\) terminals](#) under construction, the Calcasieu Pass 2, is projected to produce the equivalent of more than 51 coal plants worth of greenhouse gases each year.

A [leaked document from the Israeli Ministry of Intelligence](#) dated Oct. 13 outlines a plan by the Israeli government to forcibly remove 2.3 million residents of Gaza to tent cities in the northern Sinai desert. Israel has already forced thousands of displaced Palestinians into the Israeli-blockaded Gaza Strip, which has endured at least five major Israeli military assaults since 2008. This is a genocide based on the theft of Palestinian land and resources.

Tulane's \$2.1 billion endowment invested in war profiteers

Tulane derives endowment income from returns on its investments in companies like Lockheed Martin, Chevron, and other war-profiteering corporations. At least \$45 million of these endowment dollars come directly from the State of Louisiana as matching funds.

Through corporate “donations,” many of these companies politically control and determine school policy. For example, the Freeport-McMoran Chair in Environmental Policy is named for one of the world’s largest mining corporations, which is responsible for massive environmental destruction and killings around the world—perhaps most infamously [in West Papua](#).

Tulane takes land, skips out on taxes, pushes our residents

Tulane pays no property taxes and, on top of an original property tax exemption, received an additional \$5 million exemption on new land grabs. They have taken over rental properties, contributing to New Orleans’ housing crisis.

Tulane has directly profited from the takeover of Charity Hospital by 1532 Tulane Partners, a partnership of two developers, CCNO and El-Ad Holdings, an Israeli-based company that has been destroying Palestinian homes for illegal Israeli settlements.

1532 Tulane Partners will get \$80 million in tax credits, \$25 million in tax-exempt

bonds, a \$95 million loan, and \$30 million in equity to finance its plan. Charity Hospital could have been made into affordable housing.

While the workers of New Orleans shoulder some of the highest sales tax rates in the country, Tulane pays no sales taxes. The president of Tulane makes \$2 million a year, and dozens of other university executives live in luxury.

Oil, gas, weapons profits behind suppression of free speech

Across the country, universities, at the behest of their capitalist boards, have expelled, fired, and charged student activists and workers for pro-Palestinian activity. Among the supporters of apartheid Israel are [open Nazis and others on the far right](#). Thirty-two states have passed laws forbidding boycotts of Israel.

Both Israel and the U.S. supported apartheid in South Africa. Tactics of repression were also used against the unstoppable anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and against the worldwide anti-apartheid solidarity movement. Anti-apartheid activists, including Nelson Mandela, were labeled terrorists. University administrations enthusiastically promoted these ideas.

Danger ahead for all movements if we allow repression to continue

Congress is a millionaire's club where the majority of elected officials of both parties receive millions in campaign money from war profiteers and oil and gas companies. Most politicians also have investments in their stocks. The rise of the right, repression, and suppression of free speech can be traced to this enormous control.

The capitalists in this sector of the economy dictate policy at both the federal and state level. Every vote to increase the military budget and supplemental war expenditures increases their control over every aspect of our lives. Climate change, racism, poverty, sexual oppression, and U.S. military and economic intervention all stem from the dictatorship of the war profiteers; we must bring all these struggles

together.

In 1959, when President — and former General — Dwight Eisenhower left office, he made a famous speech about creating the military-industrial complex. Eisenhower described the fusion of all spheres of government, industry, science, and universities with the military. Together with the involvement of the big monopoly banks, this complex has grown to monstrous proportions.

Eisenhower — the commander in chief of the U.S. imperialist war machine — ended with these words: “Beware of the undue influence of the military-industrial complex in civilian affairs.” What Eisenhower described then is a thousand times bigger and more dangerous today.

Like most large universities, Tulane has dozens of links to fossil fuels and the military establishment. These are the interests behind Zionism and the motive behind the false charges brought against the Tulane 5.

Workers Voice calls for the charges against the Tulane 5 to be dropped; for Arab, Muslim, and anti-Zionist Jewish students at Tulane to be protected; for an end to the repression of dissent; and for full academic freedom for pro-Palestine events on campus.

We condemn the wealthy Tulane administration, which grabs housing and land from New Orleanians while provoking Zionist violence and repression.

Drop the charges! Stand with Palestine!

From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!

