

Defend Pro-Palestinian Protesters!

As Israel again escalates its genocidal war in Gaza, it is urgent to take a stand for arrested pro-Palestine protesters in Canada. For the Canadian rulers, like those in the U.S., support for Israel is non-negotiable. So, they have waged a concerted campaign to criminalize those who champion the Palestinian cause, including the right to protest and even to criticize. It is in the direct interest of the working class to oppose these attacks, which target the rights of the vast majority. Among those facing state persecution are:

* Montreal-based left-wing journalist **Yves Engler**, thrown in jail last month for criticizing a rabidly pro-Israel radio personality on social media. In a chilling attack on free speech, Engler faces criminal charges including intimidation and harassment purely for his pro-Palestine public statements. His next court hearing is April 25.

* In Toronto, more than a hundred activists have been rounded up under Project Resolute, an arm of the police hate-crimes unit set up at the behest of NDP mayor Olivia Chow's city government. Among those arrested were the **Indigo 11**, charged with criminal harassment and mischief. Their crime? Putting up posters that accurately accused Indigo CEO Heather Reisman of "funding genocide" via a foundation that has channeled nearly \$200 million to support Israel Defense Forces soldiers. Five of the protesters face a trial later this year.

* Among others targeted in Toronto was **Maged Sameh Hilal Al Khalaf**, arrested in January 2024 for waving the flag of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine at a protest. His charges were dropped three months later. Still under attack is **Tynan Liebert**, a union activist and organizer with the Communist Workers Circle, arrested last spring on bogus charges of assault during a protest outside a fundraiser for Liberal cabinet minister Chrystia Freeland. His trial is set for July 8.

* In Vancouver, the **Samidoun** Palestinian prisoner solidarity network and its international co-ordinator **Charlotte Kates** have been under sustained legal assault. Last October the federal government declared Samidoun a terrorist organization, and several weeks later cops in tactical gear smashed into Kates' home. Zionist organizations have been campaigning for her deportation, along with that of her husband **Khaled Barakat**.

The labour movement and defenders of democratic rights must stand united in defense of these victims of capitalist state repression, whatever their specific political views. That requires taking a stand against the political leaders—Liberal, Tory and NDP alike—who have backed Israel's genocide while unleashing repression at home. Pass motions in your unions, make donations for legal defense, mobilize in protest! A united defense campaign for supporters of the Palestinians could be a step toward a broader platform for defense of the oppressed that reaches across the workers movement. ***Drop all the charges! Down with the ban on Samidoun! An injury to one is an injury to all!***

Contact the PDC at partisandefense.canada@gmail.com. To donate, send an Interac e-transfer to the same address.

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The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste.

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