

: [this article](#) has a better analysis of the Israel lobby, showing how it is a tool of US Imperialism as opposed to the common false idea that Israel is controlling US policy. This makes more sense since Israel is funded by the US. The myth of the all powerful Israel lobby is another way that war mongers in our government shift the blame away from themselves and hide the truth that war is in their economic interest.

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Subject: Re: Virtual Summit to Counter Antisemitism in K-12 Schools

The genocide in Gaza, funded by our tax dollars and supported by our government, has only become more clear and more urgent since we passed our permanent ceasefire resolution in December. Current Casualty figures for Gaza as of 3/11/24: **Killed: at least 31,470 people**, including **more than 12,300 children & 8,400 women**. Injured: more than 72,654, including at least: 8,663 children & 6,327 women. Missing: more than 8,000. This info comes from the Al Jazeera page [Israel-Gaza war in maps and charts: Live tracker](#) which uses Palestine Ministry of Health figures (verified by Lancet study, see below). That page linked above includes figures on the destruction of civilian infrastructure in Gaza as well as casualty figures for the West Bank and Israel. A peer reviewed 12/9/23 [Lancet article concludes that the Palestine Ministry of Health figures for deaths are likely valid and data fabrication implausible](#). This article also states that deaths are likely under-reported due to bodies trapped under rubble or not being brought to morgues and the fact that a previous Palestinian MoH estimate on a 2014 attack was shown to underestimate the number of deaths. [The ICJ ruled that genocide is plausible](#), described multiple documented acts & statements that conform to the UN Genocide Convention definition and ordered Israel to stop those acts (the link above includes links to original statements by ICJ & UN). That ICJ report shows multiple instances of the intent to kill civilians stated by Israeli officials. As bombing continues with [hospitals](#) and [schools](#) destroyed, [funding for UNRWA aid cut off](#), [aid denied entry](#) into Gaza, [mass starvation is imminent unless there is a permanent ceasefire](#).

The origin of this horrific violence is not Hamas or the 10/7/23 attack on Israel. There was [peace between Arabs Muslims, Christians and Jews in Palestine](#) before the Nakba of 1948 when thousands of Palestinians were killed and nearly half driven from their homes. The settlers who committed this crime were Europeans who were backed by British & US Imperialists in a clear case of [settler colonialism or the forced displacement of an indigenous population by an outside group which forms permanent settlements](#). This is the same kind of violent displacement we recognise when we do land acknowledgements at the start of our meetings. Racial/religious/ethnic differences are weaponized to enable [land theft and exploitation for profit by the British and US capitalist ruling classes](#). They supplied the funding, weapons and propaganda that made this possible. [Joe Biden said the US would have to invent an Israel if they didn't have one](#). The history of Palestine / Israel since then has been one of continued land theft by a [racist apartheid regime](#) that has been [propped up by billions in annual US funding](#). This is the source of the violence in Palestine / Israel and the only way to bring peace for all people in the region is to end the apartheid regime, which begins with a permanent ceasefire.

We recognized the tragedy of the deaths of Israelis and Palestinians when the MTA Exec. Committee [signed a union petition in November](#) but the humanitarian crisis continues to worsen, funded and supported by our government with the overwhelming number of casualties being civilians in Gaza as described above. I am proud of our permanent ceasefire motion that passed the board on 12/9 by a supermajority with guest comments (rank & file members) even more overwhelmingly in favor. I am proud of the coalition that came together to make that happen, including members of color and members who had previously been on opposing sides. I hope that we stick to it as the world watches: opposition to this horror is growing and there is a real chance that we can make a difference. Any motions from the board that seek to "correct" the ceasefire motion would only serve the status quo, reduce the possibility that we can end the genocide and justify the attacks on our union (more below).

The claim made by opponents of our ceasefire motion that we should not take action on this issue because it occurs outside the US is beyond insulting. We know that our government spends billions every year on wars abroad including this one in Israel / Palestine. We know that educators, our students and our families all suffer from a lack of affordable housing, healthcare and higher education to name a few of the many needs that could be funded instead of wars that only serve the donor class. Even if this were not the case, there is no justification for funding war crimes. As educators, we are compelled to know something about the world we live in and the idea that we should buy this nonsense really shows just how little regard the bosses have for us.

The summit that we were invited to attend (see 3/7 email that started this thread) is sponsored by The Lappin Foundation, The ADL, and The American Jewish Committee (AJC). While they claim to support Jewish people, all 3 orgs are well connected to the mostly non Jewish ruling class and are part of the Israel lobby: explicitly dedicated to supporting the apartheid state of Israel. [The Lappin Foundation led an attack on the Unitarian Universalist Minister](#) and others in the congregation for daring to host a film that was critical of Israel and the unwavering US support for it. It was founded by a real estate magnate in Beverly, MA and is [best known for providing trips to Israel](#). **The ADL has a long history of [anti Black & anti Arab racism and support for South African & Israeli apartheid](#)**. Most recently, the ADL has led the way on using false charges of antisemitism to attack Palestinian rights activists when they [claimed that protests calling for a ceasefire and Palestinian liberation were anti semitic with no evidence provided](#). The ADL is also central to the recent push to enforce the [IHRA definition of antisemitism that makes criticism of Israel a hate crime](#). Jeffrey Blankfort, a longtime critic of the Israel Lobby, reports that [AJC operates as the "State Department" of the lobby, focusing on influencing foreign leaders and their organizations](#). The [American Jewish Committee page](#) has this quote *"AJC has truly become a global player... and a powerful advocate for the Jewish people and the Jewish state."* — ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BENJAMIN NETANYAHU. The Israel lobby also [played a major role in supporting the disastrous wars in the Mid-East](#).

The [1/23 BESE hearing \(video here\)](#) referred to in the 3/7 email above featured over an hour of testimony in support of enforcing the IHRA definition of antisemitism described in the paragraph above. [Andrea Silbert](#), currently on the board of the EOS foundation and on the Outreach Committee neglected to mention that she is on the Outreach Committee for ADL New England (see above paragraph) and a former financial analyst with [Morgan Stanley](#) which [profits from the war in Palestine](#). She said that the wave of **antisemitism is based on anti Israel sentiment** and there was a **“Concerted campaign to delegitimize Israel”** and **“The Concerted campaign has gotten into K-12, 1st with BDS and now with this curricula”** (referring to the [MTA 12/9/23 motion](#) on curriculum resources for Israel & occupied Palestine). Another quote: ***“We can’t be teaching that there are oppressed and oppressors, that there are colonists and colonized” “That’s (IHRA Definition of antisemitism) essential for identifying and tracking, it’s essential to track hate crimes and hate speech.”*** [Robert Leikind](#) of the American Jewish Committee (see above paragraph). He said Said [Liberated Ethnic Studies](#) is a **“pernicious form” of antisemitism** and that proponents of LES will call it ethnic studies, **strongly implying that all ethnic studies are suspect of these sins**. One of the community members said **“The Israeli military is the most morally responsible in the world. I know because I served in it.”** Half of the people who testified on this issue were from pro Israel lobbying groups and none of them refrained from mentioning support for Israel or Islealis. See my [full writeup of this testimony with a link to the video and the response from Palestinian advocates here](#). It seems clear that the freedom to teach about difficult history that affects our members and students is under attack by these groups.

I hope we will hold the line on our support for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and not do anything to justify the attacks on our union and on people who are struggling for peace. The false accusations of antisemitism and callous disregard for Palestinian lives must be opposed. MTA members and our students have family members in Palestine who have been killed or are barely surviving as they face starvation and ethnic cleansing and we cannot look away. I meet with Palestinian and Arab Americans every week when we stand out on the streets of Quincy and Braintree along with other union members and community members including many anti zionists Jews who are saying: not in our name and never again for anyone. I've learned so much from them and in spite of the horror, we have hope as many who pass us in the street show their support. I hope also that we will take a stand against the attacks on public education, our freedom to teach and freedom to speech coming from the same elites who are supporting the genocide. This is hard to bear for many people and I am sorry for the suffering on all sides of this conflict. None of us started this but together we can make a better world.

Solidarity!

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