

# WRITTEN REVOLUTION



VOLUME I  
FEBURARY 2024 //



COVER ART BY: NADINE ZAZA ©



## About Us

Written Revolution is a publication intended to allow the unempowered voices on campus to share their creative projects in a collective framework. Fundamentally, this publication platforms revolutionary thought on campus - we believe that writing and art are among the most powerful tools for conducting a revolution. We are aligned with the liberation of all oppressed peoples, with global indigenous rights movements, with people-oriented philosophies and practices, and with anti-capitalist sentiment. In particular, we hope to spotlight projects that engage with culture and community by producing radical shifts away from the hierarchical and individualistic.

We share essays, poems, sketches, cartoons, and many other forms of content in order to further the liberatory frame of mind. Written Revolution is open to those who support our cause, and our content submission is open to all MIT community members. We also summarize revolutionary actions and activities taken on campus to further the call to liberation, be it through student unions, grassroots movements and demonstrations, or large-scale organizing. We are here to encourage such collective action on our campus. We are the revolution, and we are writing our own history.

## Get involved



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Instagram: @mitwrittenrevolution

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Writing for the Revolution *by Zeno*
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ An Open Letter to Sally Kornbluth *by Aaliya Hussain*
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Breaking News: Special Supression Edition  
*by Khaleel Al-Adhami*
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ Art and Culture in a Time of Erasure  
*by Nadine Zaza*
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Three, Two, One *by Layal Barakat*
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Recap of the MLK Gala Action
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ Austin Cole's MLK Gala Speech *by Austin Cole*
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ On the Spirituality of Struggle  
*by Eesha Banerjee*
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Closing

# WRITING FOR THE REVOLUTION

by Zeno



The Israeli occupation and oppression of Palestine represents one of the great injustices of our time. As renowned Palestinian activist and scholar Edward Said alluded, the struggle for Palestinian liberation incorporates both ideas and military actions. We have witnessed the asymmetry of power between Israel's military might enabled by the support of Western powers, and the Palestinian people stripped of basic rights to live with dignity. But we have also witnessed the asymmetry of narratives – the stories, perspectives and shared understandings that shape how this struggle is perceived. Reclaiming control of the Palestinian narrative is itself an act of empowerment and resistance against structural erasure.

As students, scholars and conscientious global citizens affiliated with MIT, we possess a unique opportunity and moral responsibility in this domain. MIT helps supply the technological tools of occupation through extensive partnerships with military and technology firms that enable the machinery of oppression. As detailed in the Scientists Against Apartheid pledge initiated by MIT students, workers and alumni, at least 8 MIT professors directly receive funding from the Israeli Ministry of Defense for their research, receiving over \$2 million in funding. Major corporations like Lockheed Martin, Boeing, HP and Dell as well as Project Nimbus involving Amazon and Google, provide the software, data analytics, computing hardware and advanced weapons technology sustaining systematic human rights violations against Palestinians.

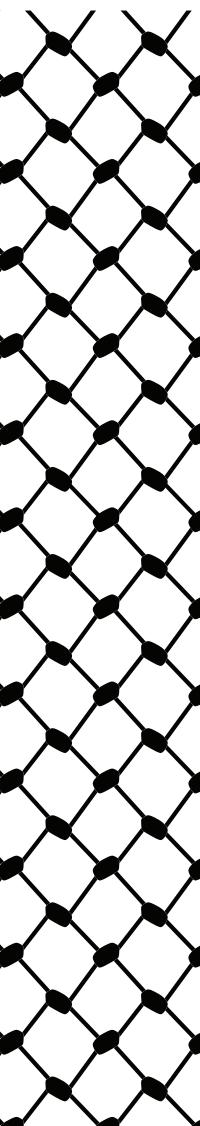
By leveraging these partnerships, MIT is complicit in the web of military-academic-industrial complexes underwriting Israeli apartheid. Our university forms a node in the networks of imperial domination that subordinate academic inquiry to structures of power, profit and oppression. And through its authority as a globally leading scientific research institution, it helps legitimize the ideological frameworks obscuring the truth of Palestinian dispossession.

As members of the MIT community, we bear profound ethical duties to refuse and resist this complicity. As the Scientists Against Apartheid pledge affirms, we must withhold our scientific labor, innovation and creativity from the destruction of Palestinian lives, livelihoods and knowledge systems. Until MIT ceases partnerships enabling the occupation, we will not work for or conduct research supporting entities that perpetrate crimes against humanity. These principles represent baseline ethical obligations. However, withdrawing our skills from the institutional machinery is but the first move. We have another moral duty to enact: contributing those capacities in service of justice.

This points us to the foundational purpose of our proposed grassroots publication. We wish to build an independent media platform showcasing perspectives and narratives typically excluded from mainstream coverage on Palestine. This serves two functions: first, to counter the systematic erasure and distortion of Palestinian voices and experiences in Western media narratives that reduce a story of anti-colonial struggle to one of religious conflict or terrorism. And second, to undermine MIT's authority, and mainstream Western media writ large, as a producer and arbitrator of knowledge on geopolitical issues by democratizing discourse.

At MIT, we are called to become leaders in global progress - we each have a hand in defining what that means for the world. In the pages that follow, members of our community give us a glimpse into a radical vision of ethical change and moral commitment, here in the belly of the beast. Read on, and remember: **THE REVOLUTION STARTS WITH YOU.**





# **AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT KORNBLUTH**

By Aaliya Hussain



## **Context**

On Saturday, February 17th, MIT junior Aaliya Hussain penned a piercing email to our university President, Sally Kornbluth, reflecting on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail". This open email, circulated around the community, directly addresses the irony of the MIT administration claiming to honor MLK's legacy while continuing to abuse policies in a manner exactly antithetical to his struggle. As a further irony, we note that members of the CAA participated in a collective reading of "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" outside the IDHR offices during the IAP to protest the flurry of biased investigations launched by that department earlier in the month, seemingly to preempt an impending subpoena from Congress for documentation of punitive measures taken against pro-Palestinian organizers. Despite the fact that the protest was entirely peaceful, even educational, and featured zero interactions with IDHR staff, MIT administration responded to this protest by filing a no-contact order against all members of CAA. This order, which is still in effect, prohibits all members of CAA from contacting IDHR directly as members of CAA. Even in an individual capacity, any member of CAA who experiences harassment or discrimination is required to run their complaint by Senior Associate Dean David Randall for legitimacy prior to making contact. This invention of a different intra-MIT legal system for CAA members suggests that the administration really does not understand what "Apartheid" or "suppression" mean. Aaliya enlightens them in her letter below.

Dear President Kornbluth,

I hope that this email finds you well.

Over the past week, MIT has been vibrant. On Monday, the Coalition for Palestine organized a beautiful demonstration against the bombing of Rafah, the current “safe zone” for 1.5 million Palestinian refugees. Yesterday, the Black Students’ Union revived a decades-long tradition of marching through the Infinite Corridor to reflect upon and carry forward MLK’s work and ideals. Tonight, dear friends of mine will speak at the Institute’s gala honoring MLK. In a time of so much suffering and injustice, the fact that I am surrounded by such moments feels like a bittersweet luxury.

I think often of MLK’s work in these moments, and in light of tonight’s gala, I wished to share afew thoughts on MLK’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” which I have studied and cherished since my high school days:

*“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”*

Every time I open my eyes and ears to news about world events, news of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, which has killed nearly 29,000 Palestinians and injured over 68,000 Palestinians, is inescapable. As I am a US citizen and an MIT student, the network of mutuality that ties me to the Palestinians is especially dense. My government bankrolls and supplies the weapons for occupation, genocide, and apartheid, as per its own reports. My university produces the science for occupation, genocide, and apartheid, as per its own records.

*“You deplore the demonstrations that are presently taking place in Birmingham. But I am sorry that your statement did not express a similar concern for the conditions that brought the demonstrations into being. I am sure that each of you would want to go beyond the superficial social analyst who looks merely at effects and does not grapple with underlying causes.”*

**LETTER CONTINUES**



*Left: King is ready for a mug shot in Montgomery, Alabama, after his 1956 arrest while protesting the segregation of the city's buses. His leadership of the successful 381-day bus boycott brought him to national attention.*

*Source | The Atlantic | Don Cravens / The Life Images Collection / Getty; Bettmann / Getty*

The MIT administration deeply deplores every single protest that the Coalition for Palestine organizes in solidarity with a people facing genocidal military aggression. But despite all of our calls, the MIT administration has yet to even acknowledge, much less express concern about, the genocide and complicity that have forced the Coalition to protest. Science, in good part, is based upon establishing causal relationships, and the leaders of an Institute dedicated to science should certainly be capable of linking cause and effect as they relate to the Coalition's protests.

*"Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creativetension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored."*

The Coalition's protests are our path towards a negotiation over the true stakes of the issues we care about. The MIT administration has consistently refused to confront the issues of MIT's complicity in occupation, genocide, and apartheid against the Palestinian people, instead choosing to create administrative distractions each time the issues are raised. We know, however, that with enough tension on our campus against our deep complicity, this administration will no longer be able to ignore the true issues.

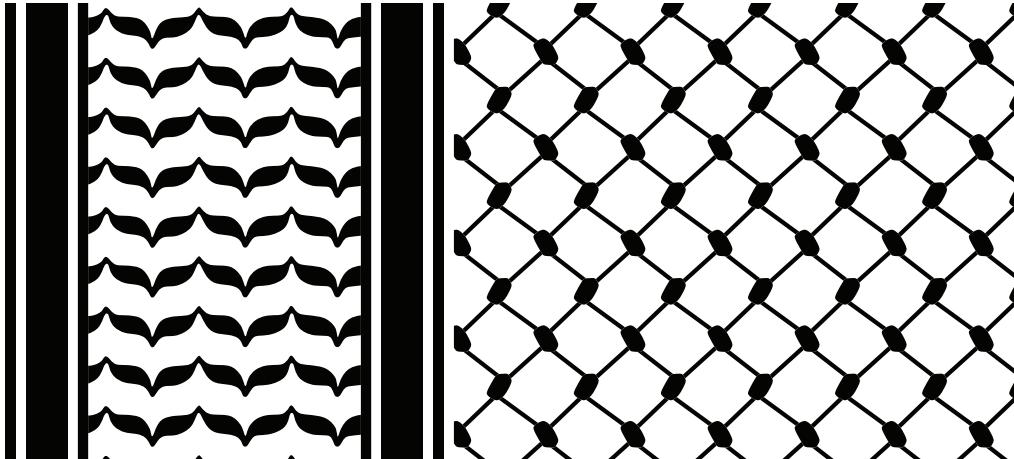
*"One may well ask, "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just laws, and there are unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "An unjust law is no law at all."*

The Coalition knows very well that laws, rules, and orders should not be blindly obeyed. Not all of them lead us towards a better world, and some will route us towards the worst of immorality. Whenever the MIT administration decides to blindside students with new "policies," "guidelines," or "rules," students like myself must be alert and critically examine whether we are being guided towards justice or injustice.

*"An unjust law is a code that a majority inflicts on a minority that is not binding on itself. This is difference made legal."*

When the Coalition Against Apartheid publicly denounced MIT's attacks on student organizers, MIT administrators accused students of violating confidentiality policies that are supposedly meant to protect us.

*LETTER CONTINUES*





Yet you, as the president of the Institute and thus part of the minority of the MIT community that holds the majority of the power, do not seem to be bound by the same confidentiality policies. This difference undermines the legitimacy of the Institute's rules.

*"An unjust law is a code inflicted upon a minority which that minority had no part in enacting or creating because it did not have the unhampered right to vote."*

*Left: In 1967, King serves out the sentence from his arrest four years earlier in Birmingham, Alabama*  
Source | The Atlantic | Don Cravens / The Life Images Collection / Getty; Bettmann / Getty

The MIT administration enacted “policies” and “guidelines” for protest without consulting the community members who organize protests. As a result, these new rules are disconnected from both the Institute’s abstract commitment to free expression and the reality of the causes that drive MIT community members to protest. No part of the newest rules, for instance, demonstrates any understanding of the concept of an emergency situation, such as the bombing of a densely populated refugee encampment, that would spark a protest among conscientious community members.

*“There are some instances when a law is just on its face and unjust in its application. For instance, I was arrested Friday on a charge of parading without a permit. Now, there is nothing wrong with an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade, but when the ordinance is used to preserve segregation and to deny citizens the First Amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and peaceful protest, then it becomes unjust.”*

MIT’s policies allowing for time, place, and manner restrictions on free expression can certainly be legitimate, but they become unjust when they are used to preserve the Institute’s complicity in occupation, genocide, and apartheid and to selectively deny members of the Coalition Against Apartheid their rights to express their opposition to crimes against humanity. They become unjust when they catch the vibrancy of the MIT community in their crosshairs and are used to limit the artistry of student performance artists, strip student leaders of their positions on their birthdays, and suppress fundraising for humanitarian aid to the last remaining safe zone for a population facing genocide.

Thank you for your time and attention to these thoughts. I look forward to tonight’s gala.

Sincerely,  
Aaliya Hussain



# SPECIAL SUPPRESSION EDITION

# Breaking News

VOL I - no.101

New Issue on MIT Issues

## MIT researchers identify a new contagious disease: *Demonstrations*

By: Khaleel Al-Adhami

MIT researchers have identified new cases of a contagious disease. This disease, which was unknown to many before, has been called “Demonstrations”.

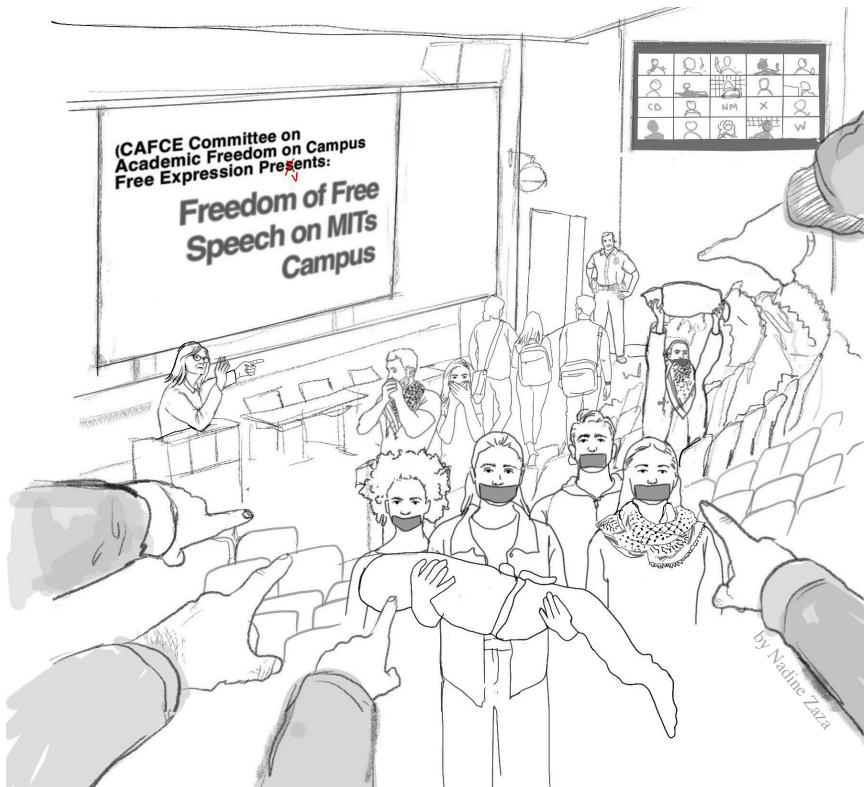
The researchers have identified symptoms of the disease. Including, but not limited to, being conscientious, caring about others, educating others, reading the news, and being arrested by the police.

The MIT researchers couldn't conclude where the disease first originated. Some have pointed out that the current ongoing genocide of Palestinians could be the problem, to which they were fired from their job.

Due to its high contagiousness, MIT has decided to use its fleet of otherwise useless police officers to create a highly secure containment of the disease. So far we have identified a few (about 150) in lobby 7, but others might have it and look like reasonable human beings. Be aware, as reasonable as they sound, you must avoid them at all costs.

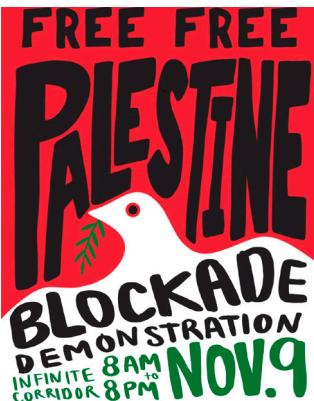
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This is purely satirical. Any parallels to the real world are purely drawn by your imagination.



## What should MIT do about the freedom *NOT* to speak?

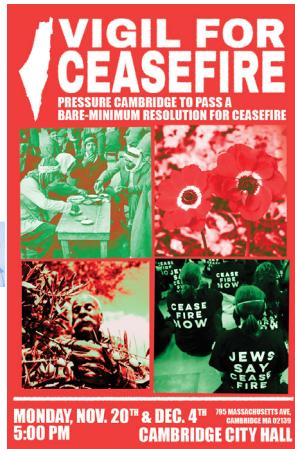
On Wednesday, February 21st, a coalition of students and graduate workers attended the monthly institute faculty meeting, open to all MIT community members. Besides faculty, only a select group of students and staff are allowed to speak. As the students filed in silently, an administrator approached them and said their presence made her “nervous” and that she was “scared”, despite having every right to be present. At the meeting, the one-week old ad-hoc Committee on Academic Freedom and Campus Expression underscored their commitment to free speech with a bold first step: both co-chairs of the CAFCE and president Sally Kornbluth voted in favor of kicking out all attending students prior to any discussion about free speech policy. Despite attendance of over 90 faculty on Zoom, the motion passed with only 42 votes due to the savvy political strategy of not tallying the votes against. Faculty later accused the students of bringing “drums” intended to disrupt the meeting; these were in fact body-bag props, representing over 13,000 children murdered so far in the genocide in Gaza. The students filed out silently in protest of their silencing on campus and were met by three MIT police officers who stood guard at the door.



## ILAN PAPPÉ ILAN PAPPE

STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION:  
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

VIRTUAL TEACHIN | FRI 12/15  
ROOM 4-237  
12:00PM - 1:30PM  
PIZZA PROVIDED



# ART AND CULTURE IN A TIME OF ERASURE

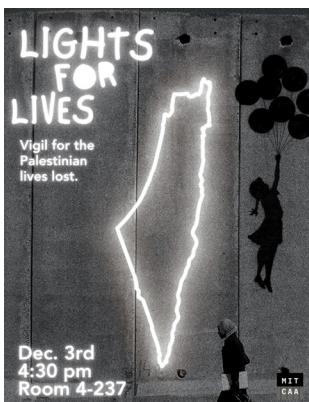
by Nadine Zaza

The systemic appropriation and erasure of indigenous cultures and histories, as witnessed in the Palestinian context, epitomize the tactics employed by modern colonial-settler states. The creation of Israel in 1948, marked by the forced displacement of a significant portion of Palestine's indigenous population, serves as a stark example of this phenomenon. Far from mere expressions of nationalistic pride, these actions are components of a calculated state policy aiming to obliterate the Palestinian identity from both historical and current memory. This cultural eradication, running parallel to the physical displacement of Palestinians, is a strategic element of a wider endeavor to erase Palestinian existence altogether.

Scholars such as Ilan Pappe and Nur Masalha describe this deliberate obliteration of Palestinian culture and history as “memocide.” The scope of this theft spans from land to cultural symbols—literature, art, traditional attire—systematically co-opted to forge a new identity atop the remnants of the displaced. The ongoing plunder of Palestinian cultural treasures and the rebranding of their cuisine underscore how cultural appropriation extends the narrative of occupation and legitimizes settler colonialism, revealing the foundational insecurities of such regimes and underscoring the critical need to address these historical wrongs.

Against this backdrop of dispossession, a robust movement of resistance has flourished, powered by Palestinians and allies who leverage art and design as tools of defiance. We engage our creative forces to not only envision but also articulate what a free Palestine symbolizes, shaping the narrative of resistance and fostering a deep, shared appreciation for Palestine's vibrant culture. Our artistic pursuits are not just acts of expression but powerful protests and celebrations of Palestinian tenacity and heritage.

To those ready to channel their intentions into tangible resistance, I urge you to engage creatively and with conviction. Utilize the might of your imagination and your artistic talents to challenge prevailing narratives and contribute to the quest for liberation. Let your creativity be a force for transformation, a bold declaration of resilience, and a rallying cry for collective endeavor for a free, free Palestine.



# **FROM THE RIVER**



©One Rad Latina

# **TO THE SEA**

**FREE PALESTINE**

**Art Against Apartheid Poster Project**  
Top | To the Sea by ONE Rad Latina  
Right | Apartheid No More by Seena  
Mavaddat

**THE CHAINS HAVE BEEN BROKEN.  
THE PRISON GATES WILL FLY OPEN.**



**APARTHEID  
NO MORE!**

# THREE, TWO, ONE

by Layal Barakat

Just because the war started, life did not stop  
Mothers welcome their babies into an unforgiving world  
Pairs of tiny eyes blink slowly at loud noises they do not understand  
But their eyes are deep and traumatized  
Already hardened by violence they might not outlive  
They stare in silence ahead, forwards, upwards  
Perhaps they can see angels protecting them in these brief moments  
Perhaps they can see their untimely demise, the nearing end of their short lives  
Perhaps they already feel the dirt suffocating them, burying them alive  
“For what crime was I killed”, they cry  
They cry, seeking food where there is none  
Because mama hasn't eaten in days and won't for a little while  
She holds all three of her tiny triplets in her lap and tells me how she gave birth in the school  
With no anaesthetic, no medicine, no family  
Nothing left but God and the cameras  
I can't stop the thoughts when they arrive as she is still speaking to me  
I can't help but think to myself, quietly  
How does a mother choose  
Which of her children to carry  
When she hears the droning warplanes  
When the bombs start falling over their heads  
Before the roof collapses on top of everything she's ever had?



# MLK GALA ACTION

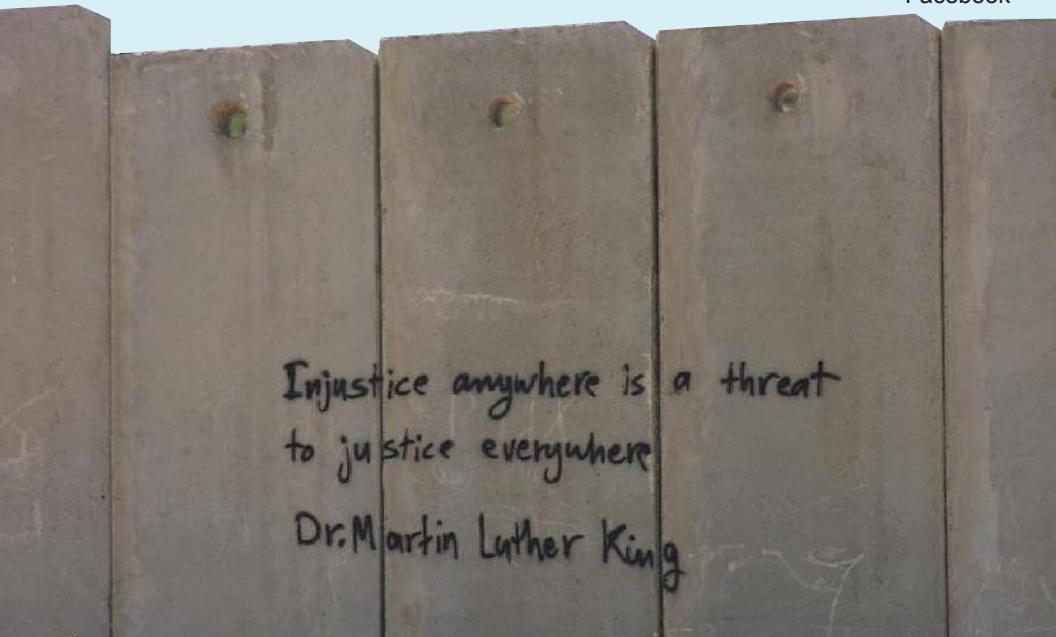
On Saturday, February 17th, the MIT Coalition For Palestine (C4P), an alliance of 14 student and staff/faculty groups on campus, coordinated two actions at the 50th annual gala celebrating and honoring the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This event, hosted by MIT's president Sally Kornbluth, aims to celebrate the life and legacy of the inspiring civil rights activist and revolutionary whose words echo throughout our history books. On Saturday, the Black Student Union (BSU) and Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) led the C4P in action to ask a very pointed question: are we at MIT truly respecting the legacy of MLK?

Prior to the start of the event, community members gathered at a rally outside the Boston Cambridge Marriott hotel, the venue of the gala, to lodge their protest against MIT administration's recent suspension of the student group Coalition Against Apartheid (CAA), which has been actively campaigning on campus and locally to end the genocide of the Palestinian people being perpetrated by the Israeli government and military. On the night of Sunday, Feb. 11th, Israel resumed its carpet bombing campaign in Rafah, an act of aggression which even United States spokespeople have said would not receive American support. These sudden events prompted the CAA to lead an emergency rally on Monday, 2/12 in response to the escalation of bombing in Rafah, where 1.5 million Palestinians have been forced to set up makeshift refugee shelters to flee the Israeli aggression.. Despite attempts at open communication with administrators to ensure safety, the CAA was subsequently suspended as a student organization, and 13 of its student leaders were temporarily banned from all leadership positions on campus, even those without any relation to CAA activities. Additionally, these student leaders face disciplinary charges which could include "permanent suspension", putting their international members at risk of deportation. President Kornbluth communicated the details of the group suspension in a public video despite an institutional policy of confidentiality in disciplinary cases.

In response to this blatant suppression, the BSU and BGSA led the coalition in a rally on Saturday, Feb 17th. Addressing over 150 community members as well as the gala attendees entering the hotel, the speakers noted the deep irony produced by having MIT administrators participate in an event honoring MLK, whose legacy of protest, direct action, and civil disobedience is perhaps best exemplified at MIT through the Coalition. The gala itself, organized by staff, faculty, and students who form a crucial support network for Black students and community members at MIT, represents an inspiring effort to honor the rich history of Black liberation; however, the C4P made it clear that they find the attendance of MIT administrators who have enforced suppressive free speech policies to be an absolute disrespect to the memory, legacy, and ongoing struggle of this movement. To confront these administrators with their contradictions, student attendees of the gala participated in a resolute display of solidarity and protest, voicing their support for the CAA and making the following demands:

- 1** Reinstate the CAA and retract threats to student organizers.
- 2** Remove the suppressive free-speech policies (e.g., “time, place, and manner” restrictions) which have been used to suppress protest on campus.
- 3** Cut research and corporate ties with the Israeli Ministry of Defense.

Wall Picture from NYC2Palestine on Facebook

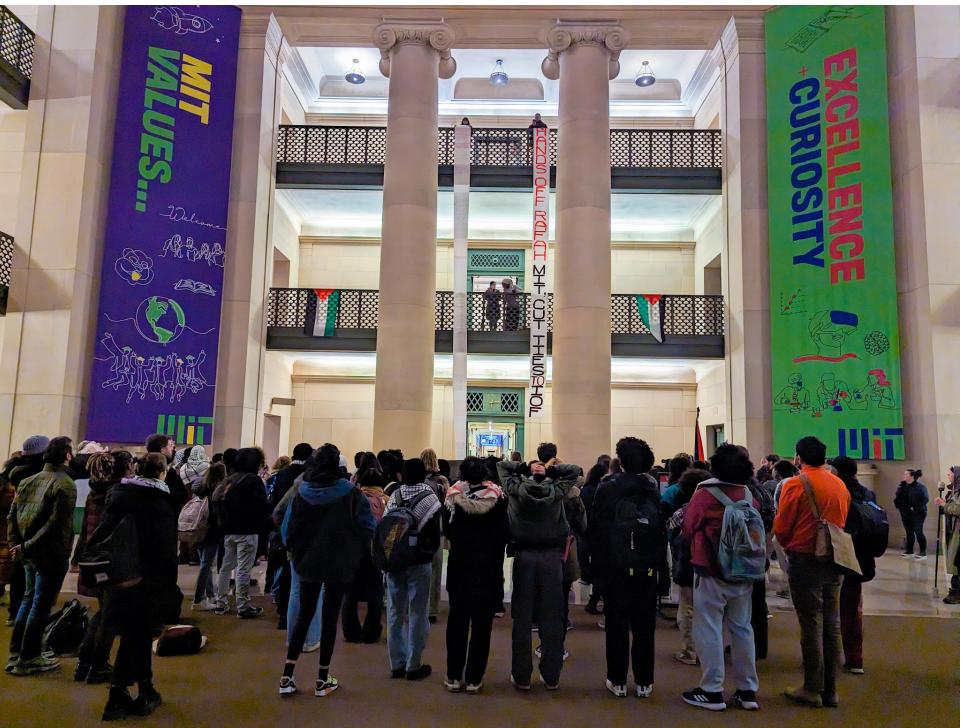


Injustice anywhere is a threat  
to justice everywhere

Dr. Martin Luther King

Inside the gala, a disruption occurred during the end of remarks given by Austin Cole, the graduate student speaker for the event and a Masters student in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP) and Sloan School of Management. Austin called on the attendees to rise from their seats in honor of Dr. King's legacy and words. He asked that they continue to stay standing if they agreed with additional statements, which connected Dr. King's struggle with the genocide in Gaza and unjust reprisals on MIT's campus. Most of the crowd stood throughout, though notable MIT administrators sat down once the CAA was referenced. As people stood, students handed out pamphlets detailing the hypocrisy of the administration and outlining the C4P's demands. Finally, dozens of students and MIT community members joined Austin on stage in front of the crowd, linking arms while reciting a joint statement. A transcript of this powerful speech, including the disruption, can be found in the following pages

photo submitted anonymously of the  
Feb.12th Emergency Rally for Rafah



# MLK GALA SPEECH

by Austin Cole

Good evening, my name is Austin Cole, and I'm a grad student in urban planning and business here at MIT. I am here by the grace of God, the will of my mother, and the love of my beautiful partner.

I believe part of developing both intelligence and character is the process of crafting our place in this world. This process is fundamentally about how we relate to others, to the earth, to the moral universe, and to ourselves. In his letter from a Birmingham jail, Dr. King wrote: "All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." This quote has always resonated, but it feels especially pertinent today when we are in another extended battle for the soul of this country and campus.

Dr. King's idea of relationship and mutuality came up for me while I was a college summer intern at the state department. I remember sitting in a conference room watching as the news flipped between the murder of Mike Brown in Ferguson and the so-called migrant crisis at the southern border. As a Black man in the US studying political economy in Latin America, I felt the connections of the physical violence of a state murder of an unarmed Black teenager with the structural violence of our foreign policy and immigration system. Those connections might not have solidified had I not offered to my team of Latin American experts that maybe we should think about solutions to the migrant crisis in the context of the US destabilizing those countries from the 50s until today. As you can imagine, I was met with silence and blank stares and after a moment the conversation changed. This was an early career reminder that the institutions that depend on upholding structural inequalities are not going to provide the solutions. How could I honestly be in relation with the masses at our border or the crowds in Ferguson while upholding such institutional norms?



Feb.17th photo from Rally outside of the MLK Gala

It was in Dr. King's understanding of mutuality and relationship that late last year I suggested to senior MIT administrators that a reason the institution struggles to confront racism is because it is intertwined with a racist, violent, and unfortunately profitable military project. Like most universities, MIT remains comfortably enmeshed within the three evils of US society that Dr. King decried in a 1967 speech: racism, excessive materialism, and militarism. Yet, the suggestion that MIT might start to divorce itself from militarism, just like my 2014 comment at the state department, was met with dismissal.

Such dismissals only forestall a more just future, and because of this it is incumbent upon me and others to struggle inside and especially outside of these institutions of extreme intelligence and questionable character. I feel called to oppose the complicity of this institution and others in the genocide in Gaza, the ongoing Nakba, the criminalization of our youth, and deadly militarism at home and abroad. While I am called to oppose this loudly, we all have different roles to play in this long struggle of societal reconstruction. If we don't see a role for ourselves in advancing this reconstruction, then we consign ourselves to complicity in genocides and injustices because we are benefiting from their violence. While this is difficult, to truly honor the legacy of Dr. King, some things must be done because they are right despite, as he said, being quote, "Neither safe nor politic nor popular."

In closing, Dr. King told us, and young people of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee showed us, that we need to be “creatively maladjusted” to the institutions that direct or are complicit in the injustices we fight, or else we perpetuate their injustices ourselves. For me this has meant organizing on and outside of this campus and I have found a beloved community in doing so.

I hope that from bottom up, this spirit of justice will emerge from all corners of this institute because thus far we've failed to heed the warning of Dr. King that, “When scientific power outruns moral power we end up with guided missiles and misguided men”. At minimum, I hope that each of us considers what it means to honor Dr. King and to carry the torch of justice while within this institution or others. As for me and mine, we choose to fight and build collectively. Like Dr. King, we choose to be among those creatively maladjusted to injustice wherever it may surface. I hope that you will join us.

And to show that you will not be alone, and in the name of education being both intelligence and character, I would ask everyone who is able to please rise if you believe in the dream of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's and his words that ‘injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere’, if you cannot stand please raise your glass

[audience stood]

Now please stay standing if you believe that standing against injustice, in whatever role you can do so in, aligns with your moral character and values

[during this time, students began handing out pamphlets]

Please stay standing if you believe in Dr. King's legacy that supporting or remaining neutral to the genocide and destruction of a people's land qualifies as an injustice

Please stay standing if you think it is reasonable for people of conscience – students/staff/faculty/community members – to fight for the beloved community by protesting against injustice and institutional complicity without being threatened with suspension, expulsion, or firing

[MIT administrators sat]

I thank everyone who's standing, and I invite all of you to come up to the front and stand together.

[students, faculty, and staff began walking to the front of the stage]

For those of you who have sat down or lowered your glasses, I ask you to grapple with why you did so: is it fear, worry, uncertainty, disagreement? These are understandable feelings, and can be overcome by solidarity, bravery, moral clarity, and a willingness to learn. I encourage all of us to think about what we are willing to stand for and in this time of a genocide in which this institution is directly complicit, what are we comfortable with not standing for or supporting? For example, are we comfortable with CAA student members not being allowed to use conventional pathways to report harassment after reading Dr King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" as a form of protest against suppressive free speech policies on campus?

On behalf of the large movement inside and outside this room, I thank the MLK Committee for your steadfast work and the love and care that you have shown us students and this institute despite all the challenges of this year, I thank those of you who stood or raised your glass for your solidarity and bravery, I thank those who may not have stood but will consider the gravity of this space and legacy and find a future role for themselves



Pamphlets that were passed out to MLK Gala attendees



For those gathered up here at the front, we will read a short joint statement, please repeat after me:

We members of the MIT community [repeated by students at front]

- students, staff, faculty - [repeated]  
recognize the importance of honoring Dr. King's legacy of action [repeated].

We recognize the work of the MIT Coalition Against Apartheid [repeated],

both historically and today [repeated],  
to free us from complicity [repeated]

In colonial and oppressive military projects [repeated].

MIT admin has tried to silence the CAA [repeated],

condemning its protests and sanctioning its organizers [repeated].

Dr. King knew [repeated] that unjust rules never compel those in power [repeated], and even just rules can be applied unjustly [repeated].

In his words [repeated],

"we do not need allies [repeated]  
more devoted to order than to justice." [repeated]

We call on MIT [repeated]:

to reinstate the CAA [repeated],  
retract threats against student leaders [repeated],

and to remove its unjust protest policy [repeated].

This is a minimum to honor Dr. King's legacy [repeated].

**We are all CAA! [repeated]**

Thank you all, now a moment of silence for those facing bombardment and murder in Rafah, those throughout Gaza under genocide, those in all of Palestine facing colonization and oppression, all Palestinians throughout the diaspora, and those facing the end results of materialism and militarism from the streets of Boston to Haiti to the Congo to Sudan and beyond. Please bow your heads. [audience bows heads]

Thank you, as we all take our seats, let us remember the words of Dr. King: "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it."

Free the people.

Free the land.

**And free, free Palestine! [repeated]**



# **ON THE SPIRITUALITY OF STRUGGLE**

by Eesha Banerjee

"Ektu shanti peli ki?" My dad asked me if the pujo had made me feel any calmer, stronger. He told me that it was the only reason he had done it, to give me some peace of mind. A pujo, at its best, is a communal act of faith. The community gathers the materials. The community practices the rituals. The community makes the food. The community eats. The community listens. The community laughs.

For pushpanjali, the community stands together with flowers in their hands. The community recites the mantras together, line by line. The community offers the flowers back to the universe. Their faith in the future.

The pujo I performed on February 18 th was for Maa Saraswati. The goddess of knowledge, of education. A pujo for Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s true purpose of education, for intelligence plus character.

The pujo I performed on February 18 th took place in two places. It took place in a basement in Birmingham; everyone I grew up with gathered together and swimming in garlands; mantras whispered through the phone. It also took place in the Marriott hotel in Cambridge. Words of support, solidarity, and a commitment to keep struggling together. Flames in the cold. And mantras spoken through a microphone, filling ballrooms.

"I would ask everyone who is able to to please rise if you believe in the dream of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and his words that 'injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.'





The community stood.

“Please stay standing if you think that it is reasonable for people of conscience – students/staff/faculty/community members – to fight for the beloved community by protesting against injustice and institutional complicity without being threatened with suspension, expulsion, or firing.”



The community gathered the flowers in their hands.

“For those gathered up here at the front, we will read a short joint statement, please repeat after me.”



The community recited the mantras, line by line.



“Dr. King knew that unjust rules never compel those in power, and even just rules can be applied unjustly. In his words, ‘we do not need allies more devoted to order than justice.’”

The community offered its hopes, its visions, its demands “to others, to the earth, to the moral universe, and to ourselves,” in Austin’s words. We engaged with the process of crafting our place in this world. An act of communal faith.





At the BSU's march the day before to honor the legacy of Dr. King, Nicole reminded us to hold onto the spirituality of marching, of action, of collective struggle. I have begun to think that this is the truest spirituality that I know. Through the phone, as my dad called Maa Saraswati into the basement in Birmingham, I called her into the Marriott in Cambridge. Arms linked with the MIT community, I prayed for the people of Rafah, all of Palestine, and the world, from Boston to Haiti to the Congo to Sudan and beyond. I prayed for an MIT free of complicity with Dr. King's three evils of society: racism, materialism, and militarism.

Today, I don't feel peace of mind. Peace of mind is unachievable in times of genocide. But I do feel calmer, stronger. I am reminded what real faith is for. Real faith, real pujo, real community, equips us with clarity, strength, and resolve. Real faith keeps us on our feet, fighting to do whatever we can for the world we hope to see, one that includes a free Palestine.

Thank you to the MLK Gala Planning Committee, Austin, the MIT BSU, the MIT BGSA, the coalition at MIT and beyond, and the Palestinian people for keeping that faith alive.

Until liberation,  
Esha



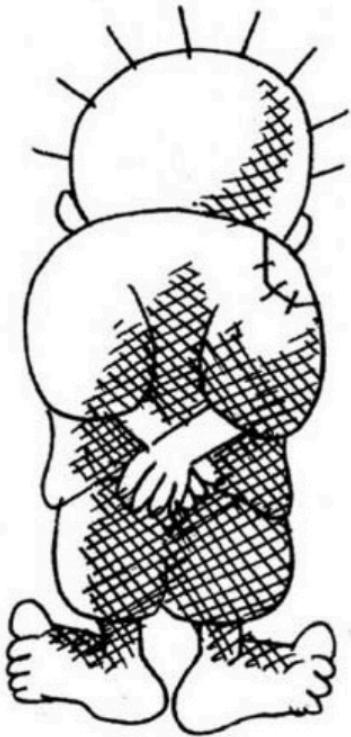


# CLOSING

By Zeno

Our publication provides a forum for Palestinians and their allies to share stories, ideas, creative works, and analysis germane to the liberation struggle on their own terms. It moves them from object to subject – from dehumanized statistics about death and demolition in dominant narratives to full human agents directing their own representations. And it challenges the privilege of institutional gatekeepers like MIT to determine whose perspectives have legitimacy or centrality when discussing affairs profoundly impacting Palestinian lives.

Of course, this platform opens possibilities not just for representation but deeper forms of solidarity. By featuring perspectives of activists, journalists and freedom fighters immersed in the struggle, our publication amplifies visions and strategies for resistance and mass mobilization. It allows us to democratize access to the Palestinian movements' evolving analytics regarding moral appeals, leverage points and coalition building that inform resistance. And it facilitates cross-pollination of struggles, letting movements like those South African anti-apartheid activists who inspired Palestinian civil society share their wisdom, opening space to expand dialogue and unravel dominant narratives suppressing the plight of the global exploited and oppressed.



*Handala, created by Naji al-Ali in 1969, is a young refugee symbolizing Palestinian defiance. Depicted facing away, he vows to turn only when Palestine is free—a lasting emblem of resistance.*

Ultimately, we launch this grassroots journalism project as our mode of contributing from our space of relative privilege as members of a globally powerful institution. We employ the skills and resources available to us in service of a movement fighting with creativity and courageous compassion against one of the world's most ruthless military powers. Through platforming stories, ideas and diverse connections we take up the mantle of Edward Said, committing our insights to the Palestinian trail of longing for place, identity and justice. As Said memorably expressed, "I speak therefore on behalf of dispossession ... But out of that dispossession, I speak and write and in that writing as a Palestinian, I seek a depth of passion, a rebirth of nurture to offset the suffering and disfiguration." We contribute our labors so that Palestinian passions, ideas and voices seeding rebirth cannot be disfigured. So that Palestinian Liberation becomes the nexus spurring Global Liberation.



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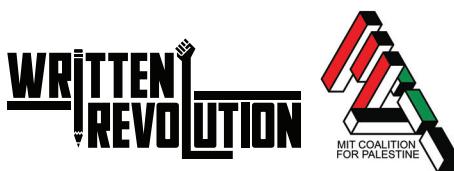
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**"WRITING IS A TESTIMONY,  
A MEMORY THAT OUTLIVES  
ANY HUMAN EXPERIENCE,  
AND AN OBLIGATION TO  
COMMUNICATE WITH OUR-  
SELVES AND THE WORLD."**

REFAAT ALAREER

