

December 26, 2023

Mount Allison Faculty Association
Sackville NB
ATTN: Karen Bamford, President

Ms Bamford:

It is with regret, though not surprise, that I hereby resign my membership in MAFA. A copy of my membership card is attached as Schedule “A”. The original will be returned to you, shredded, by paper mail.

Your communication reproduced at Schedule “B” is the reason why. The “Letter of Support”, reproduced in Schedule “C”, written by a number of members, and doubling down on it, subsequent to internal objections and after Hamas’ atrocities were even better known, only adds to it. I have absolutely no desire to be associated with a group that puts out such a communiqué, implying that Israel is preparing a genocide in Gaza, all the while ignoring the actual genocidal intentions of Hamas.

Your communiqué, frankly, sinks to the level of a traditional anti-semitic blood libel.

Let’s examine it in some detail:

1. *call for an immediate ceasefire;*

There *was* a ceasefire in place before the 7th. Hamas ended it by engaging in a genocidally-intent rampage of raping and murdering. Clearly, a “ceasefire” hasn’t worked out very well. Any civilised country that protects its citizens would do the same as Israel is doing: take all necessary measures to ensure that such barbarism never occurs again.

2. *end all forms of Canadian military and financial aid, including arms sales, to Israel.*

I’m not particularly in favour of military aid to Israel. They can take care of their own problems. In fact, I doubt that they are funded by the government of Canada. However, a fair statement would have also called for the cessation of funding to UNRWA, as had been done under the Harper government¹, given that a lot of this money likely gets diverted to the aims of the genocidally-inclined Hamas. Put another way, Canada likely is *indeed* indirectly funding genocidal violence: by enabling Hamas.

3. *call for talks under the auspices of the United Nations to find a durable and*

¹ And is now being done by the Swiss government

just political solution to this conflict

The United Nations is heavily biased against Israel and not a neutral party. Such a suggestion aims to put Israel into an untenable situation.

Multiple attempts at a negotiated solution, going back to the 1930s, have failed, habitually ending in violence initiated by parties other than Israel.

4. *call for the release of all hostages and the thousands of Palestinian political prisoners held in Israeli prisons;*

Do “Palestinian political prisoners” include murderers? The vast majority of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons are there because of choices that they made. Violent choices. Very few are actual prisoners of conscience. The hostages taken by Hamas are innocent people who happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. To create an equivalence between them implies that Israel engages in hostage politics.

One could also consider that Yehya Sinwar, current “leader” of the Hamas gang in Gaza, was released from an Israeli prison in such an arrangement. Considering his subsequent actions, it was very foolish for Israel to do so.

5. *pressure Israel to lift the unlawful blockade on Gaza*

You may wish to acquaint yourself with the history of this very partial blockade: it started in response to Hamas violence, in 2007. Very partial in the sense that the vast majority of goods that aren’t of military use had been let in. You’ll also want to consider that the Egyptians have largely implemented the same “blockade”—frankly for the same reasons, and of course without any criticism, because they’re not Israel. Moreover, it clearly hasn’t been very effective, seeing the heavy weaponry that Hamas has managed to equip itself with.

6. *condemn Israel’s violation of international humanitarian law and laws of war and support investigation by the International Criminal Court; and*

If you replaced “Israel” by “Hamas”, you’d be much more honest—and accurate—here.

7. *pressure the Israeli government to end its illegal occupation of Palestinian territories.*

It’s a bit rich to call the situation in Gaza an “illegal occupation”: Israel first came to control this territory in 1967, as the result of a defensive war against Egypt. That’s perfectly in line with customary international law. It was actually offered “back” to the Egyptians, who didn’t want it. It was supposed to become a part of the PA territories, but that didn’t work out, thanks to Hamas taking it over, partially electorally, and partially by terror. But as things stand, the illegal occupier of Gaza is... Hamas.

The West Bank situation is somewhat more complex, though I can point out to

it also being acquired in a defensive war, and the previous sovereign, Jordan, having quit any claim on it. The PA is a quasi-country, and controls most of the populated areas. Are increasing areas of Israeli settlement in the West Bank a great idea? Probably not. But they're also not an "illegal occupation" in the vast majority of cases. They're simply a bad idea because they increase contact between populations with a history of friction. As for Israeli military activities in the West Bank, they're essentially a necessity, if the West Bank isn't to turn into another Gaza. A responsible PA would make it unnecessary, but the PA isn't responsible—either by lack of willingness or of resources.

The #1 goal of the Israeli state, as with any decent country, should to protect its population, however possible. They clearly failed at that on the 7th—let's not encourage them to fail again.

I'm left thinking that MAFA's sympathies, dressed up as humanitarian concern, are definitely with Hamas. If not, there would at least also be heavy criticism of Hamas, if for nothing else, for engaging in mass rapes.

The following National Post article nicely illustrates the thought patterns involved:
<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/jamie-sarkonak-the-progressives-appalled-that-anyone-cares-about-hamass-rape-brigades>

If one is looking for a "rape culture", one needs to look no further. One would think that given much of MAFA's membership's deep concerns about people feeling uncomfortable over sexually-related *commentary*, that the membership would be appalled at actual mass *rapes*. I suppose it depends on whom is being raped.

The psychology of all this is interesting. I suspect that it's an underlying mix of anti-Westernism, romanticism and some unconscious anti-semitism. You know, the kind of "unconscious bias" that all the EDI loudmouths are always talking about—here it is, in actual technicolour. The disgust with how our (and other Western) society runs, I have sympathy for. I share many of these feelings. But the enemy of my enemy isn't my friend: Hamas might want to tear down Western society, but what they'd replace it with would be worse. Way worse. Still, I suspect that some view Hamas as "living the dream", in some twisted way. They're not. They're genocidal maniacs of the worst sort. Rest assured that if they weren't stopped, they'd come for all of you after having finished with Israelis/Jews. Consider that Arabs who are citizens of Israel are increasingly supportive of Israel since the 7th, and ask yourself why. It's all too real for them, unlike for academics in remote parts of Canada who can flirt with these ideas, failing to see the real-life consequences of them—first to others, and then to themselves.

This is the same kind of thinking that has people celebrating Che Guevara, who

was a disgusting murderer, and of a mentality similar to Hamas'.

Ask yourselves what Hamas would do (does!) to people who do not follow sexually normative roles, for example. Few things are as ridiculous as “Queers for Palestine”—they wouldn’t survive for an hour in Ramallah (never mind Gaza) with those signs, although MAFA seems to be trying to outdo them. The sad truth is that the only country in the Middle East that is generally willing and capable of protecting such a display is... Israel. The ridiculousness of it is apparent to almost anyone who truly thinks about the situation.

Positions such as MAFA’s do have real life consequences. They provide license to anti-semites to engage in increasingly violent acts. For a crowd who are capable of making us hear at length about “micro-aggressions”, it surely should be obvious that this goes well beyond that. Somehow, it seems that when Israelis (or Jews) are the receiving-end minority, the “permitted” range of nastiness is much greater than if it is anyone else. *Much* greater. Why? I don’t believe in protecting people’s *feelings* as institutional policy, but if one is to go there, what about the feelings of Israeli—or even Jewish—students at the university?

I’m not asking you to become pro-Israel. They’re far from perfect, and I have my own issues with them. Not that it’s any of MAFA’s business. I’m not even asking you to deplore Hamas’ mass murder. I’m simply asking you not to run interference for the genocidally-inclined would-be Nazis of Hamas. Just stay out of it. It has nothing to do with the purposes of MAFA. It’s not your problem. That’s all.

Please grow up, people. Once you’ve done that, I’ll consider re-joining.

עם ישראל חי!

“Louis Bélieau”

Louis Bélieau

P.S. It is customary to address fellow union members as Sister and Brother, and to sign “In solidarity”. I have not done so this time, as I feel no kinship with anyone running interference on behalf of Hamas, and any solidarity I feel is with their victims—not just the Israeli ones on the 7th, but the Gazan ones dying as an indirect consequence of Hamas’ ambitions. I have thus replaced it with a more appropriate phrase.

encl: Membership card, MAFA communiqué, Membership letter of support.

cc: Embassy of Israel, Ottawa

Schedule “A”

mafa

MOUNT ALLISON FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Louis Bélieau

is a member in good standing of the
Mount Allison Faculty Association and is entitled to all the
rights and privileges associated with membership.

Richard Hudson, President

Mount Allison Faculty Association
Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick

Schedule “B”

MAFA Statement on Israel-Palestine

Posted 2023-11-12 by [MAFA webeditor](https://www.mafa.ca/author/mafa/) (<https://www.mafa.ca/author/mafa/>) & filed under [News](https://www.mafa.ca/category/news/) (<https://www.mafa.ca/category/news/>).

November 10, 2023

In the month since the Hamas attack on October 7th, the crisis in the Middle East has escalated alarmingly, and humanity seems to be at a dangerous moment: revenge and permanent retaliation have become normalized. Last week the UN issued an urgent warning that “time is running out to prevent genocide and humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza” as Israeli government officials have advocated death and forcible displacement of civilians in Gaza, the intentional bombing of Palestinian educational, health and religious institutions, and the collective punishment of the population via the current blockade of goods, including fuel, electricity and water. This is happening in the context of on-going Western (and Canadian) condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Russian military conduct in that war; and after decades of the destruction of Palestinian homes and livelihoods and gradual, illegal expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land in the West Bank, that may well be a harbinger of what will come in Gaza.

Therefore, MAFA joins the voices of our colleagues from other Canadian universities, and Canadian civil society organizations demanding the Canadian government 1) call for an immediate ceasefire; 2) end all forms of Canadian military and financial aid, including arms sales, to Israel; 3) call for talks under the auspices of the United Nations to find a durable and just political solution to this conflict; 4) call for the release of all hostages and the thousands of Palestinian political prisoners held in Israeli prisons; 5) pressure Israel to lift the unlawful blockade on Gaza, 6) condemn Israel’s violation of international humanitarian law and laws of war and support investigation by the International Criminal Court; and 7) pressure the Israeli government to end its illegal occupation of Palestinian territories.

Sources in original document:

Gaza is ‘running out of time’ UN experts warn, demanding a ceasefire to prevent genocide —
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-running-out-time-un-experts-warn-demanding-ceasefire-prevent-genocide>

Open letter to PM Justin Trudeau – <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lH6dlpMGMmHjsWiiOowneevVzv7xr8pS7J1Vho/edit>

Resignation Letter from Craig Mokhiber, Director of the New York office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights – 28/10/2023 – <https://iaffairscanada.com/resignation-letter-from-craig-mokhiber-director-of-the-new-york-office-of-the-un-high-commissioner-for-human-rights-28-10-2023/>

Israel: Unlawful Gaza Blockade Deadly for Children — <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/10/18/israel-unlawful-gaza-blockade-deadly-children>

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Schedule "C"

December 8, 2023

We, the undersigned, write in support of the statement on Israel and Palestine issued by the MAFA executive on Nov. 10, 2023.

The welfare of staff, faculty, and students who are impacted by global conflicts, natural disasters or other emerging crises is within the mandate of MAFA. Our executive is elected to represent us and were acting within their roles as outlined in our governance documents (particularly Articles 6 & 7). Furthermore, there is a precedent for the release of statements by the MAFA executive in response to current events.

In response to the Nov. 10 statement, some members have called for an amendment to MAFA bylaws to prevent our executive from undertaking their duties. To respond in this way is to engage in the type of censorship that the [CAUT](#) and the Academic Alliance Against Anti-Semitism, Racism, Colonialism & Censorship in Canada ([ARC](#)) have identified as a threat to academic freedom for those who support International Humanitarian Law or oppose the occupation of Palestine.

We, the undersigned oppose this move to silence our executive, and our membership, on this important issue.

Signatures:

Mohammad Ahmady
Meghan Allen
Kirsty Bell
Claudine Bonner
Juan Carlos Martinez
Ada Clevinger
Paula Cowan
Geoff Crutwell
Robert Cupido
Chris Down
Jane Dryden
Maritza Farina
Krista Johnston

David Fleming
Karl Hele
Leslie Kern
Jean Ketterling
Peter Lelievre
Christiana MacDougall
Geordie Miller
Morgan Poteet
Leslie Shumka
Erin Steuter
Elizabeth Stregger
Dave Thomas
Ardath Whynacht