



FLOOD THE GATES: ESCALATE

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By Palestine Action US

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“The beginning of every revolution is an exit, an exit from the social order that power has enshrined in the name of law, stability, public interest, and the greater

good.” – martyr Bassel Al-Araj

“And it follows that if a thing is not building, it is certainly decaying — that life is revolution — and that the world will die if we don’t read and act out its imperatives.” – martyr George Jackson

It has been 208 days since this most recent and most horrific chapter of the 75-year U.S.-zionist genocide in Gaza began. Over 40,000 Palestinians have been martyred, but the actual death toll is likely upward of 100,000. Despite the mobilizations of millions around the world, we must acknowledge that we have not been able to stop the genocide — we have not come even close. **This is a failure, but not a defeat. It demands we reckon with our errors and recalculate our strategy to win.**

After October 7, we recognized immediately the need for escalatory resistance to imperialism’s escalating violence. Inspired by the success of Palestine Action UK’s campaign, we launched Palestine Action US, a direct action network targeting Elbit Systems, the largest zionist weapons company on earth. As new Palestine Action groups have formed globally, our actions have contributed to divestments from Elbit, drops in Elbit’s profits, the sale of a U.S. Elbit subsidiary, and the permanent closing of another Elbit factory in the UK. **Through our many trials and errors, we also learned that tactics used in the UK, which has a very different legal system and economic makeup, could not simply be copy-pasted into the U.S. context. Instead of solely targeting Elbit, we have expanded our scope to meet the urgent task of building capacity for direct action and militancy in the U.S. anti-imperialist movement.**

We make this intervention at a moment when escalation is more realizable than ever. On April 15, we saw a coordinated yet decentralized action that drove people across the world to take direct action against points of production and logistics networks, including ports, bridges, weapons manufacturers, and financial institutions, targeting the very economic arteries of imperialism. Then, on April 17, students and other young people launched dozens of Gaza solidarity encampments across the U.S., from Columbia to Cal Poly, occupying and barricading buildings, establishing liberated zones, and defeating police invasions. In mere weeks, the anti-imperialist movement in the Belly of the Beast has advanced to a level of militancy not seen in generations. But the genocide is ongoing and

the zionist invasion of Rafah is imminent. We still have a long way to go to break the war machine.

Here are 5 of our reflections:

1. **Above all else, ESCALATE.** We join in the calls to #Escalate4Gaza beyond symbolic action because we know power won't move unless we strike fear in the heart of the ruling class and pose a threat to their reproduction of capital. As our comrades from Within Our Lifetime wrote, *"Enough with de-escalation trainings; Where are the escalation trainings!"* Escalate from mass rallies to mass blockades of weapons companies, from encampments to building occupations, from getting kettled by the police to kettling them back. Let repression breed more resistance. We will not disavow any actions taken to escalate the struggle, including militant direct actions. Our notion of "safety" in the imperial core is built on centuries of corpses, and this liberal framing of "safetyism" prevents us from escalating and winning, which is our duty to Palestine and to us all. **We keep ourselves safe by escalating. Don't hesitate to take more risk.**
2. **Resist repression and abandon symbolic arrests.** We regret using this self-sacrificial tactic ourselves at times. While actions sometimes result in arrests, and those engaged in serious action ought to prepare for that outcome, it should never be the *goal* to lose our organizers to the carceral system. The goal should always be to achieve whatever we set out to achieve, and then get home safe. Our most successful actions were covert and decentralized. Form an affinity group or cell with people you trust, and take action; when confronted by police, learn tactics to protect yourself and your comrades – barricades, de-arrest, strategic formations, and community defense (we have compiled many resources on these tactics). As our comrades at Cal Poly wrote, *"The pro-Palestinian movement must be a movement against the police."* We must no longer be a sea of helpless subjects, begging for crumbs and crying foul at the bullying of the pigs. We must stop appealing to the respectability of monsters, to whom we owe nothing.
3. **Break open the university gates.** To those holding down campus occupations, your first task is to open the campus to the community and reject the distinction between students and "outside agitators." The popular movement for Palestine is currently based out of the universities, but students are not the sole leaders, and non-students possess a reservoir of knowledge and experience to expand the struggle beyond the campus. We must create our own "popular cradle" of resistance. The most effective occupations have been where students have strong alliances with non-students, and where they connect the struggle to Free Palestine with the struggle against U.S. fascism and Cop Cities everywhere.
4. **Diversity of tactics only works if we are building more militancy.** We have always called for a wide ecosystem of tactics, from boycotts to mass rallies to the sabotage and

dismantling of genocidal infrastructure. There is a dialectical relationship between the underground and aboveground; clandestine actions need to express the general will of the movement and garner support from its above-ground organizers. As long as other groups do not interfere, peace police, or co-opt our militancy, we must build as broad possible unity, inspired by the Palestinian resistance's concept of "**Unity of the Fields**," whereby, despite our differing ideologies, short-term objectives, and locations, we all can work towards one common goal. We need people doing jail support, media, fundraising, and community care — but it is time for more of us to step up to the front line.

5. **We in the U.S. are not exempt from resistance.** It is insincere to glorify the Palestinian resistance if, at the same time, we do not raise our own resistance here. The siege on Gaza is a rehearsal of the future the ruling class has planned for all oppressed people if we do not resist. When we step into the international struggle in a substantive way, we reclaim our power and our humanity; we stop bickering over which futile means will, or (almost certainly) won't shame the oppressor into a state of reasonable concession, and we recognize that building an infrastructure of militancy for the larger struggle against imperialism and the establishment of a new world is the only effective route we can take, and is, in fact, the easier, softer way. Our resistance to the genocide in Gaza is a piece of that effort, or it is theater. We are not naïve enough to think the revolution will come through "peaceful" means or spontaneous uprisings without organized militancy. Nor do we think that the self-proclaimed vanguard of the "organized" left, the student bureaucrats and smooth-talkers without an ounce of front-line experience, are capable of fomenting the kinds of organization actually required in this moment. The new forms of leadership and initiative will emerge from those barricaded inside classroom buildings, those who carry shields, and who are kicking back tear gas canisters. Rebellious movements must prepare to defend themselves from repression during **states of siege**, and "to outmaneuver, exhaust, demoralize, confuse, and overpower the repressive might of the state. Those who do not believe this is possible do not believe that the revolution is possible." **We know revolution will come within our lifetimes. We will make sure of it.**

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