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ACTIVISM

UAW rank-and-file tells its leadership: don't cross Palestinians' picket line!

Rank-and-file members of UAW Labor for Palestine are demanding that their union's leadership withdraws their dues money from Israel Bonds and divest from genocide.

BY [UAW LABOR FOR PALESTINE](#) - MAY 14, 2024 - 1



UAW LABOR FOR PALESTINE ACTION IN ALBANY, NY, MARCH 2024. (PHOTO: UAW LABOR FOR PALESTINE X ACCOUNT)

This statement originally appeared on the [UAW Labor for Palestine site](#).

UAW Labor for Palestine has learned that the International Executive Board of the United Auto Workers recently voted down a motion to divest from Israel Bonds, with only three IEB members voting in favor.

We are outraged at the failure of our IEB members, whose election many of us actively supported, to withdraw our dues money from Israel Bonds and from companies that do business with Israel — i.e. to divest from genocide. This pathetic lack of action comes despite [Arab-led autoworker wildcat strikes in 1973](#) that protested the UAW's purchase of Israel Bonds, repeated UAW Labor for Palestine demands that the UAW divest, and the leadership's own call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

It is particularly egregious at a time when students across the country are courageously setting up Palestine Solidarity Encampments to demand their universities divest. Our union just made strong statements against the repression meted out to students and faculty, including many UAW members. But that same union leadership cannot find enough backbone to honor the [Palestinian trade union picket line](#) by pulling its own investments in the Israeli apartheid state!

Reportedly, the reason most of the 14 IEB members — including UAW President Shawn Fain — either voted no or abstained was that it would cost the UAW \$500,000 to move its investments out of a fund that includes around \$400,000 to \$700,000 worth of Israel bonds. These bonds are sold to fund Israel's war machine, which has slaughtered at least 35,000 Palestinians, a large number of them children, since October 7.

The financial argument does not hold water. The UAW has committed \$40 million to organize unorganized auto workers. We applaud this commitment and hail the victory at Volkswagen in Chattanooga, Tennessee. However, we find it unacceptable that a union with \$40 million to fund organizing cannot part with half a million dollars to end its complicity with genocide.

We call on the IEB to reverse its shameful lack of action immediately, and we reiterate our demands that UAW leadership respect the Palestinian trade union picket line by immediately:

1. Divesting our union and employers from Israel Bonds and from the military, extractive, and technological industries connected with the Israeli occupation and U.S. imperialism;
2. Terminating UAW's ties with the Histadrut, Israel's racist labor federation, and its U.S. mouthpiece, the Jewish Labor Committee;
3. Demanding that the United States government immediately halt all aid and military support to Israel, including the supply of weapons produced in UAW shops; and

4. Protecting UAW members who engage in pro-Palestine speech and advocacy—particularly Palestinian, Muslim, and Arab workers—from doxxing, surveillance, and repression within and beyond the workplace. The defense of UAW 2325 against Congress and UAW 2710 members who have been disciplined for their advocacy, is critical at this moment, but countless workers have been facing these issues broadly around our locals.

UAWL4P urges the IEB to take these concrete actions and more in order to materialize the ceasefire call President Fain made over four months and tens of thousands of deaths in Gaza ago. The IEB must recognize that the power to end complicity lies in the hands of our union’s rank-and-file members and work to realize that power with urgency. To support the IEB’s alignment with the will of rank-and-file members, we draw your attention to this [list of BDS resolutions passed by UAW locals and other bodies across the country](#) dating back to at least 2014, and to a [new resolution](#) reiterating its [prior demands](#) for UAW divestment, adopted by ALAA-UAW 2325 on May 7, 2024.

As union members and allies who have been advocating, researching, and working tirelessly for solidarity with Palestine over the past seven months—some of us for years and decades—we believe in a UAW that stands with the people of Palestine, workers around the world, and people of conscience everywhere by immediately voting to divest the UAW from occupation and genocide as outlined above.

In Solidarity for a Free Palestine from the river to the sea!

An Injury to One is an Injury to All!

BDS BOSTON

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UAW Labor for Palestine

UAW Labor for Palestine—formally a working group created through the UAW Region 9A Rank-and-File Assembly—is a collective of rank-and-file members organizing across the UAW to demand an immediate end to Israel’s apartheid regime, occupation, and ongoing genocide in Palestine, to embrace the recent urgent call from Palestinian trade unions to stop arming Israel, and to act upon the UAW Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) sign-on letter by advancing Palestine solidarity priorities. We organize at the individual, shop, local, and regional levels, and we work towards ending the International UAW’s complicity in Israeli apartheid and oppression of the Palestinian people.

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