

## Solidarity with pro-Palestine students

# Free Mahmoud Khalil!

### WORKERS WORLD editorial

It should come as no surprise that the MAGA administration has targeted activist students. Or that they have especially focused on international students who need permission to stay in the United States. No surprise first because the Trump cabal aims for the throat. Second because they see the student movement as an internal threat to their drive to world domination.

All the more should the workers' movement, the progressive movement, the anti-imperialist movement and the revolutionary movement for socialism show 100% support to the students under attack. That's whether the assault is from the Trump crowd, from the university's management or from Israel itself.

Starting soon after October 7, 2023, the campus reaction to Israel's genocidal attack opened a path to an enduring struggle protesting U.S. policy as well as Israeli-initiated genocide. It's a struggle that the courage of the Palestinians has nourished. It's a struggle that the Trump-Musk cabal is trying to crush, but the MAGA crowd has no chance of succeeding.

We call the college administrators managers. They manage in service of the ruling class. These sharp political crises expose the real role of the privileged university administrations. While pretending to defend free discussion, they buckled under the pressure of "Genocide Joe" Biden. They have collapsed under Trump.

College administrators are finding out that, no matter how much they kiss the ring on the hands of the Trumps and Musks, they will get slapped. The announcement cutting \$400 million in government grants to Columbia University is an example of a hard slap. And it's a threat to all other universities dependent on government spending.

Much media attention this March has focused on Barnard College, part of Columbia University. The same focus happened during the campus struggles last



**Mahmoud Khalil speaking at a 2024 Columbia University rally.**

year. The media often focus attention on the Ivy League and other "elite" schools, including the University of Pennsylvania where the president was ousted for not stopping alleged "antisemitic" protests even when none had occurred.

Last year, students attending public universities also waged courageous struggles and also faced repression, police bullying and arrests, but with less publicity.

In 2023 and 2024, when the Biden administration was feeding the genocide with weapons, billionaires threatened to withhold endowment donations to universities that did not go far enough to repress campus protests. Now, in 2025, under the ultraright MAGA and billionaires' rule, the universities face cuts of government funding, and students are threatened with expulsion and deportation.

The Trump regime has threatened to deport any students on student visas who have participated in protests. It accuses them of being Hamas supporters and thus "terrorists." That's no matter what school they're at.

That's exactly what happened on March 8, when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arrested Palestinian Mahmoud Khalil in his Columbia University apartment in New York City. Khalil holds a green card allowing him to reside and work in the U.S. Khalil graduated from Columbia last December.

Anyone who knows the true history of West Asia and Palestine could rightly counter that the current occupants of power—as well as the formerly in power

Democratic Party crowd—are supporters of Israel's state terrorism. If backers of the Israeli terrorists were removed from Washington, there would be hardly anyone left from either the Democratic or Republican parties.

A movement has already mobilized to defend Khalil, who is being held in detention by ICE. A solidarity protest demonstration was set for March 10 at 4 p.m. at 26 Federal Plaza in downtown Manhattan in New York City.

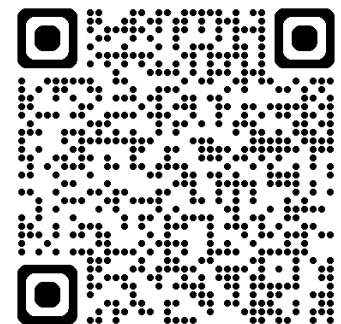
The quickly organized protest convinces us at Workers World that the students who protested genocide will find ways to continue resisting. We are equally confident that the mass resistance to the Trump-Musk autocratic rule will find ways to organize and grow.

As this anti-imperialist movement grows, it must also take up the defense of the students who, inspired by the Gazans, have steadfastly sat-in, occupied space and raised day after day the demand to stop the genocide, liberate Gaza and grant amnesty for expelled student protesters.

**Free Mahmoud Khalil! Free Palestine!**

*Sign petition to free Khalil:  
[www.tinyurl.com/mahmoudkhalil](http://www.tinyurl.com/mahmoudkhalil)*

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