



## **Violence Free Minnesota Statement in Support of the Campus Protestors**

The genocide in Gaza has not slowed nor significantly abated in the months since October. The injustice towards the people and children of Palestine remains the central, root injustice from which the current American campus discontent arises. We implore the eyes of our nation not to leave the suffering civilians of Palestine, nor should we turn away from the other nation-scale injustices of our time which are occurring today on every populated continent in the world.

To the campus protestors standing up in face of global injustice: we see you, we hear you, and we support you. We are proud of this multiracial, multiethnic, and multireligious coalition of young people who are demonstrating amazing leadership in this moment. We are disturbed, but not surprised, to see the deployment of state violence here at home to support the ongoing state violence abroad. We recognize that the leadership of the encampment protests has largely come from Palestinian, Jewish, Arab, Black, and Indigenous students, along with many other cultural groups. We believe these students when they say that they have been disproportionately targeted by the violent responses to the encampment by police and others. The students' tactics of encampment, community, and disruption echo the rich tradition of American campus protests, including the 1980s demands to divest from apartheid South Africa to the 1960s demands to cease the war in Vietnam.

Our own movement, born out of feminism, has a storied history of disruptive activism. This history includes Black Friday in London, 1910, a suffrage march turned into a police riot; the National Women's Parties marches, protests, and hunger strikes of the American suffrage movement; and the 1970 National Organization of Women general strike, among many other examples of direct and indirect action. Indeed, direct action has always been a crucial piece of any liberation struggle, including the strikes and riots of the labor movement; the boycotts, marches, sit-ins, and police riots of the civil rights movement; the Occupation of Alcatraz and similar actions in the Native American liberation movement; and the struggle for LGBTQ liberation. The leadership of women, especially Black women, with experience both in women's liberation and these other liberation struggles has been paramount to the development of effective activism within feminism. The progress made today was led by Black women activists, including Harriet Jacobs, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Parsons, Ida B. Wells, Angela Davis, and Shirley Chisholm, among countless others both in leadership and non-leadership roles. We recognize that these leaders' accomplishments and impacts were often ignored, erased, and minimized by the mainstream feminist movement during their lives and careers, and strive not to repeat that injustice.

In any sufficiently large movement, there will be elements which we cannot endorse or support. But the central purpose of the current campus protests has been clear: American academia cannot continue to enjoy the profit and favor of the arms industry, apartheid states, or global exploitation. On the campuses where the administration has been willing to listen to and engage with the organizers of the protests, instead of suppressing them with police violence, these have been the demands. They are eminently reasonable and morally imperative.

We end this statement by refocusing attention on the present suffering in Gaza. That should be the world's focus, just as it is the world's shame. Besides bombardment and the targeting of civilians, the population has also faced a man-made famine and healthcare crisis due to the prevention of aid from reaching the people and the deliberate targeting of health professionals and other relief workers. Our own nation has been a primary supplier of weapons and munitions for the purposes of this genocide, and has been a major international political supporter of the Israeli state's genocide and apartheid of the Palestinian people. We reassert our condemnation of this state of affairs.

Finally, we close by re-affirming everything stated in [our original statement of solidarity with Gaza and statement of solidarity with victims of state conflict worldwide](#).

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60 EAST PLATO BLVD., STE. 230 | SAINT PAUL, MN 55107 | VOICE: 651.646.6177 | FAX:  
651.646.5127 | [WWW.VFMN.ORG](http://WWW.VFMN.ORG)