

House Speaker Mike Johnson faces heckling at Columbia University after calling for National Guard on campus



New York, April 25 (RHC)-- On Wednesday, Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson faced heckling and boos when he visited Columbia University in New York City. Johnson called for Biden to send in the National Guard to bring order to the campus, where students set up the Gaza Solidarity Encampment last week.

Following a meeting with Columbia University President Minouche Shafik, the Republican speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives along with a group of Republican House members urged Shafik to step down if she fails to control Gaza war demonstrations on campus during a press briefing at Low Library on Wednesday.

Johnson was joined by GOP Reps. Mike Lawler, Nicole Malliotakis and Anthony D'Esposito, all from New York, and Virginia Foxx of North Carolina. "We just can't allow this kind of hatred and anti-Semitism to flourish on our campuses. And it must be stopped in its tracks. Those who are perpetrating this violence should be arrested," he said, accusing protesters of chasing down Jewish students and harassing them.

Students chanted "Free Palestine" and heckled and loudly booed Johnson and demanded his return to Washington DC, with the noise of protesters almost overpowering his speech.

Johnson, who also met with Jewish students before his remarks, said that he plans to urge U.S. President Joe Biden to take executive action against the protests if necessary, adding: "If this is not contained quickly, and if these threats and intimidation are not stopped, there is an appropriate time for the National Guard."

Protesters shouted "stop the genocide" as other Republican leaders spoke. The Republicans accused protesters of being part of the problem and supporting the resistance movements of Hamas and Hezbollah.

New York Democrats criticize Johnson for "politicizing" the ongoing pro-Palestinian protests in Columbia, with Gov. Kathy Hochul stating that the presence of an entourage is exacerbating the division.

Johnson said in an interview after his speech that he respects the right to protest, but that he thought the students on campus had crossed into harassment.

Pro-Palestinian academic activism has grown significantly across the U.S. since the onset of the Israeli regime's U.S.-backed war of genocide against the Gaza Strip.

Starting from the Columbia University in New York, protest encampments with a unified demand that their schools cut financial ties to Israel have been spread across the country. Demonstrations have been held in many universities such as Harvard, MIT, UT and other universities in Michigan, Minnesota and Colombia.

They are calling for universities to distance themselves from any companies that are advancing Israel's savage military campaign in the besieged Gaza Strip.

Johnson's speech came hours after Biden officially signed into law a long-awaited foreign aid bill for Israel, Ukraine and Taiwan that had faced considerable delays in the House due to political gridlock.

The new package will provide \$26 billion for the Israeli regime, which has been engaged in a genocidal war against the Gaza Strip since last October.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the billions of dollars in US assistance, writing on X that it "demonstrates strong bipartisan support for Israel."

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