

*U.S. police tear down Gaza
Solidarity Encampment at
Michigan University*

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University of Michigan protest / File photo

Ann Arbor, May 22 (RHC)-- U.S. police in Ann Arbor have dismantled an encampment at the University of Michigan, removing students from a peaceful anti-war protest set up to support the people of the besieged Gaza Strip.

Videos posted online by local TV stations on Tuesday showed police moving people away from the camp on the Diag, a common site for campus protests. The footage showed police using what appeared to be

an irritant to spray people, who were forced to retreat.

At least four people were arrested, which caused protesters to shift to the Washtenaw County jail where they marched outside in support of those detained. After the camp was cleared, nearby buildings including the undergraduate and graduate libraries were closed and police turned away students who showed up to study.

Protesters have demanded that the school's endowment stop investing in companies with ties to Israel. The encampment had been set up after six months of student protests for the University's divestment, which began with a sit-in at the President's house in October. Since then, students have continuously organized protests across campus demanding the University divest from Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

The university claims it has no direct investments and less than \$15 million placed with funds that might include companies in Israel.

Students and others have set up similar tent encampments on campuses around the country, including at Yale University and at Columbia University, to press college boards to divest Israeli-linked funding.

A group of graduate students at Yale University have launched a hunger strike in protest against the institution's investments in companies providing Israel with arms.

Tensions over Israel's war on Gaza have been high on U.S. campuses since the fall, but demonstrations spread quickly following an April 18th police crackdown on an encampment at Columbia University.

Arrests at campuses have surpassed the 3,000 mark nationwide with many students facing suspension, among other disciplinary actions, for their participation in the pro-Palestinian campus protests.

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