

U.S. official vows to imprison pro-Palestine protesters for years



Head of DOJ antisemitism task force Leo Terrell (R). (File photo by AFP)

Washington, February 27 (RHC)-- An official with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) says student protesters who took part in pro-Palestine protests could face years in prison.

Leo Terrell, head of the DOJ task force on anti-Semitism, announced his plans for lengthy prison punishments for those who protested against Israel during its genocide in Gaza. “We are going to put these people in jail—not for 24 hours, but for years,” Terrell told Israeli broadcaster Channel 12.

Terrell also vowed to “financially attack” the universities where such demonstrations took place.

The announcement came as students at Columbia University began fresh pro-Palestinian protests after two students were expelled for their anti-genocide activism.

The decision to imprison anti-Israel students comes despite the fact that US President Donald Trump declared his intention to “stop all government censorship” and “bring back free speech to America” during his inauguration speech.

One X user responded to the announcement by calling it the “death of the 1st amendment for a foreign nation of Israel.” “The 1st Amendment in this country ends where Israel begins” stated another.

In the past years, numerous laws have been passed in America that punish criticism of Israel and Zionism.

These include numerous state laws that punish public workers for refusing to buy Israeli products, or the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act which has faced criticism for chilling free speech.

During the previous academic year, U.S. universities and colleges emerged as a focal point for student-led pro-Palestinian protests, igniting a significant wave of demonstrations at universities throughout the world, where hundreds of students called on their universities to divest from companies that have ties to the Israeli regime.

In the spring, after pro-Palestinian students set up tents at Columbia University and school officials brought in city police to clear the demonstration, similar encampments began to emerge at colleges nationwide.

Protests erupted at prominent universities such as Harvard, Yale, MIT, and the University of California, frequently intensifying into clashes between opposing groups’ factions and increasing tensions within the campus environment.

The U.S. police arrested more than 3000 students, professors, and faculty members after accusing the involved activists of “anti-Semitism” and “terrorism” and school administrators threatened some protest leaders with suspension and academic probation.

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