



Speech By  
**Michael Berkman**


**MEMBER FOR MAIWAR**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Middle East**

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (9.24 pm): Last week the LNP state and local governments teamed up to prevent Brisbane residents from expressing solidarity with Palestine across an iconic Brisbane bridge that has been lit up for countless other communities but not once in recognition of the tens of thousands of Palestinians who have been killed by Israeli occupation forces, a third of them children, and the hundreds of thousands who have been injured. The people of Brisbane showed up on Sunday, with one of the biggest protests this city has ever seen. At best guess, 50,000 people filled the streets of the CBD, extending from the start of Victoria Bridge all the way to Musgrave Park, demanding sanctions against Israel and an end to Australia's two-way arms trade.

In January 2024 the International Court of Justice found that the actions of the Israeli government amounted to plausible genocide. Now, nearly 20 months on, the horror has only worsened. A few weeks ago Israel's Security Cabinet approved plans for military occupation of Gaza City, with a population of around 740,000 people, tens of thousands of whom are sleeping in tents having been displaced from their homes. In the south in Khan Yunis just a few days ago, Israeli forces bombed Nasser Hospital not once but twice, killing 21 Palestinians including rescuers, health professionals and five journalists who had arrived in the wake of the first bombing. Those five journalists are among 240 Palestinian journalists reported to have been killed by Israeli attacks over the last two years. Bombing, killing and the displacement of innocent Palestinian civilians is not good enough for Netanyahu's regime, it seems; they are also intent on killing those journalists who might show the extent of their atrocities.

Meanwhile, more than half a million Palestinians are facing famine, and these numbers are only set to increase. Ninety-eight per cent of the crop land in Palestinian territory has been damaged or is inaccessible, while aid trucks wait on the borders to deliver food, water, baby formula and vital medical supplies. Life-saving supplies are being blocked by Israel. This is a man-made famine—a deliberate consequence of Israel's actions. It is a war crime. It is amongst the reasons the International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant for the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Just around the corner here in Brisbane in the suburb of Tingalpa, we manufacture mechanisms that release bombs from the F-35 fighter jets—the very same jets used by the Israeli regime. Our LNP government, like the Labor government before them, directly supports this weapons manufacture and in doing so makes us complicit in the horrors being inflicted on the people of Gaza. Yes, we must condemn Hamas's attacks in October 2023, but nothing can justify the ongoing genocide in Israel. Queenslanders and Australians have said enough is enough, not in our name, sanction Israel, end the arms trade and stop the genocide.