

My name is Bryce Greene, I am entering my third year in an Informatics PhD program here at IU, and I graduated from this school 2020. Before graduating I helped found this school's Palestine Solidarity Committee. Since grad school started I've been organizing with the Indiana Graduate Workers Coalition. I'm also a spokesperson for the Indiana University Divestment Coalition

Because of my work trying to improve conditions for workers, and advocating for this institution to acknowledge and address its role in one of the worst mass atrocities of the 21st century, I was targeted for arrest, and hit with a 5 year ban from campus.

That piece of disinformation sent by the president's office that I'm sure some of you will ask about said that sending in that militarized force, brutalizing the students, and targeting leaders for arrest was the "safest" way for the university to respond to the protest.

Well let's look at their definition of safety.

As I'm sure you all know, the encampment was met with a military level of force: Chopper and drones flying in the sky, security forces armed with assault rifles, shotguns, grenade launchers and even a sniper on the roof.

For my speech and activism, IU had snipers watching me, labeling me, the "African American male with an afro," as an "instigator" and a "main actor". From the body cam footage that was recently released, we further confirmed that myself and Aidan Khamis - another leader on campus - were directly targeted for arrests by the police before anything happened that day, in my case saying that the "target" was "Black Afro guy". The police were then given orders to "snatch him up." Even that report spelled out that I was given a 5 year ban because I was a protest leader. .

All told, the police arrested almost 60 people, many of them sustaining injuries, and many more have to deal with the trauma of knowing that an institution they trust is perfectly willing to deal military levels of violence against them.

Did this make any one safer? People with basic reasoning skills can see through this pretty easily..

But that recent report says YES this was the only safe option! Of course anyone with millions of dollars can hire a team of lawyers to tell them they did everything right, and they should continue doing what they're doing. And of course you can send that report out to people and call it independent. The University knows that people don't look into things much and if they say the report is "independent" then everyone will call it "independent."

Apparently it is not hard to get people to accept this Orwellian language. A report they paid for is somehow "independent" and sending in a military against peaceful protests is the best way to ensure "safety." It's the same logic that we see in Israel's genocide in Gaza. They say if they kill

enough children, bomb enough houses, destroy enough neighborhoods, and ethnically cleanse enough people, that will make people “safer”

The Freedom of expression policy that the university is pushing is again using this pretext of safety to justify previous brutality, and more worrisome, justifying future brutality against people who dare to speak out. The policy had been written long before this report came along to try to justify it.

Let's be clear. Suppression of speech and justification of violence doesn't make us safer; that's nonsense, and the reason doesn't hold up to basic scrutiny. But Whitten and the others don't say it because they want to actually explain themselves or because they think their decisions will be scrutinized. They do it because they think the public and the university community is stupid, apathetic, or simply too disorganized to do anything about it. Well we're not stupid, we are not apathetic, and we're getting organized.

Free Palestine.