

Report reveals University of Michigan spies on pro-Palestinian student protesters

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Detroit, June 7 (RHC)-- It has come to light that the University of Michigan has employed undercover investigators to monitor and track the activities of pro-Palestinian student groups both on and off campus,

according to a recent report.

The Guardian reported on Friday that Michigan University has hired agents from Detroit-based City Shield, a private security group, to follow around pro-Palestinian students. The report added that students participating in pro-Palestinian demonstrations have been followed, recorded, and verbally harassed by investigators who in some cases posed as disabled individuals or falsely claimed to be under attack.

Some of the “evidence” they have gathered on pro-Palestinian students has been used by Michigan City prosecutors to charge and jail them, according to the report. The university administration has also used the evidence in internal disciplinary hearings, it added.

Five students who have been eavesdropped on or recorded have said that the surveillance appears to be largely an intimidation tactic.

According to students’ accounts and video footage shared with the Guardian, the undercover investigators have cursed at students, threatened them, and in a case driven a car at one of them, forcing the student to jump out of the way.

Students told the Guardian that they had frequently identified these undercover investigators and confronted them. In two bizarre instances captured by one student on video, a man who had been following the student faked disabilities, and falsely and noisily accused him of attempting to rob him.

Public spending records from the university’s board of regents, the school’s governing body, show the university paid at least \$800,000 between June 2023 and September 2024 to City Shield’s parent company, Ameri-Shield.

One of the students who have been regularly followed is Katarina Keating who is a member of Students Allied for Freedom and Equality (Safe), a local chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine.

She said the surveillance has caused her to feel “on edge,” and she often looks over her shoulder since November, when she was first followed. “But on another level, it sometimes feels comedic because it is so insane that they have spent millions of dollars to hire some goons to follow campus activists around ... It is just such a waste of money and time,” she said.

The University of Michigan said in a statement that it did not deny the surveillance, but claimed that it had not received any complaints about the investigators.

“The safety and privacy of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors are of utmost importance to the University of Michigan. The University takes a layered approach to campus security and evaluates needs based on a range of factors, particularly during periods of heightened activity or concern,” read the statement.

The University of Michigan has had several clashes with pro-Palestinian student groups since October 7, 2023, when Israel started its genocidal war against Gaza.

Student protesters have demanded the university divest from Israeli companies. In response, campus officials have requested the attorney general to prosecute students charged with alleged crimes during the protests.

Since October 7, 2023, when Israel began its genocidal war against Gaza, the regime has killed more than 54,700 Palestinians and wounded more than 125,500, most of whom are children and women.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and AFP]

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