

Macklemore's 'Free Palestine' Chant Isn't Brave - It's a Slogan That Erases Israel

THE LIE

"Free Palestine" are simply two words near and dear to Macklemore's heart. It's an important message that needs sharing with the world. Calling that antisemitic is just a "shield" against criticism of the Israeli Government.

THE TRUTH

Macklemore did not criticize a specific Israeli policy, a vote, or a wartime tactic. He ambushed a sold-out crowd of more than 80,000 fans who paid for a pop concert, not a political rally, with a chant that, as the movement uses it, calls for Israel's elimination. Calling that antisemitic is not a "shield" against criticism. For the Jewish fans in that crowd, it was simply frightening.

BACKGROUND

- On September 4th and 5th, 2026, Macklemore opened for Ed Sheeran's Loop Tour at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, where he declared 'Free Palestine' before performing a protest song - drawing immediate backlash from fans and fellow artists. [The Guardian](#)
- On September 14, 2026, Sheeran's tour promoter confirmed Macklemore was dropped from all remaining U.S. tour dates, stating venues "will not allow a concert to take place with Macklemore on the lineup." Macklemore claimed Gillette Stadium owner Robert Kraft had pressured Sheeran directly and rallied other stadium owners into a collective ultimatum. Kraft's own statement confirmed barring Macklemore from Gillette specifically, citing "a broader history of antisemitic rhetoric and imagery," but did not address the claim that he pressured other venues.
- Jewish Pop singer, Pink publicly criticized Macklemore's performances on her Instagram stating that she was 'standing up for my own people' - was promptly heckled by pro-Palestine activists for doing so. [Variety](#)
- Macklemore has been a vocal pro-Palestine activist since October 7, 2023, previously calling for "liberation" in Gaza, Congo, Sudan, and America in the same breath — framing the conflict as part of a broader anti-Western cause.
- He also has a documented history predating the current controversy: in 2014, he performed onstage in a costume with a prosthetic hooked nose, dark beard, and bowl-cut wig that the ADL said evoked a Nazi-era antisemitic caricature. [LA Times](#)

TRUTH EXPLAINED

- 'Free Palestine' as a stadium chant carries no call for Hamas disarmament and no recognition of Israel's right to exist. Macklemore's own words made that clear: he moved from 'Free Palestine' directly into "Free Lebanon," "Free Cuba," and a description of U.S. immigration enforcement as a "terrorist organization" — a sweeping anti-Western grab-bag, not a targeted critique of a specific Israeli policy. [Newsweek](#)
- Hamas — the governing authority in Gaza whose "liberation" this slogan implicitly endorses — carried out the October 7, 2023 massacre, murdering roughly 1,200 Israelis and abducting 251 people. Hamas's founding charter calls for Israel's destruction and the killing of Jews. Calling for a "free Palestine" without demanding Hamas's disarmament or accountability for October 7 isn't criticism of Israeli policy — its endorsement of Hamas' stated war aim. [Gov.II](#)
- Macklemore's claim that antisemitism accusations are used as a "shield" against criticism inverts reality. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition, adopted by over 40 countries, distinguishes legitimate criticism of Israeli government policy from antisemitism — but specifically includes denying Jews the right to self-determination. Macklemore's stadium performances didn't criticize a specific Israeli policy; it called for the country's "liberation," a call the definition itself flags. [Latimes](#)
- UNRWA, the UN relief agency Macklemore's movement consistently defends, employed staff members whom Israeli intelligence — shared with and partly acknowledged by the UN — identified as direct participants in the October 7 attack. October 7 wasn't Hamas acting alone: Israeli military investigations estimate thousands of Gazan civilians joined the assault itself, looting and abetting the killing. Defending Palestinian aid institutions without acknowledging either record isn't moral clarity. It's selective outrage. [UN Watch](#)
- Macklemore didn't just chant a slogan — he called Israel's conduct "genocide" and "apartheid" on stage, treating contested legal terms as settled fact. Israel remains the only Middle Eastern state where Arab citizens vote, hold office, and sit on the

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Supreme Court. Genocide requires intent to destroy a people, not wartime casualties in a war Hamas started. He delivered a verdict, then called it "criticism."

QUOTES

"Gillette Stadium [a stadium where Macklemore and Sheeran were set to perform] has a longstanding commitment to providing a welcoming environment for all guests and ensuring that events held at our venue do not provide a platform for hate speech" - Robert Kraft

"An entire generation... they're depressed, they're anxious, they're staring at their screen - and there is a corner of the internet that wants to point and blame the Jews for all their problems. This is demonic and it's from the pit of hell." - Charlie Kirk

TAKEAWAY

Macklemore is not being silenced for criticizing Israeli policy. He was pulled from a national tour after NFL owner Robert Kraft said the venue would not "provide a platform for hate speech," citing his "broader history of antisemitic rhetoric and imagery." His Instagram defense, that antisemitism accusations are a "shield," is itself the shield: it discredits Jewish objections before they're even raised. Genuine criticism of Israeli government decisions is legitimate and common.

Chanting "Free Palestine" alongside "Free Cuba," and calling U.S. immigration enforcement a "terrorist organization," with no demand for Hamas's disarmament or accountability for October 7, is not policy criticism. It is a slogan that treats a state's existence as the obstacle to justice. The true obstacle to a free Palestine is the terrorist organization, and hate filled mentality that has embedded itself into the Palestinian people, culture and ideology.