

Pro-Palestinian activists steal busts of Israel's first president on Balfour Declaration anniversary

From the [Manchester Evening News](#) and [The Telegraph](#)

Demonstrators seize sculptures of Chaim Weizmann from University of Manchester

An investigation has been launched after protesters used hammers to smash into a cabinet and steal two statues from a University of Manchester building.

Activist group Palestine Action has claimed responsibility for the incident at the Chemistry Building on the Oxford Road campus last night (Friday, November 1). The group shared a clip on X, formerly Twitter, of two hooded protesters using hammers to smash their way through the glass cabinet. They they appeared to grab the statues from inside the cabinet. The group said the sculptures were of Israel's first president Chaim Weizmann.

BREAKING: Palestine Action abduct sculptures of Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, from the University of Manchester.

Weizmann secured the Balfour Declaration, a British pledge written 107 years ago, which began the ethnic cleansing of Palestine by signing the land away.
pic.twitter.com/a8urQciod5

– Palestine Action (@Pal_action) [November 2, 2024](#)

"Today, Palestine Action have marked 107 years since the Balfour Declaration, by taking two sculptures of Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, from its display case at University of Manchester", Palestine Action said in a statement. "Weizmann secured the Balfour Declaration, a British pledge written 107 years ago, which began the ethnic cleansing of Palestine by signing the land away", the group claimed.

"On behalf of Britain, Balfour promised away the land of Palestine – which he never had the right to do. After the declaration until the Nakba in 1948, British soldiers killed, arrested and raped Palestinians. During their colonial mandate, the British introduced home demolitions as collective punishment to repress Palestinian resistance and burnt down many indigenous villages. During this time, Weizmann was president of the World Zionist Organisation.

"From the Balfour Declaration to today, the UK remains an active participant in the colonisation, genocide and occupation of Palestine."

If, and it is a big if, any individual British soldier committed the crime of rape during that period he would have been court martialed and once found guilty severely punished. Hamas may use rape as a routine weapon of war; the British Army DO NOT.

A spokesperson for the University of the Manchester said they were aware of the footage shared by the group and had reported the incident to Greater Manchester Police. Police confirmed they have launched an investigation, with anyone with information urged to come forward to officers. . . "anyone with any information is asked to contact police via 101 or gmp.police.uk, quoting log 4035 of 01/11/24. You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111."



A non-Palestinian activist waves a Palestinian flag outside the University of Manchester. Credit: Paul Ellis/AFP

Other violent protests have taken place elsewhere in England today. I won't go through them all.