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Summary:

On May 18, 2016, in Cambridge, MA, a new coalition called Massachusetts Against Hewlett Packard (HP) launched a campaign to end local and state spending on HP until the company agrees to end its corporate complicity in Israeli apartheid, U.S. deportations and mass incarceration. This report documents the rationale for the campaign, including HP’s record of corporate complicity in institutionalized racism and violence, as well as the details of HP’s local and state contracts.

The report answers the following questions:

1. Why boycott HP?
2. Why focus on Massachusetts and on Cambridge?
3. How will ending these contracts influence positive change?

For more information and updates, please visit MassAgainstHP.org.
Hewlett Packard, South Africa, & Israeli Apartheid: “The Polaroid of Our Times”

Forty-five years ago, in one of the inaugural actions of the boycott-divestment movement against apartheid South Africa, over 100 Cambridge students, workers, and community members rallied at Polaroid headquarters in Tech Square to launch the National Movement Against Apartheid.¹ The rally was called to commemorate the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre and defend Polaroid Revolutionary Workers Movement (PRWM) leaders Caroline Hunter and Clyde Walton, who had been fired by Polaroid for denouncing the company’s complicity in racist oppression — from South African apartheid to “Jim Crow practices” in Massachusetts.²

PRWM co-founders Caroline Hunter, a Polaroid chemist, and Ken Williams, a company photographer, began their historic campaign after discovering that Polaroid ID-2 instant photograph technology was the linchpin of the apartheid regime’s passbook system, used for registration and control of black people. After being fired from Polaroid, Hunter launched the People Against National ID Cards (PANIC) campaign to link Polaroid ID systems to worldwide surveillance and repression enabled by high technology: from the US (in the throes of COINTELPRO and national ID card debates) to Israel, to South Africa.³

In November 1979, Cambridge residents voted overwhelmingly to support divestment from apartheid South Africa in a city-wide referendum; the City Council followed by ordering the City Treasurer and Retirement Board to divest from companies doing business in South Africa — including Hewlett-Packard, which sold computers to the racist apartheid regime.⁴

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement — a global movement against Israeli apartheid and in solidarity with the Palestinian people, formed in response to a call by Palestinian civil society in 2005⁵ — has taken up the mantle of nonviolent resistance to oppression, inspired by the anti-apartheid movement. Like Polaroid in 1970, Hewlett-Packard develops and maintains the ‘nervous system’ of state oppression: population registration and surveillance. Polaroid created the passbooks allowing white South Africans to confine and control black South Africans, and HP creates the biometric ID equipment (including ID cards, fingerprinting, iris scans, and facial recognition) allowing Israelis to confine and control Palestinians. Polaroid’s 1977 withdrawal from South Africa marked a turning point in the international effort to end apartheid⁶. If HP withdraws from Israeli oppression, they impede Israel’s ability to enforce a system of segregation.

⁵ Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS, BDS Movement Website, https://bds-movement.net/call, accessed on 5/12/16.
However, just like Polaroid they won’t withdraw without significant public pressure.

HP’s violence is not limited to Palestinians who, like black South Africans during apartheid, are often targeted for the development and testing of repressive technology. HP information technology is used by US prison and immigration officials, as well as militaries around the world, to track and contain vulnerable populations.

Here in Massachusetts, HP holds a multi-million dollar contract with the state to sell computers, printers, and servers to public institutions and municipalities, including the city of Cambridge and its public school system. These institutions may legally opt out of the contract at any time and replace HP products and services with comparably-priced alternatives. By ending their contracts with HP, Massachusetts and its voters can create an economic incentive for the corporate giant to end its complicity with institutionalized racism and violence.

HP in Israel-Palestine

In Israel-Palestine, HP builds and operates the basic information technology (IT) infrastructure for the Israeli occupation and blockade of the West Bank and Gaza, and is a key partner in the continuation of the apartheid regime.

HP is vital to the daily operation of Israeli apartheid in four key domains:

- **Checkpoints**: HP company, Electronic Data Systems (EDS), now Hewlett Packard Enterprise, is the prime contractor of the Basel system, an automated biometric access control system employed within Israel’s checkpoint and ‘Separation Wall’ apparatus. A small portion of Israeli checkpoints separate Palestinians from Israelis; most separate Palestinians from other Palestinians. They fragment and segregate the occupied Palestinian territories and populations through electric fences, watchtowers, sensors, and concrete barriers. *Israel obtains the full biometric profile of virtually every Palestinian over the age of 16, including fingerprints, retinal scans, and facial recognition.* The checkpoint system separates Palestinian workers from their jobs, farmers from their land, students from their schools, patients from hospitals, and families from each other. Israeli authorities can revoke work and travel credentials at any point.

- **ID Cards**: Israel's system of biometric identification cards for citizens and residents of Israel lays the technical foundation for the country’s ‘ethnocratic’ system of tiered citizenship, which assigns rights and privileges by “nationality” (e.g. Jewish, Arab, or Bedouin). Jewish Israelis’ IDs permit them to live and travel throughout all of Israel proper, and 60% of the West Bank. Palestinians are split between four categories of identification: Citizen of Israel, East Jerusalem, West Bank, and Gaza. These IDs form the basis of rampant, de jure and de facto discrimination in housing, employment, marriage, healthcare, education, and policing.


Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza need special permits to leave that territory.11

- **The Blockade of Gaza:** HP provides broad IT infrastructure and support services for the Israeli Defense Forces, and the Israeli Navy in particular. The Navy enforces the land and sea blockade of the Gaza strip, a siege that prevents adequate food, construction, and medical supplies from entering the “open-air prison.”12 Israel denies Palestinians in Gaza the supplies necessary for repairing critical power, water, and agriculture infrastructure damaged by periodic Israeli bombing campaigns. Import, export, and travel restrictions have resulted in a collapse of economic activity. High infant mortality and incidences of otherwise preventable disease are direct consequences of this blockade.13

- **Illegal Settlements:** HP directly contracts with the municipal governments of Modi’in Ilit and Ariel, two of the largest Jewish-only Israeli settlements in the West Bank, piloting a “Smart City” project that includes a settlement data storage system. Several of HP’s close partners and subcontractors, including Matrix and Tact Testware, are based in the settlements. Israel’s network of over 125 government sanctioned (but illegal under international law) Jewish-only settlements are home to about 550,000 residents, and strategically constructed to annex maximum Palestinian land, eliminating the feasibility of establishing a geographically viable Palestinian state.14

HP has become the target of boycott campaigns around the world due to its complicity in Israeli oppression of Palestinians, in response to the BDS call. The Presbyterian Church divested from HP in 201415, and dozens of student governments have called on their academic institutions to divest from HP. Campaigns against HP are active in Los Angeles16, San Francisco17, and London.18 In 2014, 1,000 activists with the Boston for Palestine coalition marched on an HP conference.19

**HP in the United States**

In the United States, HP acts as a private extension of the military and police, profiting from the expansion of prisons, deportations, surveillance, and military:

- **Mass Surveillance:** In the wake of September 11, HP CEO Carly Fiorina donated servers to the Bush National Security Agency (NSA) that formed the basis of its illegal domestic surveillance (“warrantless wiretapping”) program. Files released by whistleblower Edward Snowden in 2013 demonstrate HP’s crucial collaboration with the US’ global surveillance dragnet.20

- **Mass Incarceration:** HP is a major player in the US prison-industrial complex, providing essential infrastructure for state and private prison systems that form the basis of a

race-based caste system. Attorney Michelle Alexander refers to this system as “The New Jim Crow”: the targeting of black men, through the war on drugs and the decimation of communities of color, as a form of racial control. Addressing racism in this country means addressing the disproportionate rates at which black people, as well as latinos, lose their livelihoods, families, and freedoms to incarceration.21 A growing movement calls on institutions to divest from companies profiting off of mass incarceration, as a strategy to reel in a prison system that continues to expand while making Americans less, not more, safe.22 HP’s largest, but by no means only, prison contract is with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for the design and maintenance of the Strategic Offender Management System — technology that tracks prisoner data, and is essential not only for the continued incarceration of millions of Black and poor people, but also for widespread legal discrimination against former prisoners.23

- **Mass Deportation**: HP developed technology used by the Obama Administration’s Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to track, raid, detain, and deport millions of immigrant families, on a scale unprecedented in US history. HP automates “status determination” and “criminal alien tracking” for ICE’s Law Enforcement Support Center, used by local and state police to profile and deport immigrants through programs such as Secure Communities.24 This technology allows ICE to deport immigrants faster, thus streamlining a system that separates people from their livelihoods and families, and often puts them in physical danger.

- **Mass Murder**: HP sits alongside war profiteer peers such as Raytheon, Boeing, and Lockheed Martin as a top-20 US ‘defense’ and ‘homeland security’ contractor.25,26,27 HP technology is employed by every branch of the US Armed Forces — Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world” — for logistics, propaganda, recruitment, vehicle and weapon systems integration, and battlefield computers.

**HP Worldwide**

In addition to the US and Israel, HP caters to repressive governments around the world, which use network surveillance to identify and suppress dissidents and censor information. HP directly developed the “Peaceful Chongqing” system of networked cameras in China.28 HP provided Iran and Syria with the surveillance technology used to crush the Green Movement and Arab Spring in 2011,29 bypassing

sanctions through third party resellers. HP has also engaged in corrupt activities: Subsidiaries in Russia, Poland, and Mexico have admitted to bribery and other forms of misconduct.

### HP in Massachusetts

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts contracts with HP — and HP subsidiaries, partners, and resellers — for consumer office technology, servers, and information systems. From fiscal years 2010–2016, the Commonwealth spent $147 million on HP goods and services, divided across several major areas: office computing hardware and software; e-payment processing; the MassHealth card and database system, and agency information systems. The following demonstrates that HP’s operations in Massachusetts are consistent with its modus operandi of building the infrastructure for state repression, surveillance, and privatization.

Of the $147 million spent on HP goods and services at the state level from FY2010–2016, at least $14 million, or about 1%, was spent by law enforcement and homeland security agencies (the “Security State”). Because of MA law enforcement agencies’ evasion of public records law, as well as the private (regional police foundations) and federal (the military 1033 program) donation of high-tech equipment, this is probably only the tip of the iceberg. ‘Security State’ agencies that consistently buy HP products include the State Police, Department of Corrections, County Sheriffs, Chief Medical Examiner, and District Attorneys. In contrast, Commonwealth public health agencies spent only $2.5 million on HP products during this period.

Israeli firm Electronic Data Systems (EDS), now HPE, built the basic infrastructure for the Commonwealth’s centralized electronic payment (E-Pay). EDS/HP also implemented E-Pay processing for agencies such as the Department of Criminal Justice Info Services, which generates revenue via its controversial Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) online system. HP thus enables MA law enforcement agencies to engage in predatory revenue-generation (most recently exposed in Ferguson, MO) and legalized racial discrimination in employment, housing, and public services (via criminal records as a proxy for race).

HP’s recent $50 million contract extension for MassHealth information systems in MA is a prime example of the corporate ‘feeding-frenzy’ around the Affordable Care Act (ACA), legislation widely considered a ‘gift’ to insurance companies. While ACA has expanded healthcare coverage to millions in the US, its implementation in MA has actually lowered coverage quality in MA. HP has helped the Commonwealth implement subtle austerity measures by creating a MassHealth membership/ID system that automates eligibility enforcement, removing residents from MassHealth rolls in order to reduce costs.

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HP spinoff Agilent Technologies is a major provider of equipment and services for the infamous Massachusetts State Police Crime Lab, the center of an evidence-falsification scandal that cast doubt on tens of thousands of drug cases and convictions. Far from independent agencies that check police claims, forensic crime labs have a mandate to support police investigations and theories, creating a strong incentive for the manipulation of evidence. From 2003–7, HP installed 2,000 laptops in patrol cars for the Massachusetts State Police, one of the most racially discriminatory law enforcement agencies in the United States according to ACLU data.34 HP also sponsors private police organizations like the New England High-Tech Crime Investigation Association, providing free equipment and training. It is no surprise, then, that quasi-private, militarized police agencies like The Northeastern Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (NEMLEC), a private nonprofit front for regional police SWAT teams, own a great deal of HP equipment, often received through corporate donors.35

On Track Innovations (OTI), the Israeli HP subcontractor that supplies biometric ID cards for Israel’s BASEL system, also built the MBTA’s CharlieCard system, supplying card readers and support software for the MBTA’s 2006–7 ticketing overhaul.36 HP is constantly searching for new Commonwealth contracting opportunities. Recently, it has expressed interest or submitted proposals for running a Raytheon cyber-defense product pilot and providing IT services for the MA National Guard.

Beyond procurement, HP maintains a considerable presence in Massachusetts, much of it devoted to security and intelligence. HP “Big Data” division Vertica, whose clients include the Drug Enforcement Agency and Navy, has a 37,000 square-foot facility near Alewife station in Cambridge. HP Ventures recently invested millions of dollars into Tel-Aviv/Boston-based cybersecurity firm Hexadite and Cambridge-based big data firm Tamr — firms that plan to cash in on government surveillance and cybersecurity fearmongering.38,39 Massachusetts was also at the center of the 2006 HP Pretexting Scandal, in which high-level HP executives directed their Boston-based private security force, the Global Security Unit, as well as outside investigators, to illegally surveil the communications and whereabouts of workers and journalists.40 HP is thus an unusually bad corporate actor, without respect for the rule of law or human rights — from Israel’s illegal settlements to our own backyard.

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HP in Cambridge

Cambridge does not make itemized spending data available in an “Open Checkbook” — leaving the city considerably behind the Commonwealth, Boston, and Somerville Open Data initiatives. From the limited data available for FY2012–2014, the City of Cambridge spent an average of $185,000 per

quarter on HP goods and services through the statewide rate contract for computers and accessories. Cambridge likely procures HP products through other contracts, so quarterly spending on HP is likely higher. Significantly, as a matter of procurement and IT policy, Cambridge only uses HP printers and Dell Computers.

Under the statewide rate contracts used by Massachusetts municipalities to purchase and lease IT goods and services, numerous alternatives to HP products are available. The contracts are non-binding and allow the municipalities to purchase any of the equipments listed in the contracts to satisfy their needs. This means that Cambridge can choose to purchase from other vendors, such as Dell, Apple, and Lenovo for example, at discounted rates. This means that Cambridge can change its procurement policy with little to no effect to the cost, while taking an ethical stance against racism and oppression.

Cambridge is under no legal obligation to continue to use HP products; technical and economic constraints are relatively small from a budgetary point of view. But a switch to alternative companies would be worthwhile in the face of HP’s violations of human rights and dignity, and preceded by Cambridge’s leadership on fighting South African apartheid in the 1970s and 80s.

Visit [www.MassAgainstHP.org](http://www.MassAgainstHP.org) for more information, and updates on the campaign.

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**APPENDIX**

**A note on HP’s corporate structure:**

In November 2015, HP split into two firms: HP Inc. (HPQ) for consumer hardware (PCs and printers), and Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) for business solutions (services, servers, storage, networking). Because the companies share facilities, management, supply chains, and branding — and collaborate on purchasing and bidding — both remain apartheid profiteers.


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41 FOIA Results, ITC47 Itemized Purchases FY2012–2014