

BRICUP Newsletter 75

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BRICUP

British Committee for the
Universities of Palestine

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CONTENTS

P.1. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) backs suspension of Israeli Architects' Association (IAUA) from its international parent body (UIA).

P.3. BRICUP writes to Stephen Hodder, President of the RIBA.

P.3. Academic boycott debated in Leeds – against the odds.

P.4. The Commission answers some questions re EU Funding for Research – but only some.

P.6 . Zionists play Whack-a-Mole; but the moles keep digging.

P.8. BRICUP urges boycott of Bar Ilan conference.

**P.9. The PACBI column
To Neil Young: Refrain from
Undermining the Rights of the Indigenous
Palestinian People.**

**P.11. The "Alliot-Marie circular"
should be abrogated.**

P.12. Notices.

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) backs suspension of Israeli Architects' Association (IAUA) from its international parent body (UIA).

Architects and Planners for Justice in Palestine (APJP) have been campaigning for over seven years for the International Union of Architects (UIA) to take action against the Israeli Association of United Architects (IAUA) for its unquestioning participation in designing and building the “facts on the ground” to consolidate Israel’s illegal occupation of the West Bank. This vast real-estate project is entirely against international humanitarian law, numerous UN Resolutions and what is more, the professional codes of ethics of all architects, also laid down in the UIA Accords. The Motion to the RIBA Council on 19th March 2014 by the courageous action of RIBA past president Angela Brady came as a surprise, as did the result. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) voted a Council Motion to back Israel’s suspension, by 23 to 16 with 10 abstentions. The debate was a passionate one, and lasted about an hour - with a presentation that was supposed to be delivered in person by APJP, but was instead distributed as a paper together with the motion. <http://apjp.org/riba-votes-to-suspend-israeli/>

This followed an almost identical Motion from the Royal Incorporation of Architects of Scotland (RIAS) a few days earlier to do the same thing, giving the Brits and the Scots, a united front. While the Scottish vote sailed through almost unnoticed and without a fuss, with a 90% majority achieved in 20 minutes, the RIBA received a barrage, nay, a

storm of hostility and intimidation from the Israel lobby, and the Jewish Chronicle, and all the pro-Israel hate sites, in a classic formula now repeated on any such occasion. A group calling itself 'Constructive Engagement', consisting of 23 pro-Israeli architects, sent a spoiling letter to each councillor, saying it was 'dialogue' - not importing the Israel/Palestine conflict to the RIBA - that was required. Stephen Games, who runs an architectural think tank called 'New Premises', was thinking of sending the RIBA exactly there, when he called for the RIBA to have its Royal Charter revoked unless it cancelled the Motion that was now dramatically voted in as Council Policy.

All the tropes of hasbara (sugar-coated mythology) were invoked, in a repeated formula by all the comments on articles, and messages sent to the RIBA. Threats were received by the councillors involved, with the imputation there would be a Jewish boycott of firms of the RIBA architects who signed the Motion - and of the RIBA itself - and to refuse to hold their Bar or Batmitvahs at hire-venues there. The Jewish Chronicle - conflating Israelis with all Jews, said that the RIBA was officially anti-Semitic. Letters from an RIBA representative and APJP refuting the hate editorials were met by derision in another editorial, re-affirming the accusations, going further by saying that Israelis would be refused entrance to the RIBA portals. Another letter claimed that Israeli architects everywhere were to be boycotted!

In reply to all this raging in emails, hate sites and defamatory articles slurring individuals - the main argument of 'singling Israel' out of all the countries in the planet repeated, *ad nauseam*, the anti-Semitic intention. Why doesn't the RIBA question every human right infringement in the world, before it points the finger at Israel? The fact was ignored that the practice of architecture in Israel was unique in its close association with state policies of ethnic cleansing, dispossession and displacement. It also combines military use of Israel's civilians in the surveillance of Palestinians for 'security' in the way the hilltop settlements were designed - and in expropriating land from Palestinians to build Israel towns and communes. The Judaisation programmes in East Jerusalem, the Hebron Hills and in the Negev and Galilee, implicated all Israeli architects, even if many claimed to be 'left wing' and said they did not build in the OPTs. The IAUA, which had kept silent in all attempts to engage with them, and silent at the whole-scale building and planning projects that were

serious breaches of the Geneva Convention and thus war crimes - and who as representatives of all Israeli architects' professional conduct was responsible for the consolidation of Israel's hold on almost all of the OPTs - suddenly woke up and wrote to the FCO and David Cameron. Michael Gove took up the cudgels at a panel event at the JW3 centre in Finchley Road, called these boycotts 'vile'.

BRICUP then organised a letter to support this courageous action by the RIBA asking it not to bow to the intimidation and anti-semitism accusations. This was signed by top architects, academics and cultural figures. [The letter is reproduced below]

See also <http://apjp.org/riba-votes-to-suspend-israeli/>

The lesson of all this is that professionals cannot evade ethics and common humanity in the work that they do - and where this work involves the benefit of one section of a population by the domination and dispossession of another, in laws that indisputably involve proven apartheid, racism, and demographic manipulation. These include the segregated roads, the matrix of control, the house demolitions, the unrecognized villages, the denial of planning permission or building for an expanding Palestinian population. The IAUA cannot evade the complicity or impunity from these unethical breaches of the IUA professional codes. Something must give, and this action is a breakthrough for the UIA to consider by taking positive action against a continuing breach of its Resolution and Accords specifically directed against Israel's illegal, frenetic and unrestrained settlement expansion, aided and abetted by its architects. War crimes such as this deny the values and importance of architecture for the benefit of all of society.

Other professionals and academics can prompt their institutions to undertake such action in the future. Hopefully a not-too distant one, as the urgency of the situation in Israel/Palestine continues.

Abe Hayeem

Chair, Architects and Planners
for Justice in Palestine.

BRICUP writes to Stephen Hodder, President of the RIBA

**The complicity of Israeli architects in settlement
building deserves RIBA's censure**

We are writing to express our support for the recent decision of the RIBA Council to move to suspend the Israeli Association of United Architects (IAUA) from the world body of architects, the International Union of Architects (UIA). The parallel decision of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland gives this initiative great force.

We are aware of the difficulties liable to be faced by any body that voices public criticism of Israel. The determination of RIBA and RIAS to take a principled stand on this issue is, in this context, particularly worthy of support. We are sure that you will face attacks – but much of it will be from predictable sources which will raise the spectre of antisemitism in response to all criticism of Israel, especially when such criticism attracts wide attention.

We understand that you have taken this action because members of IAUA have been closely involved in the design and building of illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and also in the construction of the Apartheid Wall that runs deep into the illegally occupied area. Despite previous resolutions passed by UIA on this topic, IAUA has taken no action to discipline its members who have collaborated in these breaches of international law.

Many people, Jewish and non-Jewish, architects and non-architects, will be heartened by this example of a respected body taking up its social and professional responsibilities in so resolute a manner.

Signed by 77 signatories.

(The complete list of signatories, with affiliations, is [available on the BRICUP website](#)).

Academic boycott debated in Leeds – against the odds.

On March 19th, thanks to the lengthy and persistent efforts of James Dickins (Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies) and Say Burgin (School of History) a debate, for and against the academic boycott of Israel, was held on the University of Leeds campus. The difficulties encountered by the organizers in mounting this debate, the subject of which is of significant and topical interest to many, are a worrying lesson to those of us who believe that academic freedom includes the ability to debate

controversial topics that include criticism of powerful vested interests.

Nevertheless, thanks to their persistence, a debate on the motion ***“This house believes that UK academics should join the movement for academic boycott by refusing to engage with any Israeli academic institutions until Israel ends the occupation and abides by international law”*** eventually went ahead and an impressive crowd of staff and students (peaking at about 100) turned out to hear BRICUP members Jonathan Rosenhead and Sue Blackwell pitted against two impressive opponents - Robert Fine (University of Warwick) and Hugh Hubbard (School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Leeds) - both of whom provided more nuanced and challenging arguments against the boycott than are often encountered when this question is debated.

The debate was sensitively chaired by the Leeds University Quaker Chaplain Robin Fishwick who invited the audience to an initial ‘blind’ show of hands, for and against the motion, as a measure of the influence of the arguments on the eventual outcome. This initial count found 60% (53) for, and 40% (36) against the motion.

Jonathan opened the debate with a discussion of the background, including the tactical justification for boycotting Israel. He addressed the issue of its potential effectiveness as a strategy for inducing Israel to abide by international law and human rights norms. He took time to deal with the accusations of anti-semitism constantly aimed at those who criticize Israel or call for boycott, describing them as bogus, bordering on defamatory and at complete odds with the vigilance with which the BDS movement works for the exclusion of all forms of racism. [Jonathan’s speech is online](#).

Sue focussed on the issue of academic freedom- that of Israelis, Palestinians and of those who oppose the Israeli government and support the boycott, referring to a number of attempts to silence those who oppose Israeli government policy (e.g., Norman Finkelstein) or support the boycott (Ronnie Fraser’s attempt to bankrupt his Union, and the current case against Jake Lynch etc as examples.) She described the unacceptable restrictions and humiliations imposed on Palestinian academics and students, contrasting them with the hugely generous support that Israeli academic institutions receive from the international community, despite their inextricably close

relationship with the Israeli Military and their abuses of Palestinian human rights and the institutionalized racism embedded in Israeli law.

Robert Fine, a supporter of the boycott of South Africa and a critic of the Israeli government, opposed the academic boycott on a number of grounds - that it precludes the possibility of international trade union solidarity, and that creating a collective responsibility on the grounds of nationality, religion or race is unacceptable, as is holding institutions responsible for the acts of the state. He acknowledged that Israeli universities lack 'bottle' when it comes to criticism of their government but drew parallels with the failure of UK academics to hold our government to account. 'Upset' by wrongs committed by fellow Jews, he nevertheless asserted that Israel is being picked on (rather than Egypt, Syria, Qatar, etc) because it is Jewish, that those who call for a boycott, exaggerate Israel's evil and concluded that, contrary to the assertions of the BDS movement, criticism of a country CAN be racist and does encourage anti-semitism. He concluded by asserting that Zionism, as a form of nationalism, has both positive and negative faces and must not be extracted from the history of the Jewish people in Europe and their fear that history could repeat itself. He concluded by advocating forging links of solidarity based on compassion and understanding and to encourage links between those on both sides of the conflict.

Hugh Hubbard, an active trade unionist for 50 years, was concerned about the anti-Israel bias of UK academia, the labelling of the Israeli state as racist and the need to uphold the rights of the Israeli people, most of whom were born in Israel. The state of Israel was founded on fear of another holocaust, fears which must be taken into account. His objections to the call for boycott however were focussed on his assertion that, unlike the boycott of South Africa, it had no ultimate objective and its proponents lacked a coherent vision of what a just peace would look like (a view strongly contested by Sue in her summing up). Moreover, the Palestinians have no Mandela figure to speak for them (also contested by Sue, who referred to the imprisoned Marwan Barghouti) and, since UK academia is not structured in such a way as to implement a boycott, calling for one can only be the wrong strategy and therefore counterproductive. Energies in support of the rights of both people should be directed elsewhere.

After a lively and good humoured debate and a summing up on both sides, a second vote was taken. This time the vote in favour of the motion had increased to 75% (68) of those present. BRICUP would like to offer its grateful thanks to James Dickins and Say Burgin for making this event possible, to Leeds University Palestine Solidarity Group for booking the room and to all who participated and made it so enjoyable and successful.

Similar debates are now being planned on other campuses around the country. For more information contact BRICUP on bricup@bricup.org.uk.

Monica Wusteman

The Commission answers some questions re EU Funding for Research – but only some.

Readers with an interest in Israel's access to EU research funds will recall various questions being raised in earlier editions of this newsletter- for example, about what access institutions with settlement based activities will have under the new Horizon 2020 funding arrangements (see BRICUP Newsletters 70 and 71, November and December 2013) and how any rules excluding the funding of settlements will be enforced by the EU.

Fortunately, our interest in these issues is shared by Keith Taylor, Green Party MEP for the South East of England and a good friend of the Palestinians in the European Parliament. We have been working with Keith for some time, and he has already put a series of written questions to the Commission to try and clarify various aspects of the Horizon 2020 funding arrangements for us. The most recent exchange with the Commission is of particular interest.

In the question, we pointed out that:-

- The EU is bound by UNSC Resolution 242 concerning 'the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war'; consequently it recognises that Israeli settlements in the OPT and Golan are illegal; and furthermore, it notes that Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement obliges the EU to

exclude collaboration with Israeli settlements in the OPT and Golan.

- In July 2013 the EU published guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities for EU grants and financial support. These were intended to prevent EU funds from being used to support illegal Israeli activity in the OPT and the Golan.
- In November 2013, Israel refused to accept these conditions: the EU and, according to Haaretz, Israel 'agreed to differ', resulting in an absurd situation where the parties to an 'agreement' are working according to differing and incompatible rules.
- One example of relevant Israeli activity in occupied territory is Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories, which has been a partner in several Framework 7 projects.
- Ariel University is located in an illegal settlement but claims to be actively collaborating with a number of Israeli institutions that receive EU support.

See <http://www.ariel.ac.il/research/en/research-activities>

We then asked the the High Representative (Catherine Ashton) to :-

1. Explain the EU's attitude to Israeli entities that collaborate with entities in the OPT?
2. Confirm that any Israeli University that collaborates with Ariel University will not be permitted to use EU funds or EU-funded resources in any such collaboration?
3. Confirm that Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories will not be eligible for EU funding under Horizon 2020, despite the location of its registered office inside Israel?
4. Explain how the EU will police the implementation of its policy, bearing in mind that Israel will have a different policy as a result of the 'agree to differ' arrangement?

On 03/03/2014 we received the following response (E-014264/2013) from Vice President Ashton on behalf of the Commission.

"The EU guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities for EU grants, prizes and financial instruments, published in July 2013, and in force since 1 January 2014, spell out the EU's policy regarding Israeli entities and their activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, established or which carry out activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Ariel University, are not eligible to participate (including on a no-cost basis) in Union programmes and receive EU funding from such programmes.

"According to the "guidelines", Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories are not eligible for EU funding for activities in the OPT.

"The understanding that the EU and Israel have "agreed to differ" is incorrect. The Commission will implement the guidelines and must be consistent in following the agreed EU political positions and in honouring its responsibility to diligently implement the EU budget. The Israeli unilateral statement which will be attached to the Memorandum of Understanding expresses a "principled position against" the EU guidelines but at the same time Israel has acknowledged that its participation will be governed by the rules and implementation procedures established by the Commission."

So, on the face of it, the Commission does appear to rule out the use of EU funds to support research by Ahava DSL and Ariel University on the West Bank (our questions 2 and 3) and it is good that the Commission declares that the report by Ha'aretz that the EU and Israel have "Agreed to differ" is incorrect; rather, that Israel, while disagreeing with EU policy, has agreed to follow the EU rules in practice. The wording of the "Israeli unilateral statement" that will be attached to the Memorandum of Understanding will be interesting and important. We are seeking to obtain a copy. The problem is that we know only too well that Israel has flouted EU restrictions on the export of goods from the OPT. Will Israeli practice be any different in the field of research? Our 1st and 4th questions, which were related to our third "given" point, have not been answered but are absolutely crucial. How will

the EU police the application of its rulings and what will it do if EU policy on funds for research is ignored or circumvented?

We have therefore followed up with the following question, which was submitted on 10.03.2014.

“Collaborative arrangements, even with good will, can be difficult to monitor. We know that Ariel University (AU) is built on illegally expropriated Palestinian land and Answer E-014264/2013 confirms that AU is not eligible to participate in Union research programmes. But we know from AU's website that:-

"Many studies are conducted in collaboration with researchers affiliated with other institutions, including Tel Aviv University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Ben Gurion University, the Technion, and other advanced research institutions, colleges and universities in Israel and overseas. University researchers are also extensively involved in research projects that are initiated by the industrial sector. We conduct studies that are commissioned by and/or in collaboration with IAI (Israel Aerospace Industries), Elta, Elbit, El-Op, Rafael, and other companies from Israel, Europe and the US. The total annual research budget for the University exceeds NIS 30 million (not including salaries for researchers who are faculty members)."

The question is, How does the EU intend to prevent funds awarded to Israeli and other eligible institutions percolating through to the AU and other ineligible institutions via collaboration agreements ?

We look forward to the Commission's response.

David Pegg and Monica Wusteman

Zionists play Whack-a-Mole; but the moles keep digging.

Recent weeks have seen an outbreak of BDS activity on North American campuses. Each student action has met a virulent reaction from Israel's defenders; each Zionist reaction prompts further action elsewhere.

The current round started on 24 February at Northeastern University in Boston [when Students](#)

[for Justice in Palestine](#) (SJP) repeated a tactic used on other campuses and posted mock eviction notices under students' doors. These [notices](#) bring Israel's campaign of

EVICTION NOTICE

Persons: All Occupiers
Rooms: All
Effective: Immediately

MUNICIPAL COURT
Case No: 3RW0987T Warrant No: D59R567 Issue Date: 23 February 2014

DORM SCHEDULED FOR DEMOLITION IN THREE DAYS

If you do not vacate the premise by 26 FEB 6 p.m., we reserve the right to destroy all remaining belongings under Code 211.3B. We hereby release any liability for damage to any persons or effects including gross negligence. You will receive an invoice for the charges of demolition and waste removal soon.

Eviction notices are routinely given to Palestinian families living under oppressive Israeli occupation for no reason other than their ethnic background. Forced evictions are arbitrary, racist, humiliating, violent, and in violation of Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Since 1967, Israeli occupying forces have destroyed nearly 27,000 homes and other structures crucial for livelihood resulting in the internal displacement of more than 160,000 indigenous Palestinians being injured and killed, and priceless family objects destroyed.

Palestinian homes are destroyed to cleanse the region of its Arab population, and create space for illegal settlements. Israel's apartheid policies against the Palestinian people are in violation of internationally recognized human rights. The United States' government, American corporations, and public universities support these policies against Palestinians through foreign aid and investments.

Source: Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions
Visit www.icahd.org for more information.

This is not a real eviction notice. #BostonMockEviction

demolition and eviction to the attention of all students. It is frequently, and falsely, alleged that Jewish students are targeted for these notices in an act of antisemitic intimidation. No evidence of this has ever been produced and as the aim is to spread information such a tactic would be counter-productive. Such claims were dismissed by the authorities at Rutgers and Florida Atlantic Universities

[The administration at Northeastern responded brutally](#). They suspended the SJP chapter and involved the police and threatened the only women of colour in the group that distributed the leaflets with expulsion-level charges. The threat of expulsion was rescinded following a nationwide outcry. University president Joseph Aoun recently protested, on spurious free speech grounds, against the American Studies Association decision (see [Newsletter 72](#)) to adopt BDS; he obviously sees free speech on his own campus as less vital.

This was followed on 1 March by a 798 to 585 vote by students at Windsor University, Ontario, to support BDS. University President, Alan Wildeman, immediately tried to undermine the validity of this well supported vote [making claims of irregularity without providing evidence](#). On 12 March he announced he had hired a lawyer to carry out an “investigation” of the BDS referendum.

Worse was to follow when Richard Spencer, an alumnus and major donor posted: “I am reasonably certain that the majority, if not all, of this small percentage of the student body are of the Muslim faith, which promotes violence and hatred toward the Jews in the middle east.” Wildeman has very correctly distanced himself from these comments. However, it provokes a question about the due diligence the University conducts before accepting donations if it had been pleased to accept funds from someone prone to making such racist statements.

Despite these attacks the students at Windsor remain committed to putting their BDS policies into effect.

Next the focus moved to Barnard College in New York, an affiliate of the prestigious Columbia University. On 10 March Barnard/Columbia SJP kicked off [Israel Apartheid Week](#) by hanging a [banner of a map of Palestine](#) outside Barnard Hall where groups conventionally post banners promoting their events. The campus former Hillel president wrote “The banner features a map of Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, without any internal borders, colored uniformly green. That is to say, C-SJP's banner, brazenly displayed on the front door of Barnard College, entirely erases the Jewish State from the map. While I hesitate to use the term too loosely, I am at a loss as to how to categorize this display as anything less than anti-Semitic.” These claims are strange, not only because Israel frequently produces maps without borders, although they tend to colour the territory blue. More weird are Hillel protests against a map that does not detail Israel's land grabs.

Barnard's administration swung into prompt action on receiving these pleas and tore down the banner. An action that accords with their support for Zionist Birthright trips to Israel and tolerance of regular events on campus supporting and celebrating the Occupation.

These repressive measures have fallen foul of deep US attachment to free speech and the first Amendment and even some [staunch supporters of Israel have denounced such censorship](#).

Hillel, the organisation that seeks to organise and support Jewish students has itself become an arena of contest. Many Jewish students are arguing that Hillel should represent all of them and not make support dependent on a commitment to Israel's policies. National Hillel has been operating a policy of sanctioning any campus group that attempts to host any speaker critical of current Israeli policy, regardless of their attitude to the continuance of the state as a Jewish entity. [Harvard Hillel even banned Avraham Burg](#), the former speaker of Israel's

Knesset. In reaction campus Hillel groups are declaring themselves to be [Open Hillels](#) and not subject to a rigid Zionist Dogma.

On 18 March students at Loyola, a Jesuit University in Chicago, [agreed to divest from companies complicit in aiding the Israeli Occupation of Palestine](#). They identified Caterpillar, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, G4S, Raytheon, Elbit Systems, SodaStream, and Veolia. The vote at the student senate was passed nem con with 26 votes in favour and 2 abstentions; it followed a year long campaign by Loyola SJP and a petition signed by over 800 students. It is just a year since students at San Diego State University, UC Irvine and UC Riverside passed [similar resolutions](#).

The senate revisited the issue on 24 March and confirmed their earlier decision, albeit by a smaller margin. Despite this the President of the Student Association unilaterally [vetoed the resolution the following day](#). The spotlight moves back to the Senate who can override the veto with a two-thirds majority.

On the same day students at the [University of Michigan started an indefinite occupation](#) in protest at the student government's refusal to hold a vote on divestment. Their campaign led by SAFE, Students Allied for Freedom and Equality, forced the student government to convene [a meeting on 18 March to hold a debate and a vote](#). Hundreds attended but the debate was cut short and a motion to indefinitely delay a decision was passed by 25 votes to 15 but it is significant that opponents did not have the confidence to try and vote BDS down outright. Despite this setback the campaigners are sure they have ignited a debate about Palestine at Ann Arbor and increased knowledge about Israel's actions enormously. The campus newspaper The Michigan Daily [printed an editorial](#) supporting SAFE's campaign for the University to be more active in investigating the ethical status of their investments. They intend to bring the motion back and are confident of winning UM students to BDS.

Meanwhile Vassar has been convulsed by a row over a study trip to Israel and the settlements to investigate water supply organised as part of the International Studies programme. On 6 February Vassar SJP picketed a meeting of the class, some of the students in the class claimed they felt intimidated and a meeting was held on 3 March to allow both sides to express their concerns. SJP argued the case about why the trip was discriminatory and how it embedded US support for Israel. Philip Weiss has [written a detailed and nuanced account of the meeting and the events leading up to it](#) and the wider

significance of the turmoil at Vassar for the development of the campaign for Palestinian rights on US campuses.

On 19 March students at Arizona State University joined the campaign, again a motion moved by ASU Divest from Caterpillar Inc was postponed but it will be raised again on 1 April.

On 26 March [McMaster University Student Union in Hamilton, Ontario passed a BDS resolution](#) but at a well-attended but inquorate General Assembly meeting – opponents of BDS left the meeting to make it inquorate rather than staying to register tier opposition. 27 years ago McMaster students were among the first to support South African BDS

This article is correct at the time of writing but this is a fast changing situation which we will try to track on the [BRICUP website](#) and is well reported at [Electronic Intifada](#) and [Mondoweiss](#) and on twitter.

Mike Cushman.

BRICUP urges boycott of Bar Ilan conference

To potential attendees,

We appeal to you not to attend the conference ‘From I Claudius, to Private Eyes: the Ancient World and Popular Fiction’ due to be held in June 2014 at Bar Ilan University, Israel. We would prefer academic events to be politically innocent. Regrettably it just is not so. Your attendance would be taken by some as an endorsement of the illegal and brutal colonisation of the West Bank.

Israel has a name for promoting its cultural and scientific standing - ‘Brand Israel’. This is a deliberate policy of camouflaging its oppressive acts behind a cultured veneer. Since 2005, organisations that comprise practically the whole of Palestinian civil society have called on foreign academics to engage with individual Israeli academics if they wish, but to have nothing to do with state-funded Israeli institutions or events. By boycotting this event you will be applying serious pressure on Israel. You can make a difference.

In a 1997 speech, Nelson Mandela said that “our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians”. His recent death has shone a spotlight on Israel, the last country founded by European immigrants in which the majority of the indigenous people are denied access to citizenship and the right

to vote on racial grounds. We urge you not to lend your moral authority to this conference by attending or speaking there. By deciding to withdraw, you would honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela, and the advice of his ally Desmond Tutu (www.theguardian.com/global/2010/oct/27/desmond-tutu-opera-boycott-israel). Prof. Stephen Hawking (www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22446054), withdrew from the Presidential Conference; and “Monsoon Wedding” director Mira Nair said “I will go to Israel when apartheid is over (www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/21/director-mira-nair-boycotts-haifa-festival)”.

Why do we single out Israel? Discrimination against Palestinians: Israel systematically discriminates against the Palestinians who make up 20 per cent of its population. Systematic violations of international human rights and humanitarian law: The UN Fact-Finding Mission on the 2008-09 Gaza Conflict concluded that the preceding blockade of Gaza amounted to “collective punishment” of the people of Gaza. Furthermore it found that Israel’s ‘Cast Lead’ offensive involved numerous breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the likelihood that “war crimes and crimes against humanity” had been committed.

Illegal settlement: Israel has systematically transferred Jewish settlers into the territories occupied in 1967. These transfers breach the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949). Access to higher education: Israel places multiple roadblocks, physical, financial and legal, in the way of higher education, both for its own Palestinian citizens and those under occupation.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Rosenhead

Robert Boyce

Note: This boycott appeal has been endorsed by Classicists: Professor Richard Seaford (Professor of Ancient Greek University of Exeter) Dr Paula James (Senior Lecturer, Classical Studies, Open University, UK) Associate Professor Theresa Urbainczyk, (Ancient Historiography, Social History, University College, Dublin) Associate Professor Elizabeth Irwin (Associate Professor in Classics, University of Columbia, USA.)

To Neil Young: Refrain from Undermining the Rights of the Indigenous Palestinian People

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), a member of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement in Palestine, has learned that you reportedly plan to perform in Israel on 17 July 2014 [1]. We are writing to urge you to refrain from playing in apartheid Israel and not to condone Israel's violations of international law and human rights against the Palestinian people.

Over the past 20 years, Israel has intensified its construction of illegal colonies in the occupied Palestinian territory. It continues to bomb and kill Palestinian civilians in Gaza and maintains its medieval siege of 1.8 million Palestinians there. Its wall, condemned as illegal by the International Court of Justice in 2004, is still standing and expanding, separating Palestinians from their livelihoods, schools and farms. Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinian communities in the Naqab (Negev), East Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley was condemned by a ranking UN official as constituting a strategy of exclusion and discrimination [2]. Its policy of home demolitions, uprooting trees and denial of freedom of movement have intensified in recent months. It still maintains more than 50 racist laws [3] that are condemned by international and local human rights organizations. Even the U.S. Department of State has censured Israel's system of "institutional, legal and societal" discrimination against Palestinian citizens of the state. [4]

Why would you accept to perform in a country that is so deeply involved in war crimes and human rights violations? Performing in Israel at this time is morally equivalent to performing in South Africa during the apartheid era. We all remember how leading musicians played a prominent role in enforcing a cultural boycott of apartheid South Africa in the 1980's. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights Prof. John Dugard, and South African government minister Ronnie Kasrils have repeatedly declared, Israel has created a worse system of apartheid than anything that ever existed in South Africa.

Just days ago, a special solidarity conference convened by the South African parliament, attended by major parties, trade unions and civil society networks, issued the Cape Town Declaration,

regarding Israel as guilty of the crime of apartheid and endorsing BDS against it until it meets its obligations under international law. [5]

You have been an eager speaker in favor of the rights of the indigenous First Nations in Canada, and you vividly defended their right to resist oppression and exploitation. As you have noted "The blood of these people will be on modern Canada's hands. And it will be as a result of not just a slow thing, but a fast and horrific thing if this continues. There are many ways this could happen, and believe me these people are not going to sit back and let Canada, the modern Canada, roll over them. They're not saying it, but they're feeling it." [6] Our non-violent strategy of resisting Israel's violations of the rights of the Palestinians is BDS. By having your concert in Israel, you would be crossing the picket line and undermining our resistance of apartheid and colonialism.

PACBI and the broader BDS movement, representing the absolute majority of Palestinian civil society, appeal to you to respect our strategy of resistance and uphold the highest standard of respect for the human rights of the indigenous oppressed Palestinians people. Brave decisions need to be taken in support of Palestinians exactly like you have supported the First Nations rights in Canada. Thus, the Palestinians call upon you to cancel your July 2014 performance in Tel Aviv.

Israel uses arts and culture to whitewash its violations of international law and human rights.

In December 2008 and January 2009, Israel waged a war of aggression against Gaza that left 1,400 Palestinians, predominantly civilians, dead [9], and led the UN Goldstone Report to declare that Israel had committed war crimes [10]. In the wake of this assault and to salvage its deteriorating image, Israel has redoubled its effort to "brand" itself as an enlightened liberal democracy [11]. Arts and culture play a unique role in this branding campaign [12], as the presence of internationally acclaimed artists from the West is meant to affirm Israel's membership in the West's privileged club of "cultured," liberal democracies. But it should not be business as usual with a state that routinely violates international law and basic human rights.

Your performance would serve this Israeli campaign to rebrand itself and will be used as a publicity tool by the Israeli government.

Numerous distinguished cultural figures and public intellectuals have joined the call for BDS.

Today, many international artists, intellectuals, and cultural workers have been rejecting Israel's cynical use of the arts to whitewash its apartheid and colonial policies. Among those who have supported the BDS movement are distinguished artists, writers, public intellectuals and anti-racist activists such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, John Berger, Arundhati Roy, Judith Butler, Naomi Klein, Ken Loach, Alice Walker, Angela Davis and Mira Nair.

World-renowned artists, among them Roger Waters, Bono, Snoop Dogg, Jean Luc Godard, Elvis Costello, Gil Scott Heron, Carlos Santana, Devendra Banhart, Faithless, Zakir Hussain, Stevie Wonder, Mike Leigh, Coldplay, Jello Biafra and the Guantanamo school of Medicine, Mireille Mathieu, Oumou Sangaré, Cassandra Wilson, Cat Power, Lenny Kravitz, Carlo Mombelli, and Stanley Jordan have also cancelled their performances in Israel over its human rights record. Maxi Jazz had this to say as he maintained his principled position not to entertain apartheid,

While human beings are being willfully denied not just their rights but their needs for their children and grandparents and themselves, I feel deeply that I should not be sending even tacit signals that [performing in Israel] is either 'normal' or 'ok'. It's neither and I cannot support it. It grieves me that it has come to this and I pray everyday for human beings to begin caring for each other, firm in the wisdom that we are all we have.
[13]

Significantly, you may have already heard of the boycott spreading to the academic realm, with four associations now coming out publicly in support of academic boycott [14]. The movement is spreading and the taboo to speak out against Israel is breaking. People in all quarters are no longer afraid to speak out, and we hope you will stand with them.

Please say no to performing in Israel.

Today, Palestinian civil society groups are calling on artists to shun Tel Aviv in the same way that South African activists called on artists to boycott Sun City. All we are asking is for you to refrain from

crossing a picket line called by Palestinian society, endorsed by international organizations, and increasingly supported by progressive-Israelis [15]. Palestinian civil society is asking this of you as the most essential contribution to our struggle to achieve peace and justice.

Respectfully,

PACBI

[This letter was sent privately to Neil Young weeks ago with no response]

Notes:

[1] <http://www.timesofisrael.com/neil-young-to-rock-tel-aviv-this-summer/>

[2] <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/02/12/un-report-accuses-israel-of-pushing-palestinians-from-jerusalem-west-bank/>

[3] <http://adalah.org/eng/Israeli-Discriminatory-Law-Database>

[4] <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154463.htm>

[5] <http://mediareviewnet.com/2014/02/the-cape-town-declaration/>

[6] http://exclaim.ca/News/neil_young_slams_canadian_government_over_alberta_oil_sands

[7] <http://mondoweiss.net/2013/01/contraceptive-injections-ethiopian.html>

[8] <http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/israeli-mk-i-didn-t-mean-to-shame-holocaust-by-calling-african-migrants-a-cancer-1.432809>

[9] <http://www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?id=ENGMDE150212009>

[10] <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=91&LangID=E>

[11] http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/05/13/truth_and_advertising

[12] <http://mondoweiss.net/2009/03/ny-times-offers-the-rationale-for-the-cultural-boycott-of-israel.html>

[13] <http://www.wallofsilence.org/news.html>

[14] These associations are the Association for Humanist Sociology (AHS), Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS), American Studies Association (ASA), and Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA).

[15] <http://boycottisrael.info/>

The "Alliot-Marie circular" should be abrogated

Note: The original French version of this article was written by colleagues in the Association of Academics for the Respect of International Law in Palestine (AURDIP). It was published in the print version of Le Monde on March 6th. 2014."

"As a consumer and as a citizen, I refuse to purchase Israeli products so long as Israel fails to respect international law; I am also calling on my fellow citizens to do the same in order to bring pressure upon Israel to dismantle the separation wall and the settlements."

For having made such statements in the street or in shops, or for having written them in magazines or posted them on the internet, nearly 100 individuals have faced criminal charges in French courts. They are members of organizations that support the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign. They have been indicted by prosecutors following instructions contained in an internal text issued by the Ministry of Justice on 12 February 2010, the so-called "Alliot-Marie circular", named after the Minister of Justice, Michèle Alliot-Marie. The circular requests prosecutors to bring criminal charges against individuals who call for boycotting Israeli goods. It asserts that Article 24, line 8 of the 1881 law

on the press allows the punishment citizens or organizations who call for the boycott of goods from a country whose policies they criticise. The circular interprets the law extensively, in contradiction to the principle of the strict interpretation of criminal law.

In fact, Article 24, line 8 of the 1881 law does not refer to the suppression of boycotts, but only of provocations "to discrimination, hatred, or violence against an individual or a group of individuals on the basis of their origins or their belonging or not belonging to an ethnic group, a nation, a race, or a specific religion." The Alliot-Marie circular has been criticized by organizations on the grounds of freedom of expression. It has also been criticized by numerous jurists, academics, lawyers, and judges, on the grounds of its content, which misuses a law intended to combat racist and anti-semitic remarks.

Certain prosecutors have gone so far as to refuse to call for BDS activists to be found guilty, in spite of the written instructions of their superiors. In 2012, the Paris appeals court acquitted defendants,

considering that the remarks for which they were being tried represented peaceful criticism of the policies of a State. The European Court of Human Rights, for its part, regularly reminds European states that activist groups are entitled to enhanced protection of their freedom of expression when it comes to political issues. Christiane Taubira, the present Minister of Justice, has acknowledged that the Alliot-Marie circular's interpretation of the law might be considered "unjust" or "abusive".

These facts, together with the change of parliamentary majority in 2012, led many of us to hope that the absurdity of this situation would lead to a change in policy. But the Alliot-Marie circular of 2010 remains in vigour and criminal charges continue to be brought against BDS activists. France has thus acquired the dubious distinction of being, along with Israel, the only country to criminalize a *peaceful* and *civic* initiative which calls for the *respect of international law*. Boycott is a *peaceful* initiative, limited to appeals to the conscience of consumers and retailers. No form of constraint has been applied to customers or retailers in France, or to Israeli producers and suppliers. In France, calls for boycott have for decades been a feature of the republic's political debate. Madame Taubira herself referred to boycotts as a "recognized and public form of activism" and admitted to having encouraged the boycott of South African goods, in the context of an international campaign that no one at the time would have dreamed of criminalising.

Boycott is a *civic* initiative: it is based on a mobilization of civil society. The BDS campaign began in 2005 at the request of 172 Palestinian organizations and trade unions. It calls on civil society around the world to bring pressure to bear on Israel. Numerous organizations in France have joined the Palestinian call. Their actions are peaceful, consistent with freedom of expression and address a topic of international importance. Their actions do not discriminate against Israeli citizens; they seek to boycott Israeli institutions and goods in order to change the policies of the state. Finally, boycott is an initiative to promote *respect for international law*: its goal is to obtain adherence to United Nations resolutions and the end of actions declared illegal by the International Court of Justice in the Hague, in its opinion of 9 July 2004, namely the construction of the separation wall and of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The mobilization of civil society has been

indispensable, because governments have done practically nothing to secure Israel's respect for international law.

Nothing could be further from the truth than to suggest that the BDS campaign is racist or anti-semitic. This claim is analogous to the rhetoric used in the 1970s and 1980s against anti-apartheid activists, who were compared to irresponsible Marxist-Leninists or anti-white racists. No BDS activist brought to trial since 2010 has been charged with making racist or anti-semitic remarks or with committing racist or anti-semitic acts. It is time to abrogate the Alliot-Marie circular.

Ivar Ekeland, President of AUDIP

Rony Brauman, physician and essayist

Ghislain Poissonier, magistrate

Notices

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