

**American Freedom Alliance
CAMERA: Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America
Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors
The David Project
Israel Peace Initiative
Orange County Independent Task Force on Anti-Semitism
The Orthodox Union (OU)
Scholars for Peace in the Middle East
Simon Wiesenthal Center
Stand With Us
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Zionist Organization of America**

June 28, 2010

Mr. Mark G. Yudof
President, University of California
1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94607-5200

Dear President Yudof:

We appreciate your concern for the problems that Jewish students currently face on many University of California campuses. However, we believe that the newly established Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion will not address the specific issues of Jewish students. Without an explicit focus on anti-Semitism, the problems of Jewish students will not be recognized and addressed in the same straightforward manner as those of other minority groups.

Bigotry against Jewish students has occurred over many years and on many University of California campuses. Over the last several years, Jewish students have been subjected to: swastikas and other anti-Semitic graffiti; acts of physical and verbal aggression; speakers, films and exhibits that use anti-Semitic imagery and discourse; speakers that praise and encourage support for terrorist organizations that openly advocate murder against Israel and the Jewish people; the organized disruption of events sponsored by Jewish student groups; and most recently, the promotion of student senate resolutions for divestment that seek to demonize and delegitimize the Jewish State. It is important to emphasize that the demonization and delegitimization of Israel are a contemporary form of anti-Semitism, as defined by the United States Department of State, the United Kingdom Parliament and the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe.

More than 700 students have signed a petition on-line that protests this growing problem. The petition states:

“We are Jewish students at the University of California and we are outraged and deeply offended by the behavior of some student groups on campus who sponsor

speakers, films and exhibits that use hateful anti-Jewish rhetoric and imagery and openly support terrorism against Israel and the Jewish people. As Jewish students, we are also deeply disturbed by student initiated boycott and divestment campaigns which falsely accuse the Jewish state of crimes against humanity. Please understand that these speakers, exhibits, events and campaigns are as offensive and hurtful to Jewish students as a “Compton cookout” or noose are to African-American students. We demand that the UC administrators recognize and address the concerns of Jewish students in the same way as they respond to those of all other minority groups.”

Many Jewish students, responding to an on-line questionnaire, described feeling harassed and intimidated at UC Irvine, UC San Diego, and UC Berkeley. More than two-thirds felt that anti-Israel events and campaigns promoted hatred of the Jewish State and of Jews, and even expressed the concern that such hatred might lead to violence against Jewish students on their campus. Almost all the students felt that their administrators do not treat Jewish concerns as sensitively as they treat those of other minorities. (See Appendix 1 for a selection of student responses to the questionnaire and Appendix 2 for a petition acknowledging this problem, signed by more than 60 faculty members from the University of California at Irvine).

Therefore, we respectfully request that you pursue the following course of action, which we believe would significantly improve the campus climate for Jewish students on UC campuses:

1. Issue a written statement to the entire University of California community which:
 - unequivocally condemns all forms of anti-Semitism (i.e. hatred toward Jews) at the University of California, including language or behavior that demonizes and delegitimizes Israel, as per the “Working Definition of Antisemitism” of the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, as adopted by the U.S. State Department:
 - Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, for example, by claiming that the existence of a Jewish State is a racist endeavor.
 - Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
 - Using symbols and images associated with classic anti-Semitism, such as claims of blood libel to characterize Israel or Israelis.
 - Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
 - acknowledges that anti-Semitism has been a problem on UC campuses and has created an environment of harassment and intimidation for many Jewish students;

- commits the UC administration to vigorously addressing the problem of anti-Semitism on all UC campuses.
2. Incorporate into campus policy language that:
 - defines anti-Semitism and provides concrete examples according to the U.S. State Department's "working definition;"
 - singles out anti-Semitism from other forms of bigotry and discrimination and provides clear guidelines for the prosecution of anti-Semitic behavior.
 3. Call on each of the UC Chancellors to:
 - issue a written statement to his/her entire campus community which:
 - unequivocally condemns all forms of anti-Semitism (i.e. hatred toward Jews) on his/her campus, including the examples of language or behavior that demonizes and delegitimizes Israel, as per the U.S. State Department's "working definition of anti-Semitism;"
 - acknowledges the specific manifestations of anti-Semitism that have occurred on his/her campus and the hostile environment these have created for Jewish students;
 - commits the campus administration to vigorously addressing the problem of anti-Semitism on his/her campus;
 - publicly condemn, by name, speakers who demonize Jews and Israel by, for example, comparing Jews to Nazis, or who promote terrorist entities such as Hamas and Hezbollah; also denounce, by name, those student groups that regularly promote this vicious hatred.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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CAMERA: Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America - Andrea Levin, Executive Director

Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors - Doris Montrose, President

The David Project

Israel Peace Initiative - Ealon Joelson, President

Orange County Independent Task Force on Anti-Semitism - Ted Bleiweiss, Executive Director

The Orthodox Union (OU) - Rabbi Steven Weil, National Executive Vice President of the OU; Rabbi Steven Burg, International Director of National Conference of Synagogue Youth and Managing Director of the OU; Rabbi Alan Kalinsky, West Coast Director of the OU

Scholars for Peace in the Middle East - Peter Haas, President

Simon Wiesenthal Center - Rabbi Aron Hier, Director of Campus Outreach; Rabbi Meyer H. May, Executive Director; Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Associate Dean

Stand With Us - Roz Rothstein, Executive Director

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Rabbi Steven Wernick, Executive Vice President and C.E.O.; Richard Skolnik, International President; Joel Baker, Executive Director Pacific Southwest Region, Merrill Alpert, Director of Youth Activities Pacific Southwest Region

Zionist Organization of America - Morton Klein, President

CC: University of California Chancellors
University of California Regents
Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
Senator Barbara Boxer
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Congressman Howard Berman
Congressman Brad Sherman
Congressman Chuck DeVore
Congressman John Campbell

Appendix 1

University of California Jewish Student Questionnaires Sample Responses to Selected Questions from students at UC Berkeley, UC San Diego, and UC Irvine

Do you feel harassed or intimidated as a Jewish student when you have seen or heard about the appearance of anti-Semitic graffiti (eg. swastikas) on campus?

“I feel very intimidated and worried when I see anti-Semitic graffiti on campus. I grew up thinking that such occurrences are a thing of the past, or things that only take place in Europe, but never in supposed intellectual centers.” (UCB)

“I definitely feel harassed when I hear about the appearance of swastikas on campus and the utter APATHY with which it is treated by the student newspaper and student body in general. The campus's reaction to this event is by far more disturbing than the event itself; the student newspaper brushed it off as a meaningless prank, and most students I've talked to don't seem to care at all or even realize that the appearance of a swastika means someone on this campus wants me, as an ethnically Jewish student, dead.” (UCB)

Do you feel harassed or intimidated as a Jewish student when speakers, films and exhibits that demonize Israel and her supporters are brought to your campus?

“I feel very uncomfortable when university sponsored events come to campus that are not only blatantly anti-Israel, but often quite anti-Semitic. When Norman Finkelstein came to campus last year, it made me uncomfortable that such a hateful speaker was welcome on our campus.” (UCB)

“I feel marginalized and don't know how to deal with combating this.” (UCB)

“Yes I do feel harassed and intimidated when these things happen. So much so that I changed my intended major.” (UCB)

“Yes, when these events occur I feel that I'm unwanted on campus and that my voice does not matter.” (UCB)

“One of SJP's [SJP = Students for Justice in Palestine] tactics is intimidation. Currently, I feel uncomfortable walking across campus because of the Apartheid Wall. It scares me that people listen to Finkelstein, and that they are also bringing Angela Davis to speak for them tomorrow. She is so well-known and well-respected that even if people are not educated on the conflict, they will listen to her.” (UCSD)

“Yes. I tell my friends how uncomfortable I feel. MSA speakers not only demonize Israel, but its supporters like me. When Finkelstein and other speakers compare Israel to apartheid South Africa or Nazism, that is a reflection on me, as though I support apartheid or Nazism.” (UCSD)

“I do feel very uncomfortable, hurt, and intimidated as a Jewish student at UCI during Israeli Apartheid Week.” (UCI)

“Absolutely. [Israel Apartheid Week] is completely anti-Semitic, no matter how many times the MSU denies it. Just today, after the Malik Ali event dissolved into debates, an MSU student stood on top of a wall and shouted the Islamic prayer as loud as he could. No one seemed to hear him because they were too far away, but I recorded him. It was clearly directed at the Jewish and Zionist students.” (UCI)

Do you feel harassed or intimidated as a Jewish as a result of the Divestment from Israel campaign on your campus?

“Yes, the divestment bill raised so much tension on campus and made fellow students into enemies simply based on their beliefs toward Israel. The big senate meetings were a harsh reminder to me that intense hate of Jews and Israel is very much alive and that we Jews have to remain vigilant, since the authorities and campus officials haven't stood up for us.” (UCB)

“Yes I do feel very harassed, intimidated, and threatened as a result of the divestment from Israel campaign.” (UCB)

“I feel harassed because the Divestment campaign has lead to anti-Jewish expressions such as the swastikas drawn across from the doors of Jewish students and the verbal attacks on Jewish students (for example, someone drove by my friend in a car and yelled, "Jewish bastard!" because my friend was wearing a *kippah*).” (UCB)

“I have told my friends that it is frustrating that I have to stand up as a diplomat for Israel and have the pressure of an entire country on my shoulders when I just want to be a student. Only Israel is attacked, to me, this hatred is no different than what the black students faced following the ‘Compton Cookout’.” (UCSD)

“Yes, it makes me think that it will soon no longer be safe to be Jewish here soon. Coming from the former USSR, the feeling is very familiar and truly scary.” (UCSD)

Do you feel that anti-Semitic graffiti, events which demonize Israel, and/or the Divestment from Israel campaign, could incite violence against Jewish students on your campus?

“It can and IT HAS. In addition to the many verbal attacks already mentioned in above questions, one of my friends was attacked with a shopping cart while she was holding a sign that said "Israel wants peace". As a pro-Israel student, I no longer feel safe on my campus. I feel like someone could jump me at any moment.” (UCB)

“Definitely. Since there has been little done by the administration, it seems that they are condoning such behavior, making it seem like continuing this trend (the next step being violence) is acceptable.” (UCB)

“Anti-Semitism is something that one normally reads about in history textbooks regarding the 1930s back home, it is not something I am used to coming face to face with everyday. That being said, I STRONGLY believe that if left unchanged, the campus climate is a mere few years away from descending into open violence against Jewish students. The line has already been breached this year, assault charges were filed against someone who assaulted a Jewish, pro-Israel student demonstrator with a shopping cart.” (UCB)

“I do and it already has. I was recently attacked by an Arab student who is a member of the SJP because I am a Jewish supporter of Israel.” (UCB)

“Yes. Finkelstein has said on numerous occasions that he supports Hezbollah, which has frequently expressed a desire for killing all Jews. A speaker last year called us ZioNazis and this led to students calling us "Nazis" and "white supremacists" and even spitting on some of my friends.” (UCSD)

“Yes. They use fighting words in their rhetoric. "We're going to win this war, "We're going to fight" "We have Jews in our trenches" "This is a battlefield." ad infinitum.” (UCSD)

“Yes. Jews are being demonized, shown as monsters. Soon, it will be reasonable for people to attack these monsters.” (UCSD)

“Yes. The MSU students have already done so, harassing a woman who was recording the events in the parking lot, encircling her at her car. With so much venom being spewed out by the hate mongers they bring to campus, all it takes is for one student to be fed up and decide to strike back at the "evil Zionist oppressors".” (UCI)

Do you feel that administrators on your campus treat Jewish concerns as sensitively as they do the concerns of other ethnic minorities such as African Americans and Latinos? Please elaborate.

“No. The meeting about the swastikas was poorly advertised and Jewish students were told to "ignore the ignorance" even as more incidents occurred. When the "Compton Cookout" and other racist incidents happened at other UC campuses, the Jewish community stood in solidarity with those minorities against discrimination and hate on our campuses. That same solidarity was sadly lacking amongst the student body and administration when swastikas were discovered on residential campuses.” (UCB)

“No I do not. It is crucial that UCB administrators continue to treat ethnic minorities such as African Americans and Latinos as sensitively as they have been, but it is also crucial that they recognize that the Jewish community is one that has endured just as much if not more hostility than some of these communities, and therefore needs to be treated with equal sensitivity.” (UCB)

“Absolutely not. When the swastikas appeared, the administration hosted a town hall-type meeting to discuss the event, but it was in a remote corner of the campus and was EXTREMELY ill publicized, meaning no one knew about it, so no one came. The student newspaper then used this to say that Jewish students didn't care about the event. When the Compton Cookout happened, however, a town hall event was held a block away from campus. I don't know how well publicized it was, but it was very well attended. The town hall to discuss the swastikas should have been held in a more accessible area, and it should have been more well publicized. The fact that it was four blocks away from campus and barely publicized raises the question of how much the administration really cares.” (UCB)

“No definitely not they would never allow such blatant anti-black or anti-Hispanic bills, speeches, rallies, etc. go on on campus.” (UCB)

“Absolutely not. Administrators appear to see any anti-Semitic comment that is thinly veiled in political criticism of Israel as legitimate political debate, and not an issue of campus climate. My impression is that Jewish student group leaders are hopeful that next year, because of the events of this year, that the administration will be more receptive. I hope their optimism is not misplaced. Please act fast in gathering this report, this problem needs immediate attention. The toxic campus climate is approaching dangerous levels here.” (UCB)

“No. I am latino and Jewish, and I am not afraid of speaking out about raza issues. I wish I could say the same about Israel/jewish matters, but i can't.” (UCB)

“Absolutely not. This past week a girl stated on camera that she would support the killing of every Jew in the world, which in my opinion is a lot worse than the Compton Cookout, and yet there has been no outcry from the administration.” (UCSD)

“No, this type of behavior at our school has been going on long enough that if they were to treat it as they did the Compton cookout we would not have an issue anymore. Why have I not heard our administration condemn anything?” (UCSD)

“No. The Compton cookout was dealt with as a serious issue, while this is swept under the rug. Nobody is acknowledging that anything serious is happening. Considering the historical support of African Americans by Jews, it is also depressing to see the BSU side against Israel.” (UCSD)

“No. Both the administration and AS came out in very strong support of the Black students after the Compton Cookout last quarter and said that their community should not be targeted. However, when the Divestment Bill and Apartheid Week happened, both the administration and AS did not give us any support. Because most Jews are white, we are not visibly diverse and therefore do not serve the school's vision of diversity. In my general ed writing class for Marshall College, Dimensions of Culture (DOC) we spent weeks discussing all the different ways various ethnic minorities, homosexuals, lower class, and women were discriminated against, but Jews never came up once.” (UCSD)

“No, we are expected to deal with it, while the school bends over backwards to show support for other minorities when they feel harassed or unsafe. We were essentially told as much in a meeting with the Vice Chancellor. She said that there is nothing that they can do about us feeling uncomfortable, and that feeling uncomfortable is part of going to college. I agree with the latter part of the statement, but demonizing Israel is not in the realm of legitimate discomfort. The BSU at our school last quarter felt unsafe because of a noose found in the library, and the University sent out emails condemning it, had teach ins, and the school newspaper covered it from an angle very sympathetic to Black student's concerns (and rightfully so). There is no such action taken on our behalf in response to Apartheid week.” (UCSD)

“The UCI administration does not care about Jewish students. Period. They don't seem to mind that through their inaction they have allowed UCI to become both the most anti-Semitic campus in the United States and they have allowed UCI to become the most viral breeding ground for anti-West hatred in our country. Why do they not feel ashamed that they are continuing to allow this behavior to continue, instead of searching for a solution?!” (UCI)

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Appendix 2

UC Irvine Faculty Letter Calling for Civility and Protesting Fomenting of Hate against Jews and Israelis on Campus

We, faculty at the University of California--Irvine, are deeply disturbed about activities on campus that foment hatred against Jews and Israelis. The troubling events over the past few years include the painting of swastikas in university buildings, the Star of David depicted as akin to a swastika, a statement (by a speaker repeatedly invited by the Muslim Student Union) that the Zionist Jew is a party of satan, a statement by another MSU speaker that the Holocaust was God's will, the tearing down of posters placed by the student group Anteaters for Israel, and the hacking of their web site. Some community members, students, and faculty indeed feel intimidated, and at times even unsafe.

Some of these actions are protected by the First Amendment and in no way do we want to limit freedom of speech. We welcome open dialogue among all members of the UCI community. We respect and value our Muslim colleagues, including those members of the MSU who support and encourage open dialogue and civility on campus. At the same time, we take issue with hate-promoting actions that we find unacceptable. They run counter to the peaceful co-existence and civility that are essential to a university environment. Actions that demonize and derogate others, such as the previous events that have occurred on our campus noted above, have contributed to UCI's developing a growing reputation as a center of hate and intolerance. Our campus deserves better.

Signed:

Myron Bander, Professor, Department of Physics
Jill Berg, Associate Professor, Program in Nursing Science
Marlon Boarnet, Professor, Department of Planning, Policy, and Design
Matthew Brenner, Professor, Department of Medicine
Dvora Cyrlak, Professor of Diagnostic Imaging
Gil Conchas, Associate Professor, Department of Education
Dan Cooper, Professor of Pediatrics and Biomedical Engineering
Russell J. Dalton, Professor, Department of Political Science
Rina Dechter, Professor, Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences
Hamid Djalilian, Associate Professor of Surgery
Jill Endres, MD, Director, Surgical Education, Department of Surgery
George Farkas, Professor, Department of Education
Paul Feldstein, Robert Gumbiner Professor, The Paul Merage School of Business
Gary Fouse, Adjunct teacher, University Extension
Karen Fox- Asraf, Adjunct teacher, University Extension/ESL
Stephen Franklin, Lecturer, Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences
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De Gallow, Director, Teaching, Learning & Technology Center, Division of Undergraduate Education

Julia M. Gelfand, Applied Sciences & Engineering Librarian
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Sherrie Kaplan, Professor of Medicine
Mark I. Langdorf, Professor, Clinical Emergency Medicine
Howard M. Lenhoff, Professor Emeritus, Developmental & Cell Biology
Marc Lerner, Clinical Professor, Department of Pediatrics
Kathie Levin, Lecturer, Department of English
Elizabeth Loftus, Distinguished Professor, Department of Psychology & Social Behavior, and Department of Criminology, Law & Society
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Richard Matthew, Professor, Department of Planning, Policy and Design
Seymour Menton, Research Professor, Department of Spanish & Portuguese
Frank Meyskens, Professor of Medicine, Biological Chemistry and Public Health
Dana Mukamel, Professor, Department of Medicine
David Neumark, Professor, Department of Economics
Alex Nicolau, Professor, Department of Computer Science
Raymond W. Novaco, Professor, Department of Psychology and Social Behavior
Eliezer Nussbaum, Professor of Clinical Pediatrics
Ellen Olshansky, Professor and Director, Program in Nursing Science
Richard Pattis, Lecturer, Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences
Harry Pellman, Clinical Professor of Pediatrics
Henry N. Pontell, Professor of Criminology, Law & Society and Sociology
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Judy Rosener, Senior Lecturer, School of Business
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