



## ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

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April 12, 2011

### **BY FAX AND E-MAIL**

Dr. Richard L. McCormick  
Office of the President  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
83 Somerset Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear President McCormick:

We wrote to you last week, expressing deep concern about the anti-Semitic hostility and even physical threats on campus that Jewish students at Rutgers have reported to us. In our letter, we urged you to take several steps that we believe will go far in eliminating the hostile environment and ensuring that it doesn't recur. Many of these steps were actually recommended by the U.S. Department of Education in its policy letter of October 26, 2010, in which the Department clarified that Jewish students are legally protected from anti-Semitic harassment and intimidation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. One of the steps that we strongly recommended was that you publicly speak out and condemn hateful anti-Semitic speech and conduct on campus, including anti-Israel speech that crosses the line into anti-Semitism.

There will be an important opportunity for you to speak out in response to a lecture that is scheduled to take place tonight at Rutgers. Omar Barghouti is scheduled to speak at Kirkpatrick Chapel, to promote his new book called *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*. Omar Barghouti, who is committed to destroying Israel as a Jewish state, is the founder of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which is a campaign to demonize, delegitimize and harm the State of Israel. The BDS campaign contributes to creating a hostile environment for Jewish students. You can help lessen the hostility engendered by this campaign by issuing a public statement, making it crystal clear that Rutgers firmly condemns and opposes the BDS campaign.

Omar Barghouti's own statements leave no doubt that he is not just looking to harm the State of Israel through the BDS campaign; he is also committed to destroying it. He has said, "If the occupation ends, let's say, would that end your call for BDS? No, it wouldn't." Omar Barghouti has also described the so-called "right of return" as "the most basic fundamental right that we cannot negotiate away. This is something we cannot compromise on." Omar Barghouti has also stated, "If the refugees were to return you would not have a two-state solution you'll have a Palestine next to a Palestine rather than a Palestine next to an Israel." Omar Barghouti's intentions are clear: He is looking to eliminate the Jewish State of Israel and replace it with another Arab state. This is nothing less than Jew hatred. If Omar Barghouti's campaign was to eliminate the Italian or Irish states, it would be clear that he was motivated by hatred of Italian people and Irish people.

Part of the BDS movement is the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), of which Omar Barghouti is a founding member. Promoting demonizing falsehoods about Israel, PACBI calls on "academics and intellectuals . . . in the international community to

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comprehensively and consistently boycott all Israeli academic and cultural institutions as a contribution to the struggle to end Israel's occupation, colonization and system of apartheid . . . ."

Omar Barghouti's promotion of this campaign is the height of hypocrisy. He was born in Qatar, grew up in Egypt, and attended Columbia University in New York before moving to Ramallah. He could have continued his studies in any of these locations. But Omar Barghouti chose to go to school at, of all places, Tel Aviv University in Israel! Apparently, the "moral imperative" – as Omar Barghouti has called it – to boycott Israeli academia, is an imperative for others but not for himself. Thousands of people petitioned Tel Aviv University to expel Omar Barghouti because of the anti-Israel falsehoods he promoted to harm the university and the State of Israel. But the university refused to expel him, thus demonstrating the commitment to freedom of speech in Israel. The fact that Omar Barghouti, an Arab Muslim who was born in Qatar and lived in Egypt and Ramallah, was accepted to and enrolled at an Israeli university, makes his claim of Israeli apartheid simply ludicrous.

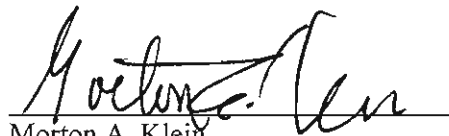
In February, the ZOA and 60 other Jewish organizations issued a statement condemning the BDS campaign against Israel as "counterproductive to the goal of peace, antithetical to freedom of speech, [and] part of a greater effort to undermine the Jewish people's right to self-determination in their homeland, Israel." When Hannah Rosenthal, the U.S. State Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, spoke before a worldwide coalition against anti-Semitism last November, she specifically noted that "when academics are boycotted – this is not objecting to a policy – this is anti-Semitism."

Last October, 41 international Nobel Laureates issued a statement opposed to anti-Israel academic and cultural boycotts, divestments and sanctions in the academy because they are "antithetical to principles of academic and scientific freedom, antithetical to principles of freedom of expression and inquiry, and may well constitute discrimination by virtue of national origin." In addition, many university leaders have spoken out and condemned boycott and divestment campaigns against Israel, including the presidents of Harvard University, Cornell University, Columbia University, the University of Michigan, and San Francisco State University.

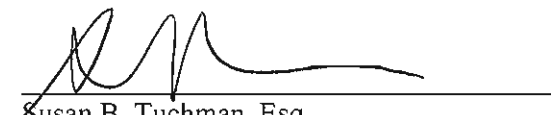
We urge you to take this opportunity to speak out, too, and denounce the BDS campaign against the State of Israel. The university community, your alumni and donors, and New Jersey taxpayers should understand that Rutgers condemns and opposes any calls or campaigns for boycotting, divestment and sanctions of Israeli academic institutions, professors, products or companies that do business with Israel, because these calls and campaigns are not only antithetical to principles of academic freedom and free speech, but they are also anti-Semitic, divisive and hostile, and promote hatred not peace.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Morton A. Klein  
National President



Susan B. Tuchman, Esq.  
Director, Center for Law and Justice

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cc: Governor Chris Christie

U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg

U.S. Senator Robert Menendez

U.S. Representative Frank Pallone, Jr.

U.S. Representative Leonard Lance

U.S. Representative Robert E. Andrews

U.S. Representative Steven R. Rothman

U.S. Representative Jon Runyan

Mayor Cory Booker

Rabbi Alan Silverstein