

Hate speech and misleading claims made during public comment

Slander, Hate Speech, and Misleading Accusations Against Israel

- 1. Israel is guilty of genocide against Palestinians** – This is slanderous hate speech. Genocide is [defined](#) as “the deliberate and systematic extermination of a national, racial, political, or cultural group.” In contrast, the Palestinian population of Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza has [grown](#) by [millions](#) over the last 6-7 decades, and continues to grow today. In regards to the related accusation of ethnic cleansing, leading historian Benny Morris has [stated](#) that, “there was NO Zionist ‘plan’ or blanket policy of evicting the Arab population, or of ‘ethnic cleansing’.”
- 2. Israel sterilized and mutilated Ethiopian immigrants as a form of eugenics** – This is slanderous hate speech. The accusation refers to a scandal about temporary birth control, in which the reality of the situation was [distorted](#) beyond all recognition by the media. Temporary birth control can in no way, shape, or form be described as “sterilization” or “eugenics”.
- 3. Israel/Israelis deliberately shoot Palestinian children in the face** – This is slanderous hate speech. According to numerous sources including Judge [Richard Goldstone](#), British Colonel [Richard Kemp](#), and Al Jazeera Arabic Anchor [Faisal al-Qassem](#), Israel makes unprecedented efforts to avoid harming Palestinian civilians. The claim that “Israel” or “Israelis” in general deliberately shoot Palestinian children in the face is a prime example of the slander and demonization the Jewish state faces all too often. What makes this especially disturbing is that similar accusations have [historically](#) been used to incite and justify mass violence against the Jewish people.
- 4. Israel is holding 56,000 Africans in open air prisons** – This is simply false. It is true that there are roughly 56,000 migrants from countries like Eritrea in Israel today, but [fewer than 1%](#) of them are being held in detention. While there have been problems with Israel’s policies regarding this issue, other liberal democracies have taken much harsher measures in dealing with illegal immigration. For example, the U.S. has [deported](#) 2 million people since 2009, France [deported](#) 33,000 in 2011, Switzerland [detains and deports](#) thousands annually, and Australia holds undocumented migrants in [detention](#) facilities for up to three years. The policy in England is to create, “a really [hostile environment](#) for illegal migration,” by denying migrants access to work, housing, services, and banks. In Italy, they penalize illegal immigration with [fines](#) of up to \$13,500. Israel’s immigration policies pale in comparison. To single out Israel for slander about its illegal immigration policy while other liberal democracies impose much harsher measures is ignorant and discriminatory.
- 5. Israel terrorizes and is uniquely racist against black people** – This is slander. Israel went to great lengths to [bring in](#) almost [90,000](#) African immigrants from Ethiopia to live as equal citizens. Unfortunately, there may not be another country on earth that used its resources bring in large numbers of people from Africa to live as equals, rather than as slaves or exploited low-wage

laborers. So while it is true that there are racists in Israel, just like in every other country, the claim that Israel is uniquely racist against black people is slanderous. In addition, despite the unacceptable hostility expressed by some Israelis, African migrants [interviewed](#) by human rights researchers have said that they feel physically secure and face no police harassment in Israel. Interestingly, pro-Palestinian activists who have criticized Israel on this issue have neglected to mention that Hamas, which governs Gaza, has been profiting from the trade of African slaves and organs in the Sinai Desert in recent years. This has been [covered](#) by CNN reporter Fred Pleitgen and others. For Pro-Palestinian activists to focus on Israel's immigration policies, while Palestinian leaders are profiting from the modern day African slave trade is the height of hypocrisy.

6. **Israel is guilty of “systematic cleansing” against Palestinians** – This is false. The Palestinian population of Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza has [grown](#) by [millions](#) over the last 6-7 decades, and continues to grow today. In regards to Israel's 1947-1949 War of Independence, leading historian Benny Morris has [stated](#) that, “there was NO Zionist ‘plan’ or blanket policy of evicting the Arab population, or of ‘ethnic cleansing’.” Today, Israel has taken steps to accommodate Palestinian population growth in some areas. For example, it took the increasing population of Palestinians in East Jerusalem into account and set aside enough residential land to [accommodate their housing needs through 2030](#).
7. **Israel's policies are meant for “racist domination” and are akin to Jim Crowe** – Israeli safety measures do not exist to separate people based on race, ethnicity, or nationality. They exist to separate terrorists from their intended victims – Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Israelis of all colors and ethnicities.
8. **Gaza has no electricity or food because of Israel.** – This is completely false. Israel delivers [thousands of tons](#) in food, medical supplies, and other aid to Gaza every single week. Electricity shortages in the Gaza Strip are a direct result of disputes between Hamas and Egypt, as well as decisions made by Hamas to [reject](#) fuel deliveries from Israel.
9. **Palestinians don't have enough water because of Israel** – Israel is actually giving more water to the Palestinians than is required under international agreements. According to [multiple studies](#), the reason some Palestinian communities don't get enough water is not because they don't have access to enough water resources, but because of their failing water infrastructure. And Palestinians leaders have refused offers of international aid to fix that infrastructure.
10. **Palestinians are systematically denied medical treatment by Israel** – This is false. [100,000s](#) of Palestinians travel from the West Bank and Gaza to Israeli hospitals for treatment every single year.

- 11. Israel attacks Palestinian civilians intentionally as a matter of policy** – This is false. According to numerous independent sources including Chair of the UN investigation into the 2009 Gaza War [Richard Goldstone](#), Former Commander of British forces in Afghanistan [Richard Kemp](#), and Al-Jazeera Arabic anchor [Faisal al-Qassem](#), the Israeli army takes unprecedented steps to avoid killing civilians during its self-defense and counter-terrorism operations.
- 12. Palestinian violence against Israelis and Jews is solely a response to Israeli policies** – Palestinian leaders [incited](#) murder and violence against Jews beginning in 1920, long before refugees, occupation, checkpoints, and all the other issues that are typically brought up today. Moreover, the terrorist organizations that carry out attacks against Israeli civilians today are driven primarily by racism and supremacist ideologies, not a desire to “end the occupation”. The very clearly and openly stated goal of groups like Hamas is to “obliterate” Israel and kill Jews. They oppose Israel’s existence and Jewish rights to self-determination in any form. So the claim that Israel is responsible for all Palestinian violence against Israelis is offensive and false. It is a prime example of blaming the victim.
- 13. Justifications for violence against Israelis (such as rock-throwing)** – Rock throwers have killed and maimed Israeli civilians on numerous occasions. In 2011 an Israeli father and his 1 year old son were [murdered](#) with stones thrown at their car as they were driving in the West Bank. Justifying and downplaying violence against Israelis is extremely offensive and insensitive.
- 14. References to “occupied and historic Palestine,” with no acknowledgement of Israel’s existence** – To call Israel “historic Palestine” without acknowledging Israel’s existence is offensive, as it delegitimizes the Jewish state and effectively erases the 3,000 year old Jewish connection to the land. Jews are indigenous to Israel and have an inalienable right to self-determination there. Any attempt to deny these facts is an affront to our community and to the vast majority of Jews around the world. Peace requires that each side come to terms with the existence and rights of the other. Divestment clearly promoted the opposite of that.
- 15. All high courts in Israel are religiously appointed. Women can’t get divorced in Israel without their husbands permission.** – This claim is completely false in some ways and deeply misleading in others. Israel has a Supreme Court that is completely secular, and is well known for its [independence](#) and willingness to challenge Israeli government policy. There are also separate religious courts in Israel, because Israel’s founders decided that the many religious communities within Israel should [maintain autonomy](#) over their own religious affairs. This has contributed to vibrant religious freedom in Israel, but it has also led to problems with issues like marriage and divorce. It is true that Jewish husbands must agree to a divorce for it to be allowed, but if they refuse, the courts can and do place [significant pressure](#) on them to change their minds. Husbands can also be [sued for damages](#) by their spouses if they refuse. Nevertheless, there are significant problems with this system which have led to injustices for some women in Israel. But the fact is that what was said during the divestment hearing completely misrepresented these issues in a way that constituted defamation against Israel.

- 16. On the Mavi Marmara Israel fired on civilians without provocation** – this is simply false. According to the UN's [Palmer Report](#), the ship's passengers attacked Israel's naval personnel, endangering their lives and forcing them to defend themselves. Some of the soldiers were nearly killed.
- 17. Israel was the primary cause of the Palestinian refugee crisis** – The Palestinian refugee crisis was the result of a war launched by Arab and Palestinian leaders, just two years after the Holocaust, to destroy any possibility of Jewish independence in the homeland of the Jewish people. Refugees left for a variety of reasons. Most fled to avoid the fighting which Arab leaders initiated; a minority fled because they were told to leave by Arab forces; a minority fled because exaggerated stories of Israeli atrocities caused panic; and a small minority was expelled directly by Israeli forces.ⁱ According to [Benny Morris](#), the leading historian on this issue, there was “no systematic policy of expulsion” carried out by Israel during the 1947-1949 War. According to [Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas](#), writing in 1976, ““The Arab armies... abandoned [Palestinians], forced them to emigrate and to leave their homeland, imposed upon them a political and ideological blockade and threw them into prisons similar to the ghettos in which Jews used to live in Eastern Europe.” Ignoring the destructive actions and culpability of Arab leaders and states is an affront to truth, justice, and intellectual honesty.
- 18. Israel is engaged in an “illegal” occupation** – Israel's current presence in East Jerusalem and the West Bank is legal. International law is made through treaties and international agreements, and the primary agreement between Israel and the Palestinians is the Oslo Accords. According to the [Oslo Accords](#), Israel will retain control of East Jerusalem and 60% of the West Bank until the two parties reach a final [peace agreement](#). The Palestinian leadership rejected Israeli peace offers in 2000 and 2008, and refused to even start negotiating for peace again until 2013. As long as there is no peace agreement, the claim that Israel is engaged in an “illegal” occupation is simply false.
- 19. Israel forces 2nd class status on Palestinians** – Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are not Israeli citizens and do not want to be. The primary reason they do not have citizenship in a recognized state today is because Palestinian leaders have [rejected every peace compromise](#) they have ever been offered.
- 20. Checkpoints are arbitrary violations of Palestinian freedom of movement** – Checkpoints do hinder freedom of movement, but because so many have been removed in recent years Palestinians can now, “travel relatively freely within the West Bank” according to the human rights group [B'Tselem](#). Unfortunately, the checkpoints that still do exist are vital to the daily safety and survival of Israel civilians. In 2013 there were nearly [1,400 attempted attacks](#) against Israelis in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Israeli safety measures like checkpoints are the reason so few of these attacks resulted in deaths or injuries. We want checkpoints to be taken down, but we recognize that this cannot happen without an end to terrorism and a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians.

- 21. Palestinians die on ambulances because of checkpoints** – Israel does not stop ambulances at checkpoints arbitrarily. It does so because Palestinian terrorists have repeatedly used ambulances to enter Israel and murder civilians. In one case IDF soldiers stopped an ambulance and found an explosive belt hidden [under the stretcher of a sick child](#). These appalling violations of morality and human rights have forced Israel to choose between creating hardships for Palestinians and allowing more Israelis to be murdered. Despite the inspections Israel has been forced to conduct, [100,000s of Palestinians travel to Israeli hospitals](#) for medical treatment every year.
- 22. Checkpoints and the barrier are not for self-defense because they also exist inside the West Bank not just along the Green Line** – There are Israeli civilians living in the West Bank who have been subjected to countless attacks and deserve protection just like all other civilians do. For example, in 2011 a terrorist entered an Israeli community in the West Bank and [murdered an entire family of five in their sleep](#), including a 3 month old baby. Checkpoints and parts of the barrier exist inside the West Bank to prevent massacres like this from happening again.
- 23. Israel searches elderly Palestinians and Palestinian children for no reason** – Israel has been forced to search all people who try to enter Israel because terrorists have [used civilians](#) of [all ages](#) and [genders](#) to smuggle weapons and carry out attacks against Israeli civilians. These egregious violations of morality and human rights have forced Israel to make the choice between searching people and allowing more Israeli civilians to be killed.
- 24. Checkpoints exist to criminalize ordinary Palestinians** – While checkpoints do cause hardships for ordinary Palestinians, they do not exist to criminalize them. They exist to separate terrorists from their intended victims. Terrorists have forced Israel to choose between making life more difficult for ordinary Palestinians, and allowing more Israelis of all colors, ethnicities, and religious beliefs to be murdered. To pass divestment, USAC would have had to ignore that reality and effectively silence all Israelis who have suffered and continue to suffer from terrorism. That is a clear step backward for peace, justice, progress, and human rights.
- 25. Israel forces people to open purses at malls and this is an injustice** – Israel was forced to have security checks at all public places because terrorists targeted civilians in all public places. All citizens are subject to those security checks.
- 26. Arabs in Israel are 2nd class citizens** – Arab citizens of Israel are not “2nd class” in any legal sense. Equal rights for all citizens are [enshrined in Israeli law](#). Israel’s legal system strives to eliminate discrimination, not enforce it. There is racism and discrimination in Israel just like in every other country, but Israel’s laws, just like the laws of democracies around the world, are meant to combat and prevent those problems. In addition, there are countless Israelis both in the government and in the non-profit sector who are [fighting discrimination](#) and working to help Israeli minorities overcome the challenges they face.

- 27. Israel is not the only democracy in the Middle East, look at Egypt and Tunisia** – Egypt is most definitely not a functioning democracy as of now. Tunisia may become a functioning democracy, but according to the human rights organization [Freedom House](#) Israel is the only fully free democracy in the Middle East today. We hope this reality changes as soon as possible, so that all people in the region obtain the democratic freedoms and rights that they deserve.
- 28. Israel tortures Palestinians as a matter of policy** – [Torture is illegal in Israel](#). All cases of torture can be taken to the Israeli Supreme Court, which is well known for its independence and history of [challenging Israeli government policies](#) and actions. Palestinians have [taken cases](#) to the [Israeli Supreme Court](#) and [won](#) on countless occasions.
- 29. Israel's Knesset passed a law saying Palestinian Christians are not Arabs** – This is false. All the Knesset was pass a law which gives Israeli Christians [their own representative](#) on Israel's Employment Commission. The law also adds representatives for Druze, Circassians, women, immigrants, and the elderly. This law was partially a response to the fact that some Israeli Christians have publicly asked for recognition as a distinct group with their own representatives.
- 30. Palestinians are not allowed to study at Israeli universities** – this is false. There are Palestinian students from the West Bank [studying at Israeli universities](#) today. In fact, the co-founder of the BDS Movement, Omar Barghouti, is a Palestinian from the West Bank city of Ramallah who received graduate degrees from [Tel Aviv University](#) in Israel.
- 31. Israel arrests Palestinian civilians for no reason** – This accusation is false. Israel arrests those who commit or attempt to commit violent attacks.
- 32. Israel arbitrarily created segregated roads in the West Bank** – today there are a small number of West Bank roads that can only be used by Israelis of [all religions and ethnicities](#), but this is not because of an arbitrary desire to separate people by nationality. This unfortunate restriction exists only because Israelis were [constantly attacked](#) on West Bank roads during the 2nd Intifada, and there was no other way to stop the violence. When the lives of Israeli drivers are no longer threatened, the few remaining restrictions on roads will be removed.
- 33. Palestinians are given no notice before homes are a arbitrarily demolished, just 10 minutes to gather their things** – this is false. Israel demolishes homes and structures that are [built illegally](#) by both [Israelis](#) and Palestinians. Demolitions happen only after ample notice is given, and residents and owners are given the opportunity to [appeal in the Israeli courts](#). These appeals can take years to be resolved, and Israel's courts have [ruled in favor of Palestinians](#) in many cases.

Offensive, condescending, and misleading statements directed at the Jewish, pro-Israel, and anti-divestment communities.

- 34. Jews aren't the only Semitic people, anti-Semitism targets Arabs too** – This is false. Arabs are considered Semitic, but the term “anti-Semitism” since its [inception](#) has always meant very specifically hatred, racism, and discrimination against Jews. It has never meant anything other than that.
- 35. Nothing about divestment threatens Jewish people.** – This is false. Divestment contributes to a movement that calls for the violation of collective Jewish rights to self-determination in Israel. It calls for divestment from safety measures that keep Israelis, including Jewish Israelis, alive every single day. And as we saw during the divestment meeting, it encourages slanderous hate speech against Israel, the world's only Jewish state. Those who claim divestment doesn't threaten Jewish people are silencing the voices of many Jews at UCLA and around the world. They have no right to speak for us or tell us how this does or does not affect us.
- 36. Jews opposing divestment are tying Jewish identity to oppression, racism, and human rights violations** – We oppose divestment because it promotes a movement that calls for the violation of our collective rights as a people. We oppose it because it promotes slanderous and misleading accusations against Israel. We oppose it because it condemns safety measures that keep Israelis of all ethnicities and religions alive on a daily basis. To silence these objections and instead paint dehumanizing caricatures of us is insensitive at best, and extremely offensive at worst.
- 37. No other student group has access to help from outside organizations like Jewish pro-Israel student groups do** – Nothing could be further from the truth. SJPs have access funding from outside groups like [American Muslims for Palestine](#), [training](#) from Jewish Voice for Peace and the American Friends Service Committee, [legal support](#) from the Center for Constitutional Rights and the National Lawyers Guild, and media assistance, training, and other resources from the [US Campaign to End the Occupation](#), which UCLA SJP is [officially a member](#) of. The claim that pro-Israel groups get outside help and SJP doesn't is utterly false.
- 38. The students standing up against divestment are equivalent to corporations lobbying against prison industrial complex divestment** – This claim is offensive. We are not faceless corporations and our motivations have nothing to do with profit or money. We are motivated by the innocent men, women, and children whose lives and safety depend on measures like checkpoints and the barrier. We are motivated by the fact that the BDS Movement, which divestment promotes, seeks the elimination of Israel and the violation of Jewish rights to self-determination. We are motivated by the pursuit of peace and understanding between Israelis and Palestinians, not the hate and ignorance promoted by divestment. To equate us and our concerns to profit-seeking corporations is extremely offensive and dehumanizing.

- 39. I wasn't aware that corporations represent any students at UCLA** – Corporations don't represent us, USAC does. And while on the surface divestment is just about corporations, in reality it has much wider implications. Divesting from safety measures that keep Israeli civilians alive every single day, endorsing misleading accusations, and helping legitimize a bigoted propaganda campaign against Israel would have had an extremely negative impact on our community. USAC, which does represent us, has no right to pass divestment in our name.
- 40. Saying the checkpoints and the barrier are necessary to save Israeli lives is the same as saying all Palestinians are dangerous** – this is false. Our position is clear – most Palestinians do not pose a threat to Israelis. But unfortunately there are terrorists in the West Bank and Gaza who do pose a threat. In 2013 alone there were nearly [1,400 attempted attacks](#) against Israelis from the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Israeli safety measures exist for one reason only: to separate terrorists from their intended victims – Israelis of all ethnicities and religions. We recognize that these measures cause hardships for Palestinians, but we cannot accept the notion that Palestinian freedom of movement trumps the rights of Israelis to be protected from terrorists who seek to murder them. We want to see the checkpoints and barrier taken down, but understand that this cannot happen without an end to terrorism and a peace agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians.
- 41. The anti-divestment argument is that Palestinians must be walled off to keep non-Palestinians safer** – This is a distorted caricature of our arguments and concerns. Our position is that checkpoints and the barrier are an unfortunate necessity because of terrorism and the absence of a peace agreement between the two peoples. Palestinians have the right to freedom of movement, but Israeli men, women, and children also have rights – like the right to live and not be murdered or maimed in terrorist attacks. By taking [refuge among Palestinian civilians](#), [using Palestinian children](#) to carry out attacks against Israelis, transporting [weapons in ambulances](#), and engaging in other appalling violations of morality and human rights, terrorists have presented Israel with an impossible choice: make life more difficult for ordinary Palestinians or allow terrorists to murder more Israeli civilians. That is a choice no country should ever have to make, but it is the reality Israel and Palestinian civilians suffer from every single day. We recognize that the only way to change this reality is to encourage a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, not through measures that completely disregard Israeli rights and place all blame on one side of the conflict.
- 42. Anti-divestment activists are claiming to speak for all Jews** – We do not claim to represent all Jews. We claim to represent the organized Jewish, pro-Israel, and anti-divestment communities. Jewish supporters of BDS are entitled to their opinions, but they represent a [tiny minority](#) of the Jewish community and do not have the right to speak for the rest of us. They can say that they don't feel attacked or silenced by divestment, but that changes nothing about its impact on the rest of us.

- 43. The Pro-divestment side is trying to say that all criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic** – We do not believe that all criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic. However, some of the slander, demonization, and hate speech we witnessed during the divestment debate was extremely offensive to our community, as it would be to the vast majority of Jews around the world. And contributing to a movement that seeks the violation of Jewish rights to self-determination is certainly a form of bigotry and discrimination.
- 44. The pro-Israel community is “Pinkwashing” Israel’s crimes** - Praising Israel for the things it does right, like its progressive LGBTQ policies, is not “pinkwashing” but rather an attempt to bring the public’s perception of Israel closer to reality. According to studies, most people perceive Israelis as either religious extremists or soldiers with guns. Those are extremely dehumanizing stereotypes and caricatures, which need to be actively challenged. And at the same time, the BDS Movement actively promotes dehumanization and caricatures of Israel and Israelis, making the problem even worse. That is why the pro-Israel community tries to educate the public about the many things Israel has done right, such as implementing the most progressive LGBTQ policies in the Middle East. As this list shows, we are not unwilling or unable to challenge the accusations made by Israel’s opponents.
- 45. We should divest because Palestinian students feel unequal** – Palestinian students shouldn’t feel unequal, but that doesn’t mean that another community of students should be made to feel unequal instead. Endorsing misleading accusations against Israel and contributing to BDS would marginalize and offend many UCLA students. The truly progressive solution here is a compromise that results from real dialogue and cooperation between communities - one that respects the rights of both sides instead of helping one at the expense of the other.
- 46. Why are human rights considered controversial only for Palestinians?** Human rights for Palestinians are not controversial. What is controversial is divesting from safety measures that keep Israeli civilians alive every day, endorsing misleading accusations, and contributing to a movement that seeks the violation of Jewish rights.

False and Misleading Statements About BDS

- 47. Divestment is not part of BDS, we can’t control if this ends up on a site somewhere as a BDS victory** – This is false. The BDS Movement’s [official divestment handbook](#) calls divestment a “stepping stone towards a broad, comprehensive boycott of Israel,” and UCLA SJP is [part of the organization](#) that wrote that handbook. We know for a fact that the BDS movement will use divestment to promote its agenda, because that’s exactly what it did with Berkeley’s divestment bill. It’s not about it getting posted on “some site somewhere.” It’s about the official BDS Movement website and its affiliates appropriating USAC’s voice to promote a malicious agenda – the elimination of Israel and the violation of Jewish rights.

48. The BDS Movement is similar to the movements against Jim Crowe and South African

Apartheid – Beyond the rhetoric and tactics on the surface, BDS has nothing in common with the struggles against Jim Crowe and Apartheid. The ultimate goal of those movements was equality and human rights for all. On the other hand, BDS effectively calls for the [elimination of Israel](#) and the violation of collective Jewish rights to self-determination. Comparing an agenda that is fundamentally anti-justice and anti-human rights to the struggles against Jim Crowe and Apartheid is ignorant at best and offensive at worst.

49. Using MLK and Nelson Mandela to promote BDS – Nelson Mandela and MLK strongly and publicly opposed the BDS agenda of eliminating Israel as a Jewish state. Mandela's [stated](#) position was that "we recognize the legitimacy of Zionism... [and] we insist on the right of Israel to exist within secure borders, but with equal vigor support the Palestinian right to self-determination." MLK said that, "Israel must exist and [has the right to exist](#), and is one of the great outposts of democracy in the world," and, "when people criticize Zionists they mean Jews, you are talking [anti-Semitism](#)." Using Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King Jr. to promote BDS is an abuse of their words and their progressive legacies.

50. We're not invested in human rights violations elsewhere in the Middle East – This is completely false. US corporations do massive business with Saudi Arabia, which [oppresses people on a massive level](#) in a wide variety of ways. US defense companies have sold [billions of dollars in weapons](#) to the Saudi government. US companies do business in Egypt where [churches have been burned](#) in recent years. And US companies do business in Iraq and Lebanon, both of which [brutally oppress Palestinian refugees](#). The fact that these issues are being ignored is further evidence that divestment is more about targeting Israel than it is about human rights for all.

51. This is pretty much the same as prison industrial complex divestment. – Beyond the surface, this is nothing like prison industrial complex divestment. Prison industrial complex divestment does not divest from safety measures that keep human beings alive every single day, does not rely on misleading accusations, and does not contribute to a movement that seeks the violation of any people's collective rights to self-determination.

52. We have power as students. When we invest in these companies we are misusing that power, but when we divest we use that power for good – We do have power as students, but passing divestment is not the way to use it. Divesting from safety measures that keep human beings alive every day, endorsing misleading accusations and one-sided narratives, and contributing to a movement that seeks the violation of Jewish rights is a blatant misuse and abuse of our power as Bruins. A truly progressive, constructive, and positive use of our power would be to encourage a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, and rise beyond the toxic discourse that currently surrounds this issue. We can show students and communities around the world that conversations about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict do not have to devolve into

slander and hate speech. Divestment does the exact opposite, but we strongly believe that if we work together as students we can find a better way forward on campus and beyond.

53. Divestment saves lives – Divestment is symbolic, so it does not take or save lives. But its symbolic impact is not one that encourages the preservation of life. Rather, the resolution called for divestment and condemnation of safety measures that keep human beings alive every single day.

54. It's not anti-semitic to criticize Israel or its government, and divestment is simply criticism – It is not anti-Semitic to criticize Israeli policy, but contributing to a movement that seeks the violation of Jewish rights to self-determination is certainly an act of bigotry of discrimination. As is divesting from safety measures that keep Israeli civilians every single day.

55. BDS broadly represents Palestinians – Some Palestinians certainly do support BDS, but there is evidence that they are a minority. According to Norman Finkelstein, a famous pro-Palestinian activist, the organizations behind the call for BDS “[represent absolutely nothing](#)” and can’t even organize a demonstration of more than 500 people in the West Bank. The leadership of the Palestinian authority has publicly come out [against boycotts](#). Palestinian workers from companies like SodaStream have [come out against boycotts publicly](#), Palestinian entrepreneurs are engaged in [countless joint projects with Israelis](#), and an estimated [16,000 Palestinian businessmen](#) have founded companies and factories in Israel and Israeli industrial zones in the West Bank.

56. There were more pro-divestment speakers during the debate, so divestment should pass – Many of the pro-divestment speakers were not UCLA students, but rather students from schools like UC Riverside, UC Irvine, and UC Santa Barbara. So the total count cannot be considered representative of UCLA students.

ⁱ Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 2001 pp. 252-258; Yoav Gelber, *Palestine 1948*, 2001 pp. 74-84; Howard Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 2000, pp. 395-405