



December 2012

Dear Friends,

As 2012 draws to a close, we would like to share some recent NYACT news:

Palestinian Testimonies and Further NYACT Endorsements

Last month's horrific assault on Gaza by Israel resulted in the killing and maiming of hundreds, perhaps thousands of civilians including children, and the destruction of homes and [infrastructure](#) including at least [52 schools](#). In light of this attack NYACT increased efforts to raise the Palestinian voice in our campaign, and has added an important new page to our website. The [Palestinian Testimonies](#) page contains video and narrative testimonies from Palestinian students and faculty describing what it is like to live, study, and teach in Israel and under Israeli occupation. A reminder that our campaign is not about silencing discourse, but about demanding human rights and academic freedom for all.

The only way in which our campaign can be sustainable and effective is if we work together with activists from other areas. Several groups have recently added their names to our growing list of [endorsers](#), and significantly several of them included strong message of support and offers to work with us; an exciting step forward which will help us increase our local network over the coming months. New endorsers include:

- [American Muslims for Palestine](#) (AMP)
- [Muslim Defense Project of the National Lawyers Guild New York City Chapter](#)
- [Palestinian Queers for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions \(PQBDS\)](#)
- Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) – Westchester
- [American Jews for a Just Peace](#) (AJJP)
- [Philadelphia Jews for a Just Peace](#) (PJJP)
- [Al-Awda NY](#): The Palestinian Right to Return Coalition
- [Birzeit University Right to Education Campaign](#); Birzeit, West Bank, Palestine (see: [statement of support](#), and [article](#) in Mondoweiss)

The Technion's Complicity in Israeli State Policy, including "Operation Pillar of Cloud"

The Technion's complicity in Israel's occupation and suppression of Palestinians has been clearly [documented](#). Immediately following Pillar of Cloud (rapidly re-branded "Pillar of Defense" by Israel) The Technion issued a [video](#) on YouTube describing just

how complicit they are. The American Technion Society also posted an advert in the New York Times (*see attached*), about the [Iron Dome](#) 'defense' system:

"It was developed at Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, whose CEO says, "We couldn't have done it without Technion graduates""

An article in Al Jazeera, [Normalising death: The business of drones](#), brought further attention to the fact that Israel's [top drones lab](#) has been invited to build in New York City:

"Israel is very well the go-to country for drone technology. The country's academic institutions are principally to thank for that grand achievement. This symbiotic relationship between academia and drone warfare may well be coming to the US."

And earlier this month from The Times of Israel, [Technion Meets New York](#):

"This is the first time, as far as I am aware, that an Israeli institution will help administer a university campus within the United States"

Universities in Israel and the U.S. Suppress Pro-Palestinian demonstrations

Our last Announcements email was sent two days after the "Operation Pillar of Cloud" assault on Gaza ended, and announced our online [petition](#) (if you've not signed it yet, please do so!). In light of Cornell University President David Skorton's visit to The Technion in Haifa four days into the assault, as "[a true friend of the State Israel](#)", it is particularly important that we make it clear that this appalling attack illustrates exactly why The Technion is not welcome in New York City.

As was the case four years ago after Cast Lead, the recent assault on Gaza highlights the complicity of Israeli universities in Israeli state policy, as well as their aggressive [suppression](#) of Palestinian student protests:

"Those who have been reluctant to support an academic boycott of Israel should reflect on what has happened recently. These recent cases show how Israeli universities identify completely with the State of Israel and go out of their way to drum up support for its crimes against the Palestinian people. These cases illustrate, too, how Palestinian students are denied their rights in Israel." (EI; 28 Nov 2012)

Israeli universities also made [exceptions](#) once again for reservist students who served during assault on Gaza.

Furthermore, at Cornell University's main campus in Ithaca, a recent peaceful [demonstration](#) in support of the people of Gaza was aggressively repressed after pro-Israel students contacted the police claiming the gathering violated Cornell's campus code because it was held without a permit. Cornell University's Campus Code of Conduct clearly states that there is "[no need for a mandatory permit](#)" for such outdoor demonstrations. Cornell's Faculty Senate is carrying out an investigation of the police department, administration, and pro-Israeli crackdown of the protest. We wait to hear

their report. In the meantime, Cornell University Students for Justice in Palestine recently issued a fantastic newsletter (see *attached*) describing the state of Palestinian solidarity work on campus, arguments against the Cornell-Technion partnership, and discussion of other campaigns.

Finally, The David Project (a Zionist campus-focused hasbara project which aims to "positively shapes campus opinion on Israel") recently issued an "[Operation Pillar of Defense: Special Briefing & Discussion Guide for Campus Professionals and Student Leaders](#)". Surely a sign of how afraid Israel is becoming of the campus-based activism, which is at the forefront of the BDS movement in the U.S.

Students Continue to Lead the Way in the U.S. BDS Movement

In Toronto, Students Against Israeli Apartheid at York University issued an [Open Letter](#) to the York University Community urging the York Federation of Students to join the Graduate Students' Association by endorsing the call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions. And as many of you will have heard the University of Toronto's Graduate Students Union recently [voted](#) 97% in favor of endorsing the Palestinian call for BDS.

Further good news came earlier this month as we learned that Technion collaborator Elbit Systems was compelled to [withdraw from a major French business convention](#) thanks to BDS pressure. And that the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, at the University of Sydney, [refused to cooperate with Tel Aviv](#) and upheld an academic boycott of Israel in response to Israel's policies towards Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

As the BDS movement goes from strength to strength, NYACT needs your help to continue our work. Please spread the word to friends, family, and colleagues, and if you want to get more involved contact us at nyact@riseup.net

Thank you for your support this year. We wish you all a happy and healthy 2013, and hope to see you out on the streets soon!

Anna Calcutt

[New Yorkers Against the Cornell-Technion Partnership](#) (NYACT)

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Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

WHOM DO WE THANK FOR IRON DOME?



Thank the Technion. As recently seen, Israel's Iron Dome can intercept and destroy missiles – and save lives. In terms of capabilities, speed and accuracy, there is no system like it anywhere in the world. It was developed at Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, whose CEO says, "We couldn't have done it without Technion graduates... some 80 percent of our engineering force are Technion graduates." ■ And there are many more breakthroughs at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. As one of the world's leading universities in science, technology and medicine, the Technion is a major source of innovation. The brainpower of its graduates helps drive the Israeli economy and contributes to the health and security of people in Israel and around the world. ■ The American Technion Society consists of thousands of people in the United States who support the Technion. Please join us and help make the next generation of Technion breakthroughs possible. For more information, visit www.ats.org/IronDome or call 212.407.6300.



**American
Technion
Society**

*Advancing Innovation
for Israel and the World*

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LIBERATION NOW

The Struggle for Justice in Palestine

Dear Campus Community,

Thank you for picking up this paper. We put it together because we feel that the Cornell community is being grievously misinformed about the nature of the Israel-Palestine conflict as well as the nature of campus discourse on the topic, and we felt that we should take proactive steps to remedy this situation.

In particular, we are concerned both that (1) the campus community is being fed a very dishonest line about what the facts are about the Israel-Palestine conflict, and that (2) the campus publications are doing a very poor job of reporting what occurs on campus in relation to organizing against Israeli war crimes, in particular their coverage of the November 19 rally, where several members or supporters of our group were physically assaulted, harassed by the police department, and threatened with arrest, while CIPAC violated the Campus Code and in the process trampled on our rights to freedom of speech on this campus. The latter issue will be addressed within this pamphlet.

Regarding the former issue – the bare and skeletal outlines of the conflict itself – we make a very simple request.

When trying to understand the Israel-Palestine conflict, we want to begin by asking you not to pay attention to a few things – at least for the moment. Don't think about words like Hamas, terrorism, retaliation, suicide bombing, the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, cluster bombs. But also don't think about words like nationalism or resistance. Instead recover the question of a Palestinian peasant from before the turn of the century, recorded by Albert Antebi, an official of the Jewish Colonial Association: "Is it true that the Jews want to retake this country?"

In that question is most of the truth of this stubborn and criminal conflict.

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At the time, Palestine was a peasant society, and Zionist colonists were diligently buying up land. What from the perspective of the colonizers had so many names – conquering the land, returning to Zion, ingathering of the Diaspora, or so many of those slogans used to justify what was done – had a simple name from the perspective of the colonized: dispossession. From that description flows the truth of the entire conflict: that what the colonizers aspired to was to create a new European society in the place of the Palestinian society then living on the land, and to do so at any price.

What is stunning is that by their own self-descriptions the Zionists knew exactly what they were doing, and they knew that it would take great violence to do so. David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, wrote to his son that Israel "would have an outstanding army...and so [he] was certain that we won't be constrained from settling

in the rest of the country, whether out of accord and mutual understanding with the Arab neighbors or otherwise.” Since they knew that the Arab neighbors – that is, the indigenous Palestinians – would not simply cleanse themselves from the land, they started to think of ways to get rid of them. The labor Zionist intellectual Berl Katznelson said in the late 1930s that “A distant neighbor is better than a close enemy,” and added that “they will not suffer through the transfer, and we most certainly will not.” In his conclusion, he claims that “In the last analysis, this is a political settlement reform benefiting both parties.” “Transfer” was the word the colonists used to describe the forced expulsion of the native population. Earlier Zionists recognized that the people living on the land were content to stay there and were attached to the land, a fact that later propagandists have sought to obscure. We can take the words of the right-wing Zionist intellectual Ze’ev Jabotinsky, who said that voluntary agreement was impossible, “because they are not a mob, but a living nation.”

In their urge to both replace the native population and put a new one in its place, they were simply doing what other colonial powers had done in the 17th and 18th centuries: eradicating or dominating the native population, and building new settler-colonial capitalist states in their place, whether in America, Australia, or South Africa, part of the final territorial outgrowth of the growth of the capitalist world-system. We need to remember that the Zionists were not exceptional nor exceptionally evil. They were enacting the same imperialistic behavior that their peers from metropolitan powers in Europe advocated. One difference is that from the very beginning, the Zionist project was also linked very tightly to imperialism, to Northern capital and Northern violence. Again, we know this from the self-description of the Zionists. Again, take Jabotinsky in the era after World War I: “If there is one outpost on the Mediterranean shore in which Europe has a chance of holding fast, it is Palestine, but a Palestine with a Jewish majority.”

Let us extract three basic threads from this tapestry of quotations. One, the Zionist project was a class alliance between a Jewish bourgeoisie establishing a colonial settlement in historical Palestine. Two, the project was premised on a Jewish majority, violently engineered; as a result that majority would find itself in opposition both to the Palestinians which it had forcibly displaced as well as the surrounding Arabs who could be made to see it as a colonial imposition, rather than an organic part of the region. And three, the Zionist settlement would proceed in violent defiance of the will and rights of the indigenous Arab population, which could never be permitted to organize itself politically, socially, or economically.

Much of the history follows from these simple facts. The Palestinians engaged in a massive revolt against the

colonizing forces in 1936-1939. The British and the Zionists brutally suppressed it, killing thousands. With Palestinian society hammered and reeling, the Zionists were easily able to cleanse 700,000 Palestinians from their land during the Nakba, and then ignore Security Council Resolution 194, affirming their right of return. They then chose to militarize their state, and that militarization led to the 1967 war of aggression, which then led to the Special Relationship – the Israeli-American alliance through which America funds its “strategic asset” in the Middle East, cutting the Arab world in half and contributing to a regional arms race.

The other result of that war was the illegal occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Later, the settlement project grew out of a blend of expansionist colonial ideology and the need to give the poor of Israeli society land and housing, land and housing from which the white European elite excluded them in Israel. Of course, once occupied, the Israelis have seen little reason to give back the West Bank – most of which remains under Israeli sovereignty – or Gaza, which remains under the effective control of the occupying forces. Once we understand all this, we understand that words like “terror” are a distraction, because the occupation is permanent terror, and the history of Zionism is a history of colonial capitalist aggression against the indigenous people, with the open support now of the American government. We have to decide how we feel about this. That too is something which we invite the campus community to consider.

-Students for Justice in Palestine



Two Battles, One Struggle

The irony of it all has already been pointed out in comments made by the readers of the article, “Conflict in Gaza Sparks Heated Rallies at Cornell” published in *The Cornell Daily Sun* on November 20: two groups with different worldviews competing over a narrow strip of land, one backed by the popular support of minority groups who sympathize with the struggle for social justice and equality for all, the other backed by the police. The latter attempts to forcibly remove the former. The piece of land, in this case, is Ho Plaza.

It is a well known fact that every story has more than one narrative, but honest, objective journalism takes into account these different narratives, leaving the reader to decide which side he or she will take. Perhaps it is difficult to maintain that objectivity when writing about a controversial issue, such as the rallies that captured so many people’s attention on Monday, November 19th. But the report on the clash of two viewpoints, was heavily biased towards the Solidarity With Israel campaign, giving Emily Schluskel and Eli Shaubi, president and vice-president of CIPAC respectively, nearly twice the space accorded to two members of Students for Justice in Palestine. The fundamentals of journalism require a balanced perspective that was sadly lacking in this particular report. Real journalistic balance is not the formalistic balance of Fox News, where for every person who says “A,” someone is found to say “Not A.” Rather, balance and objectivity must involve weighing competing claims against the evidence, evaluating their presuppositions and what they entail, and framing them accordingly.

It is in this light that the issue of competing claims to Ho Plaza on that particular day ought to be properly addressed.

Police Chief Kathy Zoner is reported as having said that “[CIPAC] had rights to the space and they asked [SJP] to move out...There was an official complaint filed that [CIPAC] had booked the space and [SJP] didn’t rent the space. So it’s just matter of who filed for the space.” However, this simply cannot be the case. “Titles III and IV of the Campus Code of Conduct outline the university policy on responsible speech and expression” specifically state that “Because outdoor picketing, marches, rallies, and other demonstrations generally pose no threat of long-lasting exclusive use of University grounds or property, there appears to be no need for a mandatory permit procedure for such outdoor activities.” In essence, the SJP protest was completely within the Cornell Code of Conduct; as there was no “long-lasting exclusive use of University grounds or property,” the university had no right to ask them to leave. If anything, CIPAC and Hillel broke the Code when they asked for the removal of peaceful protesters by insisting that they had booked an area which, as defined above, cannot in fact be booked by one group exclusively.

The story is rather straightforward: SJP began planning their protest on Thursday, November 16, the day after the commencement of Operation Pillar of Defense. When CIPAC learned of the event, they also organized a protest, as was their right. However, it was not their right to silence a dissenting voice that, according to the Code of Conduct, was perfectly legitimate in its behavior. And it most certainly was not their right to obscure what was meant to be an eye-opening experience revealing the needless loss of lives on both sides into a battle over property which is and always will be available to all.

<http://cornellsun.com/section/news/content/2012/11/20/conflict-gaza-sparks-heated-rallies-cornell>



Wherever we stand, we stand with liberation

I've been to dozens of rallies, demonstrations and marches in support of Palestinians' right to live freely on their own land. And at each of them, there was inevitably a counter-rally sponsored by the highly-organized and well-funded Israeli lobby. In addition, I have often found the police or security forces present to monitor and control the event to be more sympathetic to the Israeli lobby than to crowds gathered in support of Palestine. So the fact that both of these—a Zionist counter-rally and an unsympathetic police force--materialized at Cornell Students for Justice in Palestine's November 19th rally in solidarity with Gaza did not surprise me. What did surprise me however was how little Cornell Police and administrators attempted to hide the fact that they essentially took orders from the Zionist groups on campus.

From where I was standing on November 19th, amongst a peacefully-gathered crowd of grass-roots organizers and students who spanned a wide range of ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds, the Cornell Israel Public Affairs Committee (CIPAC) told Cornell Police and administrators to jump so Cornell police and administrators leapt. When CIPAC filed a complaint against SJP's previously-organized rally, police and administrators immediately came marching over demanding that we vacate Ho Plaza despite the fact that according to Cornell's own Campus Code of Conduct (Titles III and IV), we had every right to be there. And when we declared our right to remain in the space over a megaphone, which we were also entitled to use according to campus regulations, police quickly began to shove through the crowd, pushing a young female protestor to the ground in their attempts to silence us.

In my eyes, the Cornell administrators and police might as well have been carrying the corporate-sponsored Hillel signs reading "wherever we stand we stand with Israel." After the rally, I tried to make sense of the outright hostility and aggression shown to us, a group of peacefully assembled students, faculty and Ithaca community members, by the Cornell administration. But when you think about Cornell's extensive ties to the apartheid regime in Israel, it really isn't very surprising. Besides Cornell's partnership with The Technion, an integral part of Israel's military-industrial complex, two of Cornell's top officials recently traveled to Israel to reaffirm their support of the settler-colonialist and white supremacist state which systematically attempts to displace and eliminate Palestinians from the land and which is an expert at drafting 21st-century Jim Crow-esque laws against an entire people based only on ethnicity.

In October 2011, according to the *Cornell Daily Sun*, Cor-

nell Police Chief Kathy Zoner traveled to Tel Aviv in order to attend a "counterterrorism" training course. The purpose of this visit was supposedly to enable Zoner to apply some of these Israeli "security" tactics to her policing of Cornell's campus. It appears as if she learned her lesson well—while Israel uses the propagandist terms of "external threats" and "security" to justify its decades-old ethnic cleansing operation against Palestinians, Zoner came back to Ithaca in order to silence a group of legally and peacefully-assembled students who dared to question Cornell's financial ties to an apartheid regime. We were inconvenient, so we were to be silenced. It is no coincidence that many of the same students who attended the rally in solidarity with Gaza also attended rallies criticizing Cornell's response to the recent slew of racial and sexual assaults on campus, a trend that Police Chief Zoner has failed to stem in favor of traveling to Israel instead. What message does this send to the Cornell community? That Cornell would rather protect its economic relationships than support the women and students-of-color under attack on this campus.

A year after Zoner returned from Israel, Cornell President David Skorton made another journey to the apartheid state. On November 18th, four days into Israel's bombardment of Gaza, which killed 169 Palestinians, many of them children, President Skorton visited Haifa, where the president of Technion declared Cornell "a true friend to the State of Israel." The actions of the Cornell administration make it abundantly clear that the lives of Palestinians mean as little to it as they do to Israel.

The students standing in solidarity with Palestine did not have the means or the administrative backing of the Zionist groups on campus. We were a rag-tag, grassroots bunch with hand-written signs. So why did we pose such a threat to the Zionist students and to Cornell's administration that they felt the need to attempt to arrest us and physically accost us in order to silence us? I maintain that it is because our message terrifies them. Muslim and Jewish students, Native American and Latino students, queer and straight, Cornell faculty members and representatives from Ithaca's working class community: we stood together not just in defense of Palestinians, but of all indigenous and oppressed peoples across the world, including here in Ithaca and at Cornell. Standing together on Ho Plaza, we were a physical refutation of the white supremacist attitudes of both Israel and the Cornell administration. We used our bodies and our voices to offer an alternative to racism, colonialism and apartheid. And as long as we continue to do that, we'll always be a threat to the Israeli lobby and to its partner, Cornell University.

- <http://cornellsun.com/section/news/content/2012/02/08/cornell-police-chief-zoner-attends-conference-tel-aviv-israel>
- http://www.focus.technion.ac.il/nihul/newsPictures/Operation%20Pillar%20of%20Defense_2.pdf

Why Cornell Should Care – Because It Already Does

There is a rich and vital history of activism at Cornell University, a history linking this supposedly isolated, apathetic campus to political struggles on levels local, national and global. During the early nineteen-sixties dozens of undergraduates bussed down to Arkansas to register African-American voters. Only a few years later the university's chapter of Students for a Democratic Society was the third largest in the country and campus protest against the Vietnam War was both highly organized and widespread. A columnist for the Cornell Daily Sun reported on his participation at a march on the Pentagon, writing of himself and his student peers "each of us might have been a soldier instead of a marcher; and each soldier might have been a student and protestor." African-American students campaigned for fundamental changes at Cornell, responding to racism at home and abroad, from a cross burned on a dormitory lawn to the lack of any academic programs devoted to the study of minority histories or cultures. Protest did not diminish over the next few decades. In 1985, over a thousand members of the Cornell community were arrested demanding, in a variety of actions and events, the university's divestment from financial involvement with apartheid South Africa. In 1993, over a hundred students occupied Day Hall, using the incident of racist acts of vandalism to highlight the university's continued neglect of Hispanic interests and studies. In these and many other protests, students, faculty and staff did not seek university approval beforehand; rather, they acted directly, exercising their freedom of speech and passion for justice without the bureaucratic blessing of a higher authority. As is usually the case, seeking approval for dissent defeats the very reason for that dissent in the first place.¹

This history is especially important to recall in the present context of protests against the university's highly questionable involvement with Israel's brutal occupation of Palestine. There are as many ways for a university to be involved in political questions and controversies as there are causes or opportunities for organized resistance. Indeed, the university is a political space through and through, so activism is necessary. The point is not only to transform Cornell, or any other academic institution, from an apathetic, apolitical and isolated place into a politicized, engaged one, but to also show how members and institutions of our community are deeply enmeshed in political struggles whether we know it or not and whether we want to be or not. In the case of Cornell's special relationship with Israel, this point is crucial because of the efforts of so many—the university administra-

tion, various student groups, the Cornell *Daily Sun* and others—to obscure the political nature of that relationship, not to mention the persistent injustice of the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinians living in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Just as Cornell's vibrant activist past linked a variety of sites to specific demands for change—university finance, campus policing, academic curriculum, student life, faculty employment—so too does this "special relationship" touch on nearly every feature of Cornell University as an academic institution.

Nothing makes this more apparent than the Cornell president David Skorton's recent visit to Technion University in Haifa. In the midst of Israel's attacks on Gaza (officially titled "Pillar of Defense") Skorton was hailed by Technion's president as "a true friend of the State of Israel." Why this dubious honor? Skorton's public reaffirmation of support of Technion as Cornell's partner for the university's future campus on Roosevelt Island in New York City. An exciting opportunity for the university in a number of ways, this venture is tarnished by Technion's involvement. If anything undermines the naïve separation of academics from politics, it is the case of Technion, which is deeply embedded within Israel's military-industrial complex. For those few Israeli Arabs allowed to attend Technion, there are a series of discriminatory policies prohibiting the formation of Arab student groups or political protest against Israeli military actions. More disturbingly, Technion has undertaken several joint programs with companies like Elbit and Rafael, which have been responsible for developing tanks, unmanned aircraft, remote control bulldozers (used to make way for Israeli settlers on Palestinian land) and the separation wall running through the West Bank. Campaigns have already been organized at universities like McGill and Concordia against exchange programs with Technion. Cornell's planned campus goes much further and represents the most prominent academic collaboration with an Israeli university in the world, one that has already provoked an outcry from concerned Cornellians and residents of New York City. What's more, Technion's involvement was deliberately kept hidden from the Cornell community by the administration, bypassing democratic debate within the Faculty Senate as well as any discussion with students, including even those who helped Cornell win the bid in the first place.

While the Technion collaboration is the most direct instance of Cornell's involvement in Israel's continued subjugation of the Palestinian people, there are a host of other important links. The retirement fund for Cornell faculty, TIAA-CREF, has investments in companies that directly profit from the occupation of the West Bank and attacks on Gaza, including Northrop Grumman (helicopters and F-16s), Motorola Solutions (surveillance systems) and many others. The demand for TIAA-CREF to divest from these companies has been issued around the world as have similar measures undertaken

1 "Sixties Protest Culture and What Happened at Cornell." Cushing Strout. *New England Review*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Spring, 1998), pp. 110-136.

in response to Palestinian civil society's call to boycott, divest and sanction (B.D.S) Israel until it starts treating Palestinians and Palestinian land in accordance with international law and human rights. Following the example of protest against apartheid South Africa, this is a movement that highlights the many ways economic pressure can, especially in a world of incessant globalization, produce political change.

As mentioned, Cornell was one such site for protest against apartheid in the nineteen-eighties and shamefully, despite intense and consistent pressure, its Board of Trustees refused to divest from companies profiting from South Africa's racist rule of law. Today the economic connections between an institution like Cornell and a similar apartheid system in Israel are more numerous and thus there are many opportunities for local campaigns. Even the smallest step contributes to the cumulative effect of B.D.S.'s globe-spanning campaign. Cornell's cafeterias offer Sabra hummus, which is co-owned by a company that financially supports military brigades responsible for multiple human rights abuses against Palestinians. Several colleges have already forced their administrations to cut off ties with companies like Sabra, who make their money from occupation, war and settler colonialism.

There is another area of Cornell life directly implicated in this business: Cornell's chapter of the Israel Public Affairs Committee, Israel's powerful American lobby. C.I.P.A.C receives financial and intellectual support from the lobby so as to campaign against peaceful, non-violent movements like B.D.S. Other national organizations, like Hillel, offer similar support, evidenced most recently by the signs of a counter-demonstration on Ho Plaza on November 19th, proclaiming "Wherever we stand, we stand with Israel." The disturbing logic of this statement reveals the crude "with or against" ideology of groups like C.I.P.A.C.: always stand with Israel, no matter its policies. Any questioning or criticism thereof is added to a blacklist of usual suspects like Hamas or Iran.

This censoring of any and all criticism goes against the very principles of democracy directly at stake in the struggle of the Palestinian people for both human rights and statehood. Most disturbingly, such censorship was recently performed by Cornell's own police. Kathy Zoner was the first police chief of an American university to attend an "Experience Israel Training Tour" to learn about Israeli counter-terrorism and security measures. According to Zoner, the experience "tied in nicely with our jobs here of keeping the campus safe from external threats." While the number of terrorist incidents in Ithaca has remained at zero, this lack of "external threats" has not stopped the campus police from participating in censorship. At the aforementioned rally on Ho Plaza in November, officers attempted to shut down a SJP rally in solidarity with Gaza in direct violation of the university's charter on public assembly. They were asked to do so by members of

C.I.P.A.C., as those members explained to the *Cornell Daily Sun* ("Conflict in Gaza Sparks Heated Rallies at Cornell," 11/20/2012).

While the *Sun* has, in its opinion section, refused to honestly engage the issue of Israel's disastrous policies or Cornell's complicity in those policies there has been plenty of debate in guest editorials, letters to the editor and online comments. While internet posts on this and most issues rarely offer up a model for productive debate, it is worth quoting the words of one poster, who proudly admits "I am an Islamophobe," lumping himself with that noted authority on Islam, John Quincy Adams, quoting this sixth president: "The precept of the Koran is, perpetual war against all who deny, that Mahomet is the prophet of God." It is certainly easy to imagine the reaction to similar citations of ignorance and hate against other religious faiths, for instance Adams' take on the Jewish people: "[They] are all wretched creatures.... And they would steal your eyes out of your head if they could."² But we quote the sentiment of this internet troll only to point to its unsettling proximity to the words of one of Cornell's former professors: Benzion Netanyahu. The father of Israel's prime minister, Professor Netanyahu once taught in what is now the department of Near Eastern Studies. Before passing away this past April, Netanyahu shared his thoughts on "Arabs" in an interview: "The tendency towards conflict is in the essence of the Arab. He is an enemy by essence. His personality won't allow him any compromise or agreement...His existence is one of perpetual war."³

Beyond the internet troll and emeritus professor, there are a variety of ways Cornell's community discusses and learns about the State of Israel, both about its friends like President Skorton as well as its supposed enemies, like members of Cornell S.J.P. Whether one agrees or disagrees with any of these individuals or groups, one point above all needs to be confronted: we cannot abstain from the politics of Palestine's oppression because we are already complicit in it. It forms part of the very fabric of Cornell's future as a university and community. Recognizing this fact is the first step in accepting responsibility and with that acceptance two questions become unavoidable: where do we stand with respect to the Israeli occupation and what are we going to do about it? In thinking about this future, it is worth looking to Cornell's legacy as an activist university so that we can start honestly answering these questions.

2 *Dictionary of Antisemitism: From the Earliest Times to the Present* by Robert Michael and Philip Rosen.

3 <http://www.promisedlandblog.com/?p=803>



WHY DO I BOYCOTT ISRAEL?



APARTHEID: WE DON'T BUY IT!

Israeli brands sold in the US



AHAVA

Makes beauty products in the illegal West Bank settlement of Mitzpe Shalem using minerals from the Dead Sea, which Israel prohibits Palestinians from accessing.



SABRA HUMMUS

Half-owner Strauss Group has 'adopted' Israel's Golani Brigade, which has committed numerous human rights abuses according to Breaking the Silence, a group of former Israeli soldiers.

TRIBE HUMMUS

Fully owned by Osem Investments, which holds multi-million dollar food supply contracts with the Israeli military.



SodaStream

Makes home carbonation devices and flavorings out of its plant in Mishor Adumim Industrial Park, part of the illegal settlement of Maale Adumim, built on land taken from Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank. SodaStream pays taxes to the settlement, helping sustain it.

Global brands that profit from Israeli apartheid



MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS

Supplies Israel with surveillance systems around Israeli settlements, checkpoints, and military camps in the West Bank. Also supplies communications infrastructure to the Israeli army.



HEWLETT PACKARD (HP)

Owens Electronic Data Systems, which provides an automated access control system and other technology for Israel's pass system for Palestinians at West Bank and Gaza checkpoints.



L'OREAL

Its Natural Sea Beauty products use minerals from the Dead Sea, which Israel prohibits Palestinians from accessing. L'Oréal Israel's factory is in Migdal Haemek, established in 1952 on lands belonging to the Palestinian village of al-Mujaydil, whose original inhabitants are denied the right to return to their homes.

Israeli businesses right here in NYC



MAX BRENNER

Owner Strauss Group, Israel's second largest food and beverage company, emphasizes its support for the Israeli army "to enhance their quality of life and service conditions, and sweeten their special moments."



AROMA

With over a hundred stores in Israel alone, this growing Israeli franchise has a café in the illegal settlement of Maale Adumim in the occupied West Bank.



LEVIEV

Israeli diamond and real estate mogul Lev Leviev has built settlements in the occupied West Bank, and supported settler organizations colonizing the West Bank and East Jerusalem. He currently is developing settlements on the land of the village of Jayyous.



SABON HEALTH AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Exploits minerals from the Dead Sea, which Israel prohibits Palestinians from accessing. Its products are made in the Israeli city of Kiryat Gat, built on land from Palestinian villages al-Faluja and Iraq al-Manshiyya, demolished by Israel in 1949.

TAKE ACTION NOW AND HOLD ISRAEL ACCOUNTABLE. BOYCOTT PRODUCTS MADE IN ISRAEL AND THE COMPANIES THAT PROFIT FROM ISRAEL'S ILLEGAL ACTS.

For more on these products and companies see adalahny.org/consumer-boycott

For more on the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) Movement:

bdsmovement.net
stolenbeauty.org

AdalahNY.org

whoprofits.org
endtheoccupation.org

Time to call out the campus Israel Lobby

Tom Pessah

Imagine you are a student activist trying to get tobacco products banned from your university. You insist that cigarettes cause cancer, as so much research has shown. Your opponents are other students who claim the connection is tenuous and controversial, that student government should not make judgments on complex health issues, and that some students are so attached to their cigarettes that their very identities would be under attack if such a measure were passed. What if these students called themselves regular smokers, but were in fact trained and sometimes paid representatives of Philip Morris and Marlboro? How much credibility would they have on campus?

The answer depends on whether opponents of tobacco products buy into the frame of two symmetrical student groups – “pro-smokers” and “anti-smokers,” or whether they call out their opponents for being representatives of external bodies.

One of the biggest failings of pro-Palestine student movement in many U.S. schools is buying into the symmetry frame. We’ve largely accepted the idea that efforts to divest from Israeli apartheid are promoted by pro-Palestine student groups, and opposed by pro-Israel ones (“the Zionists”) – as if these are two symmetrical parties.

But this is a completely false picture. Groups like Students for Justice in Palestine truly are grass-root organizations. Despite persistent rumors about their secret Saudi oil money, SJP chapters hold bake sales to send students their national conferences. On the U.C. Berkeley campus, attention was diverted from SJP’s cookies and brownies by the College Republicans, who put on a lavish spectacle involving students in swimsuits. The SJP sale raised a little under \$6.

Such financial improvisation is one of the hazards of truly independent student organizing. But contrast that with a recent complaint from a “pro-Israel” student: “students are bombarded with funding opportunities to engage in pre-formed activities from a dozen different organizations. There is little opportunity to be creative and scant motivation to develop programming that comes from students themselves.”

It is in fact misleading to characterize this student as simply “pro-Israel,” or “Zionist,” any more than a representative of Philip Morris is simply “a smoker.” She is a Hasbara Fellow, a trained advocate for an external organization founded in 2001 by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She will be paid back a deposit of \$250 if her activism is considered satisfactory. The program is currently run by Aish HaTora International, a huge

international Jewish outreach organization with private donors that works closely with the Israeli government. Aish operates “dozens of full-time branches and programs on six continents.” It is based not in the U.S. but in East Jerusalem, and supports continued settlement of the West Bank. This organization tells its members that the occupation is nothing more than a “myth,” and disseminates hardcore islamophobic materials, like the films *Obsession* and *Third Jihad* (which were produced in millions of copies by an offshoot of Aish International).

One of the features of Hasbara Fellows’ activism is a relentless attempt to smear pro-Palestine students as anti-Jewish. In a failed lawsuit against her former university, U.C. Berkeley, this student claimed that Jewish students’ experiences, especially as a result of protests against checkpoints, are comparable to “incitement, intimidation, harassment and violence carried out under the Nazi regime and those of its allies in Europe against Jewish students... during the turbulent years leading up to and including the Holocaust.”

When routinely compared to Nazis (a comparison considered extremely offensive if made in the opposite direction), pro-Palestine students often get defensive. They protest that they’ve succeeded in drawing the line between anti-semitism and anti-Zionism, and display some of their Jewish members as proof. By doing so they implicitly accept the idea that what is at stake here is the feelings of Jewish American students, and that these students should therefore be the main parties to the debate. This



framing doubly undermines our own work: first, it reproduces the very structures of power and prejudice that marginalize Palestinians in the first place. Secondly, by obscuring the voices of Palestinian American students it contributes to the perception that human rights abuses happen far away - an international issue so complex that U.S. students cannot form an opinion about it, much less act on it. But the most compelling arguments are the ones that draw connections between companies our schools are invested in and human rights abuses suffered by students in those same schools - from H.P.'s equipment for checkpoints to General Electric's parts in helicopters which are used to attack civilians in Gaza. Palestinian students who've been impacted by these horrors are the experts, and they are students on our campuses. They are our best advocates.

A better way of countering these endless accusations of anti-Semitism would be to clearly distinguish the diverse community of Jewish students in each university from advocates of particular external groups. Many accusations of anti-Semitism are made by Hasbara Fellows, members of an organization that disseminates extreme islamophobic materials, as mentioned above. Similar accusations of antisemitism come from student representatives of AIPAC, whose group seeks to cut aid to Palestinian refugees, is pushing the U.S. towards war with Iran, and has a long history of preventing recognition of the Armenian Genocide. In 2010 after a divestment resolution was initially passed at UC Berkeley (before it was vetoed), an AIPAC official promised "we're going to make sure that pro-Israel students take over the student government and reverse the vote... This is how AIPAC operates in our nation's capital. This is how AIPAC must operate on our nation's campuses."

This year, a student body representing the University of California system passed a resolution distinguishing anti-semitism from criticism of Israeli state policies and affirming the legitimacy of calls for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions. In response, several current and former student senators published an open letter that contained the following language:

"UCSA's resolution refers to "Israel's illegal occupation" and charges Israel with "racism and Apartheid in the context of Israeli policies" without recognizing the level of debate and dissension constantly occurring around this hostile rhetoric. Furthermore, the resolution takes a stance "in strong opposition to...the racism of Israel's human rights violations" and "encourages all institutions of higher learning to cleanse their investment portfolios of unethical investments" in companies that do business with Israel. This extreme language alienates a significant portion of the campus community, especially those whose identities are closely tied with the Jewish state. As a governing body, it is the responsibility to create a safe campus environment and avoid making comprehensive statements that can be perceived as an attack on those UCSA claims to represent."

This letter is being disseminated by the AIPAC representatives in each school. Imagine students openly representing Exxon disseminating a letter that called any talk of global warming

"extreme language" that creates an unsafe environment for students whose identities are closely tied to purchasing oil. Most students would see this as absurd. But pro-Palestine students have been very hesitant to draw these connections. Part of the reason lies in conflict avoidance: why criticize fellow students who already say (or are told to say) we are hurting their feelings? Shouldn't we be gentler with them?

Again, being gentle to trained representatives of an advocacy group makes as much sense as reaching out to a Bank of America employee who is about to foreclose your home. Of course there is no need to deliberately offend. But if external advocacy organizations are like big corporations, pro-Palestine students can borrow from the rich traditions of anti-corporate activism. Where are our adbusters? What can we learn from Naomi Klein's No Logo? Why should paid advocates of external bodies have unrestricted access to student newspapers, without providing full disclosure? Shouldn't we be demanding a protocol to pre-empt that? What transparency do they owe if they serve in elected student bodies? How can the Freedom of Information Act be used to expose their typically covert lobbying? You've seen Shit Zionists Say - how about Shit AIPAC Says? What about a "Who Advocates?" website, modeled on Who Profits? When will "Hasbara Fellow" become a familiar term that every student associates with a tiny group of advocates for external anti-Palestinian groups - instead of seeing them as representing the voice of Jewish students? In 2011 there were only 250 Hasbara Fellows in 80 U.S., universities, an average of 3 students per school, yet they consistently speak in the name of entire Jewish communities.

While Hasbara Fellows themselves are concerned that their student groups could be seen as "a façade for multi-million dollar organizations," the pro-Palestine movement has rarely attempted to call out the Israel Lobby on our campuses. We cannot tell our local AIPAC representatives from the Hasbara Fellows. We do not even know the names of other external advocacy groups. Serious and well-documented research on each school can engender new and creative strategies to challenge these champions of the status quo, who are blocking crucial action to end Israeli apartheid in all its forms. There is no time to waste, especially after the latest slaughter in Gaza. It's time to call out the campus Israel Lobby.

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<http://mondoweiss.net/2012/11/time-to-call-out-the-campus-israel-lobby.html>

Let's call it what it is: Apartheid in Israel

The debate over a one- or two-state solution is irrelevant. The reality is that only one state exists in Israel-Palestine today, and that state is Israel. Israel was founded as and remains today the “state of the Jewish people.” But what does this mean?

According to Israeli founding-father David Ben-Gurion, the Jewish state must always have at least an 80% Jewish majority in order to protect the Jewish identity of the state. In 1947, there were about 1.3 million Arabs and about 650,000 Jews living in Mandate Palestine under British occupation. In the great act of ethnic cleansing during the 1948 war, commonly known as the Nakba or the Catastrophe, by conservative estimates more than 500,000 Arabs were expelled from or fled their homes in what became Israel. None of these refugees were allowed to return. This is how the state of Israel was established in 1948 with an 80% Jewish majority.

The new state of Israel ignored multiple UN resolutions calling urging the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes. Today, these refugees and their descendants number more than 6 million. Only 150,000 Arabs remained in the borders of what became Israel. Even those who remained in Israel were removed from their land in order to make room for incoming Jewish Arab immigrants. These Palestinian citizens of Israel lived under an oppressive system of military law without self-governance until 1966, although many of their civil rights continue to be denied to this day. It is therefore an undeniable fact that Israel was founded on the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian Arab majority from their land.

The rest of Palestine fell under Egyptian and Jordanian rule until Israel seized those territories in the 1967 war. The only reason Israel did not fully annex the territories when it occupied them in 1967 was simply because there were too many Arabs living there and annexation risked diluting the Jewish majority of the state. Instead, Israel has chosen not only to hold on to the territories, but to deny Israeli citizenship to the Arab population of the occupied territories. In this way, a Jewish minority in Israel/Palestine came to rule over and dominate a Palestinian Arab majority. With these actions, Israel demonstrates itself to be an exclusivist, supremacist state; it is the “state of the Jewish people,” and it has never been the state of all its citizens.

The International Apartheid Convention explicitly defines the crime of apartheid as covering “inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining

domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them”. It includes “legislative measures that discriminate in the political, social, economic and cultural fields; measures that divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate residential areas for racial groups; the prohibition of interracial marriages; and the persecution of persons opposed to apartheid.” The Zionist regime in Israel/Palestine demonstrates virtually all of these characteristics.

The Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa (HSRC) released a report confirming that “Israel is practicing both colonialism and apartheid in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT).” Regarding colonialism, the team found that Israel’s policy and practices clearly aim to fragment the West Bank and annex part of it permanently to Israel, which is the hallmark of colonialism. There are almost half a million Israeli colonists in the West Bank already, and their numbers continue to increase while more land continues to be appropriated from Palestinians by the Israeli government.

On apartheid, the HSRC found that “a policy of apartheid is especially indicated by Israel’s demarcation of geographic ‘reserves’ in the West Bank, to which Palestinian residence is confined and which Palestinians cannot leave without a permit.” The study declares Israel guilty of committing the crime of apartheid in the OPT, pointing to the fact that Israel 1) maintains a system in which Jews are given a superior status over non-Jews, 2) is pursuing a policy of fragmenting the OPT and confining the Palestinians to two increasingly small geographical spaces, and 3) uses “security” as an excuse to suppress freedoms of opinion, expression, assembly, association, and movement with the real goal of preventing dissent against its system of domination and maintaining control over Palestinians.

Pointing out this fact – that Israel is guilty of the crime of apartheid – is hardly controversial and far from radical. To deny this assertion is simply immoral.

- <http://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201015/volume-1015-I-14861-English.pdf>
- http://www.hsrb.ac.za/Media_Release-378.phtml



To the leadership of Cornell Hillel:

As a Jew deeply committed to tikkun olam, I am saddened and offended by the article in Hillel's fall newsletter where support for human rights of Palestinians is equated with being anti-Israel. It frightens me to think that Hillel is encouraging Jewish students at Cornell to negate the suffering of others, ignore fundamental abuses of basic rights, and blindly defend the jingoism of Israel's government. This does not make anyone a better Jew nor create a more secure world, not in Israel, not in Palestine, not in the United States, and not elsewhere in the Diaspora.

Very sincerely,
Lois Levitan,
Cornell Ph.D.'94

Program Leader:
Environmental Risk Analysis Program
Department of Communication
Cornell University

Cornell Helps Pull the Trigger: Or, Why Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions?

The ongoing Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Campaign responds to a 2005 call from Palestinian civil society. The BDS Call, which is addressed to people of conscience all over the world, cites Israel's choice to ignore the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, that the wall built by Israel in the West Bank on Palestinian land is illegal, as the impetus for this international appeal. Since Israel ignored that decision by the International Court of Justice as it has UN resolutions 181, 194, 242, and Arab Peace Plans, we might lose hope that the rights guaranteed to the Palestinian nation by international law will ever be exercised. Already in 1911 Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the founder of Revisionist Zionism, a movement which would give rise to not only terror groups during the Mandate and Nakba but also to Likud, the current ruling party of Israel, said, "We do not have to account to anybody, we are not to sit for anybody's examination and nobody is old enough to call on us to answer. We came before them and will leave after them. We are what we are, we are good for ourselves, we will not change, nor do we want to." This dictum certainly seems to have been followed ever since. But what can each of us do as individuals, and what can we do in concert?

The fundamental demands from the BDS call upon which the BDS movement is based are the following:

1. Ending Israeli occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and the dismantling the Wall
2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality
3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.

This movement draws upon the history of a similar national liberation struggle, that of South Africans against Apartheid. In that struggle, alliances were formed all over the world bringing together the full diversity of the human family to exert pressure on individuals, institutions, companies, and states to boycott, divest, and sanction the Apartheid regime in South Africa until it respected the rights of the indigenous people.

Our own BDS movement faces similar uphill battle seeking to exert pressure on a state intricately wound up in the regional strategy of the US. I cite the example of South Africa to show that what we set out to do is not impossible and has already been done once. The strength of the Palestinian cause is the political dimension which recalls the previous century when so many nations under the tutelage and boot of empires broke free and snapped the rod of colonizers. In that respect, the present status of Palestine is an anachronism. Where in the past, a colonial project was able to carve itself out of whatever land it could seize (as the US has), Israel's hands are tied by the end of the Age of Imperialism. As David Ben-Gurion said in 1938, "were we allowed to mobilize all our forces we would have no doubts about the outcome... But the fighting is only one aspect of the conflict which is in its essence a political one. And politically we are the aggressors and they defend themselves. Militarily, it is we who are on the defensive who have the upper hand but in the political sphere they are superior." The conflict is political

as he said and it is in that field that we can contribute.

Everyday we make choices and these choices define not only the person we are but are slight turns in the concentric wheels of the economies within which we are consumers and producers. That is the terrain which makes us involved in this conflict. By paying taxes which fund military aid and diplomatic cover for Israel, by purchasing goods produced in Israeli settlements in the West Bank, or by staying silent as others do these things, we grease the treads of the Israeli war machine. So, what is to be done? This is where the ultimate weapon which has always been the weapon of oppressed peoples against their oppressors is ready at hand: solidarity. Joining together with like-minded individuals or just talking to others about the conflict and moving them from inaction to action is the method which drives the BDS movement forward. Through mutual education on the issues and on the status of goods, we can identify companies and products which profit from the occupation or service it such as Ahava Cosmetics, Sodastream, and Sabra Hummus. The BDS movement must start in each of us as we choose for ourselves to answer the call and then share it with others and present our case to religious groups, family members, universities, and other groups we participate in as to why this call should be honored. Here at Cornell, we must mobilize our own community to reflect the vision we have of what a moral and ethical campus policy towards the conflict should look like.

Unfortunately, Cornell's administration has chosen to implicate itself and by extension all of us as Cornell's stakeholders in Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. By choosing to collaborate with Technion, Cornell resources are linked into research and development of Israeli munitions and weapons systems including Elbit drones, Rafael fighter jets, and Merkava tanks through Technion's close partnerships with these Israeli weapons contractors. The Cornell retirement pension provider TIAA-CREF includes Veolia which is building the settlers-only rail network that connects the illegal Jewish-only settlements to the 1948 land; Veolia also operates a landfill for settlers in the West Bank; TIAA-CREF's portfolio also includes Northrop-Grumman, which produces the Apache helicopter used against civilians in the 2008 Gaza invasion, Elbit Systems which builds the surveillance equipment on the illegal Israeli Wall in the West Bank, Motorola Solutions (separate from the cell phone manufacturer Motorola), which produces surveillance systems around Israeli settlements, checkpoints, and military camps in the West Bank, as well as communication systems to the Israeli army and settlers, and Hewlett-Packard, which is the supplier of the biometric ID system installed in Israeli checkpoints in the occupied West Bank, depriving Palestinians of the freedom of movement in their own land.

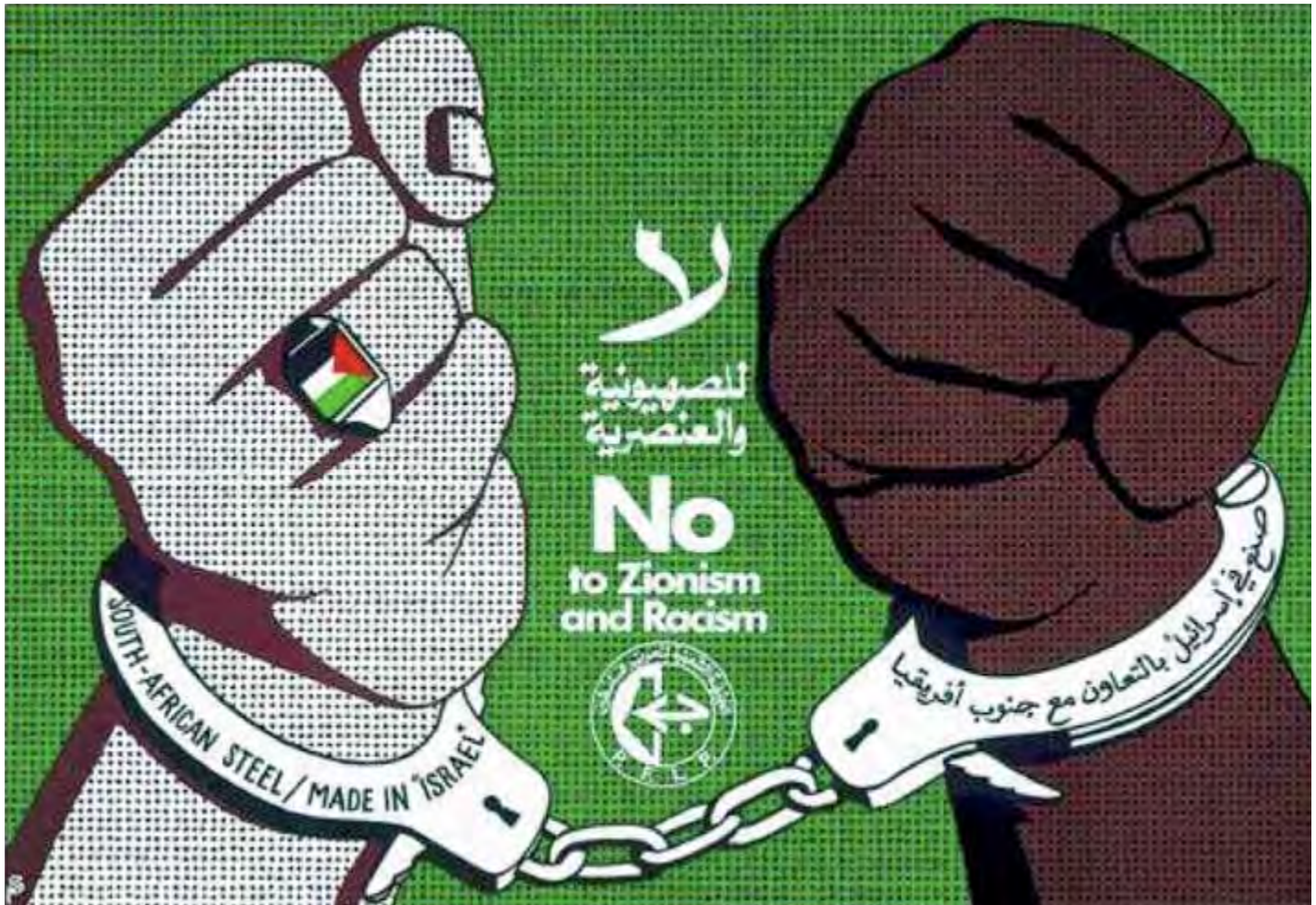
We can and must contribute to creating a space for Palestinian self-determination and the exercise of their rights. We do this by honoring their call upon us as people of conscience to mobilize our communities to boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel until it ends the occupation of Arab lands, grants equal rights to all its citizens, and honors the Palestinian right of return.

TECHNION CAMPAIGN

On December 19th 2011, Cornell University announced a multi-billion-dollar plan to create a massive applied sciences and technology campus on Roosevelt Island in collaboration with Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. Technion works jointly with the Israeli Army, as well as with Israel's two largest weapon producers, to research and develop military and arms technology, which is employed by the Israeli military to assert and maintain its occupation of Palestinian territories.

Technion is fully implicated in Israel's military apparatus, which targets civilians, as in the 2006 invasion of Lebanon and the 2008-2009 Cast Lead operation against Gaza and which constructed the separation wall, severely disrupting the lives and livelihood of countless Palestinians.

Join us in opposing Cornell's partnership with Technion by signing the petition at: <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/in-opposition-to-cornell-universitys/>.



TIAA-CREF CAMPAIGN

As part of the BDS [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions] movement – a nonviolent effort to pressure Israel to stop the occupation – WeDivest.org are calling on TIAA-CREF to stop investing in companies that profit directly from the Israeli occupation. TIAA-CREF is one of the world's largest retirement funds. It is proud of its “socially responsible” policy, yet it invests the retirement funds of university and public school workers, hospital workers, artists, and non-profit activists in companies that make money off of the occupation.

By joining this campaign and signing the petition you declare that as a TIAA-CREF investor you refuse to fund your retirement with money profited from the suffering and subjugation of a whole population. By signing this petition, as a student, or as an activist, you stand against this gross injustice, you hold TIAA-CREF to its own motto—Financial Services for the Greater Good—and demand that it divest from these companies.

One question asked constantly after our “confrontational” rally against Israeli war crimes on November 19 was why we didn’t format our protest in a way that people could listen. We heard this question many ways in many places, but the obsequious careerists of *The Cornell Daily Sun* can be relied upon to put the finest and most entitled point on the issue: the affair was “overwhelmingly frustrating,” they complain (11/20/2012), and they ask us, “as observers who see this conflict in shades of gray, and not black and white, at least let us listen.”

Let us place aside for the moment the dishonest and unprofessional coverage of the *Daily Sun*. Place aside their lies, such as the (non) existence of a banner “denouncing the very notion of Israel’s right to exist,” a banner which existed only in their imaginations. Instead, stick to the message.

Apparently, the *Daily Sun* feels that SJP does an inadequate job educating its editorial board about the conflict. We feel that this poses some important questions. Were the *Sun*’s editorial board members at any of the recent events SJP hosted about the Israel-Palestine conflict? Were they present when nationally-known human rights advocate and lawyer Noura Erakat spoke on campus to a packed amphitheater and was repeatedly interrupted by Israelis who proudly discussed the war crimes they had committed during their service in Gaza? Were they present when we Skyped in a journalist from the Gaza Strip who had just been beneath the bombs for a week to present at a teach-in alongside several members of our own group, or when we organized a student-led discussion on settler-colonialism with Native American Students at Cornell, or when we brought in Dalit Baum, a well known Israeli boycott activist, to discuss corporate complicity in the occupation?

Or does the *Daily Sun* feel that we ought to do everything according to their instructions, and that on a day which calls for outrage – when Israel is pouring bombs on almost defenseless refugees in the Gaza Strip, most of whom are under eighteen – we ought modulate our tone for those, particularly within the *Sun*, who are unwilling to educate themselves about the conflict and unwilling to either come to our painstakingly arranged events or even send a reporter to cover them?

What is the message here? That “education” should only occur when Palestinians are dying in sufficient quantities to trouble the consciences of the *Sun*’s editorial board and a few other people? That when Palestinians are suffering through the quiet destruction of their society, they simply don’t count? If we can be frank, we’re not into it.

Here are some other things we’re not into. We’re not into the *Sun*’s absurdly dishonest propaganda masquerading as “news.” We’re not into the canard that “ Hamas is as guilty an actor as any in this conflict,” and we’re not into that because we can count: we know that almost 180 Palestinians were murdered during the latest Israeli assault on Gaza with about six Israelis also killed due to Palestinian defensive rockets issuing from Gaza. We also know that during the massacre otherwise known as operation “Cast Lead,” 1,413 Palestinians were murdered including over 300 children, while at the same time 8 Israelis were killed. Between these two assaults the death toll was 20 Israelis and 314 Palestinians. We also understand

the meaning of these assaults occurring cyclically, every four years, a few weeks before the elections to the Israeli Knesset. We see the words “as guilty an actor as any” attached to the Hamas movement, and we see the specter of equivalence hovering over the *Sun*’s (im) moral imaginations, who apparently feel that Hamas must be as guilty as Israel, perhaps on the premise that Arabs are guilty by definition, that Palestinians may not defend themselves against one of the most powerful armies in the world, or that they ought to die on their knees playing Gandhi.

On these points, too, we are prepared to educate: we are prepared to tell the campus community that Israeli “self-defense” doesn’t exist, because the occupation and the colonial project within which it is nestled are and have been permanent terror against an innocent indigenous people living on their land. We are prepared to say that the label “terrorist organization” as applied to Hamas and not to Israel is simply the rhetoric of a partisan liar, that “terror” is a normative term and not a descriptive concept, since it is always the nearly powerless who seem to be “terrorists” while the terror of the powerful passes unremarked-upon – if not defended as the “defense of freedom” or whatever poisonous rhetoric people wish to use to cover up the murder of children.

We believe deeply in engagement, and because we believe in education and meaningful dialogue, we took the time to put together this pamphlet. We hope you read it, and we hope that, in reading it, you see why we do what we do. We hope you see that we do not accept that any group of people has a stronger claim to peace, dignity, freedom, and justice than another group because of ethnicity, race, or religion. We hope you see that we think that the history of this brutal colonial conflict renders ethical prevarications and fictions of symmetry obscene.

So we have to be real: we do see things in black and white. There is occupier and there is occupied. There are those who fight for social justice, and there are those who muddy the waters by ignoring the occupation, brushing over the colonial history of the conflict, and deferring the urgency of the situation by asking us to frame our protests in a way that is more digestible, palatable, polite, a little more timid, a little quieter, a little greyer. In short, easier to ignore. That’s not on our agenda. We have no intention of shutting up – not at the behest of the administration, nor that of the *Sun*, nor of a campus police department that sees Ho Plaza as a place to play cowboy, nor the kangaroo courts of this country which have thrown Muslim activists in jail time and again for daring to fight for their people. Not for anyone, not at this time, not at any time.

We will continue with our message.

Because we know that it is our voices and the truth we speak that they fear, and we will not be intimidated or bullied into silence.