

The Company They Keep

*Organizational and Economic
Dynamics of the BDS Movement*

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
of SCHOLARS

Dr. Ian Oxnevad

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Dynamics of the BDS Movement*

A report by the

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
of SCHOLARS

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Executive Summary

The “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions” (BDS) movement against Israel is one of the faces of anti-Semitism in the United States.¹ It threatens not only Jewish students and scholars but also the political neutrality of the university. The BDS movement is particularly concentrated in higher education and creates an environment of academic politicization to the detriment of academic freedom, freedom of speech, and constructive civil discourse. BDS, similarly, contributes to a hostile campus environment for Jewish students, and supporters of Israel. The BDS movement promotes a one-sided narrative that demonizes the Jewish state while disproportionately amplifying narratives of Palestinian grievance and Arab victimhood.

Anti-Israel student activism is a growing problem that threatens the political neutrality of universities due to widespread connections between pro-BDS student groups and a larger network of progressive and left-wing organizations. Rather than relying on organic student activism designed to foster civil debate, campus BDS groups thrive by means of their connection to well-funded political activism from beyond the university. In some cases, this network of pro-BDS organizations connects to Palestinian terrorism. Spearheaded by campus groups such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), campus-based BDS efforts have grown over the past two decades. Anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activism on contemporary American campuses are well-documented. Less well understood are the power dynamics of BDS activism on campus, how student activism influences college administrations, and how the campus movement is supported and funded by outside organizations. This report answers these questions.

This report finds that the BDS movement’s success on campus is mixed, while its broader movement is well-funded and growing in influence. This report notes that:

- Academia constitutes a core institutional base for the broader BDS movement in the United States.
- Pro-BDS student groups such as SJP are connected to larger progressive organizations on the Left and amplify BDS pressure and broader anti-Israel sentiment both on and off campus.

¹ In this report, we use the traditional spelling of “anti-Semitism,” which uses a hyphen and capitalizes “Sem- itism,” rather than the more recently developed “antisemitism,” which does not use a hyphen and does not capitalize “semitism.”

- Anti-Israel professors are instrumental in animating and organizing the BDS movement.
- A number of pro-BDS organizations have varying ties to Palestinian terrorism.
- Student tactics to pressure college administrations to divest from Israel are thus far largely unsuccessful in securing divestment from targeted companies. Despite these policy failures, BDS politicizes the college campus by contributing to an environment of intimidation against Jewish students and supporters of Israel.
- The BDS movement is fully integrated in an ecosystem of anti-Israel progressive organizations that includes lawfare groups, lobbying groups, and nonprofit foundations.

This report expands beyond previous work on the BDS movement by examining its constitutive student groups in the context of its off-campus support organizations and funding. BDS in universities must be understood as one component of a larger left-wing social justice movement that politicizes higher education.

This report first describes the Palestinian origins and development of the campus BDS movement, before examining its rates of success and failure nationwide from 2005 to the Fall 2022 semester. Three campus case studies then examine how pro-BDS initiatives are propagated, how such anti-Israel measures affect anti-Semitism on campus, and how university administrations address the issue. The second half of this report examines the off-campus organizations that enable BDS student activism by means of training, legal assistance, and funding. This report also notes ties between BDS organizations and terrorism.

The in-depth case studies highlight factors that likely determine how BDS battles unfold within student bodies, student government, and interactions between student organizations and college administrators. The three campuses examined are Columbia University, Ohio State University (OSU), and the University of California, Riverside (UCR). At the levels of student activism and government, the case studies reveal that building coalitions on and off campus influences the success of student divestment initiatives. Cases were selected to examine different levels of success for campus BDS movements, and to ascertain trends of how struggles over BDS occur on campus.

At both Columbia University and OSU, where BDS resolutions succeeded and failed, respectively, off-campus support and activism helped determine the final result. Pro-BDS efforts failed at OSU largely due to the activist infrastructure built by the school's Hillel chapter, which amassed support across the student body and beyond the campus

community. Conversely, Columbia's successful BDS resolution cannot be divorced from prominent anti-Israel figures on the university's faculty, and the work of national BDS groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and SJP. The case studies note that the aggression of student activists in promoting their causes similarly influenced the outcomes of divestment resolutions. At UCR, pro-BDS students succeeded in passing resolutions and securing campus victories by means of persistence and by directly approaching bureaucracies on campus.

The second half of this report documents the origins and ties of the pro-BDS movement that help groups such as SJP and JVP expand their influence, as well as the economics of their activism. Campus BDS resolutions specifically endeavor to induce colleges to divest from Israeli companies and companies deemed complicit in Israel's "occupation" of Palestinian territory as viewed through academic theories of "settler colonialism." Because campus BDS resolutions name specific companies and investment funds, the economics underpinning the campus BDS movement are a key theme of this report.

BDS efforts on campus are supported by networks of anti-Israel academics, lawfare groups such as Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights, and left-wing foundations that finance anti-Israel activism. Findings in this report note ties between the BDS movement and terrorist groups, particularly Hamas and the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

All supporting evidence in this report is open-sourced, and includes evidence from other studies on BDS, social media posts, statements from college administrators, media reports, corporate statements, investigative reporting from nonprofit watchdog groups, and government outlets.

Countering BDS and Maintaining Free Speech on Campus

This report offers two types of recommendations, both of which prioritize the principle of free speech. As the BDS movement inherently seeks to politicize campus bureaucracies against pro-Israel students and professors, it is fundamentally against the free speech and expression that a healthy collegiate environment requires to function. The first set of recommendations is designed for pro-Israel groups to counter BDS while respecting freedom of expression on campus and upholding the political neutrality of the university. The second set of recommendations focuses on legislation designed to curtail campus anti-Semitism and ensure the political neutrality of universities.

Recommendations include:

- **Create programs similar to Birthright Israel to cater to non-Jewish students** and replicate its success among a wider population.
- **Amend anti-BDS laws to implement courses on the Holocaust and Israel** in order to standardize a baseline of coursework on Israel and anti-Semitism at the college level.
- **Counter the one-sided economics of on-campus anti-Israel activism through creating Abrahamic Academic Centers that include programs related to Israel and its new Arab partners.** The creation of such centers expands discussions of Israel to broader issues beyond the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and helps reduce BDS proponents to one set of voices of among many.
- **Amend anti-BDS laws to penalize universities that offer funding or support to pro-BDS groups.** Thirty-five states have anti-BDS legislation, and such legislation should expand to restrict state funding for colleges that support anti-Israel student organizations.
- **Amend anti-BDS laws to divest state pension funds from companies boycotting Israel** in order to disincentivize companies from surrendering to BDS pressure.

Timeline

70 AD	Rome destroys the Second Temple in Jerusalem; expulsion of Jews from Judaea	
1516	Levant incorporated into the Ottoman Empire	635
1914	World War One begins	Arab invasion of the Levant
1948	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israel founded, May 14 • Israeli War of Independence 	1897
1956	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suez Crisis involving Egypt, Israel, Britain, and France 	Founding of modern Zionism under Theodor Herzl
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yom Kippur War; Israel attacked by Egypt and Syria 	1917
1987-1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Intifada (1987-1993) • Hamas founded (1987) • Palestinian Islamic Jihad founded (1987) • Oslo Accords signed 1993 • Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) founded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balfour Declaration signed, declaring British support for a Jewish homeland in the Middle East • American Friends Service Committee founded • British Mandate for Palestine begins in 1920
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) founded 	1967
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six-Day War between Israel and Arab neighbors • People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) founded
		1996
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Voice for Peace founded
		2000-2005
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Intifada (2000-2005) • BDS Movement founded
		2005-2022
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDS efforts on US campuses • Abraham Accords signed in 2020

Introduction

Rising anti-Semitism on college campuses coincides with the growth of the “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions” (BDS) movement. Multiple reports document the anti-Semitism associated with BDS and describe the increasing unease experienced by Jewish students in universities. However, few studies on BDS examine the placement of anti-Israel activism within the institutional geography of the broader progressive movement that supports it. This report describes how BDS activism unfolds on campus, and how the BDS movement is enabled and funded by organizations connected to terrorism and progressive philanthropy.

On the surface, BDS appears to constitute a narrow movement based around the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Indeed, the anti-Israel BDS movement formed in Ramallah by issuing a “call to action” in 2004 and collaborating with Palestinian terrorist groups beginning in 2007.² After its founding, the BDS movement exponentially grew in the United States through the formation of an extensive network of anti-Israel student groups, legal organizations, and nonprofits.

The movement’s ostensibly Palestinian origins obfuscate the important role that professors and academia play in its growth and influence in the West. Academics formed the first major pro-BDS organization, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI). Professors similarly helped create PACBI’s US affiliate, the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI), and Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP).³ Institutionally, academia assists the BDS movement’s ability to project influence off campus and connect its campus activism to logistical funding and support.

The BDS movement threatens the integrity of universities due to its attempt to capture university policy to suit its own political goals. Far from a movement centered exclusively on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, BDS operates as part of a larger progressive, left-wing movement that is well-funded and connected beyond the university. The placement of BDS within a larger ecosystem of progressive political organizations

2 Armin Rosen and Liel Leibovitz, “BDS Umbrella Group Linked to Palestinian Terrorist Organizations,” *Tablet Magazine*, June 1, 2018, <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/bds-umbrella-group-linked-to-palestinian-terrorist-organizations>, accessed April 19, 2022.

3 Dan Diker and Adam Shay, *The PACBI Deception: Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) Unmasked: Terror Links and Political Warfare Masquerading as Human Rights*, (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2019), 36. See also, Bill V. Mullen and Ashley Dawson eds., *Against Apartheid: The Case for Boycotting Israeli Universities*, (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2015), 10, 81.

affords it legal support, ties to electoral politics, and funding from a network of charitable foundations oriented toward social justice.

The campus-based BDS movement does not operate in isolation or seek purely symbolic political victories. Student BDS resolutions demand activist oversight of university finances and investments, and entail the bullying and intimidation of Jewish students, professors, and those who support Israel. The BDS movement's political ties and broader funding present universities with an increasing challenge to ensure freedom of expression while reducing the anti-Semitism that it foments.

This report seeks to expand beyond previous studies of the BDS movement by examining how activist pressures unfold on campus, and how BDS allies with a broad and well-funded network of political activist organizations. As this report illustrates, BDS enjoys mixed success across campuses in passing resolutions that result in college administrators altering their investment policies toward Israel. **Whereas BDS largely fails at convincing colleges to divest institutional portfolios from companies deemed to be associated with Israel, it is successful in fostering a politicized and hostile campus climate and influencing broader political discourse.**

This report highlights the importance of coalition-building in the BDS movement's ability to amass support. BDS groups present their cause through a rhetorical framework of anti-colonialism and so-called "anti-racism" that resonates with the broader left-wing political landscape. The deployment of this ideological framework embeds BDS within academia due to the predominance of critical theory, identity politics, and grievance studies in today's colleges and universities. Groups such as SJP and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) are increasingly effective in marshaling broad support for BDS initiatives across student bodies and campus governments.

This report begins by describing the emergence of the BDS movement in the Middle East in the aftermath of the Second Intifada with the founding of PACBI, and the movement's growth on American campuses through the formation of student groups such as SJP. Chapter 2 examines the effectiveness and presence of student BDS efforts nationwide along with bodies of legislation passed to counter it. A majority of state governments have passed anti-BDS laws through either legislative action or executive orders designed to penalize companies that divest from Israel for political reasons.

Chapters 3–5 examine how BDS activist efforts unfold at the campus level in order to understand determinants of the movement's success and failure. These chapters consist of case studies chosen based on the BDS movement's success rate at that campus, and include an examination of Columbia University, the Ohio State University (OSU), and the University of California, Riverside (UCR). Columbia exemplifies a case in which attempts to pass BDS resolutions at the campus level failed before succeeding.

Columbia's administration refused to acquiesce to activist demands for divesting from key companies deemed affiliated with Israeli aggression. In the case of UCR, BDS efforts unfolded in an alternating series of success and defeat. Conversely, OSU offers a case in which BDS activists repeatedly failed as the result of organized student opposition. The case studies underscore common themes of university administrations proving reluctant to follow BDS demands while also tolerating increasing hostility toward Jewish students and the politicization of campus life. Across all cases, the abilities of student groups to form coalitions of support across student bodies, and with outside organizations from beyond the university, proved a deciding factor of BDS outcomes.

Chapters 6 and 7 describe the ties between the campus BDS movement and organizations beyond the university. Chapter 6 describes ties between student BDS organizations, their national support networks, and terrorist groups in the Middle East such as Hamas and the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Chapter 7 examines BDS funding, and how the movement is supported by an ecosystem of legal groups and progressive non-profit foundations.

The final component of this report offers recommendations for both pro-Israel civil society and for legislators to craft legislation designed to curtail funding for the BDS movement. The bifurcation of recommendations is meant to help counter the anti-Semitic and politicized campus environment that BDS creates without weaponizing university administrations or empowering an academic environment that is already censorial. Due to existing anti-BDS laws, and laws against terrorist financing, the legal infrastructure to curtail activist bullying already exists in most states. This report's legislative prescriptions aim to sever university funding for campus BDS groups in order to help safeguard or restore academia's political neutrality on Israel.

The economics and funding of BDS are discussed throughout this report. BDS groups do not simply target Israel in their resolutions but also target specific companies and investment funds. Should a university acquiesce to divestment demands, such decisions signal to companies that business in or with Israel is an unaffordable risk. Similarly, BDS organizations are often well-funded by foundations and donations that have their origin in corporate giving. This report approaches BDS as a phenomenon of activist-driven economic warfare, and offers recommendations designed to counter it.

The Development of the BDS Movement's Core Organizations

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)

The anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement on American college campuses began in the Middle East. From 2000–2005, the Second Intifada witnessed an escalation of asymmetric warfare between Israel and a coalition of Palestinian groups that included organizations such as Hamas and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades. Alongside suicide bombings that targeted Israeli civilians, Palestinian groups increased their use of anti-Israel civil society diplomacy to undermine Western support for the Jewish state. One of these groups was the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI).⁴

PACBI formed in Ramallah in 2004 as a primarily academic-led organization comprising Palestinian professors operating out of Birzeit University.⁵ Drawing inspiration from international boycotts against South Africa under apartheid, PACBI set the tone of the BDS movement by framing it as a struggle against “colonial oppression of the Palestinian people, which is based on Zionist ideology.”⁶ By framing its activism as simultaneously “anti-colonial” and opposed to Zionism—which is the belief in and support for a Jewish state in Jews’ biblical homeland—PACBI and the BDS campaign embedded an ethno-religious conflict within broader left-wing narratives of anti-imperialism. Framing BDS within an “anti-imperialist” narrative explains the movement’s ability to appeal to progressive Western academia.

The BDS movement’s first episode of activism consisted of a “call” to the international community in order to increase pressure on Israel by enacting overlapping

⁴ See PACBI, Twitter, <https://twitter.com/pacbi?lang=en>, April 15, 2022.

⁵ See Diker and Shay, *The PACBI Deception: Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) Unmasked*, 13.

⁶ “Call for an Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel,” Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, July 6, 2004, <https://bdsmovement.net/pacbi/pacbi-call>, accessed April 15, 2022.

academic, cultural, and economic measures. In its original 2004 call, PACBI outlined a five-step plan of action that included a direct promotion of economic divestment from colleges and universities. This five-step plan included:

1. Refraining from participation in any form of academic and cultural cooperation, collaboration, or joint projects with Israeli institutions.
2. Advocating for a comprehensive boycott of Israeli institutions at the national and international levels, including suspending of all forms of funding and subsidies for these institutions.
3. Promoting divestment and disinvestment from Israel by international academic institutions.
4. Working toward condemnations of Israeli policies by pressing for resolutions to be adopted by academic, professional, and cultural associations and organizations.
5. Directly supporting Palestinian academic and cultural institutions without requiring them to partner with Israeli counterparts as an explicit or implicit condition for such support.⁷

Because universities often receive multiple streams of funding through grants and government funds, and hold ties to the private sector through endowments and pensions, university finances are a core focus of PACBI activism.

PACBI is structurally linked to Palestinian political groups that include terrorist organizations. In 2007, PACBI helped found the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), which serves as a coalition of organizations advocating for punitive economic measures against Israel.⁸ One of the BNC's organizational members is the Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine (PNIF), which itself comprises five different terrorist organizations: Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Popular Front-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Palestinian Liberation Front, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).⁹ The BNC, of which both PACBI and the PNIF are members, is funded in part by the US-based nonprofit US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR).¹⁰ As of 2018, the USCPR had supported 329 different BDS groups along with the BNC.¹¹ On July 15, 2017, the BNC hosted an anti-Israel webinar with Pink Floyd rock star Roger Waters that was promoted by the USCPR.¹²

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Rosen and Leibovitz, "BDS Umbrella Group Lined to Palestinian Terrorist Organizations."

⁹ Ibid. See also PNIF Press Release, "Statement by the Palestinian National and Islamic Forces in Hebron on the CPT Hostages in Iraq," International Solidarity Movement, December 6, 2005, <https://palsolidarity.org/2005/12/statement-by-the-palestinian-national-and-islamic-forces-in-hebron-on-the-cpt-hostages-in-iraq/>, accessed April 19, 2022.

¹⁰ Paul Crookston, "Report: Leading BDS Organization Tied to Palestinian Terrorist Groups," *Washington Free Beacon*, June 1, 2018, <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/report-leading-bds-organization-tied-palestinian-terrorist-groups/>, accessed April 19, 2022.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, "BDS Turns 12," <https://uscpr.org/bds-turns-12/>, accessed April 19,

In the US, PACBI's funding and influence are tied not only to the Democratic Party but also to US-based funding mechanisms that allow it to support its campus activism. In the formal political landscape of American electoral politics, PACBI donations are facilitated by ActBlue, the primary online donation platform for the Democratic Party.¹³ In February 2021, Zachor Legal Institute, a pro-Israel thinktank and legal watchdog, began pressuring ActBlue to "investigate" its facilitation of donations to PACBI.¹⁴ The Zachor Legal Institute asserted that despite PACBI's de-platforming by other funding sites, ActBlue continued to allow PACBI to fundraise through its portals under ActBlue Charities.¹⁵ As of this writing, PACBI remains listed for donations through ActBlue.¹⁶ Three key organizations serve as pillars connecting PACBI to campus BDS activism: the US CPR, the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI), and the student activist group Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP).

The US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI)

In late 2008, Jerusalem launched a military operation in the Gaza Strip in response to rocket attacks against civilians in southern Israel. The Gaza War of 2008–2009, called Operation Cast Lead by Israel, only lasted 22 days. The Gaza War catalyzed the creation of an American affiliate of PACBI. This US affiliate materialized as the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI).¹⁷ In January 2009, USACBI declared its formation as an answer to PACBI's "call" for boycotting Israel, and issued a statement aligning itself with its Palestinian counterpart. USACBI declared:

We believe it is time to take a public, principled stance in support of equality, self-determination, human rights (including the right to education), and true democracy, especially in light of the censorship and silencing of the Palestinian question in US universities, as well as US society at large. There can be no academic freedom in Israel/Palestine unless all academics are free and all students are free to pursue their academic desires.¹⁸

2022. See "Watch and share our PACBI Live broadcast with Roger Waters," BDS Movement, July 26, 2017, <https://bdsmovement.net/news/watch-and-share-our-pacbi-live-broadcast-roger-waters>, accessed April 19, 2022.

13 Adam Kredo, "ActBlue Facilitating Donations to Terror-Tied Charity, Legal Group Says," *Washington Free Beacon*, March 2, 2021, <https://freebeacon.com/democrats/actblue-facilitating-donations-to-terror-tied-charity-legal-group-says/>, accessed April 20, 2022.

14 Letter from Zachor Institute President Marc Greendorfer to ActBlue General Council, February 11, 2021, <https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ACTBlue-Letter-Zachor-Legal-Institutue.pdf>, accessed April 20, 2022.

15 Ibid.

16 See "ActBlue donations portal," PACBI, <https://secure.actblue.com/entity/fundraisers/101290>, accessed April 20, 2022.

17 Diker and Shay, *The PACBI Deception: Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) Unmasked*, 36. See also, Mullen and Dawson eds., *Against Apartheid: The Case For Boycotting Israeli Universities*, 10, 81.

18 "Mission Statement: US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel," USACBI, January 21, 2009,

As an organization, USACBI boasts multiple academic groups and entities that support its boycott efforts.¹⁹ USACBI lists 1,565 academics who officially endorse the BDS cause.²⁰ One of PACBI's founders, a sociology professor from Birzeit University named Lisa Taraki, is a member of USACBI's advisory board.²¹ Other advisory board members include the late Desmond Tutu, Angela Davis at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Ilan Pappé, and scholar-activists from across multiple disciplines.²²

In 2015, USACBI formally launched several initiatives that amounted to a turning point for the organization's campus activism. In addition to a "Speakers Bureau," USACBI formed the Faculty for Justice in Palestine (FJP) and the USACBI Academic Defense Committee. The FJP is, essentially, a chapter-based organization embedded at different universities that spearhead pro-Palestinian and pro-BDS organizations on their respective campuses.²³ Included among the FJP's political demands is the controversial "Right of Return" of Palestinian refugees to Israeli territory.²⁴ FJP's first chapters opened at the University of Hawai'i, the University of California, Davis, Kent State University, the University of Florida, and Purdue University.²⁵

The USACBI Academic Defense Committee was designed as a "national defense committee" in order to "provide letters of support, information, and resources," as well as legal support, for pro-Palestinian individuals and organizations on campus.²⁶ The Academic Defense Committee's main focus is the "academic and cultural boycott of Israel" (ACBI). It is only one organization in a coalition of groups called the National Academic Defense Coalition (NADC).²⁷ The NADC comprises a number of legal support organizations for pro-BDS activism, and includes an Academic Advisory Council affiliated with Jewish Voice for Peace,²⁸ the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network,²⁹ the Open University Project at Columbia University,³⁰ and Palestine Legal.³¹ These legal groups often help pro-BDS student organizations which advocate for anti-Israel initiatives, and frequently offer assistance when anti-Semitic incidents arise on campus.

<https://usacbi.org/2009/01/us-campaign-for-the-academic-and-cultural-boycott-of-israel/>, accessed April 21, 2022.

19 See "Appendix A: USACBI List of Boycott Endorsers." See also "Academic Associations Endorsing Boycott and Resolutions," USACBI, <https://usacbi.org/academic-associations-endorsing-boycott/>, accessed April 20, 2022.

20 Ibid.

21 "Advisory Board," USACBI, <https://usacbi.org/advisory-board/>, accessed April 20, 2022.

22 Ibid.

23 "USACBI Newsletter: February 2015," USACBI, <https://usacbi.org/2015/02/usacbi-newsletter-february-2015/>, accessed April 27, 2022.

24 Ibid.

25 "Faculty for Justice in Palestine," USACBI, <https://usacbi.org/faculty-for-justice-in-palestine/>, accessed April 26, 2022.

26 "USACBI Newsletter: February 2015," USACBI, accessed April 27, 2022.

27 "Academic Defense," USACBI, <https://usacbi.org/academic-defense/>, accessed April 25, 2022.

28 "Academic Advisory Council," Jewish Voice For Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/campus-organizing/academic-advisory-council/>, accessed April 26, 2022.

29 International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network, (<http://www.ijan.org/>), accessed April 26, 2022.

30 "The Open University Project," Columbia Law School, (<https://web.law.columbia.edu/open-university-project>), accessed April 26, 2022.

31 Palestine Legal, (<https://palestinelegal.org/>), accessed April 26, 2022.

The USACBI notes that this legal defense initiative developed alongside the American Studies Association's endorsement of BDS.³² USACBI explicitly states that its legal defense initiatives are not merely defensive, but that those who enjoy the organization's backing and support BDS are engaged in "an expression of antiracist activism."³³ The USACBI conceptualizes itself and the broader BDS movement as part of a larger struggle for academic freedom, and views pro-Israel activism as part of a "neoliberal restructuring of the university."³⁴

Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)

Students for Justice in Palestine is the primary student organization behind the BDS movement on American college campuses. SJP largely emerged out of an older Palestinian student organization, the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS). The GUPS grew out of proto-Palestinian nationalism as early as the 1920s, and officially formed in Egypt in the 1950s.³⁵

Multiple leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) began their careers as GUPS members, with Yasser Arafat being one of the most notable of the group's alumni.³⁶ The GUPS was a primary link between students in the Palestinian diaspora and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and was the first student organization to call for a political and military entity devoted to Palestinian nationalism.³⁷ Initial relations between the GUPS and the PLO were rocky due to disputes over recognition and hierarchy; however, Yasser Arafat "normalized" relations between the international student group and the Palestinian movement's core political organization.³⁸ Ultimately, most GUPS chapters in the US closed, with San Francisco State University's (SFSU) chapter standing as an exception.³⁹

The Oslo Accords and the creation of the Palestinian Authority led to the closure of most of the GUPS chapters in the United States. At its height, the GUPS boasted a presence at 60 colleges and universities; however, the number of chapters steadily declined over the 1990s as the result of internal ideological conflicts and the more nebulous

32 "Academic Defense," USACBI, accessed April 25, 2022.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 "About the General Union of Palestine Students," San Francisco State University chapter, <https://web.archive.org/web/20090828022431/http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~gups/organization/index.html>, accessed April 28, 2022.

36 Subhash Singh, "Black September: A turning point in the Palestinian National Movement," *International Journal of Applied Science*, Vol. 2, (2015): pp. 135-145, 136-137.

37 Laurie Brand, "Nasir's Egypt and the Reemergence of the Palestinian National Movement," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 17, (1988), pp. 29-45, 36.

38 Brand, "Nasir's Egypt and the Reemergence of the Palestinian National Movement," 36.

39 See Jennifer Mogannam, "Identity and Expression: The Palestinian Struggle in San Francisco," *This Week in Palestine*, Vol. 119, (2008), pp. 52-53. For a brief history of SFSU's GUPS chapter, see the *San Francisco XPress*, <https://goldengatexpress.org/tag/general-union-of-palestine-students/>, accessed April 26, 2022.

international status of the PLO alongside the Palestinian Authority.⁴⁰ Notably, one of the reasons the GUPS chapter at SFSU survived is because of the extra support it was provided by the university. SFSU's College of Ethnic Studies provided institutional support for the organization.⁴¹ SFSU's chapter also secured funds through independent fundraising and money provided by the university's Associated Students.⁴²

The GUPS remains active at SFSU and drafted the language of the university's BDS resolution in 2020.⁴³ On November 18, 2020, SFSU's Associated Students overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling for the university to divest from companies in Israel. The vote, which passed 17–1, had speakers from numerous organizations in favor of the resolution's passage. Such organizations that supported the move included the Black Student Union, the League of Filipino Students, and the International Business Society.⁴⁴ SFSU's Hillel director, Rachel Nilson Ralston, noted that many students faced "extreme pressure and bullying tactics from activists across the country" to coerce them into supporting the move.⁴⁵ In response to the resolution, SFSU's president Lynn Mahoney declared that the university would not adopt "a divestment position with no global context of acceptance of the complexities at hand."⁴⁶ Mahoney's response parallels the responses of other university administrators, and exemplifies how the BDS process succeeds at the student level while failing to change university policies on American campuses.

The national decline of the GUPS coincided with the emergence of SJP. Founded in 2001, SJP serves as the primary student activist group behind the BDS movement in the US. It grew out of a single GUPS chapter at the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley).⁴⁷ Hatem Bazian, a Palestinian-born graduate of SFSU and member of the GUPS, founded a separate chapter at Berkeley that was rebranded as SJP.⁴⁸

Bazian is currently a professor at Zaytuna College and a lecturer at UC Berkeley's Department of Ethnic Studies.⁴⁹ His scholarly background combines theological work

40 Saliem Wakeem Shehadeh, "Social History of the General Union of Palestine Students-San Francisco State University," Masters Thesis, San Francisco State University, 2017, [file:///Users/ian01/Downloads/AS-362017ANTHS54%20\(2\).pdf](file:///Users/ian01/Downloads/AS-362017ANTHS54%20(2).pdf), accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

41 Ibid., 7-8.

42 "Organization Overview," General Union Palestine Students, San Francisco State University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20090828022431/http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~gups/organization/index.html>, accessed April 29, 2022.

43 Gabriel Greschler, "SF State president opposes student government's BDS resolution," *Jewish News of Northern California*, Nov. 24, 2020, <https://jweekly.com/2020/11/24/s-f-state-president-opposes-student-governments-bds-resolution/>, accessed April 29, 2022.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Daniel Mael, "On Many Campuses, Hate is Spelled SJP," *The Tower*, Issue 19, October 2014, <http://www.the-tower.org/article/on-many-campuses-hate-is-spelled-sjp/>, accessed April 29, 2022.

48 Mael, "On Many Campuses, Hate is Spelled SJP," accessed April 29, 2022. See also "SJP-Students for Justice in Palestine or Systematic Jewish Persecution?," *The Jewish Press*, December 4, 2018, <https://www.jewishpress.com/blogs/guest-blog/sjp-students-for-justice-in-palestine-or-systematic-jewish-persecution/2018/12/04/>, accessed April 29, 2022.

49 "Faculty, Hatem Bazian," Department of Ethnic Studies, UC Berkeley, <https://ethnicstudies.berkeley.edu/people/hatem-bazian/>, accessed April 29, 2022.

in subjects such as Islamic law and Classical Arabic with the progressive academic subjects of “Race Theory and History, Colonialism, Post-Colonial and De-colonial Studies.”⁵⁰ Bazian’s activism proved instrumental in crafting SJP into a national force behind the BDS movement. By the mid-2000s, SJP began operating under a coordinating umbrella organization through the Palestinian Solidarity Movement (PSM). PSM was formed by the group American Muslims for Palestine (AMP). Bazian founded AMP in 2006 and shaped much of the organizational infrastructure for BDS student activism.⁵¹ He remains the chairman of the organization.⁵²

Both AMP and SJP have significant influence in progressive political circles and enjoy a nominal breadth of success on campuses in passing BDS resolutions in student governments. While BDS efforts on campus are better known, AMP also operates at a higher level of political activism through lobbying and pressuring policymakers. AMP’s political profile increased in recent years alongside the increasing prominence of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party.

At AMP’s 2019 annual conference, congresswoman Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) appeared as a speaker alongside activists such as Linda Sarsour.⁵³ In her remarks at the conference, Tlaib drew comparisons between US policies on the US–Mexico border and Israeli policies on Gaza.⁵⁴ The AMP conference illustrates the growing ideological confluence of AMP and the Democratic Party.

In 2021, both congresswoman Tlaib and congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) supported legislation with its origins in AMP.⁵⁵ In April of that year, McCollum introduced a bill titled the *Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act*, that would curtail Israel’s use of US financial assistance in security operations in the West Bank and “East Jerusalem.”⁵⁶ AMP endorsed the resolution alongside multiple Democratic House members:

- Bobby L. Rush (IL-01)
- Danny K. Davis (IL-07)
- André Carson (IN-07)

50 “Faculty Directory, Hatem Bazian,” Zaytuna College, <https://zaytuna.edu/academics/faculty/hatem-bazian>, accessed April 29, 2022.

51 “About, Hatem Bazian,” Hatem Bazian, <http://www.hatembazian.com/about/>, accessed April 29, 2022.

52 Abraham H. Miller, “Cal Berkeley’s Latest Effort to Erase Jewish History from Israel,” *The Observer*, September 7, 2016, <https://observer.com/2016/09/cal-berkeleys-latest-effort-to-erase-jewish-history-from-israel/>, accessed April 29, 2022.

53 Azad Essa, “American Muslims to Democrats: ‘Palestine is a foreign policy priority,’” *Middle East Eye*, December 2, 2019, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/american-muslims-must-centre-palestine>, accessed May 1, 2022.

54 Ibid.

55 Benjamin Baird, “The Palestinian Lobby Exploits US Racial Divisions,” *American Thinker*, December 10, 2021, https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2021/12/welcoming_arab_extremism.html, accessed May 1, 2022.

56 Press Release, Office of Betty McCollum (D-Minn. 4th District), “McCollum Introduces Historic Legislation: Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act,” April 15, 2021, <https://mccollum.house.gov/media/press-releases/mccollum-introduces-historic-legislation-defending-human-rights-palestinian>, accessed May 1, 2022.

- Marie Newman (IL-03)
- Ilhan Omar (MN-05)
- Mark Pocan (WI-02)
- Raúl Grijalva (AZ-03)
- Rashida Tlaib (MI-13)
- Ayanna Pressley (MA-07)
- Cori Bush (MO-01)
- Jamaal Bowman (NY-16)
- Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14)
- Jesús “Chuy” García (IL-04)

Not only is AMP's political influence growing and threatening the traditionally bipartisan nature of pro-Israel legislation in Washington, but the group retains ties to terrorist groups operating in the Palestinian Territories.

AMP's executive director, Dr. Osama Abuirshaid, is a firebrand of the BDS movement at the level of national American politics, who regularly employs classically anti-Semitic rhetoric when discussing Israel. In an interview with Jordan's Yarmouk TV about US financial support for Israel's Iron Dome, Abuirshaid declared, “We are witnessing the closing of the ranks, and an emphasis on the force that supports Palestine within the Democratic Party.”⁵⁷ Drawing inspiration from classic anti-Semitic rhetoric equating Jews with parasites, Abuirshaid declared that Israel

is a case of a parasite living off the American body. America is going through an economic crisis. America is suffering strategically. It is suffering in many places in the world. It is withdrawing from many places in the world—from Afghanistan, from the Middle East, from other places, because it wants to focus its energies on the rising Chinese dragon. Nevertheless, Israel pulls America back. It sucks the blood of America, and it scatters its attention.⁵⁸

In November 2021, only months after McCollum introduced her AMP-endorsed bill, Abuirshaid attended a conference in Jordan titled “Towards the Features of a New Arab Strategy to Deal with the Arab-Israel Conflict” that included representatives from Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).⁵⁹ At the conference, Abuirshaid linked the BDS movement's goals with progressive narratives in the

57 “American Muslims for Palestine director: ‘Israel is a parasite that sucks the blood of America’,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, September 27, 2021, <https://www.jns.org/american-muslims-for-palestine-director-israel-is-a-parasite-that-sucks-the-blood-of-america/>, accessed May 1, 2022.

58 Ibid.

59 “Head of Palestinian American lobby group joins conference with terror-group members,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, December 3, 2021, <https://www.jns.org/head-of-palestinian-american-lobby-group-joins-conference-with-terror-group-members/>, accessed May 1, 2022.

US. Abuirshaid again drew parallels between Israel's alleged apartheid policies, segregation in the US, and American policies regarding the US–Mexico border.⁶⁰ Notably, Abuirshaid, a US citizen, only obtained citizenship in 2017 after an eleven-year delay for links to terrorist groups.⁶¹

AMP's work and strategy is similar to that of the pro-Israel advocacy group AIPAC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee), in that it seeks to leverage political and activist influence in order to secure economic policy objectives. Reflecting AIPAC's efforts to secure US legislation and funding to support Israeli security, AMP seeks to eliminate funding and curtail US support for Israel. AMP, and the BDS movement as a whole, seek to replicate the success that the African National Congress had in economically isolating South Africa prior to the end of Apartheid in 1994. If SJP-led campus resolutions declaring support for the BDS movement constitute "low-level" activism, AMP's efforts exhibit a higher political altitude of the same movement by means of a separate but allied organization.

SJP chapters are ostensibly autonomous organizations connected by a collective adherence to shared policy goals. Such goals include: an end to Israel's "occupation and colonization" of Palestine, the destruction of Israel's security barrier, the granting of "full equality" to Israeli-Arabs, and the return of Palestinians displaced by Israel's creation.⁶² This autonomy of SJP chapters has allowed individual chapters to promote more radical policy goals in both campus demands and in the real political realm.⁶³ This form of autonomous, loose coordination under a single brand allows for the BDS movement to innovate and organically grow a bench of activists for higher levels of advocacy while simultaneously insulating the whole of the movement from the closure or sanction of a single chapter. Recent estimates from 2017 count 189 active SJP chapters in the United States.⁶⁴

A notable factor of the SJP is its exclusively political nature. Rather than focus on political issues alongside other aspects of Palestinian life, SJP eschews events promoting Palestinian Arab culture, the Arabic language, and other non-political activities.⁶⁵ Due to this singular political focus, SJP similarly shuns "faith-washing," or dialogue with pro-Israel groups and Jewish organizations.⁶⁶ While the SJP is the flagship organization of the student BDS movement, it does have smaller allied organization similar to GUPS

60 "Head of Palestinian American lobby group joins conference with terror-group members," *Jewish News Syndicate*, accessed May 1, 2022.

61 Baird, "The Palestinian Lobby Exploits US Racial Divisions," accessed May 1, 2022.

62 "Students for Justice in Palestine," Anti-Defamation League, https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/students-for-justice-in-palestine-sjp#_edn1, accessed May 1, 2022.

63 Ibid.

64 "Anti-Zionist Campus Groups," Amcha Initiative, <https://amchainitiative.org/sjp-chapters/>, accessed May 1, 2022. See also Dan Diker, *Students for Justice in Palestine Unmasked: Terror Links, Violence, Bigotry, and Intimidation on US Campuses*, (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2018), 9.

65 Diker, *Students for Justice in Palestine Unmasked*, 10.

66 Ibid, 11.

at SFSU. Such groups include Canada's Students for Palestinian Human Rights, Students Against Israeli Apartheid, and Harvard's Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC).⁶⁷

SJP employs theatricality and confrontation in its protests; such tactics constitute key elements of its branding and strategy. Staples of SJP publicity campaigns include "Apartheid Wall" displays, mock evictions of students in campus dorms, mock checkpoints that dramatize interpretations of Israeli security checkpoints, and its signature "Israel Apartheid Week" of annual activism events. These theatrical and melodramatic forms of activism capture most of the public's attention of the BDS movement, creating a campus climate of intimidation and anti-Semitism. This activism also positions SJP as an attractive partner to other radical campus groups seeking allied organizations for parallel causes.

SJP enjoys allies from an array of student organizations based on the politics of identity and grievance. Such organizations are often integral to SJP's efforts to pass divestment resolutions on campus. This coalition of pro-BDS organizations collaborating with SJP unites around the political logic of critical theory that predominates in the modern university, and is based around a worldview comprising oppressors and the oppressed.

This dynamic unfolds under the assumptions of "intersectionality," where identity groups deemed "marginalized" find common cause with one another in battling "colonialism" in campus activism alongside similar "oppressed" groups.⁶⁸ Due to the largely successful attempts of pro-Palestinian groups to portray Israel as a neo-colonial project akin to Apartheid-era South Africa, many campus groups align with SJP.

The success of BDS at Columbia University derives from the combined effort of SJP and JVP that resulted in the founding of Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD).⁶⁹ At Columbia, CUAD acts as an umbrella for the pro-BDS movement, despite the SJP serving as its core activist engine. After several failures to pass a BDS resolution, Columbia passed its first BDS referendum in 2020.⁷⁰ At Columbia, SJP's efforts were far from isolated, as the group's intersectional appeals led to multiple endorsements from student groups far-removed from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The expanse of such endorsements highlights SJP's organizational reach and collaborative power. The BDS movement is not a fringe campus element, but rather a part of the campus mainstream

67 Ibid, 12.

68 Diker, *Students for Justice in Palestine Unmasked*, 23-25.

69 Letter from CUAD to the Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing and President Bollinger, April 28, 2016, Columbia University Apartheid Divest, <https://apartheiddivest.org/>, accessed May 1, 2022.

70 Hannah Dreyfus, "Columbia University Students Pass College's First-Ever BDS Referendum," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, September 29, 2020, <https://www.jta.org/2020/09/29/ny/columbia-university-students-pass-its-first-ever-bds-referendum>, accessed May 2, 2022.

where it is present. The student groups at Columbia that supported BDS include a broad progressive coalition listed below.⁷¹

Figure 1.1

Asian American Alliance	Columbia-Barnard Young Democratic Socialists of America
Asian Political Collective	Divest Bernard from Fossil Fuels
Barnard-Columbia Socialists	Echoes Art and Literary Magazine
Barnard Organization of Sout and Solidarity	Ethio-Eritrean Student Associations
Barnard-Columbia Prison Abolition Coalition	Extinction Rebellion Columbia University
Barnard-Columbia Middle Eastern and North African Women's Association (MENA)	GendeRevolution
Black Reading Group	Housing Equity Project
Caribbean Students' Association at Columbia University	Journal of Art Criticism
Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society	Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians Progressive Protestant Campus Ministry
Chicanx Caucus	Muslim Afro Niyah Students Association
Columbia Divest for Climate Justice	National Society of Black Engineers
Columbia Journal of Literary Criticism	Native American Council
Columbia Muslim Students Association	No Red Tape
Columbia Queer Alliance	Proud Colors
Columbia University Black Students Organization	South Asian Feminisms Alliance
Columbia University Club Bangla	Student-Worker Solidarity
Columbia University Historical Journal	Students Helping Students
Columbia University Historical Justice Initiative	Students Organize for Syria
Columbia University Organization of Pakistani Students	Undo CU
Columbia University Turath	

SJP, naturally, draws accusations of anti-Semitism, accusations of harassment and intimidation, and occasional assault allegations made by Jewish students who claim the group creates a hostile environment for Jews. A 2016 report from Brandeis University discovered that the presence of an “active” SJP chapter on a college campus is one of the strongest indicators for Jewish students to perceive a university environment as hostile and anti-Semitic.⁷² The study also found that schools in the Northeast, Northwestern University, and the University of California were found to be anti-Semitic “hotspots”

71 “Endorsements,” Columbia University Apartheid Divest, <https://apartheiddivest.org/endorsements>, accessed May 1, 2022.

72 See Leonard Saxe et al, *Hotspots of Anti-Semitism and Anti-Israel Sentiment on US Campuses*, Steinhardt Social Research Institute, Brandeis University, October 2016.

where hostility toward Jews and Israel was deemed to be high.⁷³ The 2016 Brandeis findings are not isolated, but are confirmed by a 2021 study that noted 65% of Jewish students felt unsafe on campus.⁷⁴ The perception of an anti-Semitic campus environment that corresponds to the presence of SJP is supported by multiple incidents involving intimidation that threatened to escalate into violence. Several of SJP's centerpieces of direct-action activism involve confrontational tactics that contribute to anti-Semitic campus environments. While not an exhaustive list of the group's performative activism, SJP's mock evictions, mock Israeli checkpoints, and mock "Apartheid Wall" in particular foster a broader anti-Semitic environment.

At Emory University in 2019, the school's SJP chapter posted "eviction notices" in the college's dormitory halls warning residents that their "suite is scheduled for demolition in three days."⁷⁵ Notably, Emory's Office of Residence Life and Housing Operations allowed the posting of the flyers, despite SJP's violation of the university's policy against posting flyers on doors.⁷⁶ SJP's hostile theatrics led to Emory's campus police receiving numerous complaints from the students who received the flyers.⁷⁷ That same year at New York University (NYU), SJP received the school's President's Service Award for having "positively impacted the culture" of the university.⁷⁸ NYU's actions culminated in a complaint filed with the Department of Education that accused the university of violating the Trump administration's addition to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.⁷⁹ UC Berkeley was sued in 2011 by a Jewish student for failing to protect her civil rights when she was allegedly assaulted by a SJP student member during the group's Israel Apartheid Week.⁸⁰ In 2001, when SJP was still a new activist group, 79 people were arrested at a SJP sit-in protest at UC Berkeley's Wheeler Hall.⁸¹ Seven students were accused of resisting arrest, including one student who allegedly bit a campus police officer as the protest was broken up.⁸²

73 Ibid.

74 Maria Carrasco, "Study Finds 'Openly Jewish' Students Feel Unsafe on Campus," *Inside Higher Ed*, September 21, 2021, <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2021/09/21/survey-finds-%E2%80%99openly-jewish%E2%80%99-students-feel-unsafe-campus>, accessed May 2, 2022.

75 Richard Chess and Nicole Sadek, "Students Outraged Over Mock Eviction Notices," *The Emory Wheel*, April 5, 2019, <https://emorywheel.com/students-outraged-over-mock-eviction-notice/>, accessed May 2, 2022.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

78 Lachlan Hyatt, "NYU Students for Justice in Palestine Receives Service Award from President Hamilton," *Washington Square News*, April 10, 2029, <https://nyunews.com/news/2019/04/10/president-service-award-palestine-israel-divest/>, accessed May 2, 2022.

79 Jon Levine, "NYU settles anti-Semitism complaint brought by student," *The New York Post*, October 10, 2020, <https://nypost.com/2020/10/10/nyu-settles-anti-semitism-complaint-brought-by-student/>, accessed May 2, 2022.

80 Frances Dinkelspiel, "Jewish student sues UC Berkeley over assault by Palestine supporter," *Berkeleyside*, March 7, 2011, <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2011/03/07/jewish-student-sues-uc-berkeley-over-assault-by-palestine-supporter>, accessed May 2, 2022.

81 Andrea Cappannari, "Pro-Palestinian student group suspended following University of California-Berkeley Protest," *World Socialist Website*, May 7, 2002, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2002/05/berk-m07.html>, accessed May 3, 2022.

82 Ibid.

While SJP's intersectional calls to action bring the organization allies from campus groups and help it secure the passage of BDS resolutions, the group's reputation often proves problematic for college administrations. Administrators at Fordham University in 2015 rejected the formation of a SJP chapter, under the logic that the organization's "political goals" would be "polarizing" on campus.⁸³ Fordham's decision ultimately resulted in a 2017 lawsuit filed by SJP, which was represented by Palestine Legal, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and attorney Alan Levine.⁸⁴ After a court decision mandating that Fordham recognize the group, an appellate court overturned the ruling. The New York Court of Appeals ultimately denied SJP's further appeal, backing the Fordham administration.⁸⁵

Both AMP and SJP face continual accusations of anti-Semitism from pro-Israel groups, conservatives, and Jewish organizations.⁸⁶ Despite the allegations, both AMP and SJP deny the anti-Semitism in their organizations and officially condemn it. On its official website, AMP posts an "Anti-Bigotry Statement" declaring that the organization "is categorically opposed to all forms of racism and bigotry, including Islamophobia, anti-black racism, anti-immigrants, anti-Semitism, and other forms of bigotry directed particularly toward people of color and indigenous peoples everywhere."⁸⁷ Similarly, SJP declares that it will "continue to fight against white supremacy, Zionism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, sexism, capitalism, militarism, imperialism, homophobia, transphobia, and all other political institutions that continue to oppress marginalized folks."⁸⁸ In 2014, SJP at Vassar College used a vintage Nazi propaganda poster on social media, which led the college to launch an investigation into the group for its use of the poster as a "bias incident."⁸⁹ Pro-BDS organizations on college campuses deflect accusations of anti-Semitism by couching their platform within the broader progressive political ideology that dominates the university.

83 Press Release, "New York's Highest Court Refuses Case of Fordham Censorship of Students for Justice in Palestine," Center for Constitutional Rights, June 9, 2010, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/new-york-s-highest-court-refuses-case-fordham-censorship-students>, accessed May 3, 2022.

84 "Fordham Bans Students for Justice in Palestine," Palestine Legal, June 10, 2021, <https://palestinelegal.org/case-studies/2017/3/9/fordham-bans-students-for-justice-in-palestine>, accessed May 3, 2022.

85 *Ibid.*

86 See "American Muslims for Palestine," Anti-Defamation League, <https://www.adl.org/resources/profiles/american-muslims-for-palestine>, accessed May 2, 2022. See also David Bernstein, "A Remarkable Outbreak of Antisemitism at NYU Law School," *Reason*, April 13, 2022, <https://reason.com/volokh/2022/04/13/remarkable-outbreak-of-antisemitism-at-nyu-law-school/>, accessed May 2, 2022. See also Letter from Stand With Us to University of Chicago Chancellor Robert J. Zimmer and Dean Michele Rasmussen, February 4, 2022, <https://www.standwithus.com/post/standwithus-urges-university-of-chicago-administration-to-condemn-discriminatory-sjp-campaign>, accessed May 2, 2022.

87 "Anti-Bigotry Statement," American Muslims for Palestine, <https://www.ampalestine.org/about-amp/anti-bigotry-statement>, accessed May 2, 2022.

88 "Our Values, About Us," National Students for Justice in Palestine, <https://www.nationalsjp.org/about>, accessed May 2, 2022.

89 Amanda Borschel-Dan, "Vassar's SJP sort of apologizes for anti-Israel, Nazi cartoon," *Times of Israel*, May 16, 2014, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/vassars-sjp-sort-of-apologizes-for-anti-israel-nazi-cartoon/>, accessed May 2, 2022.

This chapter serves to give an overview of the primary organizations and groups empowering the BDS movement on American campuses. Other organizations similarly support the BDS movement and the pro-Palestinian cause elsewhere in the country's sociopolitical landscape, or to a lesser degree than the organizations mentioned above. However, the aforementioned organizations constitute the core of the BDS movement, link campus activism with political advocacy at the national level, and connect Israel as an issue of American politics to the political dynamics in the Middle East. The following chapter offers an overview of how BDS efforts succeed and fail by offering analysis and history of the movement on three campuses.

The BDS Movement on Campus: Anti-Semitic Menace or Paper Tiger?

The BDS movement constitutes an acute flashpoint of confrontational student activism. Unlike other campus causes, such as climate change, where the activism is virtually one-sided, the BDS movement faces natural opposition from Jewish student organizations and other supporters of Israel. The fact that pro-BDS student groups such as SJP are often supported by broad progressive student coalitions nonetheless creates a markedly politicized and hostile campus environment. While most Jewish students on campus may forego involvement in pro-Israel activism, the anti-Semitic overtones and activities of the BDS movement help foster a broader sense of insecurity among Jewish students and others who may support Israel.

This chapter assesses the BDS movement's effectiveness on campus by examining three metrics by which to measure its successes and failures. The first metric is how successful the BDS movement is at passing anti-Israel resolutions at the student government level. The second metric is the degree to which these resolutions from the student government level translate into university policy in the form of academic and economic boycotts, with a particular focus on whether universities follow through on student demands to divest from companies that do business in Israel. The last metric is whether the on-campus BDS movement is successful in shaping political activity beyond the confines of the university and into the broader political environment. As will be shown below, the overall effectiveness of the BDS movement on campus is mixed.

Success and Failure of BDS Resolutions

Multiple studies have covered the BDS movement on college campuses and have tracked its development since 2005, with the most work coming from the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE). Research conducted by AICE depicts a BDS movement that is vocal, acute, but ultimately narrow in its reach and shallow in its ability to achieve policy victories. Between 2005 and 2022, 150 BDS resolutions were initiated on

college campuses, while 98 failed as the result of vetoes, repeals, and simply being voted down.⁹⁰ Similarly, votes occurred at 73 schools out of the 4,298 four-year colleges included in the study, meaning the 44 BDS approvals represent 1% of American universities.⁹¹ In summation, BDS resolutions over this timespan have a 66% failure rate.⁹² Notably, BDS resolutions are often voted down both when they appear as student government initiatives and when they are attempted through student referenda.⁹³ Despite failure characterizing the overall trend of student-led attempts to achieve BDS resolutions, some universities pass such resolutions. With large studies already indicating a limited campus effectiveness of BDS, the question remains regarding how such attempted resolutions take place.

Campus BDS efforts significantly increased over the past several years, and against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, greater polarization in US politics, and the 2020 riots following the death of George Floyd. The 2020–21 academic year had more successful passages of BDS resolutions than any other year since the movement began.

Figure 2.1: BDS Resolutions Success/Failure Rate as of June 2022 (Source: AICE)

	BDS Wins	BDS Wins	BDS Losses	Total Resolution Votes	Failure Rate
2021–22	0	3	3		100%
2020–21	9	5	14		36%
2019–20	0	3	3		100%
2018–19	2	8	10		80%
2017–18	5	9	14		64%
2016–17	6	12	18		67%
2015–16*	7	11	18		61%
2014–15	7	20	27		74%
2013–14	7	11	18		61%

90 "Anti-Semitism: Campus Divestment Resolutions in the USA 2005-2022," Jewish Virtual Library, Data from the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/campus-divestment-resolutions#Cum>, accessed May 3, 2022.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 "BDS on American College Campuses: 2014-15 Year-In-Review," Anti-Defamation League, <https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/bds-on-american-college-campuses-2014-15-year-in-review>, accessed May 3, 2022.

2012–13	3	7	10	60%
2011–12	2	3	5	60%
2010–11	1	1	2	50%
2009–10	0	1	1	100%
2008–9	0	1	1	100%
2007–8	0	0	0	100%
2006–7	1	0	1	0%
2005–6	2	2	4	50%
Total	53	97	150	65%
%	35%	65%	Source: AICE ⁹⁴	

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) notes that one of the engines behind the BDS movement’s success in the 2020–21 school year is its ability to connect anti-Israel activism with larger left-wing causes on campus. Specifically, such BDS strategies include equating support for the Jewish state with support for racism and conceptually separating support for Israel from the Jewish faith.⁹⁵ On campuses where conflagration occurs between the BDS movement and broader social justice–driven activism, anti-Israel activity intensifies to exclude pro-Israel students and Jewish students from student life and deepens from criticism to essentialist anti-Semitic tropes. This activism is not limited to student organizations—it also includes professors. The ability of pro-BDS groups to attach anti-Israel activism to broader left-wing initiatives contributes not only to anti-Semitism but also to a larger politicization of college campuses that threatens academic openness and the institutional neutrality of the university.

From fall 2020 to winter 2021, Rose Ritch, vice-president of the University of Southern California’s Undergraduate Student Government, faced an intense, anti-Semitic publicity campaign that ultimately led to Ritch’s resignation. In the aftermath of Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests and the accompanying riots, Abeer Tijani, a Nigerian-born senior at USC, launched impeachment efforts against Ritch and student body president Truman Fitch on the grounds that they did not “authentically represent nor

94 “Anti-Semitism: Campus Divestment Resolutions in the USA 2005-2022,” Jewish Virtual Library, accessed May 3, 2022.

95 “The Anti-Israel Movement on US Campuses, 2020-2021,” Anti-Defamation League, <https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/the-anti-israel-movement-on-us-campuses-2020-2021#executive-summary>, accessed May 8, 2022.

promote the true breadth of diversity that our community has to offer.”⁹⁶ Despite USC’s administrative efforts to contain a growing publicity frenzy on social media, Jewish Voice for Peace, the Council on American-Islamic Relations Los Angeles, the Middle East Studies Association of North America, and the California Scholars for Academic Freedom reasserted what they viewed as a false continuity between Fitch’s support for Israel and her Jewish identity.⁹⁷ One student at USC, Yasmeen Mashayekh, an engineering student listed as a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion senator,” tweeted her desire to “kill every mother---g Zionist.”⁹⁸ After weeks of harassment and intimidation, Ritch ultimately resigned from her position. USC’s SJP chapter supported the pressure campaign.⁹⁹

On June 14, 2020, University of California, Merced (UC Merced) professor Abbas Ghassemi promoted a social media campaign equating Zionism to classically anti-Semitic portrayals of Jews. In a series of social media posts dating from the latter half of 2020, Ghassemi speculated about the makeup of the “Zionist brain” and made repeated accusations about the US government, American banking, and the media being controlled by Israel.¹⁰⁰ UC Merced’s administration ultimately opened an investigation into the postings, stating that the school must “not let anti-Semitism or any form of bigotry or hate toward any group take root in the UC Merced community.”¹⁰¹ Less than a year later, UC Merced and SFSU planned to host an online event titled “Free Speech and Palestine” featuring PFLP hijacker Leila Khaled. The event, which was cosponsored by SFSU’s program for Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies and the University of California Humanities Research Institute, drew condemnation and requests for cancellation from the Lawfare Project, which asserted that both schools could be in violation of US counterterrorism laws.¹⁰² The event was ultimately canceled, but it would have included former Black Panther Sekou Odinga and former Weather

96 Teresa Watanabe, “Column One: At USC, 2 determined women spoke out. Ugly attacks over racism, anti-Semitism, Zionism took over,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 18, 2020, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-10-18/social-media-attacks-usc-free-speech-debate-racism>, accessed May 8, 2022.

97 Ibid.

98 Louis Keene, “A USC student tweeted ‘kill every mother—ing Zionist.’ Zionist faculty are unhappy with USC’s response,” *Forward*, December 3, 2021, <https://forward.com/news/479084/usc-faculty-demand-punishment-for-antisemitic-tweet/>, accessed May 8, 2022.

99 Michael Janofsky, “A USC student leader resigns amid accusations that he Zionism ‘made her complicit in racism,’” *Forward*, August 6, 2020, <https://forward.com/news/452189/a-usc-student-leader-resigns-amid-accusations-that-her-zionism-made-her/>, accessed May 8, 2022.

100 Gabriel Greschler, “UC Merced opens inquiry into professor’s anti-Semitic tweets,” *Times of Israel*, January 1, 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/uc-merced-opens-inquiry-into-professors-anti-semitic-tweets/>, accessed May 8, 2022.

101 Ibid.

102 Sean Savage, “Lawfare Project Urges Zoom, UC Merced to Cancel Event Featuring Palestinian Terrorist,” *Jewish Journal*, April 15, 2021, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/335577/lawfare-project-urges-zoom-uc-merced-to-cancel-event-featuring-palestinian-terrorist/>, accessed May 8, 2022.

Underground member and convicted terrorist Laura Whitehorn.¹⁰³ UC Merced passed its BDS resolution in April 2016.¹⁰⁴

The BDS movement's work at decoupling perceptions of traditional anti-Semitism from anti-Israel activism has proven incredibly successful at blunting accusations of anti-Semitism made against groups such as SJP. At Duke University in 2022, the student government unanimously passed a resolution condemning anti-Semitism and adopting the definition of anti-Semitism given by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).¹⁰⁵ The measure passed by Duke's student government included training for student senators and others.¹⁰⁶ Only a month after this resolution, the same student government allocated \$16,000 to SJP in order to host anti-Semitic speakers and an event entitled "Narrating Resistance and Agency: Shifting the Discourse on Palestine."¹⁰⁷ One of the speakers at the event, Mohammed El-Kurd, is noted by the ADL for accusing Israelis of organ-harvesting and claiming that the cannibalism of Palestinians is due to Israelis' "unquenchable thirst for Palestinian blood."¹⁰⁸ The fact that the BDS movement's premier organization funded a speaker making classical anti-Semitic references did not faze the Duke University student government.

SJP's image as a general left-wing organization, rather than an exclusive group devoted to a niche issue, is further seen by the actions of the chapter at the University of Chicago in early 2022. In the wake of the shooting of an Asian student in an armed robbery near campus in late 2021, a group of predominantly Asian international students organized a list of demands for increased campus safety.¹⁰⁹ In response, a coalition of student organizations, SJP among them, condemned the pro-safety students for being ostensibly pro-police.¹¹⁰ SJP specifically stated that it "supports the complete abolition of prisons and policing as essential for racial equality."¹¹¹ While SJP has a devoted focus as part of the BDS movement and is arguably the movement's core on-campus organization, it also operates as one segment in a broader mosaic of progressive groups and causes. Despite the BDS movement's marked success in passing resolutions where it is

103 Gabriel Greschler, "Tech companies block Leila Khaled event at SFSU for a second time," *Jewish News of Northern California*, April 23, 2021, <https://jweekly.com/2021/04/23/tech-companies-block-leila-khaled-event-at-sfsu-for-a-second-time/>, accessed May 8, 2022.

104 "US BDS Victories," US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, <https://uscpr.org/campaigns/bds/bd-swins#1499720610811-1ef54a63-054b>, accessed May 8, 2022.

105 Alexandra Ahdoot, "Palestinian speaker is antisemitic," *The Duke Chronicle*, March 24, 2022, <https://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2022/03/03252022-ahdoot>, accessed May 26, 2022.

106 Ibid. See also Audrey Wang, "Jewish Life at Duke leads antisemitism training at DSG meeting," *The Duke Chronicle*, January 27, 2022, <https://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2022/01/duke-student-government-senators-antisemitism-training-university>, accessed May 26, 2022.

107 Ahdoot, "Palestinian speaker is antisemitic," accessed May 26, 2022.

108 Ibid.

109 Eshan Dosani, "'We Want Safety', An Organizer Reflects on November's Controversial Demonstration," *The Chicago Maroon*, February 10, 2022, <https://www.chicagomaroon.com/article/2022/2/10/want-safety-organizer-reflects-novembers-controversial/>, accessed May 26, 2022.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

present on campus, most schools in the US have no discernable BDS activity.¹¹² According to research conducted by AICE, most college administrators are resistant to divesting funds from Israeli companies, companies that do business with Israel, and Israeli universities.¹¹³ This reluctance contrasts with the BDS movement's occasional successes abroad and with fossil fuel divestment efforts in the US. In the United Kingdom, both the University of Manchester and the University of Leeds have divested from companies deemed to be involved in human rights abuses in Israel.¹¹⁴

SJP's Imagined Success: Hampshire College and the War on Israeli Hummus

In 2009, Hampshire College divested from an investment fund called State Street that included six companies doing business in Israel: United Technologies, Caterpillar, Motorola, Terex, ITT, and General Electric.¹¹⁵ State Street was judged by the college's director of communications, Elaine Thomas, to have held shares in "well over 100 companies engaged in business practices that violate the college's policy on socially responsible investments. These violations include unfair labor practices, environmental abuse, military weapons manufacturing, and unsafe workplace settings."¹¹⁶ Hampshire College's Board of Trustees noted that the decision was based in part on the activism from the school's SJP chapter, though the consideration itself "did not pertain to a political movement or single out businesses active in a specific region or country."¹¹⁷ While the BDS movement held up Hampshire College's divestment as a major win, several factors make the school an outlier and call into question whether the case is a victory for the movement.

Hampshire College was the first school in the US to divest from South Africa under Apartheid, indicating the institution may simply be ideologically primed to support left-wing causes in general rather than being specifically anti-Israel.¹¹⁸ Additionally, divisions within the school's administration and leadership are indicated by the school's

112 "Anti-Semitism: Campus Divestment Resolutions in the USA 2005-2022," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed May 26, 2022.

113 "University Statements Rejecting Divestment and the Academic Boycott of Israel," Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/university-statements-rejecting-bds#UCI>, accessed May 26, 2022.

114 "Manchester University divests from companies complicit in the Israeli occupation," *Middle East Monitor*, August 5, 2020, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200805-manchester-university-divests-from-companies-complicit-in-the-israeli-occupation/>, accessed May 26, 2022. See also "In first, UK university divests from firms supplying Israel army," *Middle East Monitor*, November 5, 2018, (<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20181105-in-first-uk-university-divests-from-firms-supplying-israel-army/>), accessed May 26, 2022.

115 Hanna Ingber Win, "Hampshire College Divests from Israel," *Huffington Post*, March 15, 2009, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/hampshire-college-divests_n_166528, accessed May 26, 2022. See also Jacob Berkman, "Dershowitz, ADL, praise New Hampshire College," *The Jerusalem Post*, February 25, 2009, <https://www.jpost.com/jewish-world/jewish-news/dershowitz-adl-praise-hampshire-college>, accessed May 26, 2022.

116 Win, "Hampshire College Divests from Israel," accessed May 26, 2022.

117 Ibid.

118 "Hampshire College first in US to divest from Israel," *The Electronic Intifada*, February 12, 2009, <https://electronicintifada.net/content/hampshire-college-first-us-divest-israel/932>, accessed May 26, 2022.

response to criticism of the divestment move from the ADL. After criticism from the ADL and attorney Alan Dershowitz, Hampshire president Ralph Hexter responded by stating that the decision to divest was not focused on Israel, but was made independently of Israel.¹¹⁹ Hexter and the chairman of Hampshire's Board of Trustees, Sigmund Roos, stated that "no other college or university should use Hampshire as a precedent for divesting from Israel, since Hampshire has refused to divest from Israel. We have stated this publicly."¹²⁰ In either scenario, the BDS movement itself seemed only to have an indirect effect on Hampshire's decision.

Other purported BDS victories are minor in terms of actual boycotts, such as colleges attempting to boycott the hummus brand Sabra. A year after Hampshire divested from State Street, DePaul University and Princeton University both attempted to divest from the hummus-maker Sabra. At the time, Sabra was an American company based in New York and Virginia, but was co-owned by the Israeli food giant Strauss Group.¹²¹ At DePaul, boycott efforts commenced with SJP calling on the administration to ban the sale of Sabra hummus on campus; however, despite the quick and minor victory for SJP, the school shortly reversed its decision.¹²² After the reversal, SJP brought the issue to the student government at DePaul for a referendum vote in late May 2011.¹²³ The vote to end the sale of Sabra hummus on campus passed with 80% voting in favor of the decision.¹²⁴ Despite the victory, SJP's activism was thwarted again by DePaul's administration. DePaul's Fair Business Practices Committee opted to keep the hummus brand for sale on campus.¹²⁵ The committee deemed that banning the product was unwarranted.¹²⁶ A similar student referendum was held at Princeton in late 2010; however, unlike at DePaul, students voted in favor of keeping Sabra.¹²⁷

In contrast with their British counterparts, pro-BDS student governments in the US often meet a roadblock, with administrators refusing to follow through on BDS demands. The following chapters of this report describe this dynamic in detailed case studies of campuses that forced multiple attempts at passing resolutions. The common

119 Berkman, "Dershowitz, ADL, praise New Hampshire College," accessed May 26, 2022.

120 "Statement from Anti-Defamation League," Hampshire College, February 25, 2009, <https://www.hampshire.edu/news/statement-anti-defamation-league>, accessed May 26, 2022.

121 Tamar Lewin, "New Subject of Debate on Mideast: Hummus," *The New York Times*, December 3, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/04/education/04hummus.html>, accessed May 26, 2022.

122 Ibid.

123 Mureen Clare Murphy, "Sabra boycott referendum up for student vote at De Paul University," *The Electronic Intifada*, May 16, 2011, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/maureen-clare-murphy/sabra-boycott-referendum-student-vote-depaul-university>, accessed May 26, 2022.

124 De Paul Students for Justice in Palestine chapter, "DePaul students vote to boycott Sabra Hummus," BDS Movement, <https://bdsmovement.net/news/depaul-students-vote-boycott-sabra-hummus>, accessed May 26, 2022.

125 Jenn Schanz, "Sabra to stay on campus after committee reaches decision," *DePaulia*, May 23, 2011, <https://depauliaonline.com/1965/news/sabra-to-stay-on-campus-after-committee-reaches-decision/>, accessed May 26, 2022.

126 Ibid.

127 Debra Rubin, "Israeli-made hummus prevails in Princeton vote," *New Jersey Jewish News*, December 8, 2010, <https://njewishnews.timesofisrael.com/israeli-made-hummus-prevails-in-princeton-vote/>, accessed May 27, 2022.

theme emerges that administrators at many schools view the BDS resolutions as a threat to academic freedom. Due to the BDS movement's simultaneous attacks on ties between American and Israeli academic institutions, and on Israeli for-profit companies, the influence of pro-BDS student governments reaches only so far on college campuses when it comes to policy changes.

Influence of the On-Campus BDS Movement Off Campus

While setbacks for the on-campus BDS movement have thus far curtailed its ability to translate activism into policy controlled by administrators, the movement is beginning to enjoy greater political access to policymakers at the national level. Hyperpolarization amid the Democratic Party's move to the left has created greater salience for the BDS movement and a more fertile political audience than in the past. At this higher political level, and in the US public at large, BDS is beginning to access those with greater authority in government and contribute to a more pro-BDS electorate.

American sentiment on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is well-known, as the US is generally pro-Israel. Despite this, sentiment is shifting along partisan lines. Data on how Americans view the BDS movement has been less understood until recently. According to a University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll conducted in the leadup to the 2020 election, more Democrats favor supporting the BDS movement than in the past. The poll discovered that 77% of Democrats held that the BDS movement more closely represented their views on the issue, and that the movement itself was not anti-Semitic.¹²⁸ In contrast, Republicans held an opposite view, and did so more strongly, with 85% viewing BDS as inherently anti-Israel and likely anti-Semitic.¹²⁹

This particular poll is indicative of the gradual increase in favorability that the pro-Palestinian movement enjoys among Democrats. In May 2022, a poll from Pew Research found that younger Americans view Palestinians and Israelis nearly equally in favorability, with 61% of Americans under 30 viewing Palestinians favorably.¹³⁰ Notably, 53% of survey respondents had never heard of the BDS campaign, while another 31% had heard only a little about it.¹³¹ Demographically, atheists declared the most support for BDS among any demographic group noted in the study.¹³²

128 Shibley Telhami, "What do Americans think of the BDS movement, aimed at Israel?," Brookings Institute blog, January 8, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/01/08/what-do-americans-think-of-the-bds-movement-aimed-at-israel/>, accessed May 24, 2022.

129 Ibid.

130 Becka Alper, "Modest Warming in US Views on Israel and Palestinians," Pew Research, May 26, 2022, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/05/26/modest-warming-in-u-s-views-on-israel-and-palestinians/>, accessed May 26, 2022.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

Resolutions both in support of the BDS movement and opposed to it have grown in prominence in recent years. In late 2019, the Trump administration issued an executive order to combat anti-Semitism on college campuses by expanding Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include bigotry against Jews, and by adopting the “non-legally binding definition of anti-Semitism” from the IHRA.¹³³ Section 1 of Trump’s executive order singles out the rise in “anti-Semitic harassment in schools and on university and college campuses.”¹³⁴ The usage of the IHRA’s definition of anti-Semitism is significant, as it specifically cites the targeting of Israel as an example of anti-Jewish bigotry.

Figure 2.2 (Source: IHRA)¹³⁵

**International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working
Definition of Anti-Semitism and Israel-Related Examples:**

Definition: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

Examples:

- Accusing Jews or Israel of inventing the Holocaust
- Accusing Jews of dual loyalties with Israel
- Denying Jews the right to self-determination by claiming that the “State of Israel is a racist endeavor”
- Using anti-Semitic symbols to characterize Israel
- Drawing comparisons between Israeli policy and that of the Nazis

By adopting guidelines from the IHRA into Federal regulation in order to combat anti-Semitism, the Trump administration effectively put activist groups such as SJP and supportive campus faculty and administrators at risk of penalty for violating civil rights.

The Trump administration was far from alone in tackling the BDS movement by means of legislation and regulation. Beginning in 2015, state governments began passing measures condemning the BDS movement and penalizing entities and businesses that support the movement by means of policy.

133 Executive Order on Combating Anti-Semitism, The White House, December 11, 2019, <https://trumpwhite-house.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-combating-anti-semitism/>, accessed May 26, 2022.

134 Ibid.

135 “What Is Anti-Semitism?,” International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>, accessed May 26, 2022.

Figure 2.3 State Governments and Anti-BDS Measures¹³⁶

State	Date	Legislation/Exec. Order (EO)
Tennessee	April 21, 2015	SJR-170
	April 8, 2022	SB 1993
South Carolina	June 4, 2015	H-3585
Illinois	July 23, 2015	SB-1761
Alabama	February 16, 2016	SJR-6 SB81
Colorado	February 26, 2016	HB-16-284
Indiana	March 1, 2016	HB-1378
	February 24, 2016	SB-86
Florida	March 10, 2016	HB-527
	March 30, 2018	HB-545
Virginia	March 10, 2016	HJ 177
Arizona	March 18, 2016	HB-2617
Georgia	April 26, 2016	SB-327
	May 10, 2016	SB-3087
Iowa	March 24, 2022	SF-2281 HF-2331
New York	June 5, 2016	S-6378A
Rhode Island	July 1, 2016	HB7736
New Jersey	August 16, 2016	S-1923
California	September 24, 2016	AB 2844
Pennsylvania	November 4, 2016	HB2107
Ohio	December 19, 2016	HB-476
Michigan	January 10, 2017	HB 5821 and HB 5822
Arkansas	March 22, 2017	Act 710
Texas	May 2, 2017	HB89
Minnesota	May 3, 2017	HF400
Nevada	June 2, 2017	SB26
Kansas	June 16, 2017	HB2409
North Carolina	July 31, 2017	HB161
Maryland	October 23, 2017	EO: 01.01.2017.25

136 "Anti-Semitism: State Anti-BDS Legislation," Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/anti-bds-legislation>, accessed May 26, 2022.

Wisconsin	October 27, 2017	SB553
Louisiana	May 22, 2018	EO: JBE 2018-15
Mississippi	March 15, 2019	HB761
Kentucky	August 27, 2019	SB143
South Dakota	January 14, 2020	EO: 2020-01
Oklahoma	May 15, 2020	HB3967
Missouri	July 13, 2020	SB739
Utah	March 17, 2021	SB186
Idaho	April 22, 2021	SB1086
West Virginia	April 26, 2021	HB2933

State laws can directly affect colleges and universities by opening them to potential fines and civil suits in the event that college administrations adopt resolutions passed by pro-BDS student governments. While businesses and for-profit entities are often the focus of the laws in question, the bills provide disincentives for administrators to acquiesce to activist demands. While state legislatures have passed condemnatory stances against the BDS movement, the movement itself is arguably a facet of the changing view of Israel among younger Americans who are more receptive to progressive causes.

BDS and American Jews

BDS is a fundamentally progressive movement, rather than a student-led movement devoted to Palestinian nationalism, and thrives in the progressive campus environment. Supporters of BDS are diverse, and such support includes Jews. Organizationally, Jewish groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace help spearhead anti-Israel campus activism. At the campus level, Jewish students are not inherently pro-Israel and are often involved in BDS activities.

Data on younger US Jews and their support for Israel is mixed. Nationwide, a sizable minority of American Jews support BDS. According to the findings of a recent study conducted by the Ruderman Family Foundation, 16% of American Jews support the BDS movement.¹³⁷ Such findings reflect recent studies elsewhere, which have found that 70% of millennial US Jews view Israel as integral to Jewish survival.¹³⁸ A recent study

137 Hannah Greenwood, "Poll finds alarming support for BDS among US Jews," *Israel Hayom*, February 22, 2022, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2022/02/22/poll-finds-alarming-support-for-bds-among-us-jews/>, accessed January 11, 2023.

138 Yonat Shimron, "Are relations between young US and Israeli Jews fraying? A new poll suggests no," *Religion News*, April 25, 2022, <https://religionnews.com/2022/04/25/are-relations-between-young-us-and-israeli-jews-fraying-a-new-poll-suggests-no/>, accessed January 11, 2023.

conducted by the American Jewish Committee about college-aged Jews found that 26% expressed willingness to forego open support for Israel in order to maintain social acceptability.¹³⁹ In 2021, Pew Research discovered that only 48% of American Jews aged 18–29 described themselves as “emotionally attached” to Israel.¹⁴⁰ The matrix of factors affecting young American Jews’ support for or opposition to the BDS movement is complex, with religiosity, political affiliation, and connection with Jewish organizations offering key indicators of levels of support.

Conclusion

In summation, the on-campus BDS movement is undoubtedly aggressive and prominent on a select number of campuses in the US. It is noticeably effective in securing the passage of student government resolutions against Israel when it has a large enough coalition of allied groups and when the endeavor is linked to broader progressive agendas. However, the ability of the BDS movement to secure policy victories from campus administrations is presently in doubt. When student governments are able to pass resolutions against Israel, they are often met with multifaceted, if disparate, roadblocks from reluctant administrators, student presidents, and popular pushback. Anti-BDS measures taken by state governments similarly complicate matters for administrations contemplating pro-BDS resolutions from student governments. Despite these victories for pro-Israel advocates, the increasing support for the BDS movement among younger Americans indicates that the anti-Israel sentiment on campus is likely having some effect on voter attitudes within younger age brackets.

139 Dana Levinson Steiner, “Millennial Jews Are Choosing Between Israel and Social Acceptance,” American Jewish Committee, May 2, 2022, <https://www.ajc.org/news/millennial-jews-are-choosing-between-israel-and-social-acceptance>, accessed January 11, 2023.

140 Austin Nortey, “US Jews have widely differing views on Israel,” Pew Research, May 13, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/05/21/u-s-jews-have-widely-differing-views-on-israel/>, accessed January 11, 2023.

Case Studies

Case Selection and Method

This section of the report closely analyzes three standout cases where BDS measures were attempted. In order to derive takeaway insights that can inform policy and pro-Israel activism strategy, key variables about the BDS movement’s success and failure need to be examined where different outcomes occurred. This section examines three universities based upon three different criteria. The first criterion is whether a college or university faced repeated BDS attempts, while the second and third criteria examine schools where BDS measures ultimately passed or failed. The schools examined below include: Columbia University, The Ohio State University, and the University of California, Riverside.

BDS Success, Failure, and Blockage

School	BDS Attempts	No. of Passes	No. of Fails	Blocked	Pass After Failure
Columbia University	3	1	2	Yes (Administrative)	Yes
The Ohio State University	6	0	6	Yes (Student Government)	No
UC Riverside	5	3	2	Yes (Administrative and Student Government)	Yes

Columbia University

Introduction

Columbia University’s student body successfully passed a BDS resolution in the fall of 2020 that called for the administration to divest the university from “stocks, funds, and endowment from companies that profit from or engage in the State of Israel’s acts towards Palestinians.”¹⁴¹ The successful resolution resulted from years of anti-Israel activism at Columbia, some of which pre-dates the founding of the formal BDS movement

¹⁴¹ Michael Arria, “Students at two universities just voted to divest from Israel,” *Mondoweiss*, September 30, 2020, <https://mondoweiss.net/2020/09/students-at-two-universities-just-voted-to-divest-from-israel/>, accessed June 4, 2022.

in 2004. The resolution was a campus-wide referendum in which fewer than 50% of students voted, with 61% of students favoring divestment from Israel.¹⁴² Despite its passage, the resolution was met with opposition by Columbia's administration, which publicly rejected calls to divest from Israel.¹⁴³ Far from a case of straightforward and open anti-Israel activism and pro-Israel responses from Jewish students, the history of the BDS movement at Columbia involves outside threats, harassment, accusations of censorship, and administrative distance from the movement's successful resolution.

Origins of the BDS Movement at Columbia

The American BDS movement arguably has its philosophical and organizational origins at Columbia. One of the founders of the movement, Omar Barghouti, began his activism career at Columbia while studying engineering and protesting against Apartheid in South Africa.¹⁴⁴ Barghouti helped found PACBI,¹⁴⁵ as well as the BDS National Committee (BNC).¹⁴⁶ In 2019, Barghouti was denied entry into the US when attempting to undertake a speaking tour at NYU and Harvard.¹⁴⁷ While he was ostensibly denied over an unspecified "immigration matter," then-House Representative Lee Zeldin noted that the "rise of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel hate throughout the world" justified the move.¹⁴⁸ Barghouti was also denied entry to a Labour Party conference in Britain several months later under a similar rationale.¹⁴⁹

Columbia is perceived as one of the most anti-Semitic colleges in the US. In 2014, the David Horowitz Freedom Center, a conservative think tank, published a report outlining anti-Semitic activity on American college campuses that gave Columbia the worst ranking in the country for hostility toward Jewish students.¹⁵⁰ Aside from hosting an aggressive SJP chapter and talks by figures such as Omar Barghouti, the report noted

142 Melissa Weiss, "Columbia students approve non-binding BDS referendum," *Jewish Insider*, September 30, 2020, <https://jewishinsider.com/2020/09/columbia-students-approve-non-binding-bds-referendum/>, accessed June 4, 2022.

143 "President Bollinger Comments on College Student Vote on Israel," Columbia University, Office of the President, September 29, 2020, https://president.columbia.edu/news/president-bollinger-comments-college-student-vote-israel?fbclid=IwAR2e9ZaaCfnMbyIM3bYND6RP0_iBnO--253W-Klob8RpwfAT7WANIJkPml, accessed June 4, 2022.

144 Philip Weiss, "'I'd rather die than live as a servile slave,' Omar Barghouti told his daughter," *Mondoweiss*, May 2, 2017, <https://mondoweiss.net/2017/05/servile-barghouti-daughter/>, accessed June 4, 2022.

145 Dania Akkad, "UK student union pro-BDS vote causes major stir in Israel," *Middle East Eye*, June 4, 2015, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/uk-student-union-pro-bds-vote-causes-major-stir-israel>, accessed June 4, 2022.

146 Diker and Shay, *The PACBI Deception: Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)*, 21.

147 Uri Bollag, "Israel stops BDS-founder Omar Barghouti," *Jerusalem Post*, April 11, 2019, <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/bds-founder-omar-barghouti-denied-entry-to-the-us-586558>, accessed June 4, 2022.

148 Ibid.

149 "Anti-Israel BDS founder denied entry to UK," *YNet News*, September 22, 2019, <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5594102,00.html>, accessed June 4, 2022.

150 Shiryn Ghermezian, "Columbia Leads List of America's Top 10 Colleges 'With Worst Antisemitic Activity,'" *Algemeiner*, February 23, 2015, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2015/02/23/columbia-leads-list-of-america-top-10-colleges-with-most-antisemitic-activity/>, accessed June 4, 2022.

how the prominent presence of anti-Semitic faculty such as Rashid Khalidi and Joseph Massad contribute to an anti-Semitic campus environment.¹⁵¹

Khalidi, a professor in Columbia's history department, has his own controversial past. After obtaining his doctorate from the University of Oxford in 1974,¹⁵² Khalidi was involved in Palestinian politics and is believed to have worked for the PLO's press agency in the early 1980s.¹⁵³ Another Columbia professor in the university's Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies program, Joseph Massad, has held anti-Semitic talks using his academic position as a platform. In 2002, one of Massad's talks was titled "On Zionism and Jewish Supremacy."¹⁵⁴ Massad's other talks, on themes such as "Zionist-Nazi Collaboration" and the "Anglo-American Gay Agenda," carry similar anti-Semitic tropes. In 2013, Massad wrote a piece published in *Al Jazeera* asserting that Nazi Germany was "pro-Zionist."¹⁵⁵ Prior to the BDS movement's formal founding, Massad was investigated in 2002 for intimidating a Jewish student.¹⁵⁶ Despite years of controversy over the anti-Jewish sentiment at Columbia, both professors retain their positions on campus. A third Columbia professor of note, Nadia Abu El-Haj, was the center of controversy in 2007 while seeking tenure due to her anthropological work accusing Israel of systematically doctoring and destroying archaeological evidence to legitimize the existence of a Jewish state.¹⁵⁷ Columbia's culture of anti-Semitism is promoted in part by university faculty.

As a specific brand of activism, the BDS movement at Columbia came to the fore in 2010 in conjunction with SJP's "Israel Apartheid Week" (IAW). In March 2010, the Columbia SJP chapter (CSJP) launched a series of events for IAW that included a "mock Apartheid wall," a talk with a producer from the organization Democracy Now!, and a demonstration at New York's Waldorf Astoria hotel in protest of the "Friends of the Israel Defense Forces" annual fundraiser.¹⁵⁸ What is notable about CSJP's first major

151 Ibid. See also "Horowitz Center names 10 most anti-Semitic campuses," *San Diego Jewish World*, February 23, 2015, <https://www.sdjewishworld.com/2015/02/23/horowitz-center-names-10-most-anti-semitic-campuses/>, accessed June 4, 2022.

152 "Rashid Khalidi," Columbia University Department of History, <https://history.columbia.edu/person/khalidi-rashid/>, accessed June 5, 2022.

153 Asaf Romirowsky and Jonathan Calt Harris, "Arafat Minion as Professor," *Washington Times*, July 8, 2004, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2004/jul/08/20040708-083635-4366r/>, accessed June 7, 2022.

154 "Talk 'On Zionism and Jewish Supremacy' with Joseph Massad," Middle East Institute, Columbia University, <https://www.mei.columbia.edu/mei-events-2000-09/2002/2/6/on-zionism-and-jewish-supremacy-with-joseph-massad-columbia-university-mealac>, accessed June 7, 2022.

155 Joseph Massad, "The last of the Semites," *Al Jazeera*, May 21, 2013, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2013/5/21/the-last-of-the-semites/>, accessed June 7, 2022.

156 Ariel Behar, "Tenured Columbia Professor Proudly Supports Terrorism Against Israel," *Algemeiner*, November 18, 2019, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2019/11/18/tenured-columbia-professor-proudly-supports-terrorism-against-israel/>, accessed June 8, 2022.

157 Karen W. Arenson, "Fracas Erupts Over Book on Mideast by a Barnard Professor Seeking Tenure," *New York Times*, September 10, 2007, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/10/education/10barnard.html>, accessed July 15, 2022.

158 "Israel Apartheid Week: March 1-7, 2010," Columbia SJP, February 28, 2010, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=24>, accessed June 6, 2022.

salvo of activism at Columbia is that it included an array of progressive organizations that reached beyond the confines of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.¹⁵⁹

On March 3–4, 2010, the IAW included events that framed the BDS movement as part of a wider postcolonial struggle. One workshop titled “Occupation and Resistance from Palestine to Turtle Island” included self-described “strategizing with 7th Generation Indigenous Visionaries-Students,” encompassing Native American activists, while the workshop the following day featured the same theme, but included former activists from the boycott against South Africa in the 1990s.¹⁶⁰ The protest at the Waldorf Astoria demonstrates the same dynamic of broadening the BDS movement beyond its issue-specific base, including groups such as CODEPINK, the Center for Immigrant Families, the New York chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, and American Jews for a Just Peace.¹⁶¹ One of the main groups sponsoring Columbia’s larger IAW events, such as themed talk on “Indigenous Struggle” and the protest at the Friends of the IDF dinner, was WESPAC, a group known for funding the BDS movement.¹⁶²

In April 2010, in commemoration of the “Nakba” (“catastrophe”) of the creation of Israel in 1948, CSJP reified its hardline stance by asserting its rejection of “normalization” with Israel.¹⁶³ In its official rejection of normalization, CSJP adopted the standard set by PACBI and the BNC.¹⁶⁴ Translated from Arabic, SJP’s rejection of normalization consists of:

Participating in any project, initiative or activity whether locally or internationally that is designed to bring together—whether directly or indirectly—Palestinian and/or Arab youth with Israelis (whether individuals or institutions) and is not explicitly designed to resist or expose the occupation and all forms of discrimination and oppression inflicted upon the Palestinian people.¹⁶⁵

From its first forays into activism in 2010, CSJP brought regular demonstrations both on and off campus. The 2010 protest at the Friends of the IDF dinner set a precedent where on-campus activism involved the greater public square. In May 2010, CSJP protested in Times Square in reaction to Israel’s storming of the Mavi Marmara, a

159 Ibid.

160 Ibid.

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid. See also Mitchell Bard, “BDS Money Trail Suggests Opaque Funding Network,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 14, 2015, <https://www.jta.org/2015/10/14/ny/bds-money-trail-suggests-opaque-funding-network>, accessed June 5, 2022.

163 “Columbia SJP joins Palestinian youth organizations against normalization,” *Columbia SJP*, April 30, 2010, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=109>, accessed July 10, 2022.

164 Ibid.

165 Ibid. See also PACBI, <http://pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=1021>. Also quoted in Mohammad Dajani, “Why Palestinians Should Support ‘Normalization’ with Israel,” *Fikra Forum*, Washington Institute, Sept. 13, 2016, (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/why-palestinians-should-support-normalization-israel>), accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

Turkish ship seeking to land in Gaza.¹⁶⁶ In fall 2010, other demonstrations included a “mock Israeli checkpoint” in front of Columbia University’s Low Library.¹⁶⁷ The checkpoint included CSJP members depicting Israeli soldiers harassing and humiliating other members performing the roles of Palestinian civilians.¹⁶⁸

While the first year and a half of SJP’s work at Columbia consisted of establishing a record of educational activism, the chapter facilitated and hosted the National Students for Justice in Palestine Conference at the university in 2011.¹⁶⁹ The goals of the conference focused on developing the pro-Palestinian movement and a “particular (but not exclusive) emphasis on Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS).”¹⁷⁰ The conference culminated with nearly 400 students and more than 130 different student groups in attendance.¹⁷¹ The conference also began internal SJP dialogue about formulating the group’s national organization.¹⁷² By 2014, CSJP’s efforts lead to conflict with Jewish students on campus and official calls for divesting from Israel among university faculty.

Anti-Israel Activism on Campus and Divestment Efforts (2016–2021)

In 2013, BDS efforts at Columbia reached a new level of intensity when more than 100 faculty from the school, and faculty from Barnard College, demanded that the university’s pension fund, TIAA-CREF, divest from companies viewed as affiliated with Israeli security operations.¹⁷³ Notably, the faculty directly petitioned Roger Ferguson, CEO of TIAA-CREF, to divest from five specific companies deemed to be “supporting human rights abuses.”¹⁷⁴ These five companies were Elbit Systems, Motorola (due to its Israeli subsidiary), Hewlett-Packard, Veolia, and Northrop Grumman.¹⁷⁵

While CSJP applauded the faculty for pressuring the pension fund, it also endorsed the prison divestment movement in the United States. In a move of economic activism beyond the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, CSJP demanded that Columbia University divest from portfolio holdings worth \$8 million from the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), and demanded that the university direct its fund managers to pressure

166 “Emergency Response Against Israeli Attacks on Free Gaza Flotilla,” Columbia SJP, May 31, 2010, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=112>, accessed July 1, 2022.

167 “Press Release: Right to Education Week Mock Israeli Checkpoint,” Columbia SJP, November 19, 2010, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=164>, accessed July 1, 2022. See also Video: Mock Israeli Checkpoint at Columbia University, Columbia SJP, November 20, 2010, (<https://columbiasjp.org/?p=181>), accessed July 1, 2022.

168 “Press Release: Right to Education,” Columbia SJP, accessed July 1, 2022.

169 “2011 National Students for Justice in Palestine Conference,” Columbia SJP, August 29, 2011, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=331>, accessed July 1, 2022.

170 Ibid.

171 “SJP National Conference 2011: Photo Tour and Update,” Columbia SJP, October 25, 2011, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=367>, accessed July 1, 2022.

172 Ibid.

173 “Barnard and Columbia Faculty to Hold Press Conference Calling for Divestment,” Columbia SJP, April 21, 2013, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=632>, accessed July 3, 2022.

174 Ibid.

175 Ibid.

banks, financial firms, and venture capital groups to divest from CCA.¹⁷⁶ Along with its endorsement of the prison divestment campaign, CSJP demanded that the university make its investments transparent to the student population.¹⁷⁷

Far from ineffective, CSJP's efforts, and those of other left-wing campus groups, culminated in Columbia divesting from CCA in 2015. Indeed, Columbia was the first university to follow through on such economic activism and divestment.¹⁷⁸ Columbia's president, Lee Bollinger, declared, "the issue of mass incarceration in America weighs heavily on our country, our city, and our University community."¹⁷⁹ In contrast to his tacit support for prison divestment, Bollinger declared opposition to divestment from Israel in 2020, when he asserted that the university "should not change its investment policies on the basis of a political position unless there is broad consensus within the institution that to do so is morally and ethically compelled."¹⁸⁰ It is noteworthy that CSJP's first major drive to secure a BDS victory at Columbia took place in the 2016–2017 academic year, shortly after the school decided to divest from prisons. For reference, Columbia also divested from coal in 2017.¹⁸¹

One of the first major flashpoints between CSJP and pro-Israel groups at Columbia occurred in March 2014, when a CSJP banner was removed from above the entrance to Barnard Hall. The banner, which advertised the BDS movement's annual "Israeli Apartheid Week," depicted a map of Israel that did not delineate the borders of Gaza or the West Bank and that included the slogan, "stand for justice, stand for Palestine."¹⁸² The banner provoked a reaction from Jewish students at Columbia's Hillel, which led to an email campaign urging then-president of Barnard College, Debora Spar, to remove the banner.¹⁸³ The email campaign quickly motivated non-students, parents, and alumni to express their concern to Spar's office, noting that the banner's placement suggested the school's formal endorsement of CSJP's stance.¹⁸⁴ Both Barnard College and Spar offered formal responses to the concerns of the Hillel students. The college itself declared:

176 "SJP Endorses the Columbia Prison Divestment Campaign," Columbia SJP, February 13, 2014, <https://columbiasjp.org/?p=687>, accessed July 10, 2022.

177 Ibid.

178 Valerie Strauss, "Update: Columbia University divesting from private prison companies. Why other schools should too," *Washington Post*, September 13, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/07/15/columbia-university-divesting-from-private-prison-companies-why-other-schools-should-too/>, accessed July 10, 2022.

179 Ibid.

180 "President Bollinger Condemns Anti-Semitism in a Statement Before the Senate Plenary," Columbia University, Office of the President, March 6, 2020, <https://president.columbia.edu/news/president-bollinger-condemns-anti-semitism-statement-senate-plenary>, accessed July 10, 2022.

181 Valeria Escobar, "Columbia divested from thermal coal companies, but students call for stronger stance," *Columbia Spectator*, February 14, 2020, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2020/02/14/columbia-divested-from-thermal-coal-companies-but-students-call-for-greater-fossil-fuel-divestment/>, accessed July 11, 2022. See also Emma Whitford, "Columbia Divests from Oil and Gas Companies," *Inside Higher Ed*, January 25, 2021, (<https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2021/01/25/columbia-divests-oil-and-gas-companies>), accessed July 11, 2022.

182 Lily Wilf, "Barnard Yanks Pro-Palestinian Banner," *Tablet Magazine*, March 11, 2014, <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/barnard-yanks-pro-palestinian-banner>, accessed July 10, 2022.

183 Ibid.

184 Ibid.

In light of the recent controversy concerning student banners in front of Barnard Hall, we have begun to reexamine our policy. It has been a long-standing tradition to allow any recognized Barnard or Columbia student group to reserve a space and hang a banner promoting their event. However, we understand that in hanging banners next to the official Barnard College banner we may have inadvertently given the impression that the College supports these events. These Barnard Hall banners have always been student-created and, as such, reflect the diversity of student interests and concerns, but are not meant to convey an endorsement. Barnard has been and will remain committed to free speech. Student groups will still have the ability to flyer and promote their events throughout campus, but until we have had time as a community to discuss the banner placements on Barnard Hall and better define a policy, we will not be hanging student banners on Barnard Hall.¹⁸⁵

President Spar responded to the incident with a message parallel to that of the college:

We are removing the banner from Barnard Hall at this time and will be reexamining our policy for student banners going forward...we understand your concern that in hanging the C-SJP banner next to the official Barnard College banner it inadvertently gave the impression that the College sanctions and supports these events.¹⁸⁶

CSJP issued its own statement, published in a socialist news outlet, *The Monthly Review*, where it asserted that the banner's removal amounted to a "direct violation" of "freedom of expression," and that "certain voices are discriminated against by the College."¹⁸⁷ In addition to this formal protest of the banner's removal, the controversy triggered pushback against the administration from the student government, the pro-Palestinian group Palestine Legal, and the Center for Constitutional Rights. Shortly after the banner's removal, Columbia's Student Governing Board (SGB) released two statements about the incident, with one statement consisting of a lone-voice from the SGB in support of the removal, while the rest of the board took the side of the CSJP.

Tess Glassman-Kaufman, who served as the SGB's treasurer at the time, declared support for the removal of the banner by stating that its presence above Barnard Hall

185 "Barnard to reexamine banner policy," Barnard College, March 11, 2014, <https://barnard.edu/news/barnard-re-examine-banner-policy>, accessed July 10, 2022.

186 Wilf, "Barnard Yanks Pro-Palestinian Banner," accessed July 10, 2022.

187 Columbia Students for Justice in Palestine, "Regarding Barnard Administration's SJP Banner Removal," *The Monthly Review Online*, March 12, 2014, <https://mronline.org/2014/03/12/csjp120314-html-2/>, accessed July 10, 2022.

amounted to a “direct endorsement of a specific political agenda,” and that the “banner threatened the safety of the pro-Israel community on campus by suggesting that Israel has no right to exist as a Jewish State.”¹⁸⁸ In contrast, the rest of the SGB expressed dismay that the “administration could act so swiftly in silencing any group and have such executive power over the content that students choose to share on campus.”¹⁸⁹ The main SGB statement further declared that the CSJP “feels marginalized and threatened on campus” and that the group “received threats and feels that they cannot even look to the administration for support and protection.”¹⁹⁰

In summation, the dueling arguments centered on contrasting claims of marginalization and a sense of threat facing different segments of the student population. Turath, a second student group at Columbia dedicated to the promotion of Arab culture on campus, iterated its support for CSJP on March 30, 2014, and highlighted the specificity of the pro-Palestinian side of the banner debate. Notably, Turath’s statement mentions Edward Said as one of the organization’s creators:

The rhetoric surrounding the removal of SJP’s banner was concerned with students’ emotional distress at the interpretation of the poster as promoting Palestine “without internal borders.” By this logic, the administration should recognize how other members of the Columbia community may feel “unsafe” when they see Taglit-Birthright Israel advertising free trips for their very classmates to have fun on the beach while a few miles away, some of their own family members continue to live under occupation. Rather than censor unpopular opinion, Barnard should allow SJP to celebrate and promote the connection of Palestinians to their historical and cultural homeland—just like Birthright trips are intended to celebrate the connection students have to their historical and cultural homeland.

There is more than one way that a student may feel unsafe. A student may feel unsafe when they see a banner they believe may be undermining a culture or political stance they may value, and Turath respects that offense may be taken. But a student may also feel unsafe when they attend a university that prioritizes the opinions of a certain community over others.

188 “Student Governing Board Releases Statement On SJP Banner,” *BWOG: Columbia Student News*, March 13, 2014, <https://bwog.com/2014/03/student-governing-board-releases-statements-on-sjp-banner/>, accessed July 24, 2022.

189 *Ibid.*

190 *Ibid.*

When the late Edward Said helped create Turath, it was with the hope that Arab students could transcend the racial, ethnic, and political affiliations that are often tied to minority groups on this campus. Turath has realized, through its ongoing conversations and growth over the years, that it is difficult to transcend these boundaries when the administration poses a barrier, as it recently has with regard to SJP, to freedom of expression.¹⁹¹

Following the banner incident, Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) came to CSJP's legal assistance by writing to administrators at Barnard College and protesting the banner's removal on the grounds that it violated CSJP's freedom of speech.¹⁹² CCR's legal director, Baher Azmy, asserted to Barnard's administration that the banner in question is "neither anti-Semitic, nor anti-Jewish; it is political speech that deserves the highest level of constitutional protection."¹⁹³ In a second letter, dated March 25, 2014, Azmy requested that Barnard "publicly apologize to C-SJP" for the banner's removal and reexamine the school's new policy over the placement of student banners in general.¹⁹⁴ Azmy, furthermore, wrote of the worry that "the College's summary and apparently discriminatory treatment of C-SJP has actually signaled the endorsement of a different and more troubling message: that Palestinians, Muslims and Arabs are deserving of disparate treatment."¹⁹⁵ It is worth noting that CCR and Palestine Legal are not entities devoted to separate causes; rather, both organizations work side by side on issues of pro-Palestinian activism.¹⁹⁶

In the leadup to the first BDS divestment attempt at Columbia in 2016, CSJP endorsed anti-Semitic statements made in promoting a rally for free tuition at the "Million Student March" at the City University of New York's (CUNY) Hunter College in November 2015. A Facebook post that invited students to the rally declared that:

The Zionist administration invests in Israeli companies, companies that support the Israeli occupation, hosts birthright programs and study abroad programs

191 "Columbia Turath Releases Statement on SJP Banner," *BWOG: Columbia Student News*, March 30, 2014, <https://bwog.com/2014/03/columbia-turath-releases-statement-on-sjp-banner/>, accessed July 24, 2022.

192 "Barnard College: Palestine Justice Banner Censored," Palestine Legal, March 10, 2015, <https://palestine-legal.org/case-studies/2015/3/4/barnard-college>, accessed July 10, 2022. See also *Letter from Baher Azmy at the Center for Constitutional Rights to Debora Spar*, March 13, 2014 https://static1.squarespace.com/static/548748b1e4b083fc03ebf70e/t/5562221be4b0c18afa41c197/1432494619825/CCR_Letter-to-Barnard-president-re-banner-removal_3-13-14.pdf, accessed July 10, 2022. See also *Letter from Baher Azmy at the Center for Constitutional Rights to Debora Spar*, March 25, 2014, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/548748b1e4b083fc03ebf70e/t/5562223fe4b069f36ca629df/1432494655495/CCR+Response+to+Barnard+re+Banner+Removal_3.25.14.pdf, accessed July 10, 2022.

193 *Letter from Baher Azmy at the Center for Constitutional Rights to Debora Spar*, March 13, 2014, accessed July 10, 2022.

194 *Letter from Baher Azmy at the Center for Constitutional Rights to Debora Spar*, March 25, 2014, accessed July 10, 2022.

195 *Ibid.*

196 "Palestinian Solidarity," Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/issues/palestinian-solidarity>, accessed July 10, 2022.

in occupied Palestine, and reproduces the settler-colonial ideology throughout CUNY through Zionist content and education. While CUNY aims to produce the next generation of professional Zionists, SJP [NYC Students for Justice in Palestine] aims to change the university to fight for all peoples [sic] liberation.¹⁹⁷

The rally at Hunter College involved SJP chapters from across the greater New York City area, including CSJP.¹⁹⁸ From the standpoint of campus activism, the Million Student March demonstrates the BDS movement's ability to collaborate across multiple campuses in a single initiative.

February 2016 marked a turning point for the BDS movement at Columbia, when CSJP and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) jointly formed a group called "Columbia University Apartheid Divest" (CUAD).¹⁹⁹ One of CUAD's first events, "BDS 101," was cosponsored by the Barnard-Columbia Socialists.²⁰⁰ Using the 2015 decision by Columbia's Board of Trustees to divest from private prisons and CCA to inform its pressure strategy, CUAD issued demands that the university divest from "corporations that profit from Israel's violation of Palestinian human rights."²⁰¹ CUAD explicitly demanded that Columbia divest from Caterpillar, Hyundai Heavy Industries, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Elbit Systems, Mekorot, Bank Hapoalim, Boeing, and Lockheed Martin.²⁰²

It is worth noting that the creation of CUAD in early 2016 was not an event unique to the BDS movement; rather, CUAD formed against a backdrop of increased left-wing activism at Columbia. The preceding Fall 2015 semester witnessed the creation of the "Barnard-Columbia Solidarity Network," a coalition of student activist groups issuing interlocking demands and posing as a united front for their distinct causes. Such groups included No Red Tape (a group devoted to combating sexual violence) and Student-Worker Solidarity (a group seeking minimum wage increases).²⁰³

CUAD's efforts immediately increased pro-BDS pressures at Columbia, as professors began petitioning the university to divest from Israel shortly after the group was launched. Among the 40 initial Columbia professors to sign the petition were Rashid Khalidi, Joseph Massad, and Nadia Abu El-Haj.²⁰⁴ The departments most heavily

197 Ruthie Blum, "CUNY Fails to Condemn Antisemitic Rally at Hunter College," *Algemeiner*, November 12, 2015, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2015/11/12/cuny-fails-to-condemn-antisemitic-rally-at-hunter-college/>, accessed July 10, 2022.

198 *Ibid.*

199 Ruthie Blum, "BDS Event to Be Held by Columbia Students Demanding 'End Investments in Israeli Apartheid,'" *Algemeiner*, February 2, 2016, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2016/02/02/bds-event-to-be-held-by-columbia-students-demanding-the-university-end-investments-in-israeli-apartheid/>, accessed July 10, 2022.

200 *Ibid.*

201 *Ibid.*

202 *Ibid.*

203 Samuel Falcone-Coffin, "Columbia Students Are United Behind BDS," *Socialist Worker*, February 9, 2016, <https://socialistworker.org/2016/02/09/columbia-is-united-behind-bds>, accessed July 10, 2022.

204 "40 Columbia Professors Sign BDS Petition," *Times of Israel*, March 2, 2016, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/40-columbia-professors-sign-bds-petition/>, accessed July 15, 2022.

represented by the petition-signing professors included those of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African studies; English and comparative literature; and anthropology.²⁰⁵ In addition to the rapidly growing support for BDS among Columbia's faculty in March 2016, other student groups voiced their support for CUAD's efforts. Such groups included the Columbia Black Students Organization (BSO), Columbia's Mobilized African Diaspora group (MAD), and the environmental student group, Divest Barnard.²⁰⁶ The BDS movement at Columbia is not the sole work of CSJP—it resulted, rather, from a coalition of student organizations and professors mobilized around CSJP and CUAD as the BDS movement's flagship organizations.

Shortly before Columbia's first attempt at divestment, 50 pro-Palestinian activists disrupted a speech by Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon.²⁰⁷ Invited by the Columbia student group Students Supporting Israel (SSI), Danon was slated to discuss Israel's "struggles with the UN and international community."²⁰⁸ CUAD, along with the Barnard-Columbia Socialists and Columbia Against Trump, organized a demonstration against Danon's appearance.²⁰⁹ Protestors at the event were routinely removed by security personnel, while the protestors themselves chanted slogans calling for the erasure of Israel as a Jewish state.²¹⁰

The BDS movement's first official attempt to secure Columbia's divestment took place in the spring of 2017, when CUAD and other anti-Israel students sought to persuade the Columbia College Student Council (CCSC) to place a referendum on divestment onto a ballot before the entirety of the student body.²¹¹ One student from CUAD noted that the purpose of obtaining a referendum was to allow the group to approach Columbia's Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing (ACSRI) in order to pressure it to divest from Israel.²¹² CCSC ultimately voted against the referendum. CUAD's 2017 push for BDS exemplifies the movement's strategy on campuses in general, which is to build the base and appearance of public support, and then use such publicity to sway student policy.

205 Ibid.

206 T. Keesh, "The Battle Over BDS Heats Up at Columbia," *Socialist Worker*, March 10, 2016, <https://socialistworker.org/2016/03/10/the-bds-fight-heats-up-at-columbia>, accessed July 15, 2022.

207 Jesse Rubin, "Activists disrupt Israeli ambassador's talk at Columbia University," *The Independent*, February 17, 2017, <https://independent.org/2017/02/activists-disrupt-israeli-ambassadors-talk-at-columbia-university/>, accessed July 20, 2022.

208 Ibid.

209 Ibid.

210 Lea Speyer and Rachel Frommer, "Columbia University Protestors Call for Elimination of Jewish State During Speech by Israel's UN Ambassador," *Algemeiner*, February 14, 2017, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2017/02/14/columbia-u-protesters-call-for-elimination-of-jewish-state-during-speech-by-israels-un-ambassador/>, accessed July 15, 2022.

211 Kate Hangpu and Larson Holt, "With over 100 in attendance, CCSC votes down Israel divestment ballot measure," *Columbia Spectator*, April 2, 2017, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2017/04/03/with-over-100-in-attendance-ccsc-votes-down-israeli-divestment-ballot-measure/>, accessed July 20, 2022.

212 Ibid.

The following academic year, BDS efforts at Columbia increased alongside greater tensions between supporters of Israel and pro-Palestinian students. In November 2017, Rashid Khalidi spoke at the United Nations headquarters in New York to mark the centennial of the Balfour Declaration.²¹³ Khalidi described the 1917 declaration supporting the creation of a Jewish state in post-WWI Palestine in terms consistent with the BDS movement's branding of Israel as part of a "century-long assault on the Palestinian people."²¹⁴ Khalidi's remarks that fall marked the beginning of an increasingly aggressive year for BDS at Columbia, both in the movement's forging ties with left-wing student organizations and in another attempt to secure divestment from Israel. That same fall, Ofir Dayan, an Israeli student attending Columbia and a member of SSI, claimed to have started receiving threats and facing harassment from members of CSJP.²¹⁵ Dayan, the daughter of Israel's consul general at the time, claimed to have faced screaming pro-Palestinian students calling her a "murderer" and a "terrorist."²¹⁶

While reservations among members of the CCSC about the divisiveness of BDS stymied CUAD's first attempt to secure a political win on campus, CUAD's second attempt proved successful. At Barnard College, students overwhelmingly supported a referendum crafted and worded by SJP and JVP.²¹⁷ Troublingly for supporters of Israel, students at Barnard voted in favor of divestment 64%–36%.²¹⁸ According to Hillel International, one of the premier Jewish student organizations nationwide, Barnard has one of the largest populations of Jewish students in the country who are explicitly and confessionally Jewish.²¹⁹

Notably, the referendum urged Barnard to divest from eight specific companies: Hyundai Heavy Industries, Caterpillar, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Elbit Systems, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Bank Hapoalim, and Mekorot.²²⁰ CUAD celebrated the motion as a symbolic victory, stating that "the results of this historic vote indicate the shifting tide of our generation against Israel's brutal colonization of Palestine and the apartheid practices and politics used to expand its settlement and push the Palestinian

213 Yair Ettinger, "Palestinians mark 100 years since Balfour Declaration in the UN," *Jerusalem Post*, November 4, 2017, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/palestinians-mark-100-years-since-balfour-declaration-in-the-un-513249>, accessed July 25, 2022.

214 *Ibid.*

215 "Israeli NY consul daughter: Columbia U. not protecting me from Palestinian group," *Times of Israel*, September 30, 2018, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/ny-consuls-daughter-columbia-u-not-protecting-me-from-palestinian-group/>, accessed July 20, 2022.

216 *Ibid.* See also Aaron Bandler, "Daughter of NY's Israel Consul General Says SJP Harassed Her," *Jewish Journal*, October 4, 2018, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/united-states/239816/daughter-n-y-s-israel-consul-general-says-sjp-harassed/>, accessed July 20, 2022.

217 Aiden Pink, "One of the Most Jewish Colleges In The Country Just Voted For BDS By Nearly 2-1 Margin," *Forward*, April 19, 2018, <https://forward.com/fast-forward/399159/one-of-the-most-jewish-colleges-in-the-country-just-voted-for-bds-by/>, accessed July 20, 2022.

218 *Ibid.*

219 *Ibid.*

220 "Students at New York's Prestigious Barnard College vote to divest from Israel," *Middle East Monitor*, April 20, 2018, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180420-students-at-new-yorks-prestigious-barnard-college-vote-to-divest-from-israel/>, accessed July 20, 2022.

population out of their homes.”²²¹ According to Lucy Danger, a member of Jewish Voice for Peace, the vote represented that “Zionism and opposition to Palestinian freedom does not hold the monopoly on Jewish opinion here at Barnard or elsewhere.”²²²

After the vote, Jewish students and alumni immediately began petitioning Barnard’s administration to forego any potential divestment and to effectively block enacting the resolution.²²³ Among the signatories of the pro-Israel petition were two Barnard trustees.²²⁴ The president of Barnard College, Sian Beilock, rejected the divestment measure on the grounds that it lacked “communal consensus” among the student body and had little relevance to Barnard’s mission as a school.²²⁵

Similar to Khalidi’s UN appearance earlier that academic year, Columbia’s BDS movement took on an international dimension against the backdrop of Barnard’s divestment referendum. Katherine Franke—a professor of law at Columbia, a member of the Center for Constitutional Rights’ board of directors, and a member of the Jewish Voice for Peace Academic Advisory Council steering committee—was denied entry into Israel in late April 2018, ostensibly due to her involvement in the BDS movement.²²⁶ Franke’s political activism is not confined to Columbia, as she is also an “academic mentor” for “human rights faculty” at Al-Quds University in the Palestinian territories.²²⁷

While the 2018 vote did not result in the administration divesting from Israel, anti-Israel sentiment and anti-Semitism were normalized at Columbia. Shortly after the vote to divest, Hamid Dabashi, a professor of Iranian studies and comparative literature at Columbia, drew criticism for tweeting that “Zionists” are “hyenas” responsible for “every dirty treacherous ugly and pernicious act” in the world.²²⁸ Over the summer of 2018, Barnard hosted an event sponsored by JVP that included a presentation by the organization Addameer titled “Breaking Bars: Fighting Incarceration from the US to Palestine.”²²⁹ Addameer, which describes itself as an advocacy organization for

221 Ibid.

222 Ibid.

223 Aiden Pink, “Barnard Students Rage Over President’s Rejection of Landslide BDS Vote,” *Forward*, April 25, 2018, <https://forward.com/news/399667/barnard-students-rage-over-presidents-rejection-of-landslide-bds-vote/>, accessed July 21, 2022.

224 Ibid.

225 Ibid.

226 Dina Kraft, “Two Leading US Human Rights Activists Refused Entry to Israel, One for BDS Ties,” *Haaretz*, May 3, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2018-05-03/ty-article/premium/two-leading-u-s-human-rights-activists-deported-from-israel/0000017f-f7e4-d887-a7ff-ffe456ff0000>, accessed July 20, 2022. See also “Katherine Franke Faculty Page,” Columbia University Center for Palestine Studies, <http://palestine.mei.columbia.edu/people/katherine-franke>, accessed July 20, 2022.

227 “Katherine Franke Faculty Page,” Columbia University Center for Palestine Studies, accessed July 20, 2022.

228 Caleb Parke, “Columbia professor under fire for blaming Israel for ‘every problem in the world,’” *Fox News*, May 11, 2018, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/columbia-professor-under-fire-for-blaming-israel-for-every-problem-in-the-world>, accessed July 21, 2022.

229 Aaron Bandler, “Barnard College to Host Event Featuring Group That Has Alleged Ties to Palestinian Terrorists,” *Jewish Journal*, August 2, 2018, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/united-states/236794/barnard-college-host-event-featuring-group-alleged-ties-palestinian-terrorists/>, accessed July 21, 2022. See also “Students Supporting Israel,” Facebook, July 31, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/SS1columbia/posts/ssi-columbia-condemns-barnard-college-for-allowing-addameer-on-its-campus-for-a-959203057592821/>, accessed July 21, 2022 and “Event: Breaking Bars, Fighting Incarceration from the US to Palestine,” Jewish Voice for Peace, August 2, 2018, <https://www.jvpng.org/events/2018/8/2/breaking-bars>, accessed July 21, 2022.

Palestinian prisoners in Israel,²³⁰ was designated as a terrorist organization by Israel in 2021 for its ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and its involvement in terrorist financing.²³¹ The following fall, the office of Elizabeth Midlarsky, a Jewish scholar of the Holocaust at Columbia, was vandalized with spray-painted swastikas.²³²

Meanwhile, the Columbia College Student Council decided to hold a campus-wide vote on BDS on November 4, 2019.²³³ Council members voted in favor of the referendum 25–12.²³⁴ To Columbia's credit, President Lee Bollinger specifically spoke out against the BDS movement and anti-Semitism in the months prior to the student vote. In March 2020, before the university's senate, Bollinger linked the BDS campaign to a deeper bigotry beyond the confines of policy debates.²³⁵ While Bollinger condemned the BDS movement as lacking a "consensus" on campus, he also warned Columbia's campus community to "be careful and vigilant against legitimate debate turning into anger, then to hatred and demonization, and insidious discrimination."²³⁶

Bollinger's comments won praise from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which declared that Bollinger set an example for other university presidents.²³⁷ They were similarly extolled by the American Jewish Committee, which thanked Bollinger for a "principled opposition to the bigoted BDS Movement."²³⁸ Despite Bollinger's warning and condemnation, Columbia passed a BDS resolution by referendum in September 2020.²³⁹ The referendum in favor of divesting passed with a wide margin—61.04% of students voted in favor of the measure, while 27.39% of students voted against it.²⁴⁰ Out of Columbia's undergraduate student population of 4,511, 1,771 (39.3%) students participated in the vote.²⁴¹

230 "About Us," Addameer, <https://www.addameer.org/about/our-work>, accessed July 21, 2022.

231 Rami Ayub, "Israel designates Palestinian civil society groups as terrorists, UN 'alarmed,'" Reuters, October 22, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/israel-designates-six-palestinian-civil-society-groups-terrorists-2021-10-22/>, accessed July 21, 2022.

232 "Swastikas graffitied in office of Columbia Jewish professor," *Times of Israel*, November 29, 2018, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/swastikas-graffitied-in-office-of-columbia-jewish-professor/>, accessed July 21, 2022. See also Michael Gold, "Jewish Professor Finds Swastikas Spray-Painted in Office at Columbia," *New York Times*, November 29, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/29/nyregion/columbia-swastikas.html>, accessed July 21, 2022.

233 Aaron Bandler, "Columbia Student Government Votes to Hold Campus Referendum on Divestment," *Jewish Journal*, November 5, 2022, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/united-states/307604/columbia-student-government-votes-to-hold-campus-referendum-on-divestment/>, accessed August 2, 2022.

234 Ibid.

235 "President Bollinger Condemns Anti-Semitism in a Statement Before the Senate Plenary," Columbia University, Office of the President, accessed August 1, 2022.

236 Ibid.

237 Aaron Bandler, "Columbia University President Condemns Anti-Semitism, BDS," *Jewish Journal*, March 9, 2020, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/united-states/311837/columbia-university-president-condemns-anti-semitism-bds/>, accessed August 1, 2022.

238 Ibid.

239 "Columbia University Students' Referendum Ends with Big Win for BDS," *Israel Hayom*, September 30, 2020, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2020/09/30/columbia-university-student-body-referendum-ends-with-win-for-bds/>, accessed August 10, 2022.

240 "Columbia University Students' Referendum Ends with Big Win for BDS," *Israel Hayom*, accessed August 10, 2022.

241 Ibid.

CUAD developed the language of the question used for the vote, which simply asked:

Should Columbia University divest its stocks, funds, and endowment from companies that profit from or engage in the State of Israel's acts towards the Palestinians, that according to Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD), fall under the United Nations International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid?²⁴²

Olivia Katbi Smith, the BDS movement's coordinator for North America, framed the resolution as a victory for progressive politics rather than for Palestinian nationalism.²⁴³ Katbi Smith said the Columbia victory indicated that "it is becoming impossible to be 'progressive except Palestine', because it is becoming impossible to silence our movement. The Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality so clearly intersects with all other struggles of oppressed peoples everywhere."²⁴⁴

Katbi Smith's biography supports the analytical takeaway that the BDS movement is a predominantly left-wing movement, as opposed to a movement with Islamist or Palestinian nationalist goals. In 2018, Katbi Smith, who is of Syrian descent, worked as the co-chair of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).²⁴⁵ In the midst of unrest in Portland, Oregon after the George Floyd riots of 2020, Katbi Smith filed a lawsuit against a member of the Proud Boys for allegedly doxxing her online due to her "political views."²⁴⁶ Katbi Smith has advocated for the release of Ahmad Sa'adat, a leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP),²⁴⁷ and declared in the leadup to the 2020 US presidential election that "The right is not going to give up their power unless they feel threatened."²⁴⁸ When discussing street clashes with far-right groups, she claimed that "Property destruction is not violence."²⁴⁹

242 "Students at Columbia University of Illinois at UC and Columbia University vote to divest from Israel," BDS Movement, September 30, 2020, <https://bdsmovement.net/news/students-university-illinois-uc-and-columbia-university-vote-divest-from-israel>, accessed August 10, 2022.

243 Ibid.

244 Ibid.

245 Sam Pape, "Portlander Olivia Katbi Smith Fights for Justice," *Portland Monthly*, October 17, 2018, <https://www.pdxmonthly.com/news-and-city-life/2018/10/portlander-olivia-katbi-smith-fights-for-justice>, accessed August 1, 2022.

246 Tess Riski, "Portland's Democratic Socialists of America Co-Chair Is Suing an Alleged Proud Boy for Doxxing," *Willamette Week*, November 19, 2020, <https://www.wweek.com/news/courts/2020/11/19/portlands-democratic-socialists-of-america-co-chair-is-suing-an-alleged-proud-boy-for-doxxing/>, accessed August 12, 2022.

247 "Olivia Katbi-Smith-The Terror Loving Socialist," StopAntisemitism, November 21, 2020, <https://www.stopantisemitism.org/antisemite-of-the-week-4/antisemite-of-the-week-olivia-katbi-smith-the-terrorists-loving-socialist>, accessed August 12, 2022.

248 Marc Fisher, "With Election Day looming, an anxious nation hears rumblings of violence," *The Washington Post*, October 31, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/fear-of-election-violence/2020/10/30/5b4f5314-17a3-11eb-befb-8864259bd2d8_story.html, accessed August 12, 2022.

249 Ibid.

Aftermath and Analysis

Columbia's passage of a BDS resolution was ultimately unsuccessful in obtaining a policy outcome, and was itself nonbinding.²⁵⁰ Columbia's student leader of the on-campus pro-Israel group, Aryeh, understood the BDS resolution as pure public relations intended to intimidate Jewish and pro-Israel students.²⁵¹ Aryeh's president, Jessica Fuzailof, stated that the BDS measure would likely never result in an actual policy outcome, and that "there was no chance ever that this referendum was going to actually be applied in a financial way."²⁵²

Echoing his stance from months prior to the vote, President Bollinger reiterated his opposition to divestment from companies affiliated with Israel. Shortly after the BDS vote, Bollinger stated that divesting "in order to advance the interests of one side is not among the paths we will take."²⁵³ Bollinger noted that student referenda do not ultimately dictate Columbia's investments, and that such responsibility rests with the Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing.²⁵⁴ Over 100 faculty members supported his condemnation of the BDS movement.²⁵⁵

Two possible motivations underpin Columbia's refusal to divest from companies doing business in Israel. The first is that financial prudence took precedence over ideological student pressures regarding the university's investment portfolio. However, Columbia did divest from coal and the corrections industry. While ideology played a salient role in Columbia's investment and divestment pledges, the BDS movement and its opposition are more politically polarizing than the university's other divestment decisions.

250 Melissa Weiss, "Columbia students approve non-binding BDS referendum," accessed August 12, 2022.

251 Ibid.

252 Ibid.

253 "President Bollinger Comments on College Student Vote on Israel," Columbia University, Office of the President, accessed August 12, 2022.

254 Ibid.

255 "Columbia University Faculty Open Letter in Support of President Lee C. Bollinger's Comments on College Student Vote on Israel," Columbia Faculty Against Hate, September 29, 2020, <https://www.columbiafacultyagainsthate.org/>, accessed August 12, 2022. See also, "Columbia University Faculty Members Issue Open Letter of Support for President After He Denounces Pro-BDS Referendum," *Algemeiner*, October 8, 2020, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2020/10/08/columbia-university-faculty-members-issue-open-letter-of-support-for-president-after-he-denounces-pro-bds-referendum/>, accessed August 12, 2022.

The Ohio State University

Introduction

The Ohio State University (OSU) is an outlier among schools where the BDS movement is active due to its repeated rejection of divestment resolutions. OSU has rejected BDS measures on six occasions between 2014 and 2022, and in every instance, it blocked the measure at the student-government level. Furthermore, OSU's pro-Israel students demonstrated a significant organizational capacity for campaigning against BDS and coordinating with off-campus groups.

Origins of the BDS Movement at The Ohio State University

Anti-Israel activism at OSU predates today's BDS movement by decades. Hillel, America's premier Jewish student organization, documents its own pro-Israel activities at OSU to the 1950s, when it began responding to "Arab" activism against the Jewish state.²⁵⁶ In 1969, the Organization of Arab Students (OAS), also known as the Arab Student Association, held a convention at OSU ostensibly infiltrated by the ADL.²⁵⁷ Notably, the ADL expressed concern that Arab students were "beginning to display a greater understanding of how to present their arguments to the various levels of the American public (church groups, new left, lower middle class, etc.); and any successes are certain to increase their confidence and, hence, their activity."²⁵⁸ Coincidentally at the time, both the ADL and the OAS were under ongoing FBI surveillance. Declassified documents from the Bureau describe an intense rivalry between pro-Israel groups and pro-Palestinian students on campus during the late 1960s.²⁵⁹ While the anti-Israel movement and its incarnation as the BDS movement certainly grew over the course of decades, it has enjoyed little success at OSU.

256 See, "Winter Quarter Schedule 1952," *The B'nai Brith Hillel Foundation at the Ohio State University*, 1952, cited in The Ohio State University Hillel Foundation, compiled by Becca Nitzberg, June 9, 2011, <https://columbusjewishhistory.org/histories/the-ohio-state-university-hillel-foundation/>, accessed September 11, 2022.

257 Pamela Pennock, "Third World Alliances: Arab-American Activists In American Universities, 1967-1973," *Mashriq & Mahjar*, No. 2. (2004), <https://lebanesestudies.ojs.chass.ncsu.edu/index.php/mashriq/article/view/40/525>, accessed September 12, 2022. See also Federal Bureau of Investigation, "National Convention of the Organization of Arab Students," September 1, 1969, Declassified July 14, 1992, <https://www.israellobby.org/ADL/1199215---62-NY-10686---Section2.pdf>, accessed September 12, 2022.

258 Ibid.

259 Ibid.

Pro-Palestinian activism at OSU was active in the early 2000s, prior to the BDS movement's founding in 2005. In 2003, the Third National Student Conference on the Palestine Solidarity Movement was held at OSU. Notably, the conference centered on a lecture entitled "Towards a Global Intifada: Building Palestinian Solidarity with Other Liberation Struggles."²⁶⁰ The focus of the conference demonstrates two aspects of the later BDS movement. While the 2003 OSU conference outlined the movement's overall goals, which included the "right of return" for Palestinian refugees and an end to the Israeli "occupation" of Palestine, it also included a dual focus on building coalitions of support.²⁶¹ One of the conference's main panelists, Noura Erakat, stated that the movement's strategy must include a "divestment campaign."²⁶²

Erakat is now an associate professor of Africana studies at Rutgers University, where her specialties include "critical race theory" and "Black-Palestinian solidarity."²⁶³ She also served as legal counsel for the Domestic Policy Subcommittee of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee in the House of Representatives from 2007–2009,²⁶⁴ and was a founding editor of *Jadaliyya*, a media outlet covering Middle East issues.²⁶⁵

The stated focus on divestment is noteworthy because it predates the official launch of today's BDS movement and indicates earlier planning among pro-Palestinian activists for such a strategy. Over the next few years, the pro-Palestinian movement and proponents of BDS increased their presence at OSU. By 2014, the BDS movement was actively campaigning for divestment from Israel in the OSU system.

At the time, pro-Palestinian students at OSU operated under an organization called the "Committee for Justice in Palestine" (CJP).²⁶⁶ While CJP later became OSU's SJP chapter, it operated for a time without full guidance from SJP's national organization.²⁶⁷ Ironically, OSU's SJP chapter was founded by a Jewish student named Ora Wise.²⁶⁸ Despite being Jewish and Israeli, Wise became very active in pro-Palestinian causes while majoring in women's studies and Near Eastern languages at OSU.²⁶⁹ Wise declared while at the 2003 Third National Student Conference on the Palestine Solidarity

260 "Third National Student Conference on the Palestinian Solidarity Movement," held November 7-9, 2003, Ohio State University, Columbus Ohio, <https://web.archive.org/web/20031218061833/http://www.palestineconference.com/>, accessed September 20, 2022.

261 "Students gather for Palestinian Solidarity Conference," *The Lantern*, November 7, 2003, <https://www.thelantern.com/2003/11/students-gather-for-palestinian-solidarity-conference/>, accessed October 1, 2022.

262 Ibid.

263 "Noura Erakat Faculty Webpage," Rutgers University, <https://crimjust.rutgers.edu/people/faculty-directory/details/30-faculty/faculty/620-erakat-noura>, accessed October 1, 2022.

264 Ibid.

265 Ibid.

266 "Students for Justice in Palestine at the Ohio State University" Facebook, August 21, 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/SJPOSU/posts/525444407663103>, accessed October 1, 2022.

267 Ibid.

268 Ibid.

269 Ora Wise, Discover the Networks, <https://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individuals/ora-wise>, accessed October 2, 2022.

Movement that “Zionism is racism.”²⁷⁰ Today, she remains a fixture of the BDS and broader pro-Palestinian movements.²⁷¹

Anti-Israel Activism on Campus and Divestment Efforts: A Record of Failure (2014–2022)

By March 2014, CJP was engaging in protests using its hallmark “Apartheid wall.”²⁷² From June through August of that year, Israel fought a two-month war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Dubbed “Operation Protective Edge,” the Israeli war in Gaza coincided well with pro-Palestinian students preparing for the Fall 2014 semester. That summer, OSU students in Columbus held one of the largest rallies in support of Gaza, where over 1,000 students protested and blocked traffic.²⁷³ Protestors noted that Les Wexner, an alumnus and “major donor” to OSU, led multiple companies under the Limited Brands label that heavily invested in Israel.²⁷⁴

In late October 2014, CJP posted mock “eviction notices” on dorm room doors off campus, warning students that their buildings were “scheduled for demolition in three days.”²⁷⁵ Shortly thereafter, OSU received a letter from Palestine Legal sent to over 140 US colleges warning of censoring “expression criticizing the state of Israel or advocating Palestinian human rights.”²⁷⁶ Palestine Legal argued that pro-Palestinian activism did not equate to “harassment of Jewish students” as stipulated by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.²⁷⁷

Early 2015 marked a turning point for BDS at OSU, if only because pro-BDS students became better organized and policy-driven in an attempt to pressure the university to divest from Israel. In January 2015, Ohio State University Divest (OSU Divest) was formed with the intent to sway the administration into capitulating to its demands.²⁷⁸ OSU Divest explicitly called on the OSU administration to “uphold its values of integrity and accountability by divesting from companies complicit in Israeli human rights violations and the occupation of the Palestinian Territories, as well as investing University

270 Ibid.

271 Ibid.

272 Melissa Prax, “Mock Apartheid Wall Demonstration Aims to Educate Ohio State Students on Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” *The Lantern*, March 6, 2014, <https://www.thelantern.com/2014/03/mock-apartheid-wall-demonstration-aims-educate-ohio-state-students-israeli-palestinian-conflict/>, accessed October 2, 2022.

273 Nicole Colson, “A Day of Rage for Gaza,” *Socialist Worker*, August 11, 2014, <https://socialistworker.org/2014/08/11/day-rage-gaza>, accessed October 1, 2022.

274 Ibid.

275 Audrey DuVall, “Fake off-campus eviction notices aim to raise awareness about displaced Palestinian families,” *The Lantern*, October 31, 2014, <https://www.thelantern.com/2014/10/fake-off-campus-eviction-notices-aim-to-raise-awareness-about-displaced-palestinian-families/>, accessed September 30, 2022.

276 Nora Barrows-Friedman, “Legal groups warn universities against stifling Palestine activism,” *Electronic Intifada*, November 5, 2014, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/legal-groups-warn-universities-against-stifling-palestine-activism>, accessed October 1, 2022.

277 Ibid.

278 “About Us,” OSU Divest, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150226223438/http://www.osudivest.com/about-us.html>, accessed October 1, 2022.

funds in an ethical and responsible manner.”²⁷⁹ Student power over university investment decisions constituted a central element of the group’s mission:

Divestment, in the context of our campaign, means targeting these corporations that are complicit in human rights violations and ensuring that the likes of university investment portfolios and pension funds are not used to finance such companies. Divest as it pertains to us is when we, the students:

- Recognize that our university investments are involved in violence against another people
- Take responsibility for how these investments are made, and what effect they have on people inside and outside the university
- Take back power from the OSU Office of Investments, which makes investment decisions without any input from students or faculty
- Declare that we do not support investing in unethical or violent practices that fail to respect the rights and dignity of others.²⁸⁰

While OSU Divest demanded student control over university investment practices, the group also singled out key companies it deemed to be supportive of Israel. Such companies included Boeing, Caterpillar, the Hewlett-Packard Company, General Dynamics, General Electric, and United Technologies Corporation.²⁸¹

In early 2015, OSU Divest collected student signatures in order to force a resolution in OSU’s student government to support a BDS resolution and place divestment on a student ballot initiative.²⁸² While OSU Divest collected 3,100 student signatures, OSU’s Undergraduate Student Government (USG) “disqualified” 500 signatures on the basis of technicality, thereby thwarting the measure’s advancement.²⁸³ Notably, the disqualification set segments of the USG against one another, with the USG’s Diversity Committee taking the side of OSU Divest against the student government’s Judicial Panel that made the decision to disqualify the ballot measure.²⁸⁴ Shortly after the blocked measure, three members of the Judicial Panel resigned under threats of impeachment by the USG.²⁸⁵

In the 2015–2016 academic year, the BDS movement at OSU redoubled its efforts to secure a resolution, although it failed again. In this instance, members of Congress

279 Ibid.

280 Ibid.

281 “Divestment Targets,” OSU Divest, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150226223450/http://www.osudivest.com/corporations.html>, accessed October 1, 2022.

282 Haley Swenson, “Divestment Stymied at OSU,” *Socialist Worker*, <https://socialistworker.org/2015/03/11/divestment-stymied-at-osu>, accessed October 2, 2022.

283 Ibid.

284 Ibid.

285 Van Schreiber, “3 USG Justices Resign After Being Threatened with Impeachment,” *The Lantern*, <https://www.thelantern.com/2015/03/3-usg-justices-resign-after-being-threatened-with-impeachment/>, accessed October 2, 2022.

intervened to pressure the OSU student government to forego supporting a BDS resolution.²⁸⁶ Backed by 23 separate OSU student groups, the measure called for divestment from three companies: the security firm G4S, Caterpillar, and Hewlett-Packard.²⁸⁷ What is notable about the leadup to the vote is that both OSU's pro-BDS flagship organization, OSU Divest, and the pro-Israel group, Buckeyes for Israel, held competing "town halls" to inform USG student senators of their arguments.²⁸⁸ More than twice as many student senators attended the pro-Israel townhall than did the pro-BDS event.²⁸⁹ Debate prior to the vote lasted over five hours and resulted in a USG vote of 21 student senators opposing the BDS resolution, compared to nine votes in favor and 15 abstentions.²⁹⁰

Prior to failing, the BDS movement's 2016 OSU measure caught the attention of Ohio politicians. U.S. House of Representatives members Steve Stivers (R-OH), Pat Tiberi (R-OH), and Joyce Beatty (D-OH), authored a joint letter with several Ohio state legislators to OSU's student government urging a rejection of the BDS resolution.²⁹¹ The bipartisan congressional letter stated:

It is precisely because of our commitment to a lasting peace that we oppose measures promoted by the campaign known as the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. Efforts to politically, economically and culturally isolate Israel breed discrimination and hate, and are not reflective of the values that we as Americans hold dear.

We respectfully advise student leaders at The Ohio State University and other colleges and universities to reject the inherently divisive BDS approach and choose a path toward peace that is more productive and inclusive.²⁹²

The political involvement of congressional representatives and state legislators coincided with efforts to outlaw boycotts of Israel in Ohio, particularly with House Bill 476, which denies state contracts to entities supporting BDS.²⁹³ The Ohio law was

286 "OSU Divest Resolution Voted Down After US Government Intervenes," *Palestine in America*, April 1, 2016, <https://www.palestineinamerica.com/blog/osu-divest-resolution-voted-down-after-us-government-interferes>, accessed October 2, 2022.

287 *Ibid.*

288 *Ibid.*

289 *Ibid.*

290 *Ibid.*

291 Mary Morgan Edwards, "Students want Ohio State, other universities to boycott Israel," *The Columbus Dispatch*, updated March 28, 2016, <https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/education/2016/03/27/students-want-ohio-state-other/23757224007/>, accessed October 2, 2022.

292 "Letter from Patrick Tiberi, Steve Stivers, and Joyce Beatty to Members of Undergraduate Student Government," March 21, 2016, <https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-rucPe3HpZRI/VvO6r2IIIRI/AAAAAAAAAvE/7kYsdZSr30e-b8XcPTSthmtspU2GhkSQA/s1600/ohio.jpg>, accessed October 1, 2022.

293 Edwards, "Students want Ohio State, other universities to boycott Israel," accessed October 2, 2022.

concurrently protested by Jewish Voice for Peace.²⁹⁴ Contextually, the 2016 OSU measure failed alongside a similar BDS push taking place at another Ohio school, Capital University.²⁹⁵

In response to the congressional letter and the student government's anti-BDS turn, OSU Divest and the coalition of student organizations that supported it accused the state and congressional representatives of having "subverted the student democratic process" and called on them to "respect the sovereignty of the USG" and stop "unprecedented infringement of student speech and association on campus."²⁹⁶ This response included the following student and outside groups supporting OSU Divest.

Figure 4.1: OSU Divest Supporting Organizations

Endorsing Organizations	Other Organizations
African Youth League	Syrian Student Union
Arab Student Union	Still We Rise
Bangladesh Student Association	United Students Against Sweatshops
Buckeye Bhangra	Urdu Club
Buckeye Fusion	Jewish Voice for Peace-Central Ohio
OSU Coalition for Black Lives	Franklin County Green Party Central Committee
The Committee for Justice in Palestine	
femUNITY	
Indian American Association	
International Socialist Organization-Columbus Branch	
Iranian Cultural Association	
Model African Union	
Muslim Students' Association	
Pakistani American Students' Association	
Peace Corps Club	
Project: Educate XX	
Say Hi	
SHADES	

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ "OSU Divest Responds to Efforts by Members of Congress to Intervene in Campus Divestment," Indybay, March 23, 2016, <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2016/03/23/18784418.php>, accessed October 2, 2022.

Pro-BDS students ultimately launched a sit-in at the office of OSU president Michael Drake in response to the failed resolution.²⁹⁷ The occupation of Drake's office included multiple protestors from beyond CJP, as well as organizations listed as signatories in the response letter to Ohio's anti-BDS congressional representatives. One student organization, Real Food OSU, partnered with CJP in its demands for "full access" to the university's investment portfolio and for the ability to conduct what would have amounted to a political audit of OSU's investments.²⁹⁸ The protest at OSU's Thompson Library lasted until midnight and included a standoff between the protestors and campus police.²⁹⁹ In summer 2016, CJP rebranded and renamed itself as a chapter of SJP. While the rebranding simply involved changing "Committee" for "Students" in the organization's name, the group noted that the move connected the BDS movement at OSU to SJP nationwide.³⁰⁰

The 2016–2017 academic year marked a change in favor of pro-Israel students, even while the BDS movement at OSU rebranded and redoubled its efforts. Nationwide, research from the AMCHA Initiative discovered that anti-Semitism on American campuses spiked by 40% in 2016, while Ohio passed its anti-BDS law that same year.³⁰¹ At OSU, pro-Israel students and organizations became more organized. Hillel, America's premier Jewish student organization, took an active role in building campaign infrastructure on campus in order to thwart BDS attempts.

In winter 2017, pro-BDS students began promoting another attempt to send divestment to a USG vote. The promoted measure asked that the university:

cease and/or prohibit any investments in G4S, Caterpillar, CoreCivic, The GEO Group and Hewlett Packard Enterprise until they are no longer engaged in the violation of human rights [of Palestinians] and other practices deemed unethical by the Buckeye community.³⁰²

Like campus BDS measures elsewhere, the resolution's passing would have culminated in the USG formally requesting the OSU system to remove university investments from companies deemed to be guilty of "human rights violations."³⁰³ This measure was

297 Mitch Hooper and Rachel Harriman, "Students Stage Sit-In for University Transparency," *The Lantern*, April 6, 2016, <https://www.thelantern.com/2016/04/student-stage-sit-in-for-university-transparency/>, accessed October 7, 2022.

298 Ibid.

299 Ibid.

300 "Students for Justice in Palestine at the Ohio State University," Facebook, accessed October 2, 2022.

301 Paul Miller, "New Study: Campus Anti-Semitism Surges 40 Percent Over Last Year," *The Observer*, April 4, 2017, <https://observer.com/2017/04/amcha-initiative-study-college-anti-semitism-40-percent-increase/>, accessed October 2, 2022.

302 Lea Speyer, "Anti-Israel Divestment Campaigns Kick Off on Campuses Across the US," *Algemeiner*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2017/02/12/anti-israel-divestment-campaigns-kick-off-on-campuses-across-the-us/>, accessed October 8, 2022.

303 Ibid.

mostly symbolic and nonbinding, and was backed by OSU Divest and the OSU Coalition for Black Liberation.³⁰⁴ The measure was labeled as a “human rights issue,” a pro-BDS students Palestinian cause, as a means of targeting companies “complicit in the prison-industrial complex,” and as a cause for “financial neutrality.”³⁰⁵

In response to the mounting pressure from OSU’s BDS movement, the campus Hillel marshalled a well-funded opposition campaign composed of targeted advertising and professional staffers.³⁰⁶ OSU’s Hillel took an additional step in solidifying BDS opposition by severing connections with left-wing Jewish groups on campus. B’nai Keshet, a student organization for LGBT Jewish students, and Jewish Voice for Peace were both sanctioned by Hillel and effectively barred from holding joint events or collaborating with Hillel due to their support for BDS.³⁰⁷ This move by Hillel was beyond symbolic, as it precluded any possibility of B’nai Keshet receiving Hillel funding or “access to staff and other resources.”³⁰⁸

The campaign support from outside campus, along with diligent activism from the pro-Israel side, had the desired effect.³⁰⁹ The director of OSU’s Wexner Jewish Student Center, Joseph Kohane, noted that pro-Israel students engaged in a multipronged campaign to educate the broader undergraduate community on Israel and attack what they considered deceptive messaging by the pro-BDS movement.³¹⁰ Counter-BDS campaigning included social media posting, in-person student discussions, canvassing with fliers, and video production.³¹¹ One prominent campaign tactic of the anti-BDS movement involved testimonials of pro-Israel students who explained their stance on Israel, and why they supported the Jewish state.³¹² Thematically, the pro-Israel campaign’s advocacy focused on attacking the BDS movement’s framing of divestment as a “human rights issue.”³¹³ The vote on BDS, which appeared as “Issue 2” on the ballot, failed, with 3,843 students voting in favor and 4,082 voting against divestment.³¹⁴

304 Nick Roll, “Ohio State Hillel Putting Weight, Staff, Money Behind USG Ballot Issue,” *The Lantern*, March 5 2017, <https://www.thelantern.com/2017/03/ohio-state-hillel-putting-weight-staff-money-behind-usg-ballot-issue/>, accessed October 8, 2022.

305 Owen Daugherty, “OSU Divest Seeking Spot on USG Ballot Again,” *The Lantern*, October 2, 2022, <https://www.thelantern.com/2017/02/osu-divest-seeking-spot-on-usg-ballot-again/>, accessed October 4, 2022.

306 Roll, “Ohio State Hillel Putting Weight, Staff, Money Behind USG Ballot Issue,” *The Lantern*, accessed October 8, 2022.

307 Sara Stacy, “Ohio State Hillel Ousts Jewish Student Org for Partnering with Pro-Divestment Group,” *The Lantern*, March 22, 2017, <https://www.thelantern.com/2017/03/ohio-state-hillel-ousts-jewish-student-org-for-partnering-with-pro-divestment-group/>, accessed October 1, 2022.

308 Ibid.

309 Bob Jacob, “Local students help defeat OSU student government divestment vote,” *Cleveland Jewish News*, March 9, 2017, https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/news/local_news/local-students-help-defeat-osu-student-government-divestment-vote/article_4cc4f804-04e6-11e7-92c9-c71c890f4219.html, accessed October 4, 2022.

310 Ibid.

311 Ibid.

312 “Protect OSU,” Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/protectOSU/>, accessed October 2, 2022.

313 Jacob, “Local students help defeat OSU student government divestment vote,” accessed October 4, 2022. See also Rebecca Zagorsky, “Opinion: The Dangers of Divestment,” *The Lantern*, February 27, 2017, <https://www.thelantern.com/2017/02/opinion-the-dangers-of-divestment/>, accessed October 5, 2022.

314 Ibid.

Pro-Israel mobilization efforts at OSU proved effective enough to cause the campus' SJP chapter to change strategies in January 2018, when it succeeded in securing a USG BDS vote by a late-night "secret ballot," titled 50-R-27, passed in contravention of the school's bylaws.³¹⁵ The secret BDS measure, which passed after five hours of public debate and which was decided by secret ballot in OSU's General Assembly, precluded publication of the vote count.³¹⁶ The first attempt at a secret ballot resulted in more ballots cast than student senators in attendance.³¹⁷ When the measure ultimately passed, it did so without reference to Israel or international issues; rather, the resolution mentions "mass incarceration" and accusations of systemic racism.³¹⁸ Rather than mention Israel explicitly, the measure focused on "domestic rights violations" and the formation of a committee of student senators to examine Ohio State's investment portfolio for companies suspected of violating human rights.³¹⁹ Minutes from the public forum prior to the passage of 50-R-27 reflect dueling arguments over divestment in the name of progressive causes, accusations of anti-Semitism and racism, and assertions of students' right to examine university investments.³²⁰ Notably, the committee of senators to study OSU's investments was never formed.³²¹

Despite the passage of 50-R-27, pro-Israel students marked the removal of references to Israel as a victory, particularly given their efforts devoted to blocking the anti-Israel language. Over 100 pro-Israel students attended the five-hour debate, with 51 explicitly condemning it.³²² Pro-Israel student activists won praise from the director of OSU's Wexner Jewish Student Center and the campus Chabad chapter, both of which noted the level of determination and organization demonstrated by the pro-Israel side.³²³

Despite pro-Israel students' success in countering BDS at OSU, they advocated for a change in strategy. Specifically, OSU's Hillel executive board, along with a pro-Israel group, Buckeyes for Israel, and their counterparts from other universities, publicly

315 Adam Kredo, "Anti-Israel Campus Groups Plot to Defame Jewish State Ahead of Holocaust Memorial Day," *Washington Free Beacon*, January 26, 2018, <https://freebeacon.com/culture/anti-israel-campus-groups-plot-defame-jewish-state-ahead-holocaust-memorial-day/>, accessed October 5, 2022.

316 Amanda Parish, "After Five Hours of Tense Debate, USG Passes Divestment Resolution in Secret Vote," *The Lantern*, January 24, 2018, <https://www.thelantern.com/2018/01/after-five-hours-of-tense-debate-usg-passes-divestment-resolution-in-secret-vote/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

317 Ibid.

318 Ibid. See also Resolution 50-R-27: A Resolution to Establish a Committee to Investigate OSU's Investments in Companies Complicit in Human Rights Violations, January 24, 2018, <https://studentlife.osu.edu/documents/February%205%20USG%20GA%20Resolution.pdf>, accessed October 3, 2022.

319 Ibid. See also Resolution 50-R-27: A Resolution to Establish a Committee to Investigate OSU's Investments in Companies Complicit in Human Rights Violations, January 24, 2018, <https://studentlife.osu.edu/documents/February%205%20USG%20GA%20Resolution.pdf>, accessed October 3, 2022.

320 "Ohio State Undergraduate Student Government meeting minutes," Ohio State USG 50th General Assembly, Spring 2018, Session 19, January 24, 2018, https://usg.osu.edu/posts/documents/doc_272018_133020798.pdf, accessed October 3, 2022.

321 Katie Hamilton, "USG Rejects Divestment Resolution in Secret Ballot," *The Lantern*, December 6, 2018, <https://www.thelantern.com/2018/12/usg-rejects-divestment-resolution-in-secret-ballot/>, accessed October 5, 2022.

322 Alyssa Schmitt, "Jewish students stop another OSU Israel divestment resolution," *Cleveland Jewish News*, February 1, 2018, https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/news/local_news/jewish-students-stop-another-osu-israel-divestment-resolution/article_095bd58c-06c1-11e8-9c79-13c7a8a4b429.html, accessed October 3, 2022.

323 Ibid.

denounced Canary Mission.³²⁴ Canary Mission, a website that “documents individuals and organizations that promote hatred of the USA, Israel and Jews on North American college campuses,”³²⁵ engages in a “name and shame” strategy for anti-Israel entities in higher education. OSU’s Hillel and Buckeyes for Israel argued that Canary Mission’s strategy was not only “Islamophobic and racist,” but that it also hindered pro-Israel efforts on campus by forcing the BDS movement and student governments to shift to secret ballots for fear of public criticism.³²⁶ It was precisely the secret ballot strategy that enabled OSU’s student government to nearly pass an explicitly anti-Israel resolution.

These events nearly repeated in December 2018, when OSU’s USG again faced five hours of debate over a BDS resolution.³²⁷ This resolution, 51-R-16, would have called for OSU to explicitly sever ties with Israel; to divest from holdings in G4S, Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Sabra Dipping Company; and to cut ties with Israeli colleges and universities.³²⁸

Unlike the January resolution, the December divestment measure failed to pass and was voted down 30–7.³²⁹ Tellingly, of the 63 speakers for public comment on the resolution, 43 supported Israel and opposed the BDS resolution; additionally, the president and vice president of OSU’s USG both publicly opposed BDS on the grounds that it would violate freedom of speech.³³⁰ USG President Shamina Merchant and Vice President Shawn Semmler argued that:

We believe the implications of this resolution would negatively impact students on our campus and their opportunities for scholarships, research and field experiences. It stands against the core principle of academic freedom, and we are concerned about the exclusionary language used to address our educators on campus.³³¹

One student senator, Isaac Bensignor, noted that divesting from Israeli companies would cost OSU’s endowment \$650 million over the course of a decade and would adversely affect the university’s affordability for students.³³²

324 Gabrielle Roth and Joseph Goldberg, “Jewish students: A blacklist of BDS supporters is hurting our efforts to defend Israel on campus,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, April 23, 2018, <https://www.jta.org/2018/04/23/opinion/jewish-students-blacklist-bds-supporters-hurting-efforts-defend-israel-campus?ga=2.33622497.1905068665.1665470285-1531145544.1664801362>, accessed October 3, 2022.

325 See “About Us,” Canary Mission, <https://canarymission.org/about>, accessed October 3, 2022.

326 Roth and Goldberg, “Jewish students: A blacklist of BDS supporters is hurting our efforts to defend Israel on campus,” accessed October 3, 2022.

327 Hamilton, “USG Rejects Divestment Resolution in Secret Ballot,” accessed October 5, 2022.

328 *Ibid.*

329 *Ibid.*

330 *Ibid.*

331 *Ibid.*

332 *Ibid.*

The COVID-19 pandemic effectively paused BDS efforts at OSU, though they revived in the 2021–2022 academic year. In spring 2022, the USG attempted to pass another anti-Israel resolution, calling for OSU to divest from Caterpillar Inc. and Hewlett Packard Enterprise under the accusation that they, respectfully, provided construction and demolition equipment for the construction of Jewish settlements, as well as technology for the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).³³³ The resolution, which passed 14–8, was conducted by a secret ballot.³³⁴ It directly accused the OSU administration of guilt by association, declaring that:

By investing in such companies, The Ohio State University implicitly condones and profits from the decisions and actions of these companies, and as such, becomes guilty by association when such consequences from the actions and divestments of these companies, including, but certainly not limited to, the killing of innocent civilians.³³⁵

The OSU administration responded to the incendiary remarks, noting that the school’s endowment is not capitalized by tuition, and encouraged students to engage in “discussion and debate” on the issue.³³⁶

After the resolution was passed by the USG, it failed due to a table veto by the outgoing student president, Jacob Chang.³³⁷ The OSU USG and administration faced multi-layered opposition to the resolution, with the local Jewish Federation of Columbus urging opposition to the measure alongside Ohio’s state treasurer Robert Sprague, OSU’s Hillel and Chabad chapters, the college’s Israel Coalition on Campus, and Buckeyes for Israel.³³⁸

Aftermath and Analysis

The failures of BDS at OSU were undoubtedly a product of aggressive and coordinated student activism on campus, with additional grassroots pressures brought to bear upon the school from beyond the university. The first main takeaway from OSU’s

333 Arianna Smith, Danny Fogarty, and Mariyam Muhammad, “USG Passes Resolution Asking Ohio State to Divest from 2 Companies Doing Business in Israel,” *The Lantern*, April 7, 2022, <https://www.thelantern.com/2022/04/usg-passes-resolution-asking-ohio-state-to-divest-from-2-companies-doing-business-in-israel/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

334 *Ibid.*

335 Smith, Fogarty, and Muhammad, “USG Passes Resolution Asking Ohio State to Divest from 2 Companies Doing Business in Israel,” accessed October 3, 2022.

336 *Ibid.*

337 Jane Kaufman, “Ohio State student president kills Israel divestment resolution after local Jewish groups mobilize against it,” *Forward*, April 14, 2022, <https://forward.com/fast-forward/490509/ohio-state-student-president-kills-israel-divestment-resolution-after/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

338 *Ibid.*

BDS track record is that little involvement from the administration was needed to halt divestment efforts. Unlike other schools, where the administration served as a legal and institutional guardrail against divestment, pro-Israel students at OSU managed to thwart the BDS movement at the level of student government in every case. Pro-Israel students attended BDS discussions in large numbers, and engaged in concerted, layered, and organized campaigning against BDS resolutions when they arose.

The second takeaway from the OSU case study is that BDS is a progressive and left-wing issue, rather than an exclusively Palestinian one. Debates on campus over divestment resolutions erupted due to fissures within left-wing student groups as much as they did through efforts put forth by pro-Israel students. This highlights the importance of coalitions across campus, and of connections between student groups and off-campus bases of support. It must be noted that there is no indication that the political leanings of the student body at OSU explain student support for Israel. According to demographic and statistical information on students at OSU, only 35% of the student body describes itself as Republican, while 6% of students view the school as conservative.³³⁹ In contrast, 35% of students declare themselves to be Democrats, with 21% asserting an independent stance and another 21% stating no view or passion about political affairs.³⁴⁰ Additionally, Ohio State's ranking as the fourth-largest university in the US may render it a viable model for pro-Israel organizations to emulate.

339 "Students at The Ohio State University," *Niche*, <https://www.niche.com/colleges/the-ohio-state-university/students/>, accessed October 9, 2022.

340 *Ibid.*

University of California, Riverside

Introduction to BDS at the University of California System

Unlike Columbia and the University of Michigan at Dearborn, where the BDS movement has proven successful in passing resolutions, and unlike the movement's track record of failure at Ohio State, BDS's history at the University of California, Riverside (UCR) is marked by a pattern of back-and-forth failure and success. This case study examines potential explanations for this flip-flop dynamic on a University of California (UC) campus.

Origins of the BDS Movement at UC Riverside

UCR first attempted to pass a BDS resolution during the 2012–2013 academic year; however, the school already gained notoriety several years prior due to the involvement of UCR students in disrupting a February 8, 2010 speech by then-Israeli ambassador Michael Oren at nearby UC Irvine (UCI). After multiple outbursts interrupting Ambassador Oren, during which protestors screamed the question, “How many Palestinians did you kill?” eleven UC students from the Muslim Student Association were arrested.³⁴¹ Three of the eleven students arrested were from UCR.³⁴² In addition to the arrests, UCI's Muslim Student Union was temporarily suspended from campus.³⁴³

The aftermath of the Michael Oren protest shaped the context of the overall push for BDS in the UC system. In response to the suspension, the Muslim Student Union asserted its broad-based activities beyond anti-Israel activism; the UCI chapter itself received an award for social justice from the school's Cross-Cultural Center.³⁴⁴ Nationally,

341 Natasha Mozgovaya, “Muslim Students Scream ‘Killer’ During Israel Envoy Speech in LA,” *Haaretz*, February 9, 2010, <https://www.haaretz.com/2010-02-09/ty-article/muslim-students-scream-killer-during-israel-envoy-speech-in-la/0000017f-ec7a-d639-af7f-edff879e0000>, accessed October 2, 2022. See also “Irvine, CA-11 Arrested for Disrupting Israeli Ambassador's Talk at UC Irvine,” *VINews*, February 9, 2010, <https://vinews.com/2010/02/09/irvine-ca-11-arrested-for-disrupting-israeli-ambassadors-talk-at-uc-irvine/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

342 Brian Napoletano, “Targeted for Protesting Israel,” *Socialist Worker*, June 22, 2010, <https://socialistworker.org/2010/06/22/targeted-for-protesting-israel/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

343 Elyn Pak, “UCI's Muslim Student Union suspended for a quarter,” *Orange County Register*, September 5, 2010, (<https://www.ocregister.com/2010/09/05/ucis-muslim-student-union-suspended-for-a-quarter/>), accessed October 3, 2022.

344 Raja Abdulrahim, “UC Irvine's Muslim Student Union says suspension ignores the group's religious and charitable activities,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 8, 2010, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2010-jul-08-la-me-muslim-student-union-20100708-story.html>, accessed October 3, 2022.

multiple organizations in support of BDS came to the defense of the arrested students, including Palestine Legal and JVP, which filed amicus briefs in support of the students after the Orange County District Attorney charged them with “criminal misdemeanors.”³⁴⁵ At UCR, a group of 31 faculty members and graduate students signed a letter in support of the protestors, orchestrated by the chair of the university’s Department of Ethnic Studies, Dylan Rodriguez.³⁴⁶ Statewide, the UC system faced a wave of coordinated attempts to pass BDS resolutions beginning in the 2012–2013 academic year, including one at UCR.

After the Michael Oren incident, SJP opened a regional chapter dedicated to BDS, covering the US and Canadian West Coast, in 2012.³⁴⁷ SJP expanded its West Coast presence amid broader criticism from the BDS movement against the UC system. In June 2011, the UC president’s Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture, and Inclusion was tasked with surveying the Jewish community across the system in order to assess the “challenges and positive campus experiences” faced by Jewish students.³⁴⁸ The report noted that, despite Jewish students’ “prominent place on campuses,” the BDS movement in the UC system poses major challenges for them. The report noted:

Jewish students are confronting significant and difficult climate issues as a result of activities on campus which focus specifically on Israel, its right to exist and its treatment of Palestinians. The anti-Zionism and Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movements and other manifestations of anti-Israel sentiment and activity create significant issues through themes of language which portray Israel and, many times, Jews in ways which project hostility, engender a feeling of isolation, and undermine Jewish students’ sense of belonging and engagement with outside communities. The issue of anti-Zionism activities was a focal point of our discussions with all of the students, Jewish organizations, faculty, and administration.³⁴⁹

The report was met with criticism, particularly due to the First Amendment issues raised by proponents of the BDS movement and claims made by Arab and Muslim students in a report of their own.

345 “The Palestine Exception, University of California, Irvine,” Incident Date: 2010-2014, Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/the-palestine-exception-appendix#irvine1>, accessed Oct. 10, 2022.

346 “UC Riverside Faculty Voice Support for Protestors Against Oren,” *Jewish Journal*, March 16, 2010, <https://jewishjournal.com/community/77569/>, accessed October 8, 2022.

347 “Students for Justice in Palestine West,” SJP West, <https://sjpwest.org/home/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

348 “University of California Jewish Student Campus Climate Fact-Finding Team Report and Recommendations, President’s Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture, and Inclusion,” issued by Richard D. Barton and Alice Huffman, July 2012, (<https://cascholars4academicfreedom.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/jewish-climate-fact-finding-report-july-2012-final.pdf>), 1, accessed October 3, 2022.

349 “University of California Jewish Student Campus Climate Fact-Finding Team Report and Recommendations,” 2, accessed October 3, 2022.

The group California Scholars for Academic Freedom responded to the campus report on Jewish students, alleging that it recommended censorship of Israel criticism, and that Arab and Muslim students face their own hostile environment on UC campuses.³⁵⁰ The Muslim Student Association (MSA) West, the Arab Recruitment and Retention Center, and SJP contacted the US Commission on Civil Rights, alleging the abuse of Title VI as a means of curtailing pro-Palestinian demonstrations.³⁵¹ UCR's MSA and SJP chapters both signed the letter.³⁵²

The UC Board of Regents, meanwhile, expressed its disapproval of BDS in 2010. In a joint statement with the chair and vice-chair of the UC Board of Regents, system president Mark Yudof stated that the "isolation of Israel among all countries of the world greatly disturbs us and is of grave concern to members of the Jewish community."³⁵³ As a standard for any hypothetical divestment, the UC Board of Regents stated that it would only divest from a country "when the United States government declares that a foreign regime is committing acts of genocide."³⁵⁴

Anti-Israel Activism on Campus and Divestment Efforts: Mixed Results (2013–2022)

UCR's first BDS resolution passed in March 2013, when its student government, Associated Students of UCR (ASUCR), voted 11–5 to divest from Israeli companies. The resolution, entitled "Divestment from Companies that Profit from Apartheid," explicitly singled out Caterpillar, Cement Roadstone Holding, Cemex, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, Raytheon, SodaStream, and L-3 Communications for their products and services used by the Israeli government or for their manufacturing presence in Israel.³⁵⁵ In the resolution, ASUCR stated that it would:

- Examine its assets and UC assets for investments in companies that a) provide military support for, or weaponry to, support the occupation of the Palestinian territory or b) facilitate the building or maintenance of the

350 "California Scholars for Academic Freedom Letter to UC President Yudof on Campus Climate Reports," SJP West, August 14, 2012, <http://sjpwest.org/2012/08/14/california-scholars-for-academic-freedom-lett-74148/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

351 "UC MSA SJP Letter to US Commission on Human Rights Regarding Arab and Muslim Civil Rights," SJP West, November 7, 2012, http://sjpwest.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/UC-MSA-SJP-Letter-to-USCCR-11.8.2012-Final-Version_corrected.pdf, accessed October 3, 2022.

352 Ibid.

353 J. Correspondent, "UC president, regents decry divest-from-Israel efforts," *Jewish News of Northern California*, May 14, 2010, <https://jweekly.com/2010/05/14/u-c-president-regents-decry-divest-from-israel-efforts/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

354 Ibid.

355 "UC Riverside Student Senate Passes Divestment Resolution 11-5," SJP West, March 6, 2013, <https://sjpwest.org/2013/03/06/uc-riverside-senate-passes-divestment-resolution-11-5/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

illegal wall or the demolition of Palestinian homes, or c) facilitate the building, maintenance, or economic development of illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian territory.

- Call upon our university, the University of California Treasury, and the UCR Foundation to divest their holdings from these aforementioned companies.
- That if found that UCR funds or UC funds are being invested in any of the above-mentioned companies, UCR will divest, and will advocate that the UC system divests, all stocks and securities of such companies with the goal of maintaining the divestment, in the case of said companies, until they cease these specific practices. Moreover, UCR will not make further investments, in any companies materially supporting or profiting from Israel's occupation in the above-mentioned ways.³⁵⁶

ASUCR couched its BDS resolution through a broader progressive lens, stating that “we, the students, call upon our university to dissociate itself from groups or companies that promote systematic prejudiced oppression.”³⁵⁷ Notably, Liam Dow, president of ASUCR, stated his opposition to the measure by claiming that it “encourages biases instead of reconciliation, and creates counter-productive hostilities that divide the UCR campus.”³⁵⁸

ASUCR's passage of the March 2013 resolution came as UC president Yudof was set to step down from his position that coming August,³⁵⁹ and as California elected officials in the state government and in Congress moved to oppose the BDS movement. Prior to the start of the 2012–2013 academic year, the California legislature adopted HR-35, which iterated the state government's opposition to anti-Semitism on campus and the BDS movement.³⁶⁰ Concurrent with ASUCR's vote to divest, Susan Davis and Juan Vargas, congressional representatives from around San Diego, voiced their opposition to a similar vote at the UC San Diego (UCSD) campus.³⁶¹

While outside pressure at UCSD did not stop its resolution to divest, outside figures did congratulate ASUCR for the passage of its measure. Shortly after the March 2013 passage of its BDS resolution, ASUCR received letters of support from Nobel Prize

356 Ibid.

357 Ibid.

358 Larry Gordon, “UC Riverside student Senate urges divestment from firms working in West Bank,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 2013, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/blogs/la-now/story/2013-03-08/uc-riverside-student-senate-urges-divestment-from-firms-working-in-west-bank>, accessed October 5, 2022.

359 “Mark Yudof to Step Down as UC President,” UCSF News, January 18, 2013, <https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2013/01/104472/mark-yudof-step-down-uc-president>, accessed October 5, 2022.

360 California House Resolution 35, “Relative to Anti-Semitism,” August 28, 2012, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120HR35, accessed October 4, 2022.

361 Miriam Raftery, “Local Congressional Members Oppose Students' Move to Divest UCSD From Companies Doing Business With Israel,” *East County Magazine*, March 2, 2013, <https://www.eastcountymagazine.org/node/12606>, accessed October 7, 2022.

winner Desmond Tutu and Pink Floyd performer Roger Waters.³⁶² Tutu's letter explicitly condones the BDS movement, calling it "appalling" that "companies are profiting from Israeli apartheid in occupied Palestine."³⁶³

Coincidentally, ASUCR was in dialogue with SJP UCR a "month and a half" prior to the resolution vote.³⁶⁴ Additionally, pro-Israel members of the UCR community were allegedly uninformed of the resolution in the leadup to the vote. SJP UCR noted that such tactics were justified to "level the playing field" in the face of the "Jewish lobby."³⁶⁵ These tactics, as admitted by SJP UCR, ultimately cost the organization its political success on campus. Roughly a month after the resolution's passage, it was overturned by ASUCR on the grounds that it lacked "presentation of the issue from both perspectives."³⁶⁶ The BDS resolution was overturned by a 10–2 vote after a public comment period packed to capacity.³⁶⁷ After the reversal, brought about by external lobbying from the pro-Israel group StandWithUs, UCR Hillel president Danny Leserman noted that the student government "realizes that anything that singles out Israel, or any other country, is not going to fly."³⁶⁸

Between the quick passage and reversal of the 2013 resolution and the successful resolution that followed, two factors contributed to the BDS movement's increased institutional power at UCR. On campus, the university moved to open its Middle Eastern Student Center (MESC). The MESC, noted as the "first of its kind in the nation," formed to "provide support services for all students with ties to the Middle East and North Africa."³⁶⁹ Ostensibly crafted to cater to Middle Eastern students as an identity group, the MESC worked to create "Middle Eastern" as a student identification category and a designated "Middle Eastern theme hall" in student housing.³⁷⁰ Until the 2013 BDS initiative, UCR's Hillel and Arab students collaborated to help form the MESC.³⁷¹ After the initiative, the school's Hillel noted a sense of betrayal over the BDS measure:

362 "UC Riverside Divestment Support Letters from Desmond Tutu, Roger Waters, Ofer Neiman," SJP West, April 3, 2013, <https://sjpwest.org/2013/04/03/uc-riverside-divestment-support-letters-from-desmond-tutu-roger-waters/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

363 Ibid.

364 Phillippe Assouline, "You Can Fool Some People Sometime: BS Gets BDS a Win at UC Riverside," *Huffington Post*, March 25, 2013, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/you-can-fool-some-people_b_2934844, accessed October 10, 2022.

365 Ibid.

366 J. Correspondent, "Israel divestment resolutions overturned at UC Riverside, defeated at UC Santa Barbara," *J Weekly*, April 12, 2013, <https://jweekly.com/2013/04/12/israel-divestment-resolution-overturned-at-u-c-riverside/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

367 Ibid.

368 Alex Kane, "UC Riverside student government rescinds divestment measures aimed at Israeli occupation profiteers," *Mondoweiss*, April 5, 2013, (<https://mondoweiss.net/2013/04/government-occupation-profiteers/>), accessed October 10, 2022.

369 "Our History," UCR Middle East Student Center, <https://mesc.ucr.edu/who-we-are/our-history>, accessed October 10, 2022.

370 Ibid.

371 "Passed and Shredded," *The Highlander*, March 12, 2013, <https://www.highlandernews.org/8233/passed-and-shredded/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

Up until this point, the organizations freely shared information about upcoming plans and events out of respect. Despite the internal progress made between the students while working on the MESC, this Senate meeting quickly differentiated those who are Pro-Israel from those who are Anti-Israel.³⁷²

The second factor was the boycott of Israel by the American Studies Association (ASA) in December 2013. The ASA measure was crafted in part by UCR English professor David Lloyd.³⁷³ While many academics from around the US support BDS, Lloyd is a prominent figure in the movement. Lloyd was a founding member of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel and a prominent critic of Israel through the lens of “settler colonialism” theory.³⁷⁴ In 2015, Lloyd was the academic sponsor for a student-led course to be taught by SJP students entitled “Palestine & Israel: Settler-Colonialism and Apartheid.”³⁷⁵ Such an intimate tie serves to connect SJP UCR and the international BDS movement.

In the 2013–2014 academic year, SJP increased its prominence on campus through both academic and activist means. In January 2014, CHASS FIRST, a UCR program for freshman students in the humanities and social sciences, cosponsored a guest lecture featuring PACBI cofounder Omar Barghouti.³⁷⁶ The lecture, also sponsored by UCR’s Department of Ethnic Studies, was entitled “Palestine’s South Africa Moment: Relative Justice, Not Relative Humans.”³⁷⁷ Notably, the event fulfilled course credit requirements and was endorsed by UCR Dean Stephen Cullenberg and the executive committee for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.³⁷⁸

The event was attended by two local rabbis, Rabbi Hillel Cohn, and Rabbi Susanne Singer of Riverside’s Temple Beth El, who noted that Barghouti spoke at length of a pervasive and controlling “Israel lobby” and levied accusations of Israel “hunting children” under the guise of Zionism, a “racist European ideology” designed to build a “supremacist Jewish state in historic Palestine.”³⁷⁹ Accounts of Barghouti’s lecture describe near-classic anti-Semitic tropes of blood libel and a “Jewish conspiracy” to control

372 “Passed and Shredded,” *The Highlander*, accessed October 3, 2022.

373 Michael Rios, “UC responds to boycott of Israeli academic institutions,” *The Highlander*, January 4, 2014, <https://www.highlandernews.org/11667/uc-responds-to-boycott-of-israeli-academic-institutions/>, accessed October 4, 2022.

374 David Lloyd, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/contributor/david-lloyd/>, accessed October 4, 2022.

375 “UC Riverside Offering Antisemitic Course Taught by SJP Leader,” Amcha Initiative, April 16, 2015, <https://amchainitiative.org/uc-riverside-offering-antisemitic-course-taught-by-sjp-leader/>, accessed October 5, 2022.

376 “Event Announcement, Omar Barghouti: Palestine’s South Africa Moment: Relative Justice, Not Relative Humans,” January 14, 2014, <https://www.amchainitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/UCR-Omar-Barghouti-event-announcement.pdf>, accessed October 7, 2022.

377 *Ibid.*

378 *Ibid.*

379 Letter to University of California Riverside Chancellor after University-sponsored Academic Boycott Event on 1/14/14, from Rabbi Susanne Singer and Rabbi Hillel Cohn, January 17, 2014, <https://amchainitiative.org/ucr-academic-boycott-event-followup-letter/>, accessed October 8, 2022.

prominent institutions. The lecture was orchestrated by David Lloyd, who described his role after the lecture before facilitating audience questions:

I was the professor who very proudly invited Omar Barghouti to speak on this campus. I have absolutely no shame for having done so. I will also say that I am not only a signatory of the US Campaign for the Academic and Culture Boycott of Israel, but I am also a founding member of that...Many professors at this university are signatories of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.³⁸⁰

Several months after Barghouti's appearance on campus, in April 2014, ASUCR voted again to divest from Israel, with the resolution passing 8–7.³⁸¹ The resolution was supported by 75 separate student organizations drawn along the lines of identity politics.³⁸² Multiple groups endorsed the BDS drive led by SJP, including such “allies” of the movement as the Afrikan Student Alliance, Christian Student Fellowship, MECHA, the Society for Women Engineers, and Sustainable UCR.³⁸³

The next two years at UCR exhibit an entrenchment of BDS alongside increased accounts of anti-Semitism on campus. The 2014 BDS measure emboldened SJP UCR to engage in follow-up activism pertaining to campus business. In fall 2014, UCR's dining services began selling hummus manufactured by Sabra, a company deemed “complicit” in Israeli military activities for its “material and financial donations” to the “Golani and Givati brigades” of the IDF.³⁸⁴ Rather than lobby and pressure the UC administration, SJP met with UCR's dining services, who readily agreed to replace Sabra with an alternative hummus provider.³⁸⁵ SJP UCR president Tina Matar stated that she was “surprised how easy it was to change minds.”³⁸⁶

Shortly after the chickpea diplomacy between SJP and campus dining services, the UCR administration intervened in order to reverse the agreement. A spokesman for the school, James Grant, noted that replacing Sabra with Tapaz2Go, a “gluten-free, Mediterranean-inspired brand,” was an error and that Sabra would again be served

380 Letter to University of California Riverside Chancellor after University-sponsored Academic Boycott Event on 1/14/14, accessed October 8, 2022.

381 Nora Barrows-Friedman, “Divestment passes at University of California at Riverside,” *Electronic Intifada*, April 25, 2014, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/divestment-passes-university-california-riverside>, accessed October 7, 2022.

382 Arman Azidi, “UC-Riverside student gov't passes Israeli divestment resolution,” *Liberation*, May 10, 2014, <https://www.liberationnews.org/uc-riverside-student-govt-passes-israeli-divestment-resolution/>, accessed October 7, 2022.

383 Amal Ali, “Letter to the editor: Divestment resolution,” *The Highlander*, February 11, 2014, <https://www.highlandernews.org/12243/letter-to-the-editor-divestment-resolution/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

384 “SJP at UC Riverside Gets Sabra Hummus Removed from Campus Dining over Support for the Occupation,” Press Release, Students for Justice in Palestine, April 25, 2015, <https://sjpwest.org/2015/04/>, accessed October 8, 2022.

385 Ibid.

386 Ibid.

alongside its rival brand.³⁸⁷ While Sabra itself was founded in New York, not Israel, SJP UCR claimed the reversal of the decision violated the university's values.³⁸⁸ The campus battle over hummus resurfaced in 2017, this time with a formal ASUCR vote (W17-007) to ban Sabra hummus from the UC Riverside campus. In a 13–0 vote, again supported by SJP UCR, the measure passed.³⁸⁹ In response, the administration rebuked the student government once more, stating that it had “no plans to change brands offered for sale or consumption in its stores and dining facilities.”³⁹⁰ Pro-Israel students sought to block the measure before ASUCR's deliberation, and the school's Hillel worked closely with Chabad, the Jewish fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi, and StandWithUs.³⁹¹ It is worth noting that similar hummus battles related to BDS have taken place at DePaul University and Princeton University, where both efforts to remove “Israeli” hummus also failed.³⁹²

Both SJP and David Lloyd increased their efforts to embed BDS and anti-Israel activism into campus life by offering a student-led, 1-unit course called “Palestine & Israel: Settler-Colonialism and Apartheid.”³⁹³ The course, taught during the Spring 2015 semester by SJP UCR president Tina Matar, was met with vocal protests from Jewish leaders and multiple organizations that sounded the alarm over the course's anti-Semitic orientation and its presence in a public university.³⁹⁴ In a letter to UCR chancellor Kim Wilcox, twenty watchdog organizations argued that the class met the US State Department's definition of anti-Semitic, and, thus, that it had no place on campus as it violated university policy.³⁹⁵ The organizations opposed to the class constituted a diverse array of groups, including the California Association of Scholars, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, StandWithUs, and the Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel.³⁹⁶ The UCR administration responded to concerns over anti-Semitism with the assertion that the course met all required guidelines in order to be taught.³⁹⁷

387 Joseph Serna, “UC Riverside official: Decision to stop selling Sabra hummus a ‘mistake,’” *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 2015, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-uc-riverside-hummus-israeli-ties-20150429-story.html>, accessed October 11, 2022.

388 Ibid.

389 Meredith McCollum, “UCR Associated Student Council voted to ban hummus because it's anti-Israel,” *The Tab*, February 9, 2017, <https://thetab.com/us/ucla/2017/02/09/riverside-council-hummus-ban-1652>, accessed October 10, 2022.

390 Myles Andrews-Duve, “UC Riverside: No plans to remove Sabra hummus,” *The Highlander*, February 2, 2017, <https://www.highlandernews.org/27517/ucr-administration-we-will-not-remove-sabra-hummus/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

391 Rachel Frommer, “‘It's About More Than Hummus,’ Says UC Riverside Rabbi Leading Fight Against Sabra Boycott,” *Algemeiner*, February 1, 2017, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2017/02/01/its-about-more-than-hummus-says-uc-riverside-rabbi-leading-fight-against-sabra-boycott/>, accessed October 8, 2022.

392 Andrews-Duve, “UC Riverside: No plans to remove Sabra hummus,” accessed October 10, 2022.

393 “20 organizations say UC Riverside offering anti-Semitic class,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, April 20, 2015, <https://www.jns.org/20-organizations-say-uc-riverside-offering-anti-semitic-class/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

394 Ibid.

395 Letter to Chancellor Kim Wilcox from the Amcha Initiative, “20 Groups Write to Chancellor Wilcox Regarding Serious Concerns about Political Indoctrination in UCR Course,” April 16, 2015, <https://amchainitiative.org/serious-concerns-about-political-indoctrination-in-ucr-course/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

396 Ibid.

397 Adam Kredo, “Pro-Israel Groups Blast ‘Anti-Semitic’ Course at UC Riverside,” *The Washington Free Beacon*, April 21, 2015, <https://freebeacon.com/culture/pro-israel-groups-blast-anti-semitic-course-at-uc-riverside/>, accessed October 12, 2022.

Anti-Semitism markedly increased in California in 2016, with UCR's hummus divestment serving as one point of contention involving the campus and the BDS movement. In July 2016, Chancellor Wilcox issued a statement condemning Holocaust denial after a campus "Holohoax" incident, where denials of the genocide were found chalked on campus.³⁹⁸ Coincidentally, anti-Semitic incidents in California rose 21% that year from 2015.³⁹⁹ Statewide, pro-Palestinian activists pressured the UC Board of Regents to reject a proposal to "equate anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism," which had been formed at the behest of the AMCHA Initiative.⁴⁰⁰ At UC Berkeley, a class entitled "Ethnic Studies 198: Palestine: A Settler Colonial Analysis," which was similar to UCR's course on Israel's "settler-colonialism," was briefly canceled before being reinstated due to pressure from the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and Palestine Legal.⁴⁰¹

In 2017, SJP issued several demands to the UC Board of Regents. In February of that year, the UC system announced a joint agreement memorandum with the Israel Innovation Authority in order to increase cooperation in the fields of technology and "industrial research and development."⁴⁰² In response to the agreement, SJP issued a letter accusing then-UC president Janet Napolitano of "complicity in systemic oppression" and claiming that her role as UC president "is based on economic profit and the procurement and securing of political alliances."⁴⁰³ A year later, SJP issued a joint divestment demand with the Afrikan Black Coalition, calling on the UC Board of Regents to "terminate all investments in corporations violating Palestinian Human Rights that exist within the UC Regents' Investment Funds."⁴⁰⁴

Two dynamics underpinned the BDS environment at UCR during the 2017–2018 academic year. The first is that the election of Donald Trump catalyzed a widespread zeitgeist among progressives on college campuses, including those at UCR. In an August 2017 interview, David Lloyd, the UCR English professor who helped found the BDS movement and USACBI, outlined BDS as part of a broader progressive mission against

398 "ADL Expresses Concern about "Holohoax" Chalkings at UCR," Anti-Defamation League, July 21, 2016, <https://la.adl.org/adl-expresses-concern-about-holohoax-chalkings-at-ucr/>, accessed October 4, 2022.

399 "ADL Audit: Anti-Semitic Incidents on the Rise Across the Country in 2016; Anti-Semitic incidents highest in California," Anti-Defamation League, April 24, 2017, <https://la.adl.org/adl-audit-anti-semitic-incidents-on-the-rise-across-the-country-in-2016-anti-semitic-incidents-highest-in-california/>, accessed October 4, 2022.

400 Charlotte Silver, "Pressure forces amendment to Univ. of California intolerance report," *Electronic Intifada*, March 24, 2016, <https://electronicintifada.net/content/pressure-forces-amendment-univ-california-intolerance-report/16141>, accessed October 3, 2022.

401 "UC Berkeley Suspends and Reinstates Course on Palestine," SJP West, October 19, 2016, <https://sjpwest.org/2016/10/>, accessed October 3, 2022. See also Alexander Nazaryan, "Why a Controversial Palestinian History Class at Berkeley Was Canceled, Then Reinstated," *Newsweek*, October 5, 2016, <https://www.newsweek.com/2016/10/14/berkeley-palestinian-history-class-506153.html>, accessed October 5, 2022.

402 "The University of California and Israel's Innovation Authority sign cooperation agreement," UC Office of the President, February 17, 2017, <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/university-california-and-israels-innovation-authority-sign-cooperation-agreement>, accessed October 4, 2022.

403 "Students ask UC not to partner with Israel Innovation Authority," An Open Letter to the Office of President Janet Napolitano, SJP West, March 26, 2017, <https://sjpwest.org/2017/03/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

404 "Students for Justice in Palestine Demand that UC Regents Divest from Corporations Violating Palestinian Human Rights," SJP West, March 14, 2018, <https://sjpwest.org/2018/03/14/students-for-justice-in-palestine-demand-that-the-uc-regents-divest-from-corporations-violating-palestinian-human-rights/>, accessed October 3, 2022.

the administration's "simultaneous advocacy of White supremacy, Zionism, and anti-Semitism."⁴⁰⁵ This occurred alongside ongoing campus "apathy" among UCR's Israel supporters; indeed, Ofri Avgil, student president of Students Supporting Israel (SSI) at UCR, noted that the campus "leans apathetic," with most students simply being ignorant of Israel and the challenges it faces.⁴⁰⁶ Avgil noted that "SJP currently stands on UC Riverside's campus ... they luckily don't deal with too much hate."⁴⁰⁷ Unlike at OSU, where pro-Israel students created an active anti-BDS machine, Avgil stated that the goal of UCR's SSI was fundamentally one of educating students and fighting what she described as "false advertising" on Israel in the media and online.⁴⁰⁸

ASUCR's passage of a BDS resolution in 2022 came about amid a nationwide progressive upheaval in campus politics in the aftermath of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and George Floyd riots. Shortly before closures swept across college campuses nationwide, UCR's SSI was engaged in a sophisticated level of activism. In February 2020, the group hosted an event featuring Lt. Col. Eyal Dror, an Israeli soldier who oversaw Operation Good Neighbor and led operations to evacuate and treat civilians injured in the Syrian civil war.⁴⁰⁹ The event, cosponsored by StandWithUs, was met with a small walk-out protest by pro-Palestinian students.⁴¹⁰

Anti-Semitic incidents accompanied the social justice riots of 2020, with Jewish institutions in California being targeted.⁴¹¹ In response to the death of George Floyd, SJP UCR co-signed a letter to Chancellor Wilcox with a number of demands, including the cancellation of final exams, the "ultimate divestment" of UCR's campus police, and mandated funding for the "Black student community" on campus.⁴¹² Increased on-campus activism grew concurrently to higher-profile anti-Semitic statements from other campus figures. During the 2020–2021 school year, Dylan Rodriguez, a professor of media and cultural studies at UCR, as well as that year's president of the American Studies Association, declared that "Most California public education administrators don't understand how Zionism politically toxified our schools and curricula."⁴¹³

405 "KPFK interview with David Lloyd and Eli Unger-Sargon," USACBI, August 20, 2017, <https://usacbi.org/2017/08/kpfk-interview-with-david-lloyd-and-eli-unger-sargon/>, accessed October 5, 2022.

406 "Meet Ofri Avgil: Students Supporting Israel at UC Riverside," Students Supporting Israel, 2019 blog, <https://www.ssimovement.org/2019-blogs.html>, accessed October 5, 2022.

407 Ibid.

408 "Meet Ofri Avgil: Students Supporting Israel at UC Riverside," Students Supporting Israel, accessed October 5, 2022.

409 "Former IDF Officer Speaks to Hundreds of California Students About Israel's Humanitarian Aid to Syrians," *Algemeiner*, February 14, 2020, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2020/02/14/former-idf-officer-speaks-to-hundreds-of-california-students-about-israels-humanitarian-aid-to-syrians/>, accessed October 4, 2022.

410 Ibid.

411 Aaron Bandler, "Los Angeles Synagogue Vandalized With 'Free Palestine,' 'F—Israel' Graffiti," *Jewish Journal*, May 30, 2020, https://jewishjournal.com/los_angeles/316561/los-angeles-synagogue-vandalized-with-free-palestine-f-israel-graffiti/, accessed October 5, 2022.

412 "Campus letter to Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox and UCR Administration," May 31, 2020, <https://diversity.ucsd.edu/files/Campus%20Statements%20-%20Racism/UCR-Demands-to-Administration---Call-to-Action-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf>, accessed October 3, 2022.

413 Aaron Bandler, "UCR Professor: 'Zionism Politically Toxified Our Schools,'" *Jewish Journal*, January 12, 2021, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/327364/ucr-professor-zionism-politically-toxified-our-schools/>, accessed Octo-

At the level of campus government, ASUCR spent the 2020–2021 school year tabling a measure submitted by SSI that would have had the school adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism.⁴¹⁴ The resolution, SR-W21-002, was criticized by multiple students during public comment for its “anti-Palestine” orientation that linked anti-Semitism to anti-Zionism; furthermore, some pro-Palestinian UCR students even went so far as to link the IHRA definition to “adopting the policies of former President Donald Trump and his white supremacist ideologies.”⁴¹⁵

In spring 2022, the BDS movement succeeded in passing a resolution (SR-S22-004) formally calling on UCR and the UC system as a whole to eliminate Israel as a study-abroad location and to divest from corporations deemed to violate “Palestinian Human Rights,” as well as “all future companies that support Israeli, or any other system of apartheid.”⁴¹⁶ The resolution, like BDS efforts elsewhere, does explicitly target a number of companies deemed complicit in supporting Israel. The companies explicitly mentioned include Perrigo Company, Cemex, Sabra, Raytheon, 3M, Northrop Grumman, Boeing, United Technologies, Lockheed Martin, Ford, Atlas Copco, and BlackRock.⁴¹⁷ Innovatively, the resolution calls for an “annual and consistent renewal” of the measure “in collaboration with the UCR Students for Justice in Palestine.”⁴¹⁸ Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the resolution’s passage for pro-Israel and Jewish students is that the measure, which passed 11–0,⁴¹⁹ ties SJP to the campus government indefinitely while offering the BDS movement the ability to annually shape debate on the issue. SJP UCR’s presence across different student groups appeared to grow not only in prominence but also in scope, reaching beyond the confines of its own campus. Following the passage of SR-S22-004, the SJP UCR rallied with UC Los Angeles groups to promote divestment from fossil fuels, “private prisons,” and weapons manufacturers.⁴²⁰

ber 8, 2022.

414 Laura Anaya-Morga, “ASUCR tables bill aimed to have UCR adopt the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism,” *The Highlander*, January 25, 2021, <https://www.highlandernews.org/81578/asucr-tables-bill-aimed-to-have-ucr-adopt-the-ihra-definition-of-anti-semitism/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

415 Ibid.

416 See UC Divestment from Apartheid, Senate Resolution SR-S22-004, May 4, 2022, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nYJGsX5MgXc3YXX-2az0pVGvxjRh9u0uHWp304ldilQ/edit>, accessed October 3, 2022.

417 Ibid.

418 Ibid.

419 Dion J. Pierre, “Jewish Students Censure ‘Misguided’ BDS Vote at University of California Riverside,” *Algemeiner*, May 13, 2022, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2022/05/13/jewish-students-censure-misguided-bds-vote-at-university-of-california-riverside/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

420 Clara Schwartz and Christine Tran, “Protestors outside UC Regents meeting call for weapons manufacturer divestment,” *Daily Bruin*, May 18, 2022, <https://dailybruin.com/2022/05/18/protesters-outside-uc-regents-meeting-call-for-weapons-manufacturer-divestment>, accessed October 3, 2022.

Aftermath and Analysis

The case of BDS at UCR is illustrative for two reasons. First, it shows SJP's ability to innovate as an organization while demonstrating an understanding of university institutions. SJP's strategy of approaching dining services directly in order to promote BDS to campus administrators below the top-level administration demonstrates a sophisticated degree of innovation and an ability to lobby. Second, the fact that SJP UCR secured the passage of a BDS resolution to be reviewed on an annual basis, and in a manner that will allow it to advise the student government, indicates that the group succeeded in establishing an element of institutional power on campus as the result of its activism efforts. While there is no current indication that the UCR administration, or the UC system as a whole, will follow through on demands made by SJP and student governments supporting BDS, the UCR case illustrates the BDS movement's ability to position itself for ongoing activism at a higher level than its immediate campus.

Conclusion

The above case studies offer an analysis and description of how the BDS movement progresses in higher education, and of elements that determine its relative success and failure. On campus, two factors stand out from among the three case studies that can inform anti-BDS policy and strategy. The first aspect of success or failure stands at the level of student activism.

As illustrated by a comparison of UCR and OSU, innovation and aggression among student activists proved to be the deciding factor in passing or blocking BDS resolutions and policy. At OSU, anti-BDS students engaged in on-campus lobbying among the broader student body and fielded a considerable showing of students opposing divestment when BDS measures were up for potential votes at USG meetings. SJP UCR, similarly, succeeded by means of persistence and strong showings in favor of BDS motions. At another level, economic pressure played a role in OSU's success, if only due to the investment of pro-Israel groups in campus campaigning.

In the battle over Sabra hummus, SJP UCR approached dining services directly in order to secure a policy victory, albeit a short-lived one prior to its reversal from the campus administration. Additionally, SJP UCR sought institutional power by normalizing its views and presence on campus and in student government. Offering a student-led course based on the concept of "Israeli Apartheid" not only embedded core BDS arguments within the normal functions of the university but also allowed SJP to influence course instruction by taking on a teaching role. SJP UCR succeeded even further when it secured what amounts to a consulting role in an annual assessment of BDS at the level of student government. Not only did SJP succeed in getting the measure onto ASUCR's agenda, but it did so in a manner that allows it to shape future debates on the matter. Like teaching courses on "settler colonialism," this allows SJP to normalize the demonization of Israel across the campus at an institutional level.

The second main takeaway from these case studies pertains to financial and economic considerations. With rare exception, university investment and spending decisions are ultimately the domain of school administrators. Columbia University's administration refused to cede authority in this domain to campus activists, despite the school's hostile environment to Israel and Jewish students. Changing investment or spending for an entire university can affect pension planning and investment performance for endowments, and can potentially open schools to civil liability by means

of a potential breach of contract. As noted by OSU student senator Isaac Bensignor, divestment from Israel was not a cheap proposition from the school, as it could have cost OSU's endowment \$650 million.⁴²¹ Undoubtedly, economic calculation played some role in Columbia's administration rejecting BDS demands. Divesting from a single corrections contractor, or "private prison," is a cheaper means of virtue-signaling than divesting from a slate of companies connected to an entire country.

Beyond campus, the BDS movement has proven more successful, particularly in persuading companies to alter their business strategies as they pertain to Israel. Companies, whether ideologically motivated or not, are concerned with reputational risk as well as the bottom line. If institutional investors, such as those who manage major university endowments, are under political pressure, this can affect business decisions made by companies related to the issue at large. The BDS movement is affecting specific companies, with some publicly responding to it and others altering their business practices because of activist pressure. Furthermore, the BDS movement views these changes in business strategy as a result of activism from organizations like SJP.

In early 2016, the Irish building and construction company CRH announced it was liquidating holdings in Israel. Formally known as Cement Roadstone Holdings,⁴²² CRH is explicitly named in UCR's divestment efforts and operates heavily in developing markets across Asia.⁴²³ CRH is a firm of considerable size and is listed as a Fortune 500 company (CRH plc).⁴²⁴ Pressured by SJPs across multiple UC campuses,⁴²⁵ by direct protests, and by a lawsuit filed by Palestinian activists in the US, CRH sold its holdings in an Israeli company operating Neshar Cement.⁴²⁶ Neshar Cement was accused of servicing construction contracts for Israeli settlements, and for "extracting minerals from Palestinian territory."⁴²⁷ To be fair, CRH had been the focus of activist pressure for over ten years, and was faced with routine protests, complaints with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Irish government, and direct lobbying from pro-Palestinian groups.⁴²⁸ CRH was sued by Palestinian plaintiffs in a US

421 Hamilton, "USG Rejects Divestment Resolution in Secret Ballot," accessed October 5, 2022.

422 "Our History," Roadstone, <https://www.roadstone.ie/about-us/our-history/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

423 Ibid.

424 "CRH plc, stock listing," Yahoo Finance, <https://finance.yahoo.com/quote/CRH>, accessed October 10, 2022.

425 "Irish firm CRH, key target of UC SJPs' Divestment Campaigns, ends its financial complicity with violations of International Law and Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," SJP West, January 20, 2016, <https://sjpwest.org/2016/01/20/crh-divestment/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

426 "Huge BDS victory as CRH pulls out of toxic Israeli assets, ends complicity with Israeli crimes," Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, January 9, 2016, <http://www.ipsc.ie/press-releases/huge-bds-victory-as-crh-pulls-out-of-toxic-israeli-assets-ends-complicity-with-israeli-crimes>, accessed October 10, 2022. See also "CRH named in Euro34b lawsuit by Palestinian activists," *Global Cement*, March 31, 2016, <https://globalcement.com/news/item/4766-crh-named-in-euro34bn-lawsuit-by-palestinian-activists>, accessed October 10, 2022.

427 "CRH named in Euro34b lawsuit," *Global Cement*, accessed October 10, 2022.

428 "Huge BDS victory as CRH pulls out of toxic Israeli assets," Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, accessed October 10, 2022. See also "Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign vs. CRH," OECD Watch, filed May 3, 2011, <https://www.oecdwatch.org/complaint/ireland-palestine-solidarity-campaign-vs-crh/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

court shortly after announcing its divestment, only to have the case thrown out of the American legal system on the grounds of jurisdictional limits and extraterritoriality.⁴²⁹

It is worth noting that while the CRH case may seem inconsequential and unrelated to the campus-based aspects of the BDS movement, it nonetheless demonstrates the multinational and multilayered nature of the BDS challenge to Israel's legitimacy. According to the Bank of Ireland, CRH is Ireland's largest company.⁴³⁰ Forcing such a large company to liquidate a 25% stake in an Israeli firm is not inconsequential and highlights the need for greater anti-BDS coordination across the corporate and cultural landscape.⁴³¹

Other companies have pulled out of Israel, such as the French companies Orange and Veolia, which withdrew from the Jewish state due to activist pressures.⁴³² In an era of greater corporate involvement and virtue-signaling on political and social issues, BDS will likely gain influence across the US. This dynamic was confirmed in 2021, as the US ice cream maker Ben and Jerry's announced it would withdraw its products from the West Bank in response to the BDS movement.⁴³³ While the main focus of this report is the campus BDS movement in the US and the funding behind it, it must be noted that college campuses constitute only one of multiple interlocking fronts where BDS is seeking to gain power and legitimacy.

429 John Mulligan, "West Bank case against CRH thrown out by court," *Independent.ie*, September 7, 2017, <https://www.independent.ie/business/irish/west-bank-case-against-crh-thrown-out-by-court-36107121.html>, accessed October 10, 2022.

430 Peter Flanagan, "The 10 biggest Irish businesses," *Think Business*, Bank of Ireland, <https://www.thinkbusiness.ie/articles/the-10-biggest-irish-businesses/>, accessed October 10, 2022.

431 Mulligan, "West Bank case against CRH thrown out by court," accessed October 10, 2022.

432 "Huge BDS success: Veolia finally pulls completely out of the Israeli market," Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, August 28, 2015, <http://www.ipsc.ie/press-releases/huge-bds-success-veolia-finally-pulls-completely-out-of-the-israeli-market>, accessed October 10, 2022. See also Ali Abunimah, "France's Orange dumps Israeli affiliate that backed Gaza war," *Electronic Intifada*, January 4, 2016, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/frances-orange-dumps-israeli-affiliate-backed-gaza-war>, accessed October 10, 2022.

433 "Ben and Jerry's tries to halt sales in Israel once more," *Jerusalem Post*, September 7, 2022, <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-716544>, accessed October 10, 2022.

The BDS Movement and Terrorism

Introduction

In order to understand the BDS movement, it must be viewed as an aspect of economic warfare tied to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict rather than simple issue-driven activism restricted to college campuses. Because the Palestinians lack developed state bureaucracies by which to engage in economic sanctions, currency manipulation, or other aspects of economic warfare, they rely upon non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to achieve the same purpose and to support political and armed conflict.

The BDS movement officially formed in 2005 in the West Bank against the backdrop of the Second Intifada, and from its outset was connected to Palestinian terrorist groups. According to a 2019 report published by Israel’s Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy, over 100 ties exist between Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and NGOs promoting the BDS movement in the West.⁴³⁴ Hamas, the PFLP General Command (PFLP-GC), and the PFLP are all designated as terrorist organizations by the US and Canada.⁴³⁵ While “terrorism” as an act carries the generally adopted definition of a non-state organization attacking civilian targets in order to secure a political goal, “who” constitutes a terrorist organization varies drastically from one country and international organization to another.

BDS as Strategy

The BDS movement arguably formed in 2005 as a reaction to three key factors guiding Palestinian political strategy in the early 2000s. The five-year-long Second Intifada that began in 2000 dealt a number of political and economic setbacks to Hamas and the

434 Lehav Harkov, “Watch: Dozens of Hamas members hold senior positions in BDS NGOs,” *Jerusalem Post*, February 3, 2019, <https://www.jpost.com/BDS-THREAT/Over-30-Hamas-PFLP-terrorists-hold-posts-in-anti-Israel-BDS-groups-govt-579544>, accessed October 10, 2022.

435 “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” US Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/>, accessed October 10, 2022. See also “Currently Listed Entities, Public Safety,” Government of Canada, <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrct/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crrnt-lstd-ntts-en.aspx>, accessed October 10, 2022.

PFLP. Combined, these factors presented Hamas and the PFLP with a different geostrategic landscape than that which existed prior to 2000.

Toward the end of the Second Intifada, Hamas shifted its terrorist operations as the result of increased Israeli security operations in the West Bank, as well as an increased risk aversion on the part of mid-level personnel after Israel's use of targeted killings proved effective as a counterterrorism tool.⁴³⁶ Through targeted killing, Israel brought leadership challenges to both Hamas and the PFLP with the assassinations of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in 2004 and Abu Ali Mustafa in 2001. It is worth noting that the PFLP was a smaller organization than Hamas at the time, and that disagreements between the two terrorist groups over political legitimacy led the PFLP to reject Hamas' offers for joint governance in 2006.⁴³⁷

Counter-terrorist financing (CTF) laws around the world drastically changed after the attacks on New York and Washington by Al Qaeda in 2001; coincidentally, the 9/11 attacks occurred in the midst of the Second Intifada. While CTF laws already existed in the West, having steadily grown out of anti-money laundering laws since the 1970s, they proliferated internationally after 9/11. In October 2001, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1373, which mandated member states to adopt legislation against both terrorism itself and terrorist financing according to the 1999 Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing.⁴³⁸ While de jure adoption of CTF laws largely occurred worldwide, with the exception of "rogue states," de facto implementation of CTF laws did not take place.⁴³⁹ From the standpoint of logistical viability, Palestinian terrorist groups faced new challenges in safeguarding funding for their operations and in acquiring international political support for their cause.

The purpose of BDS is multifaceted—it includes a "cultural" and "academic" boycott of Israel alongside an economic one. The BDS movement understands the complexity of fostering a boycott of the entirety of "Israel" in light of a global economy and Israel's interconnection with multiple industries as the result of its innovation and connections to the Jewish diaspora. Indeed, the BDS movement acknowledges that a "complete" boycott is not the goal of the movement, as blacklisting every company and organization tied to Israel is impossible. The BNC declares its approach to boycotting as follows:

436 Jonathan Schacter, "The End of the Second Intifada?", *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 13, No. 3, (2010), pp. 63-80, 67. See also AE Stalhl and William F. Owen, "Targeted Killings Work," *Infinity Journal*, No. 1, (2010), pp. 10-13.

437 "PFLP not to join Hamas government," *Al Jazeera*, March 19, 2006, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2006/3/19/pflp-not-to-join-hamas-government>, accessed October 3, 2022.

438 Anne L. Clunan, "The Fight Against Terrorist Financing," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 121, No. 4, (2006), pp. 569-596, 578.

439 See JC Sharman, *The Money Laundry*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011). See also Ian Michael Oxnevad, *Making a Killing: States, Banks, and Terrorism*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2021).

Targeted consumer boycotts are convincing retailers across the world to stop selling products from companies profiting from Israel's crimes. Many Israeli exporters complain that it is getting harder for them to export their products.

The Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) calls for a boycott of Israeli and international companies that are complicit in violations of Palestinian rights. Virtually all companies are complicit to some degree in Israel's system of occupation and apartheid. *We focus our boycotts on a small number of companies and products for maximum impact. We focus on companies that play a clear and direct role in Israel's crimes and where we think we can have an impact* [emphasis added].⁴⁴⁰

The BDS movement is strategic in its efforts, targeting companies like Caterpillar Inc., which is highly visible in images affiliated with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in media coverage of the construction of Israel's security infrastructure and housing in the West Bank. Similarly, iconic Israeli companies such as the cosmetics company Ahava or Sabra hummus offer the BDS movement highly visual targets for activism.⁴⁴¹

Using economic actors, such as businesses and investors, as a means of geopolitical strategy is not without precedent. While the BDS movement's allusions to South Africa under apartheid are well known in light of frequent refrains of "Israeli Apartheid" on university campuses and in theories of "settler-colonialism," the role of the private sector in ending Apartheid in South Africa is less commonly known.

The end of Apartheid required securing a diplomatic willingness among powerbrokers from the African National Congress (ANC) and the then-ruling National Party (NP). Between 1987 and 1990, a dozen privately brokered talks were held in Britain between representatives from both sides due to the work of Michael Young, the public affairs officer for the gold mining conglomerate Consolidated Gold Fields.⁴⁴² Prior to working in the private sector, Young worked in the governments of British Prime Ministers Alec Douglas-Home and Edward Heath.⁴⁴³ In his role as a public affairs officer, Young helped broker the release of Nelson Mandela and helped both the ANC and the NP come to agreements about post-Apartheid governance.⁴⁴⁴

440 "Know What to Boycott," BDS Movement, <https://bdsmovement.net/get-involved/what-to-boycott>, accessed October 10, 2022.

441 *Ibid.*

442 "Negotiator played secret role in bringing apartheid to an end," *Yorkshire Post*, January 13, 2010, (<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/negotiator-played-secret-role-bringing-apartheid-end-1992844>), accessed October 3, 2022. See also Records of Michael Young (1986-2001), GB 193 YOU, Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York, (<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/8fb836bc-e79c-3900-b619-1b6edde2ca35>), accessed October 3, 2022.

443 *Ibid.*

444 *Ibid.*

Concurrent with Consolidated Gold Fields' involvement in private sector-led diplomacy was South Africa's strain under economic sanctions. South Africa's economy toward the end of minority rule was hobbled by payment imbalances, skilled-labor shortages, and ever-increasing security costs.⁴⁴⁵ Sanctions imposed by industrialized economies on South Africa decimated the viability of the country's exports, with US and European sanctions proving the most harmful.⁴⁴⁶ Rounding off the effects of economic measures was the psychological influence that *cultural* boycotts of South Africa had on the government, and how they added to the country's sense of isolation.⁴⁴⁷

Israel's economic standing and geopolitical context are significantly different from those of Apartheid South Africa; however, boycott efforts against Praetoria during that era and the role that the private sector played in changing the form of government do illustrate that the BDS movement's efforts to demonize Israel are not without a precedent for success elsewhere. Over time, consistent demonization in education and academic discourse can accumulate to change overall electoral sentiments against Israel, while also predisposing government officials to hostility toward Israel and Jews more broadly. The BDS movement's strategy needs to be understood as a sophisticated effort in the context of precedent.

Terrorist Ties of the BDS Movement

When the BDS movement issued its "call" in 2005 and officially launched, it marked a dual change in Palestinian strategy. On the one hand, BDS is designed to secure political legitimacy vis-à-vis Israel, with boycotts and divestment offering Palestinian activists and terrorists new domains to assert their cause. On the other hand, BDS, along with the formation of multiple NGOs and nonprofit organizations, offers the Palestinians new avenues by which to access funding in a post-9/11 international financial system designed to curtail funding for terrorism.

According to a 2019 report by Israel's Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy, the BDS movement's ties with terrorist organizations manifest in three different ways: financial support, public policy and advocacy campaigns, and the shared leadership of key individuals in both pro-BDS groups and terrorist organizations.⁴⁴⁸ Out of the roughly 300 pro-BDS organizations worldwide, 42 have proven links to

445 See Anton D. Lowenberg, "Why South Africa's Apartheid Economy Failed," *Contemporary Economic Policy*, Vol. 15, No. 3, (1997), pp. 62-72.

446 See Simon J. Evenett, "The Impact of Economic Sanctions on South African Exports," *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, No. 49, No. 5, (2002).

447 See Philip I. Levy, "Sanctions on South Africa: What Did They Do?," *American Economic Review*, Vol. 89, No. 2 (1999), pp. 415-420.

448 *Terrorists in Suits: The Ties Between NGOs Promoting BDS and Terrorist Organizations*, (Jerusalem: Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy, 2019), https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/generalpage/terrorists_in_suits/en/De-Legitimization%20Brochure.pdf, accessed October 15, 2022, 5.

Palestinian terrorism.⁴⁴⁹ A number of BDS organizations with terrorist ties mentioned in the Israeli report have been active on US college campuses.

Figure 6.1: BDS Organizations with Terrorist Ties (Sources: Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy, 2019; and the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2018)

BDS Organization	Key Individuals	Year Founded	Terrorist Organization Ties
Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) ⁴⁵⁰	Omar Barghouti (Co-Founder)	2007	Multiple (Incl. PFLP, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad)
	Mahmoud Nawajaa (BNC General Coordinator)		
	Salah Khawaja (BNC Secretariat)		
	Haidar Eid (PACBI Member)		
	AbdulRahman Abu Nahel (BNC Gaza Coordinator)		
	Alys Estapé (BNC Europe Coordinator)		
	Garrick Ruiz (BNC USA Coordinator)		
	Pedro Charbel (BNC Latin America Coordinator)		
Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI; BNC's "Academic Arm")	Overlap with BNC	2004	Multiple via BNC
	Addameer	Sahar Francis (Director)	1992
Mahmoud Hassan (Legal Unit Manager)			
Ayman Nasser (Legal Unit Coordinator)			
Abdullatif Ghaith (Chairman of Board of Directors and General Assembly)			
	Khalida Jarrar (Deputy Director of Board 2006-2017)		

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ *Terrorists in Suits*, 14-21, accessed October 15, 2022.

Samidoun	Charlotte Kates (International Coordinator)	2012	PFLP
	Joe Catron (US Coordinator)		
	Mohammad Khatib (Europe Coordinator)		
	Mustapha Awad (European Representative)		
	Maram Saadi (Lebanon Coordinator)		
	Hatem Bazian (AMP National Board Chair)		
American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)	Osama Abuirshaid (National Policy Director)	2005/2006	Hamas
	Salah Sarsour (National Board Member)		
Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)	Founding and Speakers from BNC and AMP	2010 (National)	Multiple

BNC and PACBI

At the nexus of the global BDS movement and its connection to anti-Israel activism on American campuses are the BNC and its academic component, PACBI. Rather than serve as an offshoot of the global BDS movement, PACBI helped foster the broader movement's development and remains integral to its operations. Indeed, PACBI was founded by Omar Barghouti several years prior to the formation of the BNC.⁴⁵¹ As noted earlier in this report, Barghouti tours US campuses as a fixture of the BDS movement in American academia. He is also influential in shaping the BDS movement off campus, such as when he met with the president of the Ben and Jerry's Foundation, Jeff Furman, prior to the company's decision to boycott Israel.⁴⁵²

At the organizational level in the US, the BNC's regional coordinator, Garrick Ruiz, is active not only in anti-Israel politics but also in the Democratic Socialists of America, where he is Western Regional Organizer as of 2020.⁴⁵³ Active in left-wing political activism since the 1990s, Ruiz describes himself as a connection between the BNC and the broader BDS movement:

Some of my earliest work was anti-war and international solidarity in the 90's. I've spent months in East Timor and Palestine engaged in solidarity with folks

⁴⁵¹ *Terrorists in Suits*, 15, accessed October 15, 2022.

⁴⁵² Alex Kane, "Ben & Jerry's Path to Boycotting Israeli Settlements," *Jewish Currents*, July 26, 2022, <https://jewishcurrents.org/ben-jerrys-path-to-boycotting-israeli-settlements>, accessed October 12, 2022.

⁴⁵³ "February Dispatch: We Can Win-If We Organize," Democratic Socialists of America, February 11, 2020, <https://www.dsusa.org/news/february-dispatch-we-can-win-if-we-organize/>, accessed October 12, 2022.

resisting military occupation and apartheid. Most recently I spent several years as the North America Regional Coordinator for the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) providing BDS campaigns throughout North America organizing support, strategic advice and a direct link back to the Palestinian leadership of the BDS movement.⁴⁵⁴

In 2014, pro-BDS activists on the West Coast successfully blocked Israeli shipping containers in Washington from unloading for three days as part of the “Block the Boat Coalition”.⁴⁵⁵ Notably, the shipping protest was led by Nada Elia, a professor from Antioch University and a member of PACBI’s steering committee.⁴⁵⁶ This was concurrent with Ruiz’s involvement in seeking to foster a similar protest in California by including trade union support.⁴⁵⁷

BNC members do include other organizations, such the Council of the National and Islamic Forces in Palestine (PNIF).⁴⁵⁸ The PNIF formed early during the Second Intifada as a collaboration between all major Palestinian terrorist groups, including Hamas.⁴⁵⁹ In 2018, Donorbox, a software firm devoted to facilitating charitable giving, suspended a BDS platform due to complaints over its inclusion of the PNIF and its constitutive terrorist groups.⁴⁶⁰

American universities have not been unwilling to provide Palestinian terrorists a platform. Leila Khaled, a veteran figure within the PFLP responsible for airplane hijackings in the 1960s and 1970s,⁴⁶¹ is regularly invited to speak about Palestine on college campuses. In 2021, San Francisco State University’s (SFSU) Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies program was forced to cancel a featured talk by Khaled after Facebook, Eventbrite, and Zoom removed posts and links for the event.⁴⁶² In October 2020, Khaled appeared on a US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI) webinar hosted by New York University, in which she parroted the usual accusation of Israel constituting an “apartheid state.”⁴⁶³ SFSU professor

454 Ibid.

455 Charlotte Silver, “Protestors block and delay Israeli ships up and down the US West Coast,” *Electronic Intifada* August 28, 2014, <https://bdsmovement.net/news/protestors-block-and-delay-israeli-ships-and-down-us-west-coast>, accessed October 14, 2022.

456 Ibid.

457 Ibid.

458 “Palestinian BDS National Committee,” BDS Movement, <https://bdsmovement.net/bnc>, accessed October 14, 2022. See also Rosen and Leibovitz, “BDS Umbrella Group Linked to Palestinian Terrorist Organizations,” accessed October 10, 2022.

459 Ibid. See also *Terrorists in Suits*, 15-21, accessed October 15, 2022.

460 Joseph Federman, “US fundraising site suspends Palestinian boycott account,” *Associated Press*, December 21, 2018, <https://apnews.com/article/31dc5185c81745aaaa011a74681e771b>, accessed October 3, 2022.

461 “Leila Khaled in Her Own Words,” Anti-Defamation League, October 2, 2020, <https://www.adl.org/blog/leila-khaled-in-her-own-words>, accessed October 24, 2022.

462 Greschler, “Tech companies block Leila Khaled event at SFSU for a second time,” accessed October 23, 2022.

463 See John Leland, “What Zoom Does to Campus Conflicts Over Israel and Free Speech,” *New York Times*, January 22, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/22/nyregion/college-anti-semitism-bds.html>, accessed October 23, 2022, see also NYU Webinar, “We Will Not Be Silenced,” USACBI YouTube, October 23, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaTk53RRelM>, accessed October 23, 2022.

Rabab Abdulhadi, the host of the school’s talk featuring Khaled, is a founding member of USCABI and faced a civil suit in 2017 over allegations that she “fostered a climate of anti-Semitism on campus.”⁴⁶⁴

While the PFLP was designated by the US as a terrorist organization in 1997,⁴⁶⁵ it is worth noting that the group remains active. In 2019, 50 PFLP terrorists were arrested by Shin Bet in response to a bombing that led to the death of an Israeli teenager.⁴⁶⁶ In summary, the USCABI retains direct contacts with known terrorists, while academics in the movement attempt to legitimize these terrorists alongside their demonization of Israel.

Samidoun

Samidoun, or the Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, is another prominent BDS organization tied to terrorism. It offers a platform for activism to Palestinians in prison. The 2019 report from the Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy notes that Samidoun has ties to both PACBI and USCABI, along with the PFLP.⁴⁶⁷ Some key individuals in Samidoun, such as Mohammed Khatib and Mustapha Awad, are also listed as members of PFLP.⁴⁶⁸ Awad trained with Hezbollah in 2015 and couriered funds between the Middle East and Europe from 2016–2017.⁴⁶⁹

Samidoun frames itself as a predominantly left-wing organization devoted to “achiev[ing] justice for Palestinian prisoners through events, activities, resources, delegations, research and information-sharing as well as building bridges with the prisoners’ movement in Palestine.”⁴⁷⁰ Samidoun also expresses its sympathy for non-Palestinian issues and other identity-based “liberation struggles”:

Samidoun also stands in solidarity with Arab and international political prisoners, and, in particular, political prisoners in the United States, Canada and Europe targeted for their work with liberation struggles and freedom movements, including Arab and Palestinian movements, Native and Indigenous liberation and sovereignty struggles, Puerto Rican independentistas, Black liberation organizers, Latino and Chicano activists and many others targeted by

464 Joshua Keating, “Is Zoom More Like the Phone or Facebook?” *Slate*, December 18, 2020, <https://slate.com/technology/2020/12/zoom-free-speech-rabab-abdulhadi.html>, accessed October 23, 2022.

465 “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” US Department of State, accessed October 23, 2022.

466 Anna Ahronheim, “Shin Bet arrests 50 PFLP terrorists, thwarting upcoming attack,” *Jerusalem Post*, December 18, 2019, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/shin-bet-arrests-50-pflp-terrorists-thwart-upcoming-attack-611289>, accessed October 24, 2022.

467 *Terrorists in Suits*, 22-23, accessed October 25, 2022.

468 *Terrorists in Suits*, 23, accessed October 25, 2022.

469 *Ibid.*, 24.

470 “About Us,” Samidoun, <https://samidoun.net/about-samidoun/>, accessed October 25, 2022.

racism, colonialism, and oppression, and we recognize the fundamental connections between imprisonment, racism, colonialism, and the criminalization of immigrants, refugees and migrants.⁴⁷¹

In 2021, Discover Card stated that it would no longer process donations for the Alliance for Global Justice (AFGJ), an Arizona-based think-tank connected with Samidoun, after pressure from the Zachor Legal Institute and allegations of the group's ties to terrorism.⁴⁷² In 2019, PayPal, Donorbox, and Plaid all ceased processing funds for Samidoun due to its ties with terrorism.⁴⁷³ In February 2023, AFGJ announced that it could no longer take credit card donations after concerns over its connections to suspected terrorist groups.⁴⁷⁴

The AFGJ, located in Tuscon, listed as Samidoun's address for accepting donations and appears on tax-deductible receipts for donations made to Samidoun via credit card.⁴⁷⁵ While the financial industry has proactively distanced itself from Samidoun, the organization has met with progressive congressional representatives from the Democratic Party. In April 2019, Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) met with Joe Catron, Samidoun's US coordinator, and American Muslims for Palestine.⁴⁷⁶

Samidoun's financial ties to the AFGJ place it within a broader left-wing movement beyond the confines of Palestinian activism. Founded in 1998, the AFGJ explains that it emerged out of the "Nicaragua Network" of the 1980s and pro-Sandinista activists in the US.⁴⁷⁷ Despite broadening its focus since the 1990s, the AFGJ's official website notes that "Nicaragua solidarity" continues to be a main focus of the organization. It also operates as part of the Honduras Solidarity Network and advocates for prisoners in Colombia.⁴⁷⁸ Notably, the PFLP, with which Samidoun is affiliated, does have ties to Central America, as it has, historically, sought solidarity with ideologically affiliated organizations in the Western Hemisphere. Ties between the Sandinistas, the PLO, and the PFLP are well-documented, including mutual cooperation in terrorism and training in both Central America and the Middle East.⁴⁷⁹

471 Ibid.

472 Ada Kredo and Matthew Foldi, "Discover Card Cuts Ties With Palestinian Terror-Linked Organization," *Washington Free Beacon*, September 16, 2021, <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/discover-card-cuts-ties-with-palestinian-terror-linked-organization/>, accessed October 25, 2022.

473 "PayPal shuts down services to BDS group with terror links," *Israel Hayom*, May 16, 2019, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2019/05/16/paypal-shuts-down-services-to-bds-group-with-terror-links/>, accessed October 25, 2022.

474 "Group loses fundraising platform for alleged ties to blacklisted pro-Palestinian NGO," *Jerusalem Post*, Feb. 19, 2023, (<https://www.jpost.com/international/article-732006>), accessed Feb. 22, 2023.

475 "Donate," Samidoun, <https://samidoun.net/donate-page/>, accessed October 28, 2022.

476 Cameron Cawthorne, "Tlaib Meets With Another Anti-Israel Radical," *Washington Free Beacon*, April 17, 2019, <https://freebeacon.com/politics/tlaib-meets-with-another-anti-israel-activist/>, accessed October 29, 2022.

477 "Our History," Alliance for Global Justice, <https://afgj.org/about/our-history>, accessed October 29, 2022.

478 "Our History," Alliance for Global Justice, accessed October 29, 2022.

479 See Bruce Hoffman, *The PLO and Israel in Central America: The Geopolitical Dimension*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1988), <https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/notes/2009/N2685.pdf>, accessed October 29, 2022. See also Marshall Yurov, "Evolving Relationships: Nicaragua, Israel, and the Palestinians," *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 46, No. 3, pp. 149-163.

Addameer

Founded in 1992, Addameer is another activist group devoted to both BDS and Palestinian prisoners with ties to the PFLP. Until 2017, Addameer received funding from Europe's Human Rights and International Law Secretariat, with known funding from government sources between 2014 and 2017 totaling \$937,700.⁴⁸⁰ Yacoub Odeh and Abdullatif Ghaith, members of Addameer's board, Ayman Nasser, the organization's legal coordinator, and Khalida Jarrar, the group's deputy director until 2017, have all been tied to terrorism or have served time in prison for orchestrating attacks for the PFLP.⁴⁸¹ Salah Hammouri, Addameer's "field researcher," planned a PFLP assassination of Israel's former Chief Sephardic Rabbi Ovadia Yosef in 2005.⁴⁸² According to Addameer's website, the organization focuses on offering "free legal representation and advice" to Palestinian prisoners and engaging in activism abroad for the Palestinian cause.⁴⁸³

Addameer is not unknown within academia's BDS movement. In 2018, Columbia University hosted a workshop on campus with Addameer that was co-sponsored by a group called Release Aging People in Prison (RAPP).⁴⁸⁴ Coincidentally, the RAPP representative participating in the event, Laura Whitehorn, was convicted and imprisoned for a 1983 bombing of the US Senate and the Israeli Aircraft Industries Building in New York City.⁴⁸⁵ The event itself was sponsored by the Barnard Center for Research on Women and JVP.⁴⁸⁶ In 2022, Harvard Law School's International Human Rights Clinic released a report accusing Israel of "apartheid" and "Jewish supremacy" in conjunction and cooperation with Addameer.⁴⁸⁷

American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)

As noted earlier in this report, AMP is one of the foremost and earliest organizational proponents of the BDS movement. Founded by Hatem Bazian, now a lecturer of ethnic studies at UC Berkeley,⁴⁸⁸ AMP also helped create SJP.⁴⁸⁹ AMP's ties to terrorism include the group's connections to Hamas and the Holy Land Foundation.⁴⁹⁰ In 2009,

480 *Terrorists in Suits*, 29, accessed October 25, 2022.

481 *Ibid.*, 30-31.

482 *Ibid.*, 32.

483 "Our Work," Addameer, <https://www.addameer.org/about/our-work>, accessed October 29, 2022.

484 Shiri Moshe, "Barnard College to Host Prisoners' Group Accused of Ties With Palestinian Terrorists," *Algemeiner*, August 1, 2018, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2018/08/01/barnard-college-to-host-prisoners-group-accused-of-ties-with-palestinian-terrorists/>, accessed October 30, 2022.

485 *Ibid.*

486 *Ibid.*

487 Steve France, "Harvard Law School 'apartheid' report leaves Israel's defenders speechless," *Mondoweiss*, April 5, 2022, <https://mondoweiss.net/2022/04/harvard-law-school-apartheid-report-leaves-israels-defenders-speechless/>, accessed October 30, 2022.

488 "Faculty, Hatem Bazian," Department of Ethnic Studies, UC Berkeley, accessed October 30, 2022.

489 Miller, "Cal Berkeley's Latest Effort to Erase Jewish History from Israel," accessed April 29, 2022.

490 *Terrorists in Suits*, 64-65, accessed October 25, 2022.

members of the Holy Land Foundation were convicted of providing material support to Hamas through money laundering and fundraising from *zakat*, Muslim organizations, and charities.⁴⁹¹ The Holy Land Foundation's New Jersey representative, Abdulrahman Odeh, once described suicide bombing as a "beautiful operation."⁴⁹² A number veteran employees of the of Holy Land Foundation were later absorbed into AMP's organization. Hussein Al-Khatib, who served on AMP's board, was a Holy Land Foundation regional director.⁴⁹³ Another of AMP's board members, Salah Sarsour, was identified in a FBI report as a fundraiser for Hamas.⁴⁹⁴ Two other organizations link AMP to Hamas: the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) and the KindHearts charity.⁴⁹⁵ Sufyan Nabhan and Osama Abuirshaid, both AMP board members, worked with the IAP, which assisted Hamas financially.⁴⁹⁶ The IAP's former president, Rafeeq Jaber, works for the AJP Educational Foundation, a Palestinian lobbying group in the US, and is a fiscal backer of AMP.⁴⁹⁷

In May 2022, lawsuits against AMP over its alleged ties to Hamas were allowed to proceed in Federal court.⁴⁹⁸ In 2004, IAP was ordered to pay survivors of terrorism \$156 million for its ties to Hamas.⁴⁹⁹ While IAP shut down before paying the plaintiffs, AMP emerged as IAP's successor and quickly became the focus of a follow-up lawsuit over the group's similar ties to terrorism.⁵⁰⁰ The 2022 lawsuit was allowed to proceed on the grounds of overlap between the two organizations, as well as ties between AMP and the now-defunct Holy Land Foundation.⁵⁰¹ AMP, arguably, is the nucleus of the BDS movement in the US. Ties between AMP and Hamas, and between the founder of SJP and AMP, serve to connect the campus-based aspects of BDS to Palestinian terrorism.

AMP claims to "educate the public and media about Israel's occupation of Palestine," and to

Highlight Israel's flagrant and continual violations of international law and human rights abuses of Palestinians in the construction of settlements, the

491 Press Release, "Federal Judge Hands Down Sentences in Holy Land Foundation Case," US Department of Justice, May 27, 2009, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-judge-hands-downs-sentences-holy-land-foundation-case>, accessed October 30, 2022.

492 Ibid.

493 *Terrorists in Suits*, 65, accessed October 25, 2022.

494 Ibid, 65.

495 Ibid, 66.

496 Ibid, 66.

497 Ibid, 66. See also "Our Story," AJP Action, <https://ajpaction.org/services/ourstory/>, accessed October 30, 2022.

498 Abha Shankar, "Judge finds evidence linking AMP to Hamas supporters for lawsuit to proceed," *Jewish News Syndicate*, May 24, 2022, <https://www.jns.org/opinion/judge-finds-evidence-linking-amp-to-hamas-supporters-for-lawsuit-to-proceed/>, accessed October 30, 2022. See also Melissa Weiss, "Federal judge rejects American Muslims for Palestine motion to dismiss decades-old terror-financing case," *Jewish Insider*, May 19, 2022, <https://jewishinsider.com/2022/05/david-boim-american-muslims-for-palestine-lawsuit/>, accessed October 30, 2022.

499 Ibid.

500 Ibid.

501 Ibid.

apartheid wall and the more than 600 checkpoints, obstacles and other barriers to the freedom of movement.⁵⁰²

Despite evidence linking AMP to Hamas, the organization's official website states that it is an "independent, American organization and not affiliated with any foreign entities or organizations."⁵⁰³ AMP's funds flow through a lobbying firm named AJP Educational Foundation Inc; additionally, it is worth noting that Hatem Bazian heads both organizations.⁵⁰⁴ In 2019, AMP raised \$1.2 million, while operating costs amounted to \$1.3 million.⁵⁰⁵ In late 2021, AMP policy director Osama Abuirshaid appeared alongside PFLP terrorist Leila Khaled and Hamas founder Sami Khater.⁵⁰⁶ Far from being separate, evidence indicates ties between AMP and terrorism in the Middle East. On college campuses, AMP is one of the main engines of the BDS movement. It holds an annual conference for anti-Israel activists and students at its Chicago headquarters.⁵⁰⁷

SJP and Terrorism

SJP is the premier campus organization behind the BDS movement in academia. It is the main organization promoting BDS resolutions at the level of student government, and the foremost anti-Israel organization in universities pressuring administrations to divest from Israel. However, despite its organizational structure as separate chapters on campuses around the country, SJP receives training from AMP and retains ties to the BNC.⁵⁰⁸ It is largely through connections with these two organizations that SJP has ties to terrorism.

In 2014, AMP's annual fundraiser featured Jamal Said of the Chicago-based Mosque Foundation.⁵⁰⁹ A decade prior, Said raised funds on behalf Sami Al-Arian, who was then under suspicion of assisting terrorism.⁵¹⁰ In 2006, Al-Arian plead guilty to assisting Palestinian Islamic Jihad while working as a professor at the University of South

502 "Statement of Principles," American Muslims for Palestine, <https://www.ampalestine.org/about-amp/statement-principles>, accessed October 30, 2022.

503 *Ibid.*

504 "American Muslims for Palestine," NGO Monitor, April 5, 2022, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/american-muslims-for-palestine-amp/>, accessed October 30, 2022.

505 *Ibid.*

506 "Head of Palestinian American lobby group joins conference with terror-group members," *Jewish News Syndicate*, accessed October 31, 2022.

507 "Homepage," Palestine Convention, <https://www.palestineconvention.org/>, accessed October 31, 2022.

508 Diker, *Students for Justice in Palestine Unmasked*, 8-9, 11-12.

509 "American Muslims for Palestine, Annual Fundraising Dinner," Facebook, 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/ampalestinechicago/photos/gm.140704112890451/597477577008212/?type=3&theater>, accessed October 31, 2022.

510 Press Release, "Sami Al-Arian Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy to Provide Services to Palestinian Islamic Jihad," US Department of Justice, April 17, 2006, https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/April/06_crm_221.html, accessed October 31, 2022.

Florida,⁵¹¹ and was later deported in 2015.⁵¹² Said's organization, the Mosque Foundation, has faced scrutiny for years over its ties to terrorist financing. The Mosque Foundation's bank account was frozen in 2005 due to its donations to the Islamic African Relief Agency, another organization tied to terrorism through its links to Osama bin Laden.⁵¹³ In total, the Mosque Foundation donated at least \$374,000 to charities designated as supporters of terrorism.⁵¹⁴ Jamal Said has been a keynote speaker at AMP's annual conferences in 2014, 2015, and 2016.⁵¹⁵

In a 2016 hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, Jonathan Schanzer of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies noted the prominence of AMP as a "sponsor and organizer" for SJP.⁵¹⁶ The congressional hearing notes the cosmetic separation between AMP and the Americans for Justice in Palestine Education Foundation (AJP), as well as the support AMP provides to SJP by means of funding, training materials, and campus speakers.⁵¹⁷

While SJP chapters do receive support from AMP, they also receive funds from individual schools and universities. Returned Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) responses collated by the Jerusalem-based watchdog NGO Monitor found that the SJP receives regular largesse from university administrations.⁵¹⁸

Figure 6.2: Snapshot Funding of SJP Chapters on Campus 2008–2013 (Source: NGO Monitor)

School	Event	Date	Funding Amount
San Diego State University	Palestine Awareness Week	2010–2013	\$14,000
University of California, Irvine	Omar Barghouti, Guest Speaker	July 3, 2013	\$2,280
San Diego State University	Hatem Bazian, Guest Speaker	2010	\$4,000
California State University, Long Beach	Palestine Awareness Week	2013	\$850

Both Hatem Bazian of AMP and Omar Barghouti of the BNC are regularly involved with SJP's campus activities, while both organizations are linked to terrorism. The BNC

511 Press Release, "Sami Al-Arian Pleads Guilty," US Department of Justice, accessed October 31, 2022.

512 Murtaza Hussain, "Exclusive Interview: Sami Al-Arian, Professor Who Defeated Controversial Terrorism Changes, Is Deported From US," *The Intercept*, Feb. 5, 2015, (<https://theintercept.com/2015/02/05/sami-al-arian-charged-terrorism-never-convicted-deported-today-u-s/>), accessed Nov. 1, 2022.

513 Sam Westrop, "Congressional Candidates Withdraw from Event at Jihadist Mosque," *Focus on Western Islamism*, Aug. 15, 2022, (<https://www.meforum.org/63462/congressional-candidates-withdraw-from-event/>), accessed Nov. 1, 2022.

514 Ibid.

515 Morton Klein, Press Release, "Former Treasury Official: Hamas Group Funds BDS/SJP Groups," Zionist Organization of America, May 3, 2016, (<https://zoa.org/2016/05/10323011-former-treasury-official-hamas-group-funds-bdssjp-groups/>), accessed Oct. 31, 2022.

516 Jonathan Schanzer, "Israel Imperiled: Threats to the Jewish State," Joint Hearing before House Foreign Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, Washington DC, April 19, 2016, (<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA18/20160419/104817/HHRG-114-FA18-Wstate-SchanzerJ-20160419.pdf>), accessed Oct. 31, 2022, 2.

517 Ibid.

518 Yona Schiffmiller, *BDS On Campus: SJP and Its NGO Network*, (Jerusalem: NGO Monitor, 2015), 4-5.

works with SJP through hosting speakers and facilitating conferences. In 2010, AMP announced it would sponsor SJP students to attend the US Social Forum in Detroit, which ultimately became the first “national” SJP conference.⁵¹⁹ The 2010 Social Forum, similarly, was sponsored by the BNC and included Salah Khawaja and Khalida Jarrar from the PFLP, who helped found SJP at the national level.⁵²⁰ Other organizations present at SJP’s founding conference included the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Free Gaza Movement.⁵²¹

Conclusion

Ties between the BDS movement on campus and terrorism are multifaceted and consist of linkages between nonviolent activist organizations and terrorist groups by means of funding, key individuals, and publicity campaigns that inhabit the same ideological universe. Ties between SJP, BNC, and AMP form the core connection between BDS on campus and terrorism; however, these ties are not exhaustive. The PFLP and Hamas have a prominent presence in the BDS movement, while the BNC’s organizational membership connects to multiple Palestinian terrorist groups. Often, ties between BDS activism and terrorism derive from anti-Israel political activity involving the same key individuals. As noted above, many key individuals involved in the Holy Land Foundation ultimately came to work with AMP and constitute part of a network connected to terrorism through financing, ideological support, and organizing.

Multiple individuals prominent in the BDS movement have a presence in academia. AMP’s Hatem Bazian remains on faculty at UC Berkeley, where he is a continuing lecturer of ethnic studies.⁵²² Sami Al-Arian taught computer engineering at the University of South Florida.⁵²³ As noted earlier in this report, UC Riverside’s David Lloyd is a founding member of USACBI, and is the faculty advisor for the campus’ SJP chapter.⁵²⁴ Indeed, the existence of Faculty for Justice in Palestine (FSJP), a group of academics devoted to supporting SJP’s activities and mission, indicates that academia is a key supportive industry of the BDS movement rather than an unwilling venue for anti-Israel activism and anti-Semitism.⁵²⁵

519 Diker, *Students for Justice in Palestine Unmasked*, 12-13.

520 *Ibid.*, 13.

521 *Ibid.*, 13.

522 “Faculty, Hatem Bazian,” Department of Ethnic Studies, UC Berkeley, accessed October 31, 2022.

523 Meg Laughlin, “Al-Arian’s wife bids goodbye before moving to Egypt,” *Tampa Bay Times*, June 30, 2007, https://web.archive.org/web/20120124022420/http://www.sptimes.com/2007/06/30/Hillsborough/Al_Arian_s_wife_bids_.shtml, accessed October 31, 2022.

524 David Lloyd, contributor page, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/contributor/david-lloyd/#!>, accessed October 31, 2022.

525 “Faculty for Justice in Palestine,” USACBI, accessed October 31, 2022.

The BDS Movement in Lawfare and Woke Capitalism in the US

Introduction

The BDS movement is international, widespread, and influential on campuses where it is present. While investigative researchers with pro-Israel think tanks and the Israeli government have published multiple reports on aspects of the BDS movement, less work has been done that examines the financing behind the foundations and charities that enable the movement to operate. Beyond campus student activism agitating for divestment measures from student governments, and behind the professional organizing that trains student activist organizations, lies a network of legal and financial support organizations that empowers the campus BDS movement to function. This chapter examines the support system and funding behind the BDS movement on campus, and the charitable foundations and companies that support it. First, the main legal organizations that support the BDS movement will be examined, along with their own financial supporters. The second half of this chapter examines the financial foundations of the campus movement's professional supporters in the realm of lobbying and higher-profile activism beyond the university. As will be shown below, the BDS movement relies upon a deep financial system of progressively oriented businesses and nonprofit foundations devoted to a broad array of social justice causes.

Pro-Palestinian Lawfare: Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights

SJP's aggressive activism brought it into direct confrontation with pro-Israel groups and some college administrations. Allegations of terrorist ties and anti-Semitism have brought the BDS into multiple legal battles ranging from defense against assault allegations to First Amendment lawsuits. The BDS movement has developed a number of legal

organizations devoted to promoting groups such as SJP and defending pro-Palestinian activists. Such legal, or “lawfare,” organizations connote a parallel support system in conjunction with the professional activism training provided by groups such as AMP. The two main legal advocacy groups that support the BDS movement on campus are Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR).

Palestine Legal

Founded in 2012, Palestine Legal is an organization devoted to supporting pro-Palestinian activist groups. Palestine Legal describes itself as an “independent organization dedicated to protecting the civil and constitutional rights of people in the US who speak out for Palestinian freedom.”⁵²⁶ While it is not the only prominent lawfare group supporting the BDS movement, it accurately describes itself as the only group “exclusively dedicated to supporting the movement for Palestinian rights.”⁵²⁷ Palestine Legal notes that the burgeoning campus-based BDS movement needs legal support when it faces “suppression.”⁵²⁸ According to Palestine Legal, it has supported BDS activists facing alleged suppression in 1,707 “incidents” between 2014 and 2020.⁵²⁹ Many of the perceived threats facing Palestine Legal’s clients include “false and inflammatory accusations of anti-Semitism and support for terrorism.”⁵³⁰ Virtually all of the disputes and cases in which Palestine Legal describes itself as involved revolve around university and campus activism.⁵³¹

One prominent case involves Palestine Legal’s civil suit against Fordham University for denying official status to an SJP chapter on campus. In 2015, SJP attempted to open a chapter at Fordham, only to be denied by the college administration and in an override of Fordham’s student government.⁵³² The Fordham administration ostensibly denied SJP’s status on the grounds that the group would toxify the campus social environment.⁵³³ From 2017–2021, Palestine Legal and CCR sued Fordham University on behalf of SJP students at the college under Article 78 of New York’s Civil Practice Law and Rules.⁵³⁴ Palestine Legal and CCR succeeded in court against Fordham, securing a compelling motion to allow SJP to temporarily operate on campus until 2020, when the appellate

526 “What We Do,” Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/about>, accessed November 2, 2022.

527 *Ibid.*

528 “The Issue,” Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/about-the-issue>, accessed November 2, 2022.

529 *Ibid.*

530 *Ibid.*

531 “Case Highlights,” Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/cases>, accessed November 2, 2022.

532 “Case Highlights, Fordham Bans Students for Justice in Palestine,” Palestine Legal, June 10, 2021, <https://palestinelegal.org/case-studies/2017/3/9/fordham-bans-students-for-justice-in-palestine#:~:text=After%20the%20court%20ordered%20Fordham,to%20ban%20SJP%20once%20again.>, accessed November 2, 2022.

533 *Ibid.*

534 “Case Highlights, Fordham Bans Students for Justice in Palestine,” Palestine Legal, accessed November 2, 2022.

court overturned the motion in favor of the campus administration.⁵³⁵ The case ended in 2021, when the New York Court of Appeals refused SJP's appeal for recognition.⁵³⁶

Palestine Legal's case against Fordham is noteworthy, particularly as it underscores the ability of a private university to prevent anti-Semitism from forming an organizational presence on campus. Additionally, the Fordham case illustrates the BDS movement's ability to legally intimidate a university administration. In a 2016 email to SJP, Fordham University dean Keith Eldredge noted that SJP is not an ordinary campus organization, but rather one "whose sole purpose is advocating political goals of a specific group, and against a specific country."⁵³⁷ Despite Eldredge's rationale, Justice Nancy Bannon described the administration's refusal to recognize SJP as "made in large part because of the subject of SJP's criticism is the State of Israel, rather than some other nation, in spite of the fact that SJP advocates only legal, nonviolent tactics aimed at changing Israel's policies."⁵³⁸ Katherine Kuemerle, Fordham SJP's treasurer, noted that Palestine Legal and CCR worked alongside student activists in "social media and marketing assistance," and beyond the confines of pure legal representation.⁵³⁹

While Palestine Legal's Fordham case exemplifies the BDS movement's legal trajectory as it relates to campus activism, a number of its cases demonstrate the extent to which it will attempt to coerce or sway university administrations in order to further the prominence and power of groups such as SJP. In 2021, Palestine Legal demanded that George Washington University offer support services for "Palestinian community members" suffering "trauma" related to Israeli security actions in Gaza.⁵⁴⁰ In 2020, Palestine Legal also worked alongside CAIR to pressure Florida State University to support Ahmad Daraldik, a Palestinian student president facing alleged harassment amid accusations of anti-Semitism.⁵⁴¹ The Daraldik controversy emerged after he posted multiple social media posts comparing Israel to Nazi Germany, stating, "stupid jew thinks he is cool," and saying, simply, "f*** Israel."⁵⁴²

535 Ibid.

536 Ibid.

537 Email from Keith Eldridge, December 22, 2016, Exhibit A, New York County Clerk, filed June 5, 2017, <https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/fbem/DocumentDisplayServlet?documentId=ZO3dXWnxrZWkJtyo-CAb9tQ==&system=prod>, accessed October 21, 2022.

538 Gunar Olson, "Fordham's Students for Justice in Palestine Did More Than Win Club Status," *The Nation*, August 13, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/fordhams-students-for-justice-in-palestine-did-more-than-win-club-status/>, accessed October 31, 2022.

539 Joe Kottke and Vicky Carmenate, "Students for Justice in Palestine Face Fordham in Court Once Again," *Fordham Observer*, November 29, 2020, <https://fordhamobserver.com/52547/recent/news/sjp-students-for-justice-in-palestine-face-fordham-in-court-once-again/>, accessed October 22, 2022.

540 "Case Highlights: Anti-Palestinian Discrimination and Retaliation at George Washington University," Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/case-studies/2022/1/28/anti-palestinian-discrimination-retaliation-at-george-washington-university>, accessed October 22, 2022.

541 "Case Highlights: Student Leader Challenges Anti-Palestinian Campus Climate," Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/case-studies/2021/4/13/student-leader-challenges-anti-palestinian-campus-climate-at-florida-state-university>, accessed October 22, 2022.

542 Exhibit 1, Resolution No. 2020 from the City of Hallandale Beach Florida Condemning the Anti-Semitic Social Media Posts Made by the Florida State University Senate President, August 2020, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/548748b1e4b083fc03ebf70e/t/6070cb68325728641c673e1a/1618004840884/August+5+Hallandale-Beach-Commission-Resolution+Condemning+Ahmad.pdf>, accessed November 2, 2022.

Beyond the confines of the campus BDS movement, Palestine Legal has worked to oppose state and federal legislation designed to counter boycotts of Israel. The group also opposes the adoption of the definition of anti-Semitism from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which labels the demonization of Israel as anti-Semitic.⁵⁴³ In 2019, Palestine Legal published a report alongside CCR against the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) over its support for anti-BDS legislation.⁵⁴⁴ Palestine Legal's director, Dima Khalidi, stated that "ALEC's legislative attacks on advocacy for Palestinian rights are part of its racist, reactionary agenda, and should concern all who are working for social justice in the US."⁵⁴⁵ Similar to BDS groups that frame their cause as a progressive social justice issue rather than a movement of Palestinian nationalism, the BDS movement's legal support organizations frame their lawsuits in similar ideological language.

Financial Support for Palestine Legal: The Tides Foundation

On its official website, Palestine Legal notes that it is a "fiscally sponsored project of the Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization."⁵⁴⁶ Headquartered in San Francisco,⁵⁴⁷ the Tides Foundation states that it has "sponsored" 1,400 projects across more than 120 countries since its founding in 1976.⁵⁴⁸ The Tides Foundation is not an organization specifically devoted to Palestinian causes, but rather is focused on funding an array of social justice and left-wing initiatives. The Tides Foundation states that it "accelerates the pace of social change, working with innovative partners to solve society's toughest problems."⁵⁴⁹

The Tides Foundation was founded by Drummond Pike, who is one of the earliest pioneers of activist-driven investing and the melding of social justice politics with big business.⁵⁵⁰ A philanthropist devoted to progressive causes, Pike helped bail out the activist group ACORN in 2008.⁵⁵¹ Like the Tides Foundation, ACORN formed in the 1970s

543 "Types of Legislation," Palestine Legal, <https://legislation.palestinelegal.org/types-of-legislation/#antisemitism-redefinition>, accessed November 2, 2022.

544 "New Report Details Impact of Secretive American Legislative Exchange Council on Communities of Color," Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/news/2019/12/3/report-alec-impact-communities-of-color>, accessed November 2, 2022.

545 Ibid.

546 "About Us," Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/about>, accessed October 31, 2022.

547 "Contact Us," Tides Center, <https://www.tides.org/contact/>, accessed October 31, 2022.

548 "Homepage," Tides Center, <https://www.tides.org/>, accessed October 31, 2022.

549 "Our Mission," Tides Center, <https://www.tides.org/about/vision-mission-approach/>, accessed October 31, 2022.

550 Christina Williams, "Equilibrium Capital hires Tides' Drummond Pike," *Portland Business Journal*, April 20, 2011, <https://www.bizjournals.com/portland/blog/sbo/2011/04/equilibrium-capital-hires-tides.html>, accessed October 30, 2022.

551 Stephanie Storm, "Head of Foundation Bailed Out Nonprofit Group After Its Funds Were Embezzled," *New York Times*, August 16, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/17/us/17acorn.html>, accessed October 31, 2022.

to advance progressive political agendas; however, it became defunct after embezzlement scandals and investigations into voter fraud.⁵⁵² Pike is a prominent donor to the Democratic Party, having donated \$27,700 to various Democratic candidates and initiatives during the 2016 election cycle.⁵⁵³ Tides is currently led by Janiece Evans-Page, former head of sustainability and diversity at the Fossil Group and member of the Board of Trustees for Southern New Hampshire University.⁵⁵⁴

Tides' initiatives are divided across multiple "funds": the Frontline Justice Fund, the Healthy Democracy Fund, We Lead, which is devoted to women in environmental activism, and the Advancing Girls Fund.⁵⁵⁵ For pro-Palestinian activism, the Tides Foundation lists three "partner" organizations: Palestine Legal, the Adalah Justice Project, and the Arab Resource and Organizing Center.⁵⁵⁶ Tides describes the Adalah Justice Project as "aiming to shift public discourse and policy on Palestine" by working toward "collective liberation" and "linking the human rights struggles of Palestinians to both the occupation of indigenous people within the US and the BLM movement."⁵⁵⁷

The Tides Foundation provides significant funding to Palestine Legal and other progressive causes. From 2007 to the present, the Tides Foundation reported \$2.6 billion in revenue, of which it gave out \$607 million in grants in 2020.⁵⁵⁸ According to Influence Watch, the Tides Foundation receives millions of dollars per year in donations from a wide array of charitable funds and corporate donors:

Figure 7.1: Major Tides Donors 1998–2018 (Source: Influence Watch)⁵⁵⁹

Donor	Amount
Annie E. Casey Foundation	\$946,500
Arca Foundation	\$542,000
Bauman Family Foundation	\$2,773,787
California Endowment	\$4,265,828

552 Bonnie Erbe, "Obama's ACORN Connection to Voter Fraud," *US News*, October 10, 2008, <https://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/erbe/2008/10/10/obamas-acorn-connection-to-voter-fraud>, accessed October 30, 2022.

See also "The Fall of ACORN," *The Week*, January 8, 2015, <https://theweek.com/articles/496396/fall-acorn-timeline>, accessed November 2, 2022. See also "18 Former ACORN Workers Have Been Convicted or Admitted Guilt in Election Fraud," *Fox News*, December 23, 2015, <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/18-former-acorn-workers-have-been-convicted-or-admitted-guilt-in-election-fraud>, accessed October 31, 2022.

553 "Drummond Pike Political Campaign Donations, 2016 election cycle," *CampaignMoney.com*, <https://www.campaignmoney.com/finance.asp?type=in&cycle=16&criteria=pike&fname=drummond>, accessed October 31, 2022.

554 "Board of Directors," Tides Foundation, <https://www.tides.org/about/board/#:~:text=Janiece%20Evans%2DPage%20is%20the,face%20systemic%20barriers%20to%20opportunities>, accessed October 31, 2022.

555 "Funds and Initiatives," Tides Foundation, <https://www.tides.org/funds-initiatives/>, accessed October 31, 2022.

556 Iriñi Neofotistos, "Meet These Extraordinary Palestinian Leaders and Learn About Their Work," Tides Foundation, June 7, 2021, <https://www.tides.org/priority-issues/equality-human-rights/extraordinary-palestinian-leaders-and-their-work/>, accessed November 1, 2022.

557 *Ibid.*

558 See Form 990, Tides Foundation, 2007-2020, Part I, Lines 12, 13, Influence Watch, <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/tides-foundation/>, accessed November 2, 2022.

559 "Tides Foundation," Influence Watch, <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/tides-foundation/>, accessed November 1, 2022.

Carnegie Corporation of New York	\$823,486
David and Lucile Packard Foundation	\$492,000
Ford Foundation	\$26,410,759
Foundation to Promote Open Society	\$10,259,289
Open Society Foundations	\$12,130,241
Gill Foundation	\$3,292,700
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	\$340,986
Nick and Leslie Hanauer Foundation	\$640,384
Oak Foundation USA	\$392,754
Omidyar Network Fund	\$818,000
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	\$2,236,350
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	\$5,373,108
Rockefeller Family Fund	\$460,914
Rockefeller Foundation	\$1,661,055
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors	\$3,525,000
W.K. Kellogg Foundation	\$3,131,201
Wallace Global Fund II	\$8,621,001
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	\$8,317,690

The Tides Foundation is heavily influential in funding a constellation of key anti-Israel organizations. Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), noted in 2021 that Tides contributes heavily to anti-Israel organizations aside from Palestine Legal:

Figure 7.2: Tides Support for Anti-Israel Groups (2018–2019)⁵⁶⁰

Organization	Amount	Years
Institute for Middle East Understanding	\$200,000	2018-2019
Jewish Voice for Peace	\$175,000	2018-2019
Code Pink	\$105,400	2018-2019
CAIR: Philadelphia and Arizona Chapters	\$60,000	2019
National Lawyers Guild	\$1,030,500	2018-2019
Center for Constitutional Rights	\$90,893	2018-2019

While Tides helps provide financial support for multiple anti-Israel groups supportive of BDS, key individuals affiliated with the foundation's leadership have held prominent positions in academic administration. During his undergraduate years at the University of California, Santa Cruz in the late 1960s, Drummond Pike

⁵⁶⁰ Morton Klein, "The anti-Semitic Tides Foundation is far worse than previously reported," *Jewish News Service*, July 7, 2021, <https://www.jns.org/opinion/the-anti-semitic-tides-foundation-is-far-worse-than-reported/>, accessed November 1, 2022.

served as a campus representative to the University of California Board of Regents.⁵⁶¹ Janiece Evans-Page, Tides' current CEO, is on the board of Southern New Hampshire University.⁵⁶² The president of Temple University, Jason Wingard, also served on Tides' Board of Directors.⁵⁶³

One notable curiosity about Tides is that some of the voluminous funding it offers its beneficiaries goes to pro-Israel organizations, including Hillel at the University of Washington, the American Jewish Committee, the National Council of Young Israel, and the Israel on Campus Coalition.⁵⁶⁴ One possible explanation for the competing activist funding from Tides is that the scope of donations and grants is sufficiently large to obfuscate competing causes facing Tides' benefactors. Notably, Sid Espinosa and Janiece Evans-Page, two members of Tides' Board of Directors, both held executive positions at Hewlett-Packard (HP). Espinosa worked as HP's Director of Philanthropy, while Evans-Page worked for its Imaging and Printing Attach Organization.⁵⁶⁵ HP is a corporate target of the BDS movement, and in 2021 it issued a statement affirming its commitment to the "highest standards of business conduct" in the face of BDS pressures and publicity.⁵⁶⁶ This conflict between pro-BDS and pro-Israel corporate behavior may derive from the political orientations of key individuals, or it may simply reflect indifference or legitimate ignorance among competing BDS and Israel supporters.

The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR)

The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) is a legal foundation that supports the BDS movement alongside other prominent left-wing causes. Palestine Legal recognizes CCR as a partner organization and designates its own attorneys as "CCR cooperating counsel."⁵⁶⁷ Dima Khalidi worked for CCR prior to founding Palestine Legal.⁵⁶⁸ Founded in 1966,⁵⁶⁹ CCR is significantly older than most organizations related to BDS and has litigated a number of cases in arenas ranging from immigration to LGBTQ causes. It has also

561 "Drummond Pike, Contributor Page," *Huffington Post*, <https://www.huffpost.com/author/drummond-pike>, accessed November 3, 2022.

562 "About the Board of Directors," Tides Foundation, <https://www.tides.org/about/board/>, accessed November 3, 2022.

563 Klein, "The anti-Semitic Tides Foundation is far worse than previously reported," accessed November 1, 2022. See also "Dr. Jason Wingard, Temple University's 12th President," Office of the President, Temple University, <https://president.temple.edu/about-president>, accessed November 3, 2022.

564 Mitchell Bard, "BDS Money Trail Suggests Opaque Funding Network," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 14, 2015, <https://www.jta.org/2015/10/14/ny/bds-money-trail-suggests-opaque-funding-network>, accessed October 1, 2022.

565 "About the Board of Directors," Tides Foundation, accessed Oct. 31, 2022.

566 Press Release, "HP Statement on Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)," HP, May 25, 2021, <https://press.hp.com/us/en/blogs/2021/hp-statement-on-boycott-divestment-sanctions-campaign.html>, accessed October 31, 2022.

567 "What We Do," Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/about>, accessed November 2, 2022.

568 "Dima Khalidi," Palestine Legal, <https://palestinelegal.org/staff#dima>, accessed October 10, 2022.

569 "About Us," Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/who-we-are/mission-and-vision>, accessed November 3, 2022.

represented terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay.⁵⁷⁰ CCR claims to defend “social justice movements and communities under threat—fusing litigation, advocacy, and narrative shifting to dismantle systems of oppression regardless of the risk.”⁵⁷¹ Unlike purely legal advocacy groups, CCR describes its approach in fundamentally activist terms beyond litigation. CCR’s advocacy includes “narrative shifting” and marketing, and it considers a “case’s value to the social movements of which it is a part.”⁵⁷² Prior to working at CCR, the group’s advocacy director, Nadia Ben-Youssef, co-founded the Adalah Justice Project.⁵⁷³

Unlike more symbolic efforts by the BDS movement, CCR directly confronts companies it deems to be in cooperation with Israel. In 2005, CCR filed suit against Caterpillar Inc. over the death of an American activist named Rachel Corrie, as well as over Palestinians who died when Israeli forces demolished a home in Gaza during the Second Intifada.⁵⁷⁴ At the time of her death, Corrie was an undergraduate student at Evergreen State College and a member of the anti-Israel International Solidarity Movement.⁵⁷⁵ The case was brought under the Alien Tort Statute and Torture Victim Protection Act; however, the case was ultimately dismissed on the grounds that it interfered with US foreign policy.⁵⁷⁶ Years later, leaked corporate documents from Caterpillar revealed that the company hired investigators to monitor the family seeking suit for Corrie’s death.⁵⁷⁷ CCR has also attempted to sue former Shin Bet director Avi Dichter⁵⁷⁸ and the US Department of Defense for information related to Israeli security operations.⁵⁷⁹

One prominent case involved Steven Salaita, a professor of American Indian studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign who was dismissed in 2014 over anti-Semitic social media posts.⁵⁸⁰ Salaita’s appointment was blocked after 1,300 signatures

570 Jenna Greene, “Pro Bono Heroes: Jenner, rights center seek justice for Gitmo detainee,” Reuters, January 31, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/pro-bono-heroes-jenner-rights-center-seek-justice-gitmo-detainee-2022-01-31/>, accessed November 3, 2022.

571 “About Us,” Center for Constitutional Rights, accessed November 3, 2022.

572 “How We Define Victory,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/how-we-work/how-we-define-victory>, accessed November 3, 2022.

573 “Who We Are, Nadia Ben-Youssef,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/who-we-are/staff/ben-youssef-nadia>, accessed November 4, 2022.

574 “Corrie et al. v. Caterpillar,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/corrie-et-al-v-caterpillar>, accessed October 31, 2022. See also “Israeli bulldozer kills American protestor,” CNN, March 25, 2003, <http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/03/16/rafah.death/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

575 “Israeli bulldozer kills American protestor,” CNN, accessed November 5, 2022.

576 Corrie et al. v. Caterpillar, Center for Constitutional Rights, accessed October 31, 2022. See also Ed Pilkington, “Families cannot sue firm for Israel deaths,” *The Guardian*, September 19, 2007, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/sep/19/usa.israel>, accessed November 5, 2022.

577 “Report: Caterpillar Hired Intelligence Firm to Spy on Rachel Corrie’s Family, Leaked Documents Reveal,” *Haaretz*, December 12, 2017, <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/2017-12-12/ty-article/report-caterpillar-spied-on-rachel-corries-mourning-family-leaked-documents-reveal/0000017f-f856-d460-aff-fb76e25e0000>, accessed November 5, 2022.

578 “Matar et al v. Dichter,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/matar-et-al-v-dichter>, accessed November 4, 2022.

579 “CCR v. Department of Defense/Gaza Freedom Flotilla FOIA,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/ccr-v-department-defensegaza-freedom-flotilla-foia>, accessed November 4, 2022.

580 “Salaita v. Kennedy, et al,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/>

opposing it were presented to the university's board of trustees.⁵⁸¹ Salaita's refused appointment rallied multiple academic associations to his defense, including the American Association of University Professors, the Modern Language Association, and the Society of American Law Teachers.⁵⁸² After CCR's involvement and suit against the University of Illinois, the university settled for \$875,000.⁵⁸³

CCR is heavily embedded in academia, as many of its board members are faculty members at universities:

Figure 7.3: CCR Board Members with Faculty Positions (Source: Center for Constitutional Rights)⁵⁸⁴

Board Member	Faculty Position
Katherine Acey	Senior Activist Fellow, Barnard Center for Research on Women
Amna Akbar	Charles W. Ebersold and Florence Whitcomb Ebersold Professor of Law, The Ohio State University
Amanda Alexander	Senior Research Scholar, University of Michigan Law School
Rosemary Corbett	Faculty Fellow, Bard Prison Initiative
Lisa Crooms-Robinson	Professor of Law, Howard University School of Law
Catherine Coleman Flowers	Senior Fellow, Center for Earth Ethics at Union Theological Seminary
Sylvester Johnson	Assistant Vice Provost for Humanities and Executive Director of "Tech for Humanity Initiative," Virginia Tech
Gay McDougall	Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence, Leitner Center for International Law and Justice, Fordham University School of Law
Priscilla Ocen	Professor of Law, Loyola Law School

In 2018, CCR's then-chairwoman of the board, Katherine Franke, was denied entry into Israel as part of a trip to "explore the intersection of Black and Brown people's experiences in the US with the situation of the Palestinians."⁵⁸⁵ Franke is well known for anti-Israel advocacy as part of her work as Sulzbacher Professor of Law, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Columbia University.⁵⁸⁶ Franke, who is also on the Executive Committee for Columbia's Center for Palestine Studies, was at the center of controversy

[salaita-v-kennedy-et-al](#), accessed November 4, 2022.

581 Robert Mackey, "Professor's Angry Tweets on Gaza Cost Him a Job," *New York Times*, September 12, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/13/world/middleeast/professors-angry-tweets-on-gaza-cost-him-a-job.html>, accessed November 4, 2022.

582 "Salaita v. Kennedy, et al," Center for Constitutional Rights, accessed November 4, 2022.

583 Press Release, "Settlement Reached in Case of Professor Fired for "Uncivil" Tweets," Center for Constitutional Rights official website, [https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/settlement-reached-case-professor-fired-uncivil-tweets#:~:text=Salaita's%20firing%20became%20a%20flashpoint,has%20agreed%20to%20pay%20\\$24875%2C000.](https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/settlement-reached-case-professor-fired-uncivil-tweets#:~:text=Salaita's%20firing%20became%20a%20flashpoint,has%20agreed%20to%20pay%20$24875%2C000.), accessed November 4, 2022.

584 "Who We Are, Board of Trustees," Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/who-we-are/board>, accessed November 5, 2022.

585 Press Release, "Center for Constitutional Rights Executive Director and Board Chair Both Denied Entry into Israel," Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/center-constitutional-rights-executive-director-and-board-chair>, November 5, 2022.

586 *Ibid.* See also "Katherine Franke Faculty Page," Columbia University Law School, (<https://www.law.columbia.edu/faculty/katherine-m-franke>), accessed November 4, 2022.

between Columbia and ZOA after she hosted a workshop for high school teachers on “Citizenship and Nationality in Israel/Palestine” in 2015.⁵⁸⁷ Columbia’s workshop is now a component of the university’s Open University Project.⁵⁸⁸

Vincent Warren, CCR’s executive director, was denied entry into Israel alongside Katherine Franke and is similarly well known for his demonization of the Jewish state. In 2021, Warren participated in a panel at a conference hosted by Istanbul Zaim University’s Center for Islam and Global Affairs entitled “Understanding the Struggle Against White Supremacy and Zionism.”⁵⁸⁹ Other participants at the Istanbul conference included Sami Al-Arian, who admitted to assisting Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Mohammad Akram Al-Adlouni, who is linked to funding Hamas, and AMP’s policy director, Osama Abuirshaid.⁵⁹⁰

According to information compiled from Internal Revenue Service Form 990s from 2011 to 2018, CCR’s funding has significantly grown:

Figure 7.4: CCR Revenue 2011–2018
(Source: Influence Watch Compilation of IRS 990 Reporting)⁵⁹¹

Year	Revenue
2011	\$6,286,295
2012	\$7,063,475
2013	\$6,695,972
2014	\$6,799,179
2015	\$8,331,942
2016	\$9,842,822
2017	\$22,733,539
2018	\$13,543,646

WESPAC Foundation

Similar to Tides, WESPAC Foundation formed in the 1970s as part of an increase in financial backing for left-wing activism. Founded in Westchester County, New York, in

587 Center for Constitutional Rights, “Zionist Organization Fails to Censor Columbia University Workshop on Israel/Palestine,” *Huffington Post*, June 22, 2015, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/zionist-organization-fail_b_7639874, accessed November 4, 2022.

588 “Readings on Citizenship and Nationality in Israel/Palestine, Structures of Difference and Democracy,” Open University Project, Columbia University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220801083223/https://web.law.columbia.edu/open-university-project/curricula/citizenshipnationalityisrael-palestine>, accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

589 “Conference Program, Second International Conference on Palestine,” Center for Islam and Global Affairs, June 18-23, 2021, <https://www.izu.edu.tr/en/ciga/conferences/palestine/2nd-international-conference-on-palestine/program>, accessed November 4, 2022.

590 “HRW, Other NGOs Join ‘Apartheid’ Event, Along with Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, PFLP,” *NGO Monitor*, June 17, 2021, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/hrw-apartheid-event-hamas-islamic-jihad-hezbollah-pflp/>, accessed November 4, 2022.

591 “Center for Constitutional Rights,” *Influence Watch*, <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/center-for-constitutional-rights/>, accessed November 4, 2022.

1974, WESPAC describes itself as a “leading force for social change,” “agitating and organizing for a more just and peaceful world, an end to militarism and racism and a more fair economy that works for all.”⁵⁹² Unlike Tides, WESPAC operates with considerably less financial depth. In 2020, WESPAC’s revenue only totaled \$411,082.⁵⁹³ While it is comparatively small, WESPAC’s PayPal page does process donations for the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN).⁵⁹⁴ WESPAC also collects funds for SJP and the Palestine Freedom Project.⁵⁹⁵ According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), WESPAC is a primary “fiscal sponsor” of SJP, and it receives funding from a number of nonprofit groups: the Sparkplug Foundation, the Elias Foundation, Cultures of Resistance, the Bafrayung Fund, the Violet Jabara Charitable Trust. It is also funded by the Yonkers City Government.⁵⁹⁶

US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

The US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, otherwise known as the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR), is a coordinating organization of other organizations devoted to anti-Israel activism. According to the pro-Israel group StandWithUs, the USCPR constitutes a collection of more than 300 groups that began cooperating as a network after the Second Intifada.⁵⁹⁷ USCPR’s Steering Committee links it to other groups and key anti-Semitic figures featured elsewhere in this report, including Rashid Khalidi of Columbia University, CCR Deputy Legal Director Maria LaHood, and Huwaida Arraf of the International Solidarity Movement. Well-known left-wing commentator Cornel West also serves on the Steering Committee.⁵⁹⁸

USCPR describes itself as a “political home for all who believe that freedom for the Palestinian people is an integral part of achieving our collective liberation.”⁵⁹⁹ For BDS, USCPR offers a number of resources designed to empower independent pro-BDS

592 Nada Khader, “About WESPAC,” WESPAC Foundation, <https://wespac.org/2013/06/11/about-wespac/>, accessed October 1, 2022.

593 WESPAC, IRS Form 990 for 2020, https://pdf.guidestar.org/PDF_Imag-es/2020/133/109/2020-133109400-202100119349301470-9.pdf?_gl=1*kdbln8*_ga*MTY5NTzY5NTc4MS4x-Njl4MTQ3MTU3*_ga_0H865XH5JK*MTYzMTIwMzY1Ny43LjEuMTYzMTIwMzY2My4w*_ga_5W8PXYYG-BX*MTYzMTIwMzY1Ny43LjEuMTYzMTIwMzY2My4w&_ga=2.231964060.2097257137.1631193496-1697695781.1628147157, accessed June 20, 2022.

594 “Contribute to IJAN,” International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network, <http://www.ijan.org/get-involved/>, accessed Nov. 7, 2022.

595 Mitchell Bard, “BDS Money Trail Suggests Opaque Funding Network,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 14, 2015, <https://www.jta.org/2015/10/14/ny/bds-money-trail-suggests-opaque-funding-network>, accessed October 1, 2022.

596 Westchester Peace Action Committee Foundation, “Anti-Israel Activism on US Campuses 2021-2022,” Anti-Defamation League, October 10, 2022, <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/anti-israel-activism-us-campuses-2021-2022>, accessed October 31, 2022.

597 “The US Campaign for Palestinian Rights: A Deceptive Name for a Coalition of Extremists” Stand With Us, <https://www.standwithus.com/factsheets-uscpr>, accessed November 4, 2022.

598 “Steering Committee and Advisory Board,” US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, <https://uscpr.org/about-us/steering-committee-advisory-board/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

599 “Who We Are,” US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, <https://uscpr.org/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

activists. Among the resources it offers are a “BDS Toolkit” and a “Divestment Tool,” the latter of which allows consumer-activists to screen their own investments, and even entire portfolios, for exposure to companies deemed complicit in supporting Israel.⁶⁰⁰

USCPR’s financial support and activist influence are considerable given its organic nature. Unlike Tides, the bulk of USCPR’s funding derives from individual donations. According to its 2020 Annual Report, 67% of its funding derived from individual donors, from a total of 3,590 donors overall.⁶⁰¹ USCPR claims to have facilitated over 33,000 “actions” in promoting its message via grassroots support, including helping 68 organizations pressure Congress to support the Palestinians.⁶⁰² Politically, USCPR claims to have trained 146 local leaders in 91 different congressional districts.⁶⁰³

USCPR is reportedly linked to terrorism through its support of the BNC. According to *Tablet Magazine*, USCPR is a financial backer of the BNC, as it discovered by donating to the group and receiving a receipt and thank you email stating:

This is a receipt for your kind donation to the Palestinian BDS National Committee, the broadest coalition in Palestinian civil society that leads the global BDS movement for Palestinian rights. For your records, the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) is fiscally sponsored by Education for Just Peace in the Middle East, which is registered as a 501(c)3 charitable organization.⁶⁰⁴

While it is seemingly unrelated, USCPR’s official legal name is Education for Just Peace in the Middle East.⁶⁰⁵ Indeed, USCPR is registered as Education for Just Peace in the Middle East, under EIN 42-1636592.⁶⁰⁶ While it was originally formed in 2001, its current tax-exempt status is dated to 2005 and corresponds to the formal launch of the BDS movement.⁶⁰⁷

American Friends Service Committee

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is an outlier in the BDS movement for both its age and its origins as an organization. Founded in 1917, AFSC is noted as a Quaker organization committed to a number of initiatives around the globe. Initially

⁶⁰⁰ “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions,” US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, <https://uscpr.org/activist-resource/boycott-divestment-and-sanctions/>, accessed November 4, 2022. See also Divestment Tool, US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, <https://uscpr.org/activist-resource/boycott-divestment-and-sanctions/divestment-tool/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

⁶⁰¹ “Annual Report 2020,” US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, <https://www.uscpr2020.org/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁴ Rosen and Leibovitz, “BDS Umbrella Group Linked to Palestinian Terrorist Organizations,” accessed November 4, 2022.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.* See also “Education for a Just Peace in the Middle East,” Guidestar Nonprofit Search, <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/42-1636592>, accessed November 5, 2022.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

founded to support conscientious objectors during WWI, the AFSC asserts a commitment to working “at the forefront of social change movements.”⁶⁰⁸ Unlike many prominent organizations involved in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, the AFSC has worked in the Middle East since the end of the British Mandate, when it assisted Palestinian refugees after the 1948 Israeli War of Independence.⁶⁰⁹

Today, the AFSC works to “counter the militarization of Israeli society, understanding that widespread acceptance of militarism is one of the factors sustaining inequalities, occupation, and conflict.”⁶¹⁰ The AFSC began working with conscientious objectors in Israel in 2002, concurrent with its offerings of “nonviolent resistance” training with Palestinian NGOs.⁶¹¹

In the BDS movement, the AFSC works with JVP and “provides campus and community activists with training, resource, and ongoing support to organize and lead effective and sustainable divestment campaigns.”⁶¹² One of the AFSC’s initiatives resembles USCP’s “Divestment Tool” and consists of a database of searchable companies and investment portfolios for investors and managers to screen their holdings for companies accused of human rights abuses. For example, the AFSC “spotlights” companies and funds it targets for divestment, such as TIAA-CREF’s Social Choice Equity Fund over its inclusion of Caterpillar Inc. in its portfolio and its \$344.9 million allegedly involved in “Illegal Occupations.”⁶¹³ In 2012, TIAA-CREF dropped Caterpillar Inc. due to its equipment being used by the IDF.⁶¹⁴ Among its listings, the AFSC ranks companies by the number of “divestment targets,” which includes companies allegedly tied to Israeli security operations as well as companies involved in other AFSC areas of concern, such as “prison” and the “border.”⁶¹⁵ One of the key funds the AFSC highlights is the iShares MSCI Israel ETF, in which it targets 29 companies for divestment that are also targeted elsewhere in the BDS movement. Among the companies AFSC targets are firms such as Bank Hapoalim and Elbit Systems Ltd.⁶¹⁶

608 “The history of AFSC,” American Friends and Services Committee, <https://web.archive.org/web/20221123221119/https://www.afsc.org/content/history-afsc>, accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

609 “Our Work in Israel,” American Friends and Services Committee, <https://www.afsc.org/office/israel>, accessed November 5, 2022.

610 Ibid.

611 Jennifer Bing and Lucy Duncan, “Love Wins: Quaker Activism in Israel and Palestine,” *Quaker Religious Thought*, Vol. 127, Article 5, (2016), pp. 40-49, 48.

612 “Peace Building,” American Friends and Services Committee, <https://web.archive.org/web/20221124000501/https://www.afsc.org/we-divest>, accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

613 TIAA-CREF Social Choice Equity Fund, AFSC, <https://investigate.afsc.org/fund/2882368>, accessed November 5, 2022. See also Suzanne Morrison, “Organising the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement: the case of ‘we divest’ companies,” *Conflict, Security and Development*, Vol. 15, No. pp. 575-593, <https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/65674/1/Organising%20the%20boycott.pdf>, 9, accessed Feb. 20, 2023. See also American Friends Service Committee, (<https://investigate.afsc.org/company/caterpillar>), accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

614 Illinois Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, (<https://www.ilym.org/peaceresources/?p=530>), accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

615 AFSC Fund Search, “Israel,” American Friends and Services Committee, <https://investigate.afsc.org/fund-search?keyword=israel&strict=0>, accessed November 5, 2022.

616 iShares MSCI Israel ETF, AFSC Investment Search, American Friends and Services Committee, <https://investigate.afsc.org/fund/2885902>, accessed November 5, 2022. See also Investigate, American Friends Service Committee, Elbit Systems, (<https://investigate.afsc.org/company/elbit-systems>), accessed Feb. 20, 2023. See

Support for BDS is a core goal of the AFSC, which combines its campus activism with its business pressures against Israel. In 2014, the AFSC launched a “BDS Summer Institute” initiative aimed at undergraduate students alongside JVP.⁶¹⁷ The initiative included a five-day series of trainings on direct action, organizing, and narrative messaging.⁶¹⁸ Jihad Abusalim, education and policy coordinator for the AFSC’s Palestine Activism Program, is doctoral candidate at New York University in the field of Judaic studies.⁶¹⁹

The AFSC’s funding overlaps with that of Palestine Legal. According to NGO Monitor, the AFSC received \$89,500 from the Tides Foundation in 2019, as well as \$85,000 from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund specifically for its anti-Israel activities between 2018 and 2020.⁶²⁰ For the fiscal year ending in September 2020, the AFSC reported revenues of \$37,250,984.⁶²¹

Jewish Voice for Peace

Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) is a specifically pro-BDS organization focused on undermining support for Israel among American Jews. While JVP is prominent in the campus BDS movement, it originated on campus in 1996 when it was formed by several students at UC Berkeley.⁶²² JVP’s leadership and personnel link it to other pro-BDS organizations through dual or mutual positions:

Figure 7.5: Jewish Voice for Peace Leadership Linkages
(Source: Jewish Voice for Peace and NGO Monitor)⁶²³

Name	JVP Position	Mutual Position
Michael Ratner	Advisory Board Member	President, CCR ⁶²⁴

also Investigate, American Friends Service Committee, Bank Hapoalim BM, (<https://investigate.afsc.org/company/bank-hapoalim>), accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

617 Yifa Yaakov, “Jewish, Quaker groups launch BDS summer camp,” *Times of Israel*, February 21, 2014, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/quaker-jewish-groups-launch-bds-summer-camp/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

618 Yaakov, “Jewish, Quaker groups launch BDS summer camp,” accessed November 5, 2022. See also Press Release, “Anti-Israel Groups Attempt to Indoctrinate Youth With Hatred of the Jewish State in ‘Summer Camps,’” Anti-Defamation League, June 19, 2013, <https://www.adl.org/news/press-releases/anti-israel-groups-attempt-to-indoctrinate-youth-with-hatred-of-the-jewish>, accessed November 5, 2022.

619 “Jehad Abusalim,” American Friends and Services Committee, <https://web.archive.org/web/20221206142903/https://www.afsc.org/content/jehad-abusalim>, accessed Feb. 20, 2023.

620 “American Friends Service Committee,” NGO Monitor, April 5, 2022, https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/american_friends_service_committee_afsc/, accessed November 4, 2022. See also “American Friends Service Committee,” Rockefeller Brother Fund Grantee, <https://www.rbf.org/grantees/american-friends-service-committee>, accessed November 5, 2022.

621 “American Friends Service Committee, Financial Statements and Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, Sept. 30, 2020 and 2019,” <https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/AFSC%20Financial%20Statements%202020.pdf>, accessed November 5, 2022.

622 “About JVP,” Jewish Voice for Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/faq/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

623 See “Jewish Voice for Peace,” NGO Monitor, December 30, 2021, https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/jewish-voice-for-peace_jvp/, accessed November 5, 2022. See also “People,” Jewish Voice for Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/people/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

624 Michael Ratner passed away in 2016. See Vincent Warren, “CCR Mourns the Loss of a Hero-Michael Ratner,” Center for Constitutional Rights, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/blog/2016/05/12/ccr-mourns-loss-hero-michael->

Jonathan Matz	JVP Board Member	Steering Committee Member, East Side Jews Activist Collective Neighborhood Captain, Democratic Socialists of America
Irit Reinheimer	JVP Board Member	Formerly with the AFSC
Phyllis Bennis	JVP Board Member	Founder, USCPR
Grace Lile	JVP Board Member	Director, CCR

Additionally, JVP receives funds from many of the sources which fund other pro-BDS organizations such as Palestine Legal and the AFSC. Financially, JVP has received \$480,000 from the Rockefeller Brother Fund since 2017.⁶²⁵ For its part, the Tides Foundation provided \$75,000 to JVP in 2019.⁶²⁶ According to investigative research from NGO Monitor and information derived from IRS Form 990s for JVP, the group receives significant funding from multiple foundations supporting progressive causes.

Figure 7.6: Jewish Voice for Peace Grant Funding (Source: NGO Monitor)⁶²⁷

Funder	Year	Amount
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	2015	\$140,000
Tides Foundation	2014	\$49,477
Firedoll Foundation	2014	\$25,000
Schwab Charitable Fund	2014	\$158,800
Jewish Communal Fund	2015	\$25,100
Bonus Fund	2014	\$20,000
Kaplan Foundation	2014	\$20,000
Violet Jabara Charitable Trust	2015	\$15,000
Left Tilt Fund	2014-2015	\$30,000
Pomegranate Foundation	2014	\$10,000
Bijan Amin and Soraya Amin Foundation	2014	\$10,000
Vivian and Paul Olum Charitable Foundation	2014	\$10,000
Sparkplug Foundation	2014	\$6,500
Shams Foundation	2014	\$5,000
LouVin Foundation	2014	\$5,000
Nasiri Foundation	2014	\$5,000
Porter Family Charitable Foundation	2014	\$4,500
Do Right Foundation	2014	\$3,000

⁶²⁵ [ratner](#), accessed November 5, 2022.

⁶²⁶ See "Jewish Voice for Peace," NGO Monitor, accessed November 5, 2022.

⁶²⁷ Ibid.

⁶²⁷ "Uncovering the Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) Funding Network," NGO Monitor, 2016, <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/uncovering-the-jvp-funding-network/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

James and Mary Jane Barrett Foundation	2014	\$7,166
Shimkin Foundation	2014	\$3,000
Ben and Jerry's Foundation	2014	\$2,500
Iqbal G. Mamdani and Shelby M. Mamdani Foundation	2014	\$2,500
AJ Muste Memorial Institute Inc.	2014	\$2,000
Hope and Justice Foundation	2014	\$1,100
De La Cour Family Foundation	2014	\$1,000

JVP's individual memberships and dues augment its grant funding. JVP offers membership options for those who donate either \$18 or more per year or \$5 or more per month.⁶²⁸ This grassroots membership allows would-be members access to policy briefings, invite-only webinars, "guidance material" from JVP-affiliated rabbis, and opportunities to work with local chapters of the organization.⁶²⁹ Combined with major grant funding, membership dues and grassroots financing offer JVP a robust basis of support that spans both activist capitalism and organic individual appeal. JVP claims a membership of over 200,000 people.⁶³⁰

JVP is very open about its support for BDS. The organization dismisses the "assertion that BDS is inherently anti-Semitic" and stands alongside "activists who employ the full range of BDS tactics when they are demonized or wrongly accused of anti-Semitism."⁶³¹ JVP has issued multiple statements in support of SJP on campus and against allegations of anti-Semitism from pro-Israel organizations.⁶³² Cooperation between SJP and JVP is widespread across college campuses and has lasted for years since the BDS movement's emergence.

Conclusion

The BDS movement constitutes a deep and expansive network of organizations. It links campus activism to terrorism and well-funded anti-Israel nonprofits. The list of organizations examined in this report is not exhaustive, but is rather intended to offer a view of the institutional geography of the BDS universe, the key leaders within it, and

628 "Getting Involved," Jewish Voice for Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/faq/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

629 Ibid.

630 "On Campus," Jewish Voice for Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/?s=campus>, accessed November 5, 2022.

631 "Frequently Asked Questions," Jewish Voice for Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/faq/>, accessed November 5, 2022.

632 "JVP National Student Network Statement of Solidarity with SJP Facing Harassment in Chicago," Jewish Voice for Peace, October 21, 2015, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/2015/10/jvp-national-student-network-statement-of-solidarity-with-sjps-facing-harassment-in-chicago/>, accessed November 5, 2022. See also Statement by SJP, CAIR, and JVP, "The Movement for Palestinian Rights Will Not Be Silenced-JVP, SJP and CAIR Respond to ADL Attacks," Jewish Voice for Peace, <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/2022/05/sjp-cair-jvp-statement/>, accessed November 4, 2022.

its major sources of funding. As noted earlier, campus BDS groups connote only one layer of a broader movement.

Overall, the American BDS movement's success is questionable. Certainly, multiple BDS resolutions have been passed across numerous universities and colleges. However, virtually none of them have resulted in actual institutional divestment from portfolio holdings tied to Israel. Additionally, the backlash against BDS from state legislatures is notable and formidable. Many court cases brought by organizations such as Palestine Legal have not materialized into significant victories. However, the BDS movement is making policy gains through its institutional entrenchment in academia, where anti-Semitic ideas are legitimized and reflected across multiple anti-Jewish and anti-Israel organizations.

At the university level, the BDS movement imperils academia's political neutrality and threatens to fully integrate anti-Semitism into academia's ideologically saturated environment. Such developments endanger not only academic freedom but also the freedom of expression required for a healthy university to function. Beyond campus, the emergence of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party indicates that the BDS movement will inhabit a greater policy space than it did in the past.

As an ideological universe, BDS is multifaceted and interlocking. SJP constitutes the primary pro-BDS group on college campuses, but it is simply one key actor within a broader constellation of organizations devoted to social justice and progressive causes, one which attempts to direct the university to its own ideological ends. While this threat exists, academia is also the institutional source of the BDS movement as a whole. Individuals like Hatem Bazian, and organizations such as AMP, emerged out of progressive academia. JVP, similarly, was founded on campus, and the BDS movement's lawfare wing is deeply tied to progressive legal faculty at schools such as Columbia University. This saturation of anti-Israel, pro-BDS sentiment on college campuses is a long-term danger to US support for Israel by its simple normalization of demonizing the Jewish state. Beyond the problem of anti-Semitism, the importance of academia to the BDS movement's growth and viability demonstrates the steady erosion of its political neutrality that has taken place over the past two decades.

Recommendations

The widespread and well-funded nature of the BDS movement precludes the provision of a straightforward solution based solely in legislation. Indeed, multiple states have passed anti-BDS laws over the past few years. Where pro-Israel advocates face the greatest challenge is in combating an activist movement that is growing in civil society and on college campuses. This section offers a number of recommendations designed to reinforce the university's political neutrality and contain the growth of BDS on campus.

1. Expand on the Birthright Israel Concept

One of the most visible pro-Israel initiatives among undergraduates is the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, which offers free ten-day trips to Israel for Jewish students. Founded in 1999 for Jews between the ages of 18 and 26, Birthright brings approximately 50,000 students a year to Israel in order to foster an emotional bond with the Jewish state.⁶³³ According to a study conducted by Birthright and researchers from Brandeis University, the program is shown to be effective at instilling stronger support for Israel among those who participate in it. The study found that even up to 20 years after participation, Birthright participants are 47% more likely to have a connection to Israel.⁶³⁴ The BDS movement is diverse in its supporters and is not limited to pro-Islamists. It is also worth noting that Jews are among some of the BDS movement's most ardent supporters, and that Jewish identity is not sufficient to guarantee opposition to it.

One of the challenges in combatting the BDS movement is to create a diverse pro-Israel coalition that can counter BDS measures when challenged in normal economic and political processes. Building this coalition requires replicating

⁶³³ "Mission," Birthright Israel, <https://birthrightisrael.foundation/mission/>, accessed November 6, 2022.

⁶³⁴ Gidi Mark, "20 Years of Birthright Israel," *EJewishPhilanthropy*, February 5, 2020, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/20-years-of-birthright-israel/#:~:text=Key%20findings%20include%20that%20Birthright,non%2Dparticipants%2C%20even%20after%20that>, accessed November 5, 2022.

the Birthright Israel program with non-Jewish students, major businesses and charitable funds, university administrations, faith leaders, and cultural institutions. While the Birthright trips are “free” to those individuals who participate in it, the program has significantly benefitted the Israeli economy.⁶³⁵ Indeed, between 1999 and 2014, Birthright contributed \$825 million to the Israeli economy.⁶³⁶ Creating Birthright-like trips for students from groups such as College Republicans, College Democrats, business fraternities, faculty from departments of engineering or computer science, and Christian student organizations offers multiple pathways to building a robust pro-Israel coalition on campus.

2. Amend Anti-BDS Laws to Include a Mandated Holocaust-Israel Curriculum in State Schools

Most of the anti-BDS laws passed at the state level over the past few years prohibit boycotts, but they do little in terms of positive policy prescription. One aspect of anti-BDS laws that needs amending is the inclusion of the Holocaust and Jewish history in state-level instruction. According to recent studies, Millennials and Generation Z have a significant lack of Holocaust awareness. According to a 50-state study conducted by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, 63% of adults under 40 were found to be ignorant of the Holocaust’s death toll of 6 million Jews.⁶³⁷ Worse, 10% of respondents had not heard of the Holocaust at all.⁶³⁸

While Jewish history links Jewish identity and Judaism to the Middle East and modern Israel, a lack of Holocaust knowledge and concurrent ignorance about Israel among younger Americans creates a ready population for the BDS movement to manipulate. Anti-BDS laws need amending to not simply prohibit the singling out of Israel for economic punishment but also to include an educational component that legitimizes Israel’s existence as a Jewish state built upon both an ancient and modern justification for existing. Anti-BDS laws should be amended to implement a standardized baseline curriculum on Israel.

635 Ibid.

636 Sam Sokol, “Study: Birthright contributed \$825 million to Israeli economy,” *Jerusalem Post*, January 9, 2014, <https://www.jpost.com/jewish-world/jewish-news/study-birthright-contributed-825-million-to-israeli-economy-337680>, accessed November 7, 2022.

637 Kit Ramgopal, “Survey finds ‘shocking’ lack of Holocaust knowledge among millennials and Gen Z,” *NBC News*, September 16, 2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/survey-finds-shocking-lack-holocaust-knowledge-among-millennials-gen-z-n1240031>, accessed November 7, 2022. See also “First-Ever 50-State Survey on Holocaust Knowledge of American Millennials and Gen Z Reveals Shocking Results,” *Claims Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany*, <https://www.claimscon.org/millennial-study/>, accessed November 7, 2022.

638 Ibid.

3. Create Abrahamic Academic Centers and Investment Initiatives

The signing of the Abraham Accords in 2020 marks an underappreciated geopolitical development in the US and offers opportunities for new ties between Israel and the UAE, the Middle East's most advanced economy. The Accords also offer unique opportunities for American businesses looking to invest in the Middle East as a region. The agreement should be expanded bilaterally by pro-Israel organizations seeking to deepen business and economic ties between the US and Israel, as well as between the US, Israel, and its Emirati partners. Fostering business ties through joint investment initiatives and investment in the US from Accord signatories, as well as outbound US investment, will make BDS policies more difficult to implement. The high-tech sector, as well as industries related to water technology, media, and energy, offer ample pathways to develop such ties.

Similarly, joint ties between Israel and the UAE offer the possibility of the joint creation of new academic centers in the US. Recent research by the National Association of Scholars found that many academic programs designed to foster cultural and linguistic knowledge of the Middle East, known as Middle East Studies Centers (MESCs), have been corrupted by progressive politics and have strayed from their original purpose.⁶³⁹ Because the BDS movement promotes the view that Israel does not belong in the Middle East, and that it is an aberration of "apartheid" and "settler colonialism," integrating Israel into new centers on college campuses jointly tied with the UAE creates a needed alternative to the moribund MESCs that currently exist. The creation of new Abrahamic Studies Centers (ASCs) or similar institutions could offer joint Hebrew-Arabic language instruction, Middle East specializations for business students and students in the social sciences, and training for American students seeking to study the new Middle East. Such programs would ultimately offer training to future policymakers, and would incentivize create greater institutional hostility to BDS initiatives.

⁶³⁹ See Press Release, "Middle East Studies Centers Captured by Activists, Report Finds," National Association of Scholars, October 6, 2022, https://www.nas.org/blogs/press_release/middle-east-studies-centers-captured-by-activists-report-finds, accessed November 7, 2022.

4. **Amend Anti-BDS Laws to Specifically Include Universities and Target BDS Funding**

Legal measures to counter BDS should focus on three levels of the campus BDS movement and isolate it from outside support. Laws should penalize companies that engage in BDS, expand by amendment to penalize universities engaged in divestment from Israel, and include provisions to reduce funding for universities supporting anti-Israel student organizations.

Thirty-five states have passed anti-BDS laws either through legislation or executive orders. While some anti-BDS laws are purely symbolic in nature, others preclude state governments from investing in companies engaged in BDS activity. Illinois and Colorado both divested public pension funds from Unilever after its subsidiary, Ben and Jerry's, opted to boycott sales in the West Bank.⁶⁴⁰ Deploying the market power of state investment to dissuade private businesses from divesting from Israel creates a disincentive for companies to buckle under BDS pressure.

Existing anti-BDS laws should be amended to counter the corrosive effect of BDS on higher education. Colleges and universities receive state support not only through grants but also through permanent funding from state governments. Anti-BDS laws should be amended to curtail state funding for universities that fund anti-Israel student organizations such as SJP and groups that co-sponsor anti-Israel activism on campus. Expanding such laws incentivizes college administrators to maintain political neutrality on Israel and assist in neutralizing anti-Semitism in student activism.

⁶⁴⁰ Shira Hanau, "Illinois' state pension board will divest from Unilever over Ben and Jerry's decision to stop selling ice cream in West Bank," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, December 23, 2021, https://www.jta.org/2021/12/23/politics/illinois-state-pension-board-will-divest-from-unilever-over-ben-and-jerrys-decision-to-stop-selling-ice-cream-in-west-bank?utm_source=JTA_Maropost&utm_campaign=JTA_DB&utm_medium=email&mp-web=1161-38400-30123, accessed December 18, 2022. See also Bob Kozlowski, "Colorado PERA to divest Unilever over Ben & Jerry's ban," *Pensions and Investments*, March 21, 2022, <https://www.pionline.com/pension-funds/colorado-pera-divest-unilever-over-ben-jerrys-ban>, accessed December 18, 2022.

Glossary

ActBlue:

ActBlue is a fundraising platform established in 2004 to facilitate individual donor contributions to Democratic politicians and progressive political and nonprofit organizations.

Addameer:

Addameer (“Conscience” in Arabic) was founded in 1992 and provides legal assistance and advocacy for Palestinian prisoners. Israel designated Addameer as a terrorist organization in 2021.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC):

The American Friends Service Committee formed as a Quaker social justice organization in 1917. The AFSC received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947 and evolved into an increasingly secular and left-leaning organization starting in the 1970s.

American-Israel Public Action Committee (AIPAC):

The American-Israel Public Action Committee is a pro-Israel lobbying group founded in 1963 and is known for its promoting bipartisan policy recommendations to multiple levels of government.

American Muslims for Palestine (AMP):

American Muslims for Palestine is a pro-Palestinian nonprofit and advocacy group founded by Hatem Bazian in 2006. AMP trains pro-Palestinian activists and supports BDS efforts alongside Jewish Voice for Peace.

BDS National Committee (BNC):

The BDS National Committee is a coalition of Palestinian organizations that promotes BDS policies and activism around the world. The BNC is one of the main organizations linking international BDS groups to anti-Israel groups in the Palestinian Territories.

Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR):

The CCR is a progressive civil rights nonprofit focused on legal advocacy for social justice issues. The CCR was founded in 1966 and supports pro-BDS activism using legal means.

General Union for Palestinian Students (GUPS):

GUPS is one of the earliest pro-Palestinian organizations based in student activism. Most chapters of GUPS shut down in the 1990s, while GUPS remains active at San Francisco State University.

Hamas:

Hamas is a Palestinian jihadist group founded in 1987 and is one of the most violent groups involved in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Hamas operates as a pseudo-governmental entity in the Palestinian Territories and offers social services alongside its terrorist wing.

Holy Land Foundation (HLF):

The Holy Land Foundation once operated as one of the largest Muslim charities in the United States. The US labeled the HLF a terrorist group in 2001.

Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP):

Jewish Voice for Peace was founded in the 1990s as a Jewish progressive organization dedicated to delegitimizing Israel and Zionism.

Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI):

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel was founded in 2004 and is the primary international organization advocating for the boycott of Israeli academic institutions. PACBI views Israel through the lens of settler-colonialism that is common in critical studies and includes Omar Barghouti among its founders.

Palestine Legal:

Palestine Legal was founded in 2012 and is a pro-Palestinian lawfare organization that offers legal assistance and training to pro-BDS students and activists. Palestine Legal works closely with the Center for Constitutional Rights and the National Lawyers Guild.

People’s Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP):

The People’s Front for the Liberation of Palestine is a secular, Marxist, Palestinian terrorist organization founded in 1967. PFLP, along with Hamas, advocates for the elimination of Israel.

Samidoun:

Samidoun, or the Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, is a coalition of activists dedicated to advocating for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody.

Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP):

SJP is the premier pro-BDS organization on college campuses in the US and the English-speaking world. SJP replaced the influence of GUPS in the early 1990s and formed coalitions with progressive, left-wing student organizations in an effort to shape university policies related to investments in Israel and delegitimize pro-Israel groups on campus.

Tides Foundation:

The Tides Foundation is one of the most influential left-wing charitable and grant-making organizations in the United States. The Tides Foundation was founded in 1976 by philanthropist Drummond Pike and is a premier funder for progressive activist groups dedicated to social justice causes.

US Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI):

The US Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel is led by an advisory board and focuses on advocating for the boycott of Israel. It is affiliated with the BDS National Committee.

US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR):

The US Campaign for Palestinian Rights assists in coordinating and supporting pro-Palestinian activist organizations in the US and seeks to reshape American public opinion and policy to the detriment of Israel.

WESPAC Foundation:

The WESPAC Foundation is an organization based in Westchester County, New York, and is dedicated to assisting social justice and progressive causes. WESPAC has assisted Students for Justice in Palestine by means of financial sponsorship and organizational support.

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
of SCHOLARS