

A RESOLUTION ADDRESSING MISINFORMATION SURROUNDING UCLA'S STUDENTS FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE

WHEREAS Mock newspapers distributed by the David Horowitz Freedom Center falsely and slanderously equating Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) activism with Nazism and terrorism were discovered on the UCLA campus on April 30th, 2019;¹

WHEREAS This is not the first instance in which the David Horowitz Freedom Center engaged in targeted campaigns against members of campus organizations such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and the Muslim Students Association (MSA) through racist and demonizing accusations of campus activism being directly continuous with terrorism;²

WHEREAS Posters previously distributed by the David Horowitz Freedom Center blacklisted particular students and faculty members with false accusations of support for terrorism and were denounced by Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Jerry Kang, as an “intimidation tactic” that in his opinion caused “severe psychological harm” to all targeted;³

WHEREAS The actions of the David Horowitz Freedom Center are not exceptional, and the false accusations made within DHFC propaganda is often pulled from Canary Mission, an anonymous and ever-expanding online blacklist of individuals supportive of the Palestinian struggle for freedom, liberation and equality whose stated intent is to destroy career prospects for individuals’ political views;^{4,5}

WHEREAS Such targeted repression of students and faculty supportive of Palestinian rights, particularly students and faculty of color, is part of a broader atmosphere of censorship and intimidation on university campuses that is so widespread and entrenched that the legal organizations Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights were compelled to compile a thorough legal analysis documenting what they term the “Palestine Exception to Free Speech.”⁶

WHEREAS Administrative figures including Chancellor Gene Block and local politicians have promoted the same accusations found within both Canary Mission and the David Horowitz Freedom Center propaganda, equating support for the National Students for Justice in Palestine Conference held at UCLA in 2018 with anti-Semitism either directly or by implication, thereby compounding the atmosphere of fear, intimidation, and political repression that the aforementioned vigilante initiatives and organizations seek to stoke;^{7,8,9}

1 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eqJEEJOH6kgyuPtjYi7tD83cbO6vEU1/view?usp=sharing>

2 <https://dailybruin.com/2015/11/12/offensive-posters-targeting-sjp-resurface-on-campus-for-third-time/>

3 <https://dailybruin.com/2016/04/19/ucla-officials-denounce-david-horowitz-posters-as-intimidation/>

4 <https://mesana.org/advocacy/committee-on-academic-freedom/2018/04/18/exposing-canary-mission>

5 <https://theintercept.com/2018/11/22/israel-boycott-canary-mission-blacklist/>

6 <https://ccrjustice.org/the-palestine-exception>

7 <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-block-ucla-students-for-justice-in-palestine-conference-20181112-story.html>

8 <https://knock-la.com/why-is-la-city-councilman-paul-koretz-associating-with-hate-59ac13b9716d>

9 <https://haam.org/2018/10/24/u-s-representative-brad-sherman-on-israel-and-sjp-interview-by-grayson-peters/>

WHEREAS Chancellor Gene Block said the following marginalizing statements with respect to SJP in an op-ed about the 2018 NSJP Conference at UCLA: “In this case, I have fundamental disagreements with SJP, which has called for boycott against and divestment in Israel, actions that stigmatize that nation and label it a pariah state.”

WHEREAS Chancellor Gene Block stated the following claims in the aforementioned op-ed that allude to the content of SJP’s national conference as being anti-Semitic without evidence to support those claims, ostracizing and stigmatizing the conference and attendees: “Much of what will be said at that conference may be deeply objectionable — even personally hurtful — to those who believe that a complex conflict is being reduced to a one-sided caricature, or see a double standard that demonizes the world’s only Jewish state while other countries receive less condemnation for dreadful behavior. Indeed, there is fear among some that the conference will be infused with anti-Semitic rhetoric.”

WHEREAS Students and faculty deserve a safe and welcoming campus environment and should not be subjected to harassment, intimidation or repression for their identities and principled support for the freedom and self-determination of oppressed peoples;

WHEREAS It is incumbent upon administration to stand against racialized incitement and targeted harassment and not to participate in such initiatives themselves, however unwittingly;

WHEREAS The safety and well-being students and faculty named in David Horowitz Freedom Center and Canary Mission propaganda should be the responsibility of administrative officials;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED That we call on administration at the highest levels to issue statements condemning the David Horowitz Freedom Center and Canary Mission website for the unjust intimidation tactics they truly are and affirming that such defamatory initiatives must have no bearing on the occupational prospects of all affected members of the campus community;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED That said statement will also include language affirming the right of students to discuss and advocate for Palestinian human rights without outside misinformation and intimidation from organizations such as Canary Mission and the David Horowitz Freedom Center.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED That we call on administrative officials to engage in meetings with all individuals named by the aforementioned organizations who request it;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED That in addition to meetings, we call on administration to help people deal with the impact of David Horowitz Freedom Center and Canary Mission, including advisors that can provide both general and technological guidance on how to address targeted online harassment and career counseling services that can blunt the impact of Canary Mission’s efforts to slander individuals.

LET IT BE FINALLY BE RESOLVED All individuals will receive personalized assurance of full support and affirmation that their political and scholarly focus on Palestine is fully protected by the First Amendment and the principles of academic freedom.