

OCTOBER 2014 - RUTGERS UNIVERSITY RESPONDS TO COALITION LETTER

On Oct 31, 2014, at 8:05 AM, Robert Barchi wrote:

Dear Ms. Benjamin,

Thank you for your message expressing your concerns about the safety of Jewish students on the Rutgers campuses.

Rutgers University carefully guards every student's fundamental rights of freedom of speech and freedom of association. To promote a vibrant intellectual community, we vigorously defend the free exchange of ideas in an environment of civil discourse. Please rest assured that should we find evidence of harassment or discover that the rights of free speech and free association have been violated, we will respond appropriately to ensure the safety, well-being, and basic rights of our students.

You have my best wishes.

Sincerely,

Bob Barchi

On 10/28/2014 12:06 PM, Tammi Benjamin wrote:

Dear President,

Last month, you received a letter from 14 organizations informing you about some of the anti-Semitic harassment and intimidation tactics employed by the group Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), and urging you to take adequate steps to ensure the safety of Jewish students on your campus.

As a follow-up to that letter, we would like to inform you of a troubling revelation about one particular SJP chapter that may be relevant to the safety and well-being of Jewish and pro-Israel students on your own campus.

A foundational document of the SJP group at Binghamton University, entitled "[Declaration of Principles and Strategies](#)," recently came to our attention. The document is extremely troubling in that it outlines a clear strategy for targeting, ostracizing, harassing, and silencing students on campus who oppose the boycott of Israel or who support or simply attend a program or event with which the SJP disagrees.

In a section entitled "With Regards to SJP's Interaction with Zionist Student Organizations," the document prohibits SJP leaders and members from collaborating or cooperating with specifically-named Jewish and pro-Israel student organizations, as well as with any group that has "aided and abetted Zionist student organizations." Although a student organization is certainly free to choose its partners for collaboration and cooperation, the SJP group's *a priori* rejection of any interaction with Jewish and pro-Israel student groups – or with any other group that is deemed to have "collaborated" with them – bespeaks of prejudice, bigotry, and a lack of tolerance and civility, behavior that should not be tolerated from a student group on any campus.

Far more troubling, however, is the section of the document entitled "With Regards to Tactics and Strategies Used to Counter Zionist Normalization," which spells out a strategy for not only protesting certain student events, but also for actually disrupting them, simply because the SJP disagrees with the views that might be expressed there. In calling for the disruption of other student groups' events, the SJP group is advocating behavior that violates Binghamton's Student Code of Conduct, and may well be inciting criminal conduct in violation of New York State law prohibiting the disturbance of a lawful meeting or event.

We are bringing this document to your attention because it advocates behavior consistent with "anti-Zionist normalization" campaigns being waged by SJP groups across the country, whose explicit purpose, according to the [Anti-Defamation League](#), is to delegitimize all pro-Israel perspectives and actively suppress their expression on college campuses. These campaigns have resulted in dozens of Jewish and pro-Israel students' events being disrupted, and Jewish and pro-Israel students feeling harassed, intimidated, and stripped of their constitutionally-protected freedom of expression and association. (See [HERE](#) for a sample of Israel-related events that have been disrupted by SJP students on more than 20 U.S. campuses).

Moreover, if members of the SJP orchestrated a disruption of a campus event, such conduct could subject them to prosecution and conviction under state criminal laws – which is precisely what happened to members of the anti-Israel student group at the University of California, Irvine after they carried out their plan to disrupt a speech by Israel's then-ambassador to the U.S.

We therefore urge you to carefully monitor the behavior of the SJP group on your campus and to ensure that its members' conduct conforms to university policy and the law, and that the group does not threaten or infringe on the rights of other members of your university community.

Sincerely,

Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity (AEPi)
AMCHA Initiative
American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists
Americans for Peace and Tolerance
David Horowitz Freedom Center
Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET)
Hasbara Fellowships
Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel
National Conference on Jewish Affairs
Proclaiming Justice to the Nations
Scholars for Peace in the Middle East
Simon Wiesenthal Center
StandWithUs
The Lawfare Project
Zionist Organization of America