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Our Palestine Moment

By David Lloyd ^[1]

On Tuesday, the National Council of the American Studies Association announced that it had voted unanimously to support a resolution to “endorse and honor the call of Palestinian civil society for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions.”^[2] Their vote came in the wake of over several years of discussion within the Association and of an Open Meeting at the 2013 annual conference of the ASA at which overwhelming support was expressed for the resolution, signaling broad membership endorsement of their decision. Despite this vocal support, and over 1000 members who signed on,

they have nevertheless decided to ask ASA members to endorse the resolution by a vote.

The ASA National Council’s caution in appealing to the membership as a whole is understandable.

When the Association for Asian American Studies passed a similar resolution in May 2013, it was greeted with an outpouring of antagonism, much of which claimed that its decision was undemocratic and a violation of its procedures. Asian American politicians were called on by Zionist organizations to condemn the resolution and the leadership of the Association was urged to rescind it. As it turned out, the Association had followed its written procedures to the letter and, more importantly, defended its action in light of its historic commitment “to foster scholarship that engages conditions of migration, displacement, colonialism, and racism, and the lives of people in zones of war and occupation”, to cite the resolution.

The ASA is larger and generally seen as a more mainstream organization than AAAS and its endorsement of the resolution hard on the heels of the latter organization represents a signal victory for Palestinian solidarity. Accordingly, even its discussion of a resolution in favor of the academic boycott of Israel has already provoked a ferocious campaign of threats and vilification. A letter signed by around fifty opponents of the resolution claimed that it “does not further, but harms, the general interests of the association.” The Association of American University Professors sent in advance of the meeting a statement condemning academic boycotts in principle. The infamous Alan Dershowitz sent an open letter in which he blustered that “a vote for a boycott will expose you and your association both for [sic] legal and academic consequences”, threatening to harm the association in rather more concrete ways.

Under such circumstances, the National Council's decision to seek the further ratification of the membership may seem a reasonable hedge against the inevitable firestorm of antagonism that will follow on its announcement. It is, at the same time, an unusual procedure, since all previous ASA resolutions have been ratified by the Executive or National Councils, the elected representatives of the Association, without further consultation of the membership. Once again, an exception is being made around the issue of Palestine that has the effect of singling Israel out for special treatment.

True as that is, and as familiar as such procedural routines are to anyone who has spent any time engaged in Palestine solidarity work, it may be worth viewing it in a different light now. While the ASA's National Council may have been motivated to reach out to the membership on account of the onslaught of vilification and legal threats it is bound to face, it is nonetheless clear that this campaign of intellectual terrorism has already backfired. Rather than containing the resolution, attempted coercion has brought it yet more circulation.

Over the past couple of years, Zionists and their organizations in the United States have ceased to engage their opponents and have sought instead to suppress criticism of Israel through legal and political maneuvers. They clearly know that not only will they lose any debate on the basis of the facts of Israel's dispossession of and violence and discrimination against Palestinians, or any discussion of the colonial nature of its regime. They will also undermine the Zionist cause simply by allowing open public discussion of the issues. Students and academics who support Israel are advised not to engage in debate and it has proven nearly impossible in recent years to get any pro-Israeli speaker to participate on panels that offer parity to Palestinian speakers. This situation persists, despite reports that some Zionist organizations are now starting to coach students on their talking points. Evidently, it is no longer possible to rely on the spontaneous and unquestioning adherence to Israel that used to be automatic. Consequently, the dialogues that opponents of the academic boycott pretend to be protecting are certainly not happening in this country, except under the duplicitous rubric of mutual understanding or premature reconciliation.

Instead, criticism of Israel is equated with anti-semitism, despite the evident fact that there is something profoundly anti-semitic in that coercive identification of every Jewish person with a single state that purports to speak on their behalf whether they will or not. In the name of this baseless charge,

university administrations are lobbied to shut down the protected speech of professors and students. Already in California the State Senate has been hustled into passing House Resolution 35 (HR 35)^[3] which seeks to insinuate that insidious equation into public policy. HR 35 is clearly a template for the rest of the country. This well funded and orchestrated legalistic campaign is mostly just a deliberate nuisance, wasting enormous amounts of administrative, faculty and student time rebutting preposterous legalistic claims, but at times can amount to harassment and intimidation of a nastier kind that has had the effect of tamping down debate and deterring potential critics of Israel.

It is against the background of such attempts to close off debate and suppress inquiry into the nature of Israeli policy and practices that the ASA's Open Meeting on academic boycott and the National Council's endorsement of the resolution seem so momentous. Even were the membership to go against the Council's recommendation, a turning point in public perception of Israel and Palestine has been reached. As many at the Open Meeting stated, this was the first time they had been in a room where it was possible to voice opposition to the occupation of Palestine or to Israeli colonialism and not feel intimidated. It was the first time many more had been in a space where, for once, solidarity with Palestine was the norm, not the odd exception. And whatever the membership decides, those who attended the meeting will carry that sense forward with them.

They will do so because what has crumbled is the delusion that free and critical discussion of Israel can be suppressed by force or threat. Intimidation is ceasing to be effective and coercion has lost its power in the face of the exercise of academic freedom in its genuine form—freedom of inquiry that informs action for justice in the world. Academic freedom has never been required in order to protect scholarly business as usual. In general, professional academics have no need of the protections of academic freedom because their research and publications rock few boats. Historically, only those scholars whose work has challenged institutional assumptions or professional consensus, or intervened in public debate against the vested interests of the powerful, have needed to invoke academic freedom.

The ASA is engaged in a moment in which it is exercising and furthering real academic freedom, not only for those Palestinian scholars and students whose rights Israel infringes on a daily basis, but also for scholars here in the United States. It has taken a significant step towards normalizing critical

discussion of Palestine and Israel that had been the third rail of academic and public culture alike and has placed inquiry into the United States' long-standing colonial collaboration with Israel high on the scholarly agenda.

Far from closing down dialogue or curtailing academic freedom, the passage of this resolution extends them. The ASA is the latest organization to benefit from what one might call the "Palestine effect": engagement with Palestine's civil society movements and their calls for BDS and academic and cultural boycott continually enhances democracy for those who participate. Some may support the initiative of BDS out of a principled adherence to non-violence, or merely from disgust at violence. There is, however, a broader reason to support it, which is that unlike an armed resistance (to which a people under military occupation are indubitably entitled), non-violent movements tend to be decentralized and democratic. Engagement with them is for those who take part a lesson in democratic process and decentralized organization. Solidarity with the Palestinian cause is emancipating for those who involve themselves even as it seeks the emancipation of Palestine.

In turn, every attempt to suppress such a movement is eventually bound to fail. The lesson of the ASA is that the patient work of discussion and dissemination over several years and in multiple locations pays off. Those who came together at the conference were often surprised by the expressions of solidarity they heard from people they had never met or known of. Solidarity and a common project had emerged out of a dispersed and decentered movement that had been responding to the BDS call on numerous campuses across the country and with only minimal capacity to co-ordinate. They coalesced for a brief moment at the ASA to give the National Council their resounding endorsement of the resolution and have returned to their campuses with an enhanced sense of the possibility for further boycott initiatives in other associations or for divestment resolutions in their cities or campuses.

It is clear that the National Council has responded to the endorsement voiced at the open meeting. If it has chosen to turn to the membership at large for further ratification, it too has been touched by the "Palestine effect", even if its anomalous decision to democratize the procedures was at first a response to actual and anticipated efforts to shut the resolution down.

Among the lessons that we are learning from Palestinian civil society is the process and value of democratization itself, a process that we may hope will become ongoing and permanent in face of the increasing authoritarianism of our universities and diminishing democracy at the level of our states. Once again, even as we celebrate what may prove an historic victory for justice in Palestine, we are reminded that international solidarity is always a two-way street whose benefits and lessons flow in more than one direction. If BDS offers Palestine its "South Africa Moment", it may offer the rest of us our Palestine moment.

Notes.

[1] David Lloyd is Distinguished Professor of English at the University of California, Riverside and a founding member of the organizing committee of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.

[2] http://www.theasa.net/from_the_editors/item/council_statement_on_the_academic_boycott_of_israel_resolution/

[3] <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora/civil-rights-advocates-condemn-california-assemblys-passage-anti-semitism-resolution>

The PACBI Column

Historic Decision: American Studies Association National Council Unanimously Endorses BDS

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) salutes the American Studies Association (ASA) National Council in the United States for its principled support for the cause of justice in Palestine by unanimously endorsing a resolution calling for the boycott of Israeli academic institutions on December 4, 2013. By doing so, the ASA National Council sends a message that it stands in full solidarity with the world-wide BDS movement initiated and led by Palestinian civil society.

This historic decision comes after a similar decision by the Association of Asian American Studies and a number of important student council votes in

support of divestment from companies involved in Israel's occupation, accentuating an already visible trend of growing support for BDS in the US. This great accomplishment led by conscientious scholars in the ASA is further evidence of a real, significant shift in public opinion on US campuses, in particular, in support of Palestinian rights under international law and BDS as the most effective and morally consistent means to achieve those rights.

Palestinian academics, students and society at large deeply appreciate and are inspired by this most effective expression of international solidarity that reminds us of similar initiatives taken by academics and academic associations worldwide in the 1980s in support of the academic boycott of South Africa under apartheid.

The ASA resolution, unanimously endorsed by the National Council and awaiting ratification from the ASA membership, resolves that the association “endorses and will honor the call of Palestinian civil society for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions. It is also resolved that the ASA supports the protected rights of students and scholars everywhere to engage in research and public speaking about Israel-Palestine and in support of the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement” [1].

PACBI wishes to acknowledge, with gratitude, the determined efforts of all the academics who diligently and strategically worked on and those who endorsed this unprecedented resolution. Considering the prevailing climate of intimidation in the US academy when it comes to voicing the slightest criticism of Israel's violations of international law, it indeed takes courage to advocate for the academic boycott and to demand that the rights of those who support the BDS movement should be protected.

Such resolutions indicate a refusal to be intimidated by the persistent efforts of defenders of Israel's regime of occupation, colonization and apartheid and Israeli lobby groups inside and outside the academy to keep BDS outside the domain of acceptable public discourse. The publication of a number of compelling pro-BDS articles by the American Association of University Professors' Journal of Academic Freedom a few months ago [2], for instance, sent the lobby into overdrive in its relentless attempts to undermine this prominent validation of the need to debate BDS and Israel's system of injustice in academia.

The ASA decision cannot but be viewed as a triumph for the logic of academic boycott against

Israel's complicit academy, as consistently reflected in the positions of the Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUPE) as well as PACBI and its partners worldwide. It is, indeed, a significant step in the direction of holding Israeli institutions accountable for their collusion in maintaining the state's occupation, colonization and apartheid regime against the Palestinian people.

The ASA resolution amounts to a clear decision to challenge the notion that Israel's complicit institutions, including the academy, can be "normal" partners of any self-respecting institution or association. Indeed, it has to be recognized by academics the world over that Israeli universities, in particular, are part and parcel of the structures of domination and oppression of the Palestinian people. Far from being neutral, Israeli academic institutions have played a direct and indirect role in promoting, justifying, developing or otherwise abetting the state's racist policies and persistent violations of human rights and international law. As the resolution acknowledges, it is significant that not only have Israeli academic institutions failed to condemn the state's colonial policies and practices and the longstanding siege of Palestinian education, they have facilitated, enabled, and often encouraged the collaboration of their academic departments, faculty members and researchers with the Israeli military-security establishment, above all in the occupation regime, in flagrant violation of the principles of the independence of universities and academics.

The ASA has proven beyond doubt that effective solidarity with the oppressed is the most morally and politically sound contribution to the struggle to end oppression and to promote human rights and justice. And solidarity starts with “withdrawing support,” as a fundamental first step, from a system of injustice, as Martin Luther King Jr. says. We are certain that this outstanding expression of solidarity and support for the Palestinian BDS movement will further galvanize academics across the United States as well as in other countries to issue similar calls for the boycott of the Israeli academy and its complicit institutions. As in South Africa during apartheid, only by isolating these institutions can there be any chance of ending their complicity in Israel's multi-tiered system of oppression against the Palestinian people.

PACBI

[1] http://www.theasa.net/american_studies_association_resolution_on_academic_boycott_of_israel

[2] <http://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/journal-academic-freedom/volume-4>

Hebrew University conference keynote speakers withdraw ^[1]

The organisers of the campaign report that “we have achieved a victory, of sorts,” with the withdrawal of two noted international oral historians who were to be keynote speakers at the Hebrew University oral history conference - Alessandro Portelli (Italy) and Marshal Marshall Clark (USA).

The university’s claim to be hosting the “first international oral history conference” was unfounded when they made it and is even less true now. We thank all those who added their names to the public letter/boycott call: in less than four months almost 400, one-third of whom are oral historians, from Palestine, Israel, South Africa and 27 other countries in Europe, West-East-South Asia and Oceania, and North and South America have signed the letter. Of course, this victory is not the end of the campaign, and even as we welcome the withdrawal of Portelli and Clark who were to serve as featured keynoters, we must continue to call on other international oral history practitioners and other scholars to refuse to participate in this complicit Israeli institution and to honour the Palestinian call for academic and cultural boycott.

Our campaign to boycott the Hebrew University conference is part of a growing international movement to hold Israel accountable for its violations of Palestinian human rights and international law. From Capetown to Catalunya, Sydney to San Paolo and London to Lahore, faculty and students are challenging their institutions to honour the Palestinian call for a non-violent response to Israel apartheid and colonialism. Even in the US, as Alex Lubin has noted, what Edward Said dubbed the “America’s last taboo” was broken, as aging scholars and youthful students vigorously debated an academic boycott resolution at the American Studies Association conference – the outcome of which is still being determined^[2].

We ask that you do all that you can to help the campaign continue to grow as we call on oral historians and related professionals and activists around the world to refuse to be a party to sanitizing the reputation of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and to covering up its close association with Israeli annexation and settler-colonialism.

If you haven’t already done it yourself, the group encourages you to endorse the academic and cultural boycott campaign in your own country:

Britain: www.bricup.org.uk ;

France: www.aurdip.org;

Spain: pebai.wordpress.com/; US: www.usacbi.org.

Notes

[1] Information extracted from a report by the Campaign Working Group: Samia Botmeh, Haim Bresheeth, Sherna Berger Gluck, Nur Masalha, Rosemary Sayigh, Lisa Taraki.

[2] <http://www.merip.org/breaking-%E2%80%9Camerica%E2%80%99s-last-taboo%E2%80%9D>.

A Mugging

Street crime is going up, at least in Berlin. On his way to deliver a lecture there last month, British academic Brian Klug was mugged by a gang of 17 Zionists.

OK, it’s a metaphorical mugging I am talking about, though no doubt bruising to the person on the receiving end. However this case of calculated aggression does give us an object lesson on how the supporters of ‘Israel right or wrong; but it’s never wrong’ go about their business.

The background is that Brian Klug, a Senior Research Fellow and tutor in philosophy at St Benet’s Hall, Oxford, was invited to give the keynote address at Berlin’s Jewish Museum , at a conference on *Antisemitism in Europe Today: the Phenomena, the Conflicts*, held to mark the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

Why Klug?

Dr Klug researches antisemitism (among other related topics), so he might seem a natural to speak at the conference. He is a careful and measured scholar of standing in the field. For example when our academic union UCU marked Holocaust Day in 2010, he was one of the invited speakers. I was there. He gave a balanced, thoughtful account of how we might address the lessons of the Holocaust in our particular time and situation. Balanced and thoughtful is what he does. His scholarly and sensitive talk prepared for the Berlin conference was called “What do we mean when we say ‘antisemitism’?” You can read it [here](#).

So why was he attacked in advance by a bully-gang including professors from the Hebrew University, Bar-Ilan University and the Begin-Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies (also a reserve Lt Colonel in the

IDF); an ex-head of the World Jewish Congress; a journalist from the US and a columnist for *Jerusalem Post* and *Israel Hayom*; a number of researchers and Jewish community activists from Germany (and one from Austria). Oh yes, and some from the UK. (I will come to them in a minute.) The dossier – that’s what they call it - was compiled by the Director of the *Berlin International Center for the Study of Anti-semitism*. It was given [full coverage](#) in the *Jerusalem Post*, as well as in the *Times of Israel* and a number of other places.

There are three reasons for the attack. Only one of them has to do with Brian Klug himself.

The personal reason is that Brian Klug has form. He has carefully and critically studied the ‘new antisemitism’ (as propounded for example by the London lawyer Anthony Julius). This relatively new phenomenon, it has been claimed, emanates simultaneously from the far-left, radical Islam, and the far-right, and it tends to manifest itself in opposition both to Zionism and to the State of Israel.

As will be gathered from the title of his 2004 essay "The Myth of the New Anti-Semitism" published in *The Nation*, Klug does not buy this. Classical antisemitism, which he defines as "an ingrained European fantasy about Jews as Jews," or more briefly still as "hostility to Jews as Jews", undoubtedly still exists. However to claim that criticism of Israel should be scrutinised for and often identified as antisemitic is to extend the term beyond reason – in fact to brigade together two different phenomena and claim them to be one, bigger, thing.

There are many, too many, reasons to criticise Israel based on its behaviour. That Israel is a state for the Jews may be a factor in some peoples’ minds, but mostly not. Yet an accusation of (new) antisemitism is routinely, even wantonly, administered whenever Israel’s transgressions are highlighted. And this is the second reason for the attack on Klug. His demystification of the ‘new’ expanded definition of antisemitism, if allowed to take hold, would rob the defenders of Israel of what is still one of their most valued strategies: to shout ‘Antisemite!’ and hope to divert the conversation from the policies of Israel to the probity of the critic.

This unscrupulous tactic, like that of the boy who cried “Wolf!”, has a downside. By over- and inappropriate use the term, sadly still highly relevant, is devalued. As Brian Klug puts it

“[W]hen anti-Semitism is everywhere, it is nowhere. And when every anti-Zionist is an anti-Semite, we no longer know how to recognize the real thing—the concept of anti-Semitism loses its significance”.

The final and ostensible reason for the assault on Klug was to persuade the organisers to withdraw his invitation to speak. In this they notably failed, and Brian Klug gave his talk to a full and appreciative house without a single heckler. But this attempt is part of a larger strategy. The previous year a comparable attack was made on the Museum for inviting Judith Butler, the celebrated (Jewish) American feminist academic, to speak there. That too failed, and the Museum stood firm. However it is quite possible that the Museum, or other more vulnerable institutions, might in future think three times before inviting speakers likely to attract such a firestorm. That must be part of the calculation.

What did they say?

I will concentrate on the Brits. Two surprising contributors are two London Zionists, Jonathan Hoffman and Richard Millett, both well-known for their relatively unsophisticated interventions and activities at London Palestine solidarity meetings. Their brief paragraphs, one each, say nothing memorable, in fact serving only to indicate that they support the attempt to have Klug removed from the bill

Other British dossier-niks are more forthcoming. Sam Westrop is Director of the London-based *Stand for Peace*, which calls itself, a ‘counter-extremism organisation’. He calls Klug’s analysis “a considered attempt to sanitize the darker side of the anti-Zionist movement and to paint liberal defenders of the Jewish state as hysterical peddlers of hyperbole. Klug is no objective academic; he is an agitator with a political agenda”.

Oh, but we can do better than that. Here is Efraim Karsh, Professor of Middle East and Mediterranean Studies at Kings College London (but also holding a chair at Bar-Ilan): “It is mind boggling, therefore, that a Jewish-German institution would offer a foremost proponent of this vile credo a platform to spawn his venom, and on Kristallnacht’s 75th anniversary of all dates!”

Perhaps that is enough. But then we would miss the wit and wisdom of Denis McShane. McShane, it may be remembered, was the chief UK proponent of the EUMC so called ‘working definition’ of antisemitism. But probably you remember him better as Labour MP for 18 years, and Minister for Europe under Tony Blair. Or better still for being suspended from the House of Commons for submitting 19 false invoices "plainly intended to deceive" the parliamentary expenses authority, resigning his seat, and being removed from the Privy Council. On 18 November, in the same month he was attacking Klug, he pleaded guilty to false

accounting at the Old Bailey, by submitting false receipts for £12 900. A prison sentence is likely.

So, what does this ornament to the UK political scene have to say about Brian Klug? Perhaps luckily, nothing personal, as comparisons could have been odorous. He talks, though of Klug's "obsession with anti-semitism denial" and that he "make[s] a profession of rubbishing concerns about anti-semitism as just a cover for uncritical support for Israel".

There is more, much more. A non-UK contributor to the dossier says that Klug "has made it his mission to immunize anti-Zionists from the charge of anti-Semitism". The organiser of the dossier says that "He uses his Jewishness to endanger other Jews in Israel and elsewhere....Non-Jewish anti-Zionists, though, *depend* on Jewish anti-Zionists to do the dirty job of defaming the Jewish state".

A dirty job! That's what I feel after ploughing through this meretricious, over-heated and unsavoury material. Klug's calm humane analysis is a welcome antidote.

Jonathan Rosenhead

EU research funding guidelines: Israel humiliated but sanitised

In late November the European Commission and Israel finally agreed to sign a compromise text on Guidelines for Israel's future access to EU research funds. This agreement concluded several months of arguments over the Commission's text which excluded the Occupied Territories from eligibility. The practical effect on EU funds to Israel will emerge only in the coming years.

In any case, the text is already a political humiliation for Israel, whose signature acknowledges that the nation's territory does not legitimately extend beyond its pre-1967 borders. Thus the compromise document indicates the political limits of Israeli intransigence, both now and in the future.

Analysing the recent diplomatic struggle, this article draws out some strategic implications for our future efforts at restricting Israel's access to EU research funds. For more background information, see also the article in the BRICUP Newsletter 70, November 2013.

Illegal settlements: agreeing to disagree

Throughout the Israel-EU negotiations, the contentious issue was the illegality of Israeli settlements. In July 2013 the Commission's Guidelines^[1] were meant to implement the EU

Council decision that 'all agreements between the state of Israel and the European Union must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967'^[2] In August the Israeli government refused to sign any agreement including this commitment, and then seemed shocked that the Commission stood firm. The Commission insisted that any EU-Israel agreement must include an annex stating that the EU can withhold funds from entities based in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Without a formal agreement, Israel would have lost access to funds from the EU's Horizon 2020 programme for assisting research during 2014-2020. The financial loss to Israeli research would probably exceed 300 million euros over the period. As a more important benefit of participation, multi-partner projects give Israeli institutions access to Europe's scientific elite, early research results and even agenda-setting opportunities.

The threat of losing this access had motivated more than 600 Israeli academics to sign a petition urging the government to sign the agreement and to avoid any activities 'that might harm our relations with Europe...'^[3] For similar reasons, the Committee of University Heads and the Council for Higher Education's Budgeting and Planning Committee also expressed great concern over the damage to Israeli academia if an agreement were not signed.^[4]

In November the Israeli Cabinet held emergency sessions to find ways of avoiding such damage. After marathon telephone negotiations between Israel's Justice Minister Tzipi Livni and EU Foreign Minister Catherine Ashton, a compromise was reached. They agreed to disagree: Israel could attach an annex objecting to the Guidelines as regards the settlements, from both a legal and political perspective.^[5]

Thus the agreed text had a self-contradictory outcome. Evidently the two partners, while differing over the illegal settlements, shared a common political will to continue Israel's access to EU research funds.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz commended the agreement as follows: When receiving EU funds, every Israeli beneficiary 'will need to develop a mechanism to ensure that any money it receives from the European Union is invested only in activities conducted inside the Green Line'.^[6] But responsibility for such policing remains unclear in practice. Haaretz also pointed out the principal issue at stake: 'the reinstatement of the Green Line as the line that divides Israel from the occupied territories'.

Yet this distinction is fictitious and self-serving, as we explain next.

Fictitious distinction sanitising the EU's collusion

As the European Commission stated back in July, the Guidelines would maintain Israeli access to EU funds. In promoting the Guidelines the Commission was responding partly to its earlier political embarrassment over having been caught funding a project involving Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories in Mitzpe Shalem, an illegal settlement in the West Bank. Critics lobbied the Commission, including a joint BRICUP/AURDIP delegation which met with the Research Commissioner's senior staff in Brussels in 2011. The Guidelines are designed to prevent any such evident misuse of EU funds in future. But they would permit almost all projects with Israeli participants previously funded by the EU, so long as the participants have an address within the Green Line, i.e. in pre-1967 Israel.

Although the Commission's nominal exclusion of settlement entities provoked Israeli criticism, this focus conveniently reduces the Israeli Occupation to settlements – that is, to companies, institutions or individuals officially based there. By drawing an artificial distinction between clean Israel versus its dirty Occupation, the Guidelines sanitise the former and protect its access to EU research funds.

In practice such funds have generally reinforced the Occupation in both direct and indirect ways.^[7] For example, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem extended its campus to land that Israel occupied in 1967, yet it will be treated as an institution fit to receive Horizon 2020 grants because HUI's official address lies within the Green Line. Likewise Israeli companies such as Elbit Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries will continue to participate in EU-funded research projects while assisting in the construction of Israel's Apartheid Wall, recognised as illegal by the EU and international law. Civil society organisations have long petitioned the European Commission to exclude such companies from eligibility for EU funds.^[8] Under the new Guidelines all such entities will remain eligible, provided that the specific funds awarded do not directly finance illegal activities – or until and unless such a link can be demonstrated by opponents.

EU research agendas securitised

Moreover, substantial EU funds have been awarded to Israeli companies and universities under the EU's 2007-2013 Security research programme, whose agenda reduces societal conflicts to 'security threats' warranting 'security measures'. As a beneficiary of massive EU funding, the Israeli industrial-security

complex has shaped the EU research agenda towards mass surveillance and counter-insurgency techniques. Within the Security research programme, Israel has played a leading role in demonstration projects, e.g. where prototype security systems are manufactured and tested; likewise in infrastructure projects, e.g., communications systems, critical infrastructure and crisis management capacity.^[9]

All of historic Palestine (including Israel's Palestinian citizenry) has become a laboratory experiment for Israeli securitisation agendas and techniques, which are increasingly exported globally.^[10] By developing a model 'surveillance economy', as well as retaining the façade of a modern liberal democracy, Israel has positioned itself as the Homeland Security State par excellence, with revenues to match.^[11]

Not dependent on institutions based in settlements, Israeli 'security' research will remain eligible for EU funds. Indeed, Israeli entities will be encouraged by the EU for their contribution to technoscientific development, security innovations and securitisation perspectives. These have also permeated the Social Sciences and Humanities programme. This systematic EU-Israeli collusion is potentially sanitised by the new Guidelines by avoiding the more overtly outrageous funding of settlement-based activities.

Unlike most EU-funded research, the Security programme has been led by the Directorate General for Enterprise. Its current Commissioner is a board member of European Friends of Israel, a cross-party alliance partly modelled on the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). He seeks to strengthen EU-Israel trade as well as research cooperation.^[12]

Implications for BDS activists

The BDS campaign has sought to prevent Israeli institutions from obtaining EU research funds. We have discouraged research consortia from including Israeli entities, and we have criticised the lax eligibility criteria of the European Commission. Now it stood firm in the face of Israeli pressure over the new Guidelines, which set some limits on funding the Occupation. Given our minor victory, where do we go from here?

A possible strategy is to exploit the existence of the EU Guidelines. Although their aim is to sanitise EU funding of Israeli research, they can be used by activists for the opposite aim. Whenever an Israeli entity which has some activities in the Occupied Territories gains EU funds, we can challenge it to

demonstrate that none of the funds cross the Green Line and demand that the European Commission do likewise.

More ambitiously, we can demand broader exclusions from funding. Despite Israel's intransigence, the EU has maintained its exclusion of settlement-based entities. Israel blinked first. We need to build on the EU's demonstration of resolve, which also indicates a weakening of Israel's international strategic clout. As a possible first step, we could campaign for the EU to exclude all research activities, wherever located, which directly or indirectly aid the Occupation. In doing so we can challenge the spurious distinction that the EU makes between Israel and the Occupied Territories regarding research activities.

Les Levidow

Notes

¹ Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards, 19.07.13, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:205:0009:0011:EN:PDF>

² http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/press_corner/all_news/news/2013/20131607_02_en.htm

³ <http://www.eccpalestine.org/israeli-petition-supporting-eu-guidelines-on-funding-of-israeli-entities>

⁴ Barak Ravid, Israel-EU rift deepening after talks over settlement funding ban hit impasse, *Haaretz* 25.11.13, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.560054>

⁵ Barak Ravid, Horizon 2020 crisis: Israel and EU compromise on terms of joint initiative, following rift over settlement funding ban, *Haaretz* 26.11.13, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.560292>

⁶ *Haaretz* Editorial, The price of deception and apartheid: The European Union is making an important contribution to Israel's future by refusing to transfer funds to the settlements, <http://www.haaretz.com/misc/writers/haaretz-editorial-1.239>

⁷ David Cronin, *Europe's Alliance with Israel: Aiding the Occupation*, Pluto Press, 2010; interview at <http://citizenpartridge.wordpress.com/2011/08/04/una-bridged-interview-with-david-cronin-and-audio-of-his-dublin-lecture/>

⁸ <http://www.eccpalestine.org/eu-research-funding-and-israeli-violations-of-international-law>

⁹ Ben Hayes, *NeoConOpticon: The EU Security-Industrial Complex*, Statewatch and Transnational Institute, 2009, <http://www.statewatch.org/analyses/neoconopticon-report.pdf>

¹⁰ Steve Graham, 'Settler colonial securitism: Israeli surveillance and control regimes at airports and mega-events', <http://campacc.org.uk/uploads/images/Steve%20Graham.pdf>;
IJAN, Israel's Worldwide Role in Repression, <https://israelglobalrepression.wordpress.com/download/>

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¹¹ Neve Gordon, The Political Economy of Israel's Homeland Security, The New Transparency Project, Working Paper III, IRSP IV, 2009.

¹² EU enterprise chief seeks stronger ties with Israel's war industry, 20.08.13, <http://dvcronin.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/eu-enterprise-chief-seeks-stronger-ties.html>

Israel asks British government to pressure universities to fight BDS

According to a report in [The Times](#), Israel has asked the British government to "lean on universities to prevent their participation in academic boycotts of the country". ^[1] Israeli Science Minister Yaakov Peri has urged the UK's Minister for Universities and Science, David Willetts, "to try and put some more influence on the vice-chancellors to see who are the speakers, who are the leaders for the movement" and to "eliminate" the effects of the BDS campaign on UK campuses. Peri also expressed concern "about invited speakers to certain universities expressing anti-Semitic views", and said that "he had instructed the Israeli Ambassador in London to inform Mr Willetts if such an event was about to take place". These developments come soon after the discovery that the Israeli Embassy in London [employs](#) two people "whose full-time brief is to monitor and counter BDS attempts".

Meanwhile, on UK campuses, [student-led campaigns](#) targeting complicity in Israeli apartheid continue to make headway, with a BDS motion [passed](#) at the University of West England recently, and G4S [losing out](#) on two contracts following concerted efforts by activists.

[1]
<http://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/europe/8576-israel-asks-british-government-to-pressure-universities-to-fight-bds>

Information from the Middle East Monitor

Notices

BRICUP is the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine.

We are always willing to help provide speakers for meetings. All such requests and any comments or suggestions concerning this Newsletter are welcome.

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