

## **Vote Against the anti-Israel TSSU BDS Motion!**

TSSU members will vote in May whether to amend the bylaws and policies to require joining the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement against the state of Israel.

### **What's missing from the CJPME pro-BDS flyer distributed by the TSSU?**

- It neglects to state that the 1947 UN Partition Plan to create a Jewish and an Arab state west of the Jordan river was approved overwhelmingly by the member countries of the United Nations (33 in favour, 13 against, 10 abstentions) and accepted by the Jews but rejected by the Arabs.
- It omits that armies from Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt simultaneously invaded the newly-declared state of Israel in 1948 with the express intention of wiping out the country.
- It ignores decades of violence against military and civilian targets by Palestinian Arab armed groups including the PLO, Islamic Jihad, and Hamas, involving hostage taking, plane hijacking, shootings, bombings, suicide attacks, and stabbings. It doesn't say that Israel continues to be attacked through tunnels and with rockets from Gaza, even though Israel ended its occupation of Gaza in 2005.
- It doesn't mention that in 2000-2001 at Camp David and Taba, Israel proposed a Palestinian Arab state in Gaza and 95% of the West Bank, with its capital in East Jerusalem, which the Palestinian leadership rejected, preferring instead to launch the Second Intifada that claimed over 4000 Israeli and Palestinian lives.

### **Is BDS antisemitic?**

Antisemitism is not a charge to be made lightly, and criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country is definitely not antisemitic. In fact a small minority of Jewish people actually support anti-Israel BDS.

But legitimate criticism of Israel can tip over into antisemitism when the criticism is persistent, obsessive, exaggerated, and wholly one-sided.

### **Why is only Israel targeted? Why not other countries?**

BDS condemns just one party in a complex conflict in which neither Israelis nor Palestinian Arabs are blameless. It ignores several far more deadly Middle Eastern conflicts, including the civil war in neighbouring Syria: the deadliest conflict so far of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with 450,000 Syrians killed, 1 million injured, and 12 million displaced.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/05/syria-civil-war-explained-160505084119966.html>

While it's true that the Solidarity and Social Justice Committee of the TSSU has supported many local and international political causes, this motion would be the first time that condemnation of a specific group or nation would be written into the TSSU bylaws and policies. How can such extreme measures against Israel possibly be justified?

### **Does the BDS movement seek to destroy Israel?**

- “Most definitely, we oppose a Jewish state in any part of Palestine.”  
Omar Barghouti, BDS co-founder <https://vimeo.com/75201955>
- “So BDS does mean the end of the Jewish state.”  
Ahmed Moor, leading BDS activist  
<http://mondoweiss.net/2010/04/bds-is-a-long-term-project-with-radically-transformative-potential/>
- “the real aim of BDS is to bring down the state of Israel... That should be stated as an unambiguous goal. There should not be any equivocation on the subject. Justice and freedom for the Palestinians are incompatible with the existence of the state of Israel.”  
As'ad AbuKhalil, leading BDS activist <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/4289>

The public demands of the BDS Movement <https://bdsmovement.net/call> include Israel's “Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands”, meaning not only the West Bank, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem (lands captured by Israel during the 1967 war) but all of Israel itself. However the TSSU motion exchanges the telling phrase “all Arabs lands” for the less alarming “Palestinian land captured in 1967”, to exclude the demand for Israel itself. This is a crucial distinction. Why have the SFU proponents of BDS not spelled out the true objectives of the Movement they support?

### **Are there alternatives to BDS?**

- Engage in meaningful dialogue with Jewish Israelis, Arab Israelis, Palestinian Arabs, Bedouins, Druze and other minority groups to understand the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Challenge one-sided BDS propaganda that seeks to mislead rather than inform.
- Support movements like Peace Factory (<http://thepeacefactory.org/>) that are genuinely committed to dialogue and understanding among Middle Eastern people.
- See the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in context, as one among many tragic conflicts in the Middle East and beyond, and by no means the most severe.

Further reading: “What's the Problem with BDS? A Progressive Critique”  
<http://thirdnarrative.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Progressive-Critique-of-BDS.pdf>