



Jewish Voice for Peace–Madison

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Jewish Voice for Peace–Madison Applauds UW-Madison TAA Divestment Resolution

Jewish Voice for Peace–Madison applauds the recent decision by the UW-Madison Graduate Student Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA/AFT Local 3220) to approve a resolution calling for divestment from Israeli state institutions and corporations that profit from the illegal occupation of Palestine and ongoing violations of Palestinian human rights.

JVP- Madison is a grassroots organization whose membership includes Jews and allies committed to working for justice and peace for everyone in Israel/Palestine. We are part of a national JVP network that includes almost 300,000 supporters, 9,000 members and more than 60 chapters.

The TAA resolution was put forth in response to a call by Palestinians for non-violent resistance to the occupation in the form of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS). BDS is a tactic that was used to end apartheid in South Africa and which is being used today in the United States to combat bigotry against transgendered people in North Carolina.

JVP- Madison agrees with activists around the world that the Palestinian BDS movement is especially important in light of the impasse engendered by decades of failed peace talks. We reject the frequent assertion by those opposed to BDS, that the strategy is anti-Semitic. Rather, we support BDS because it is in keeping with Jewish tradition to work for peace, social justice, and equality.

We are aware that various other members of the Madison Jewish community, including UW-Hillel, have voiced opposition to the TAA resolution and accused organizers of putting forth the resolution secretly and “without a clear process of campus discussion.”

These assertions are incorrect. TAA organizers have released documents substantiating that information about the resolution was first presented to general membership in September 2015, and was continually presented at meetings and discussion forums throughout the school year. Information was also shared via emails and on social media, and feedback was sought.

At its April general membership meeting, TAA attendees voted to place the resolution on an electronic ballot to ensure that all members had the opportunity to vote. Prior to this vote, which lasted two weeks, there were two town hall discussions where members discussed any concerns about the resolution. In the final tally, 81% of voting members supported the BDS resolution.

We congratulate the UW Graduate Student Workers for their dedication and commitment to peace and social justice in Israel/Palestine, a reflection of the group's longtime solidarity with movements beyond the labor issues of the UW campus.

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