

Anti-Semitism at UC Irvine

INTRODUCTION

The University of California, Irvine (UCI) has become a center for anti-Semitic activity in recent years. Much of this activity has been organized by the Muslim Student Union (MSU), a vocal student group at UCI, which is responsible for staging large events every spring featuring virulently anti-Semitic speakers.

In July 2010, the MSU was suspended for one year because of its involvement in disrupting a speech by Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren in February of that year. The university's investigation into the matter uncovered evidence that MSU organized a calculated demonstration at Ambassador Oren's speech that was in violation of university policy against disorderly conduct, obstructing university activities, furnishing false information and other campus policies. Eleven students—9 from UCI and 2 UC Riverside—were arrested at the time. The group was eventually only suspended for the Fall 2010 semester.

Since its reinstatement, the MSU has shown no signs of dialing down its rhetoric and activity. In May 2012, [Amir Abdul Malik Ali](#) was invited to speak as part of the group's "Palestine Liberation Week" on campus. Malik Ali, who had previously delivered anti-Semitic speeches on campus in years past, used the platform to accuse Zionists of orchestrating the financial collapse and condemn UC president Mark Yudof as a "Zionist Jew" who supports the "apartheid state of Israel." Malik Ali also responded to a question from the audience about Israel being the Jews' homeland with, "ya'll came from Europe...you gotta go back."

MUSLIM STUDENT UNION (MSU)

For the past several years, the MSU at Irvine has staged many anti-Israel events, including a large event every spring with some of the most anti-Semitic speakers participating regularly, including the anti-Semitic leaders of the [Sabiqun movement](#). MSU's annual events have included lectures and outdoor displays, and employed provocative titles such as "Israeli Apartheid Week," "Israel: The Politics of Genocide," "Never Again? Palestinian Holocaust" and "Holocaust in the Holy Land."

In February 2010, MSU was involved in disrupting a speech by Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren. Approximately 100 individuals repeatedly interrupted Oren's talk, accusing him of murder and shouting,

among other things, "How many Palestinians have you killed?" and "Propagating murder is not an expression of free speech." Eleven students—9 from UCI and 2 UC Riverside—were arrested in connection with the disruption. At one point during the talk, Oren was escorted out of the room by security.

The university's investigation into the matter uncovered evidence that MSU organized a calculated demonstration at Ambassador Oren's speech in violation of university policy against disorderly conduct, obstructing university activities, furnishing false information and other campus policies.

Over the years, MSU has distributed radical and anti-Semitic literature through Al Kalima, UCI's Muslim student paper. For example, one editorial published in June 2004 praised Hamas and justified its use of terror by arguing that it is directed against "the evils of Shaytan (Satan) and the enemies of Allah." It argued that the "only solution to the Zionist situation is through military force, which is espoused by Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, and other Islamic resistance organizations."

Together with al-Talib, a sister publication of Muslim students at UCLA, Al Kalima also produces brochures that employ Islamist militant language. One of these, a colorful glossy leaflet handed out in 2009, advocated jihad and martyrdom, explaining that "the individual or community that participates in jihad finds itself between two blissful outcomes, either victory and the establishment of justice, or the reward of martyrdom and Paradise."

MSU is a member of the Muslim Student Association, that largest Muslim student organization in the country with affiliated student clubs on dozens of campuses in the U.S. and Canada.

2012 LECTURE SERIES

In May 2012, the Muslim Student Union held "Palestine Liberation Week: Getting to the Root of the Occupation," which featured a number of anti-Israel speakers and presentations on the UC Irvine campus.

As part of the program, virulent anti-Semite Amir Abdul Malik Ali was invited back to the university for the first time since May 2010, when he made a speech that referred to Jews as "the new Nazis" and "the party of Satan." In 2012, Malik Ali once again made anti-Semitic remarks in his speech, titled "The Struggle Has No Borders." Malik Ali used his platform at the university to spread conspiracy theories and condemn Zionism for alleged responsibility for the financial crisis, the alleged vilification of Islam, and global corruption issues.

Malik Ali argued that Zionists are responsible for the financial crisis:

The current financial crisis and collapse, the architects of it, are Zionists. Whether you're talking about Greenspan or whether you're talking about Geithner or whether you're talking about Summers or whether you're talking about Blankfein or whether you're talking about Dimon. I'm saying Zionism corrupts you. Zionism corrupts you. These are not righteous Jews who are doing this. These are not righteous practitioners of the Jewish faith who are doing this. These are them who are mix[ing] injustice with their religion."

Malik Ali described the University of California President Mark Yudof as a "Zionist Jew" who "supports the apartheid state of Israel" because of a letter that Yudof had written calling for tolerance on campus. Malik Ali conspiratorially alleged that Yudof's letter, which addressed concerns about anti-Jewish and anti-Israel incidents, "followed the media plan...in the media, you're not allowed to show a Muslim or a Palestinian or an Arab or what have you from a sympathetic perspective."

Malik Ali blamed President Obama and the American government for "corrupting the Constitution." He predicted that President Obama would likely be re-elected in 2012 because of his race, saying the "next theater of [military] operations is Africa. Black Africa...and they cannot have a white man in the White House bombing Black Africa."

During the Q&A session, a student in the audience shouted something about Israel being the homeland of the Jewish people and Malik Ali responded that Israel is not the Jews' homeland and that "ya'll came from Europe" and "you gotta go back."

Other anti-Israel speakers who appeared at UC Irvine during "Palestine Liberation Week" included [Hatem Bazian](#) and [Hedy Epstein](#). In addition, members of the "Irvine 11" who were suspended for disrupting a speech by Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren in February 2010 returned to campus and spoke about their experiences.

2010 LECTURE SERIES

In May 2010, the Muslim Student Union (MSU) held its annual anti-Israel event at UC Irvine (UCI), titled "Israeli Apartheid Week: A Call to Boycott, Divest and Sanction," which featured a variety of anti-Israel presentations and events.

MSU selected the May dates to coincide with the "anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba (Catastrophe) and the beginning of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian people," according to its event announcement. MSU indicated that the event was meant to jump start a campaign to pressure the university to divest from Israel and encourage boycott of Israel in general.

As in previous years, [Amir Abdul Malik Ali](#) delivered one of the more radical speeches. Titled "Death to Apartheid," Malik Ali compared Jews to Nazis, expressed support for Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad and called for the destruction of the "apartheid state of Israel." He also accused supporters of Israel of "using" the Holocaust as an excuse to oppress Palestinians, and claimed that it is easier to criticize Israel because people "are no longer being afraid of being called anti-Semitic."

Several of the speakers expressed support for the students that disrupted a speech by Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren at UCI in February 2010. For example, Omar Shakir, a student from Georgetown University, praised the students saying: "it's an honor to be speaking at the campus that made a statement heard around the world, the campus that officially said: 'we have no place for a war criminal...' you guys should be very proud of what you are doing."

Hatem Bazian, president of the anti-Israel American Muslims for Palestine, gave a speech titled "Roots of the Conflict." Bazian portrayed Israel as a foreign colonial power and rejected the legitimacy of Jewish claims in the Middle East. He characterized Jewish presence in the Middle East in Biblical time as "occupation," which he said was similar to the "occupation in the present context." Other speakers included [Norman Finkelstein](#) and [Alison Weir](#).

Prior to each presentation, an MSU representative read a prepared statement rejecting accusations that the event was anti-Semitic. The statement argued that it is "hypocritical and immoral" to describe "anyone who has the courage to stand up and speak out against the genocidal Zionist policies of Israel as anti-Semitic." The statement then compared Israel's policies to "the oppression that took place in Nazi Germany."

The event's organizers erected a mock version of Israel's security barrier, which displayed anti-Israel messages and a poster that hailed Hamas as "Freedom Fighters" decorated with a picture of Hamas founder Sheik Ahmad Yassin. In addition to the wall, organizers created a cardboard representation of an Israeli tank that was adorned with fake blood-stained Israeli flag. The tank was labeled "Goliath."

The weeklong event was co-sponsored by several groups, including the Asian Pacific Students Association, Black Student Union, MEChA, Pakistani Student Association and Radical Student Union and Worker-Student Alliance.

2009 LECTURE SERIES

The Muslim Student Union (MSU) at UC Irvine (UCI) hosted a series of lectures in May 2009 featuring anti-Semites and anti-Israel speakers. The series, titled "Israel: The Politics of Genocide," included presentations by [Amir Abdul Malik Ali](#), the anti-Semitic leader of the Sabiqun movement, former Congresswoman [Cynthia McKinney](#) and former British MP [George Galloway](#).

A video trailer advertising the event that was posted to the MSU Web site and on YouTube had as background music a religious-style Jihadist song in Arabic. The lyrics included the following text: "With all force we'll drive them away...We will restore purity to Jerusalem." The last part of the song, which was not included in the MSU video but was available online, also declared: "We'll never relinquish one inch of our land to be humiliated. The earth will bury them and burn them."

The most provocative of the lectures delivered during the event were Malik Ali's two presentations on May 14. During one presentation he stated that "Zionists" are "the new Nazis" and "the party of Satan," and that "Zionism must be destroyed. Every aspect of them." He explained how Zionists display the character of Satan: "They operate behind closed doors in silence, they are whisperers. Satan gives suggestions and withdraws." He also alleged that if President Obama attempted to make serious policy changes he should "be ready to die because the Pentagon, the C.I.A. and the Zionists will be upset with him."

In a second presentation, Malik Ali criticized the recent Congressional action on federal hate crimes legislation, which he claimed was in fact a conspiracy to consolidate Zionist control over the American people. He claimed that the legislation criminalized criticism of Israel and made questioning the historicity of the Nazi Holocaust illegal. He called for "civil disobedience as it relates to the Zionists," claiming that there are "disproportionate numbers of Jews, Zionist Jews, in the media, in finance and foreign policy." He also expressed support



Politics of Genocide video trailer

for Hamas, stating: "Hamas works in the interest of the Palestinian people, not in the interest of the Zionists."

The lecture series closed on May 21 with a presentation by Galloway during which donations were collected to support [Viva Palestina](#), Galloway's campaign to organize a convoy from the U.S. to deliver cash and vehicles to Gaza. During his presentation, Galloway denounced Israel as a racist state, compared Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza to the Holocaust, and argued that Zionism has debased "the Jewish people."

After Galloway spoke, the outgoing MSU president, Omar Zarka, gave closing remarks in which he denied that the MSU was promoting anti-Semitism. He declared: "I love bagels, I eat kosher, and frankly I'm Semitic. I have no problem with the Jewish people, but I have to say that I have a huge problem with Zionism."

In addition to the lectures, MSU held a screening of *Occupation 101*, an anti-Israel propaganda film that denounces Zionism as an impediment for peaceful coexistence. The film, screened May 11, includes a distorted historical overview of the Israeli-Arab conflict that omits major historical events and facts. It portrays Israel as the aggressor and the Palestinians as innocent victims of an ongoing project of "ethnic cleansing." One visual through which the film shows Palestinian victimhood is the incorporation of images of Jesus and the crucifixion. On the event's program, MSU organizers wrote that the film "presents an analysis of the facts surrounding the controversy and dispels long-perceived misconceptions."

On the day of the film screening, Jim Lafferty of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, a left-wing civil liberties organization, recited a spoken word piece about the conflict in Gaza in which he blamed Israel for targeting babies and compared Israel to Nazi Germany. He stated: "fascist scheming...they learned it from the masters. They went and made it worse by blowing up the caskets and babies in their baskets... choking little children with the rope that you were given from imperialist false hope of ending terrorism."

The event's organizers erected a mock version of Israel's security barrier, which displayed anti-Israel messages and a poster that hailed Hamas as "Freedom Fighters"



decorated with a picture of Hamas founder Sheik Ahmad Yassin. Another display featured an American flag with a Star of David in place of the fifty stars, representing the allegation that Israel controls U.S. politics. One section of the wall described Zionism as "an ultra nationalist movement concerned with establishment and maintenance of a Jewish-only state in Islamic Palestine." The display was adorned with a fake blood-stained Israeli flag.

Other displays put up on campus by the organizers included a poster about Israel's 2008-09 military operation in Gaza with the headline: "Israel's blitz Holocaust," and a cardboard representation of an Israeli tank that included a drawing of Holocaust victim Anne Frank wearing a Kaffiyeh. The different displays included statements condemning Israel for brutality, juxtaposed with Quranic verses and sayings of the Muslim prophet Muhammad. Organizers also displayed large banners during the outdoor presentations. One banner read: "Israel: spilling Palestinian blood since 1948."

The lecture series was co-sponsored by a coalition of libertarian, far-Left and ethnic-based groups, including: Afrikan Student Union, Alkalima, Armenian Sorority, Armenian Student Association, Asian Pacific Student Association, Hindu Student Council, Pakistani Student Association, Radical Student Union, Society of Arab Students, Vietnamese Action Committee, Young Americans for Liberty, Hip Hop Congress, Indian Subcontinental Club and Workers Student Alliance.

Several of the initial sponsors of the lecture series, including The Agora, Alpha Epsilon Omega and the Sikh Student Association, withdrew their names, reportedly after being informed of the speakers' anti-Semitic views. In addition, the name of Haaretz reporter Gideon Levy, who is known for his criticism of Israel's policies in the West Bank and Gaza, was taken off the series' program before it began.

CHRONOLOGY OF ANTI-SEMITISM AT UC IRVINE

For the past several years, the Muslim Student Union (MSU), the Muslim student group at UC Irvine (UCI), has staged many anti-Israel events, including a large event every spring with some of the most anti-Semitic speakers participating regularly, including the anti-Semitic leaders of the [Sabiqun movement](#). MSU's annual events include lectures and outdoor displays, and employ provocative titles such as "Israeli Apartheid Week," "Israel: The Politics of Genocide," "Never Again? Palestinian Holocaust" and "Holocaust in the Holy Land."

May 10-13, 2010, "Israeli Apartheid Week: A Call to Boycott, Divest and Sanction"

MSU hosted a [weeklong program](#) called "Israeli Apartheid Week: A Call to Boycott, Divest and Sanction," which featured a variety of anti-Israel presentations and events. It included presentations by [Amir Abdul Malik Ali](#), [Norman Finkelstein](#), [Alison Weir](#), and Hatem Bazian, president of the anti-Israel American Muslims for Palestine. MSU indicated that the event was meant to jump start a campaign to pressure the university to divest from Israel-linked companies and encourage boycott of Israel in general. Several campus groups have co-sponsored the event. In his speech, titled "Death to Apartheid," Malik Ali compared Jews to Nazis, expressed support for Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad and called for the destruction of the "apartheid state of Israel."

May 5-21, 2009, "Israel: The Politics of Genocide"

MSU hosted a [lectures series](#) titled, "Israel: The Politics of Genocide." It included presentations by Malik Ali, former Congresswoman [Cynthia McKinney](#) and former British MP [George Galloway](#). The event also included a screening of Occupation 101, an anti-Israel propaganda film. The most provocative of the lectures delivered during the event were Malik Ali's two presentations on May 14, during which he stated that "Zionists" are "the new Nazis" and "the party of Satan," and that "Zionism must be destroyed." He also expressed support for Hamas and talked about Jewish/ Zionist conspiracies to control to the U.S. and suppress Muslims. The lecture series closed on May 21 with a presentation by Galloway during which donations were collected to support [Viva Palestina](#), Galloway's campaign to organize a convoy from the U.S. to deliver cash and vehicles to Gaza.



May 7-15, 2008, "Never Again? Palestinian Holocaust"

MSU held a week-long event titled "Never Again? Palestinian Holocaust" that featured several anti-Israel and anti-Semitic speakers, including Malik Ali, al-Asi and Ilan Pappé, a professor at the University of Exeter in the UK and author of *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*.

During one of his presentations al-Asi referred to Israel as a "hateful and expansionist militant nation state" and spoke about how Jews left ghettos in Europe only to create a ghetto in Israel: "You began to build a wall, a barrier, around the country you are living in, isn't this a grand definition of a ghetto!" He claimed that the hostility of neighboring Arab countries toward Israel was "a reaction to all the misery and

all the hostility" that Jews brought from Europe.

In his presentation Malik Ali argued that Israel is bound to be defeated because "Israelis have suffered major losses when they went up against Muslims...Every time we fought for Islam, we won."

During his speech, Pappe told the audience that "the real ambition of Israelis at large and Zionists is to get rid of all the Palestinians who live in Israel. That is the Zionist formula – you get it from cradle to grave." He also charged that Zionists "used Europe's guilt after the Holocaust" and "used ethnic cleansing to get more of Palestine." According to a statement from the MSU Pappe, an Israeli, was invited to attend to "provide a balanced perspective that sheds light on both sides of the issue."

March 3-6, 2008, "*Gears of War: Blood, Oil and University*"

A four-day event commemorating the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq featured al-Asi and Malik Ali. The event was co-sponsored by MSU, Amnesty International, Worker Student Alliance and Students for Peace and Justice.

February 7, 2008, "*From Auschwitz to Gaza: The Politics of Genocide*"

MSU hosted Mohammad al-Asi for an afternoon presentation at an outdoor space on campus grounds. During his speech, al-Asi claimed that "Zionists or what some people call the Jewish lobby" have made the U.S. a "second fiddle to the Israeli government." He further claimed that the war in Iraq was fought for Israeli interests "lurking behind the scenes," and that "the pro-Zionist, Israeli crowd" is pushing the U.S. into a war with Iran. "It is the Israelis who are benefiting from the American blood that is shed in those lands," al-Asi added.

May 14-18, 2007, "*Israel: Apartheid Resurrected*"

MSU hosted several anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist speakers, including key speeches by Malik Ali, al-Asi, Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss of the [Neturei Karta](#) and Lenni Brenner that were delivered at an outdoor amphitheater in the center of campus.

During his speech, al-Asi argued that the U.S. is fighting the war in Iraq on behalf of Israel, stating: "You can't differentiate between Washington and Tel Aviv any longer." He also alleged that the U.S. knew about the plan to attack the World Trade Center before September 11. He said his positions were not anti-Semitic; adding that Jews should take the stand that "Zionism is one thing and Judaism is another thing." Later in the day, al-Asi spoke about Hamas.

Lenni Brenner, a self-described "Trotskyist" and a staunch anti-Zionist, gave a speech entitled "Zio-Nazis," in which he claimed that all Zionists are racist and that the Zionist movement in the '30s and '40s made common cause with the Nazis. He claimed that contemporary supporters of Israel are hiding their racist origins from the Americans but that they are still racists. He contrasted it with the MSU activists who openly state their ideology.

Malik Ali said in a speech that Zionist Jews are working behind the scenes against the civil rights of African Americans while pretending to support the rights of oppressed minorities in the U.S. to get their support. Standing in front of a large banner that said "Death to Apartheid," he said: "the older Zionist Jewish leaders know what I'm talking about." He expressed support for Hamas and Hezbollah, saying that "Hamas are freedom fighters, not terrorists." Malik Ali also said: "The Zionist Jews, the Israelis, these are oppressors....we know that their time is coming to an end.... The Zionist Jew has only one fear... the ultimate fear of the Zionists are the Muslims." He said that despite the fact that the FBI and the people "who are running the system" are oppressing the Muslims, "we will not stop until we are either victorious or we are martyred."

During a second speech that Malik Ali gave that day, titled: "The UC Intifada: How You Can Help Palestine," he claimed that Zionist-Jews were behind September 11 attacks: "That's exactly what they do...they do things to make people think that it's Muslims when it is actually them behind the scenes [that is] how they do this in Palestine, how they did this with the World Trade Center, both of them: in 1993 and in 2001."

May 8-10, 2007, "Holocaust Memorial Week"

The misleadingly named "Holocaust Memorial Week," organized by MSU, included an anti-Semitic speech by Alim Musa during which he said: "who ran the slave trade...who funded [it]? You'll study and you will find out: the Jews...It was the Jewish bankers...in Vienna, with pockets full of money, funding and insuring [sic], that's who did it.... you can't tell us about no Holocaust. Between the African Americans and the Native Americans, everybody else's stuff was small potatoes."

Also as part of the Holocaust week, Professor Ward Churchill gave a speech titled "Manifest Destiny and the American Holocaust" and Hedy Epstein, a Holocaust survivor and activist with the [Wheels of Justice](#), talked about her experiences during the Holocaust. Her address was listed by organizers as: "Surviving the Nazis: Remembering is Not Enough."

October 5, 2006, *Malik Ali Speech*

Malik Ali spoke at UC Irvine about the war between Israel and Hezbollah. Ali accused "the Western Zionist controlled media" of covering up the truth about what happened in the war. He praised Hezbollah and argued that every time Muslims fight Israel in the name of Islam they are victorious. In response to a question from the audience about peace between Israel and the Arab states, Malik Ali said: "If history is any indication, there'll be peace when you're gone and we are in control again."

May 15-18, 2006, "*Holocaust in the Holy Land*"

MSU hosted several anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist speakers for a week-long event, including al-Asi, Malik Ali, Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss and Professor Norman Finkelstein. At the entrance to the venue where Finkelstein spoke, someone handed out literature by Holocaust denier [Mark Weber](#). And during a protest the MSU held as part of the event, students chanted: "Judaism, yes, Zionism, no! The state of Israel has to go!"

During a speech on May 18, Malik Ali praised Hamas and Hezbollah for fighting against Israel, saying: "The truth of the matter is your days are numbered. We will fight you until we are either martyred or we are victorious...It's about time that they [Israelis] live in fear." He claimed that Israel's defeat was imminent because unlike the Muslims, Israeli soldiers do not embrace death. During his speech, which was titled "Israel: The Fourth Reich," Malik Ali also claimed that the media in the U.S. is controlled by Jews, repeating several times: "Rupert Murdoch is a Zionist Jew!"

May 25, 2004, *al-Asi Speech*

Al-Asi gave a speech at an MSU event in which he blamed Israel for the U.S. invasion of Iraq, stating that: "the U.S. — lock, stock and barrel — is doing what Israelis want you to do." He urged the students to "tip the balance and recreate [America's] image-not in the image of Zionist Israel." Al-Asi also argued that "Many of our [Muslims] innocents have been killed when we all believe 'an eye for an eye' and 'a soul for a soul.' We're lagging behind, but we have plenty of time to catch up."

February 26, 2004, "*America Under Siege: The Zionist Hidden Agenda*"

Malik Ali gave a lecture in which he said that Zionism was a mixture of "chosen people-ness and white supremacy." He claimed that Zionists had "Congress, the media and the FBI in their back pocket" and blamed Israel for September 11, alleging that "the Israelis knew about and were in-control of 9-11" and that the attack "was staged to give an excuse to wage war against Muslims around the world."

September 9, 2001, *Benefit dinner for Imam Jamil al-Amin*

MSU held a benefit dinner for Imam Jamil al-Amin, a Muslim activist who has since been convicted for killing an Atlanta, GA, deputy sheriff. The dinner featured a speech by Alim Musa, in which he stated: "You think Zionism and Palestine is the only dictatorial power in the world. We're telling you about apartheid right here in America....When you fight Old Sam, you are fighting someone that is superior in criminality and Nazism." Another keynote speaker at the benefit, a popular speaker and Muslim activist, Hamza Yusuf, who at the time was on the board of advisors of the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#), added: "This country is facing a very terrible fate, and the reason for that is because this country stands condemned. It stands condemned like Europe stood condemned, because of what it did. And lest people forget that Europe suffered two world wars after conquering Muslim lands."

February 21, 2001, *al-Asi Speech*

During a speech at UC Irvine, al-Asi said: "You have the Jews who are blind and deaf and dumb [for whom] discrimination, if it is against a gentile, is not objectionable; but anything that happens against a Jew becomes a Holocaust...Where is the courageous Jew who can come out and say Israel is as fascist as the most fascist of Europe? Israel is a racist as Apartheid could ever be.... We have a psychosis in the Jewish community that is unable to co-exist equally and brotherly with other human beings."

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