

Rock legend Roger Waters pens letter in support of pro-Palestinian McGill students sued by B'nai Brith

Groups call on McGill administration to defend students from B'nai Brith bullying

Yesterday (July 27) B'nai Brith announced a lawsuit against the McGill administration, Student Society of McGill University (SSMU) and student group Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights. The Israel lobby group complained that undergraduate students were asked to

vote on whether they supported Palestinian rights. B'nai Brith's press release communicated that their suit was a way to deter student democracy at universities across the country.



“B'nai Brith can't tell McGill students they don't have the right to free speech on their own campus,” noted Bianca Mugenyi, director of Canadian Foreign Policy Institute.

“The McGill administration must defend its students from the pro Israel lobby,” added Karen Rodman of Just Peace Advocates.

In response to the suit rock legend Roger Waters, who is mentioned in B'nai Brith's press release, published an open letter (below) “On Human Rights, McGill University, Students and Free Speech” in which he denounces B'nai Brith's bid “to extinguish the global Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement for Palestinian rights.” The founder of Pink Floyd concludes, “all your huffing and puffing and baring of teeth signifies nothing, because your cause is morally bankrupt, your Emperor has no clothes.”

In March 71% of students voted for a Palestine Solidarity Policy committing SSMU to divest from and boycott “corporations and institutions complicit in settler-colonial apartheid against Palestinians.” In response to the student vote, B'nai Brith called on the administration to [sever](#) SSMU's funding. Shortly after, McGill’s administration threatened to terminate its Memorandum of Agreement with the student union, which regulates fees and other matters between the university and SSMU.

In response the Canadian Foreign Policy Institute and Just Peace Advocates organized a public letter signed by Waters, author Yann Martel, former MP Libby Davies, author Chris Hedges and 200 academics, artists and authors as well as 40 organizations criticizing the McGill administration's threats against SSMU.

On the eve of his July 15 performance at Montreal’s Bell Centre, the founder of Pink Floyd participated in an online rally in support of McGill students organizing for Palestinian rights.

The rally with Roger Waters generated significant media attention and in their press release announcing their lawsuit B'nai Brith attacked Waters for standing with McGill students.

For more information contact the Canadian Foreign Policy Institute: 514-436-7629, info@foreignpolicy.ca

An open Letter from Roger Waters
On Human Rights, McGill University, Students and Free Speech

The latest move by B'nai Brith in the McGill affair looks like the last desperate baring of teeth of a cornered animal. It is predictable, pathetic and dangerous. The reason it is dangerous is it is frightened. Why is it frightened? Because someone has switched on the light and there is nowhere to hide. The light it would dearly love to extinguish is the global Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement for Palestinian rights.

Ok, enough with metaphors. B'nai Brith and the rest of the Israel lobby supporters of the illegal occupation of Palestine and the apartheid regime Israel maintains, seek to convince the rest of us that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of Paris of 1948 is wrong. B'nai Brith believes that only people of the Jewish faith should have full rights in Palestine. In a recent undisputed referendum, 71% of McGill students disagreed. That overwhelming majority of McGill students, like me, and several hundred other signatories of an open letter in support of them, do believe in the Paris Declaration. That means we believe in equal human rights, including, but not limited to, political and property rights, the right to self-determination, the right to life... yeah all that good stuff denied to the Palestinians...

We believe those rights should extend to all our brothers and sisters all over the world irrespective of ethnicity, religion or nationality. Just to be clear, that would include the Palestinian people, no?

This is not rocket science. Threatening McGill students and by inference the people of these United Nations with “lawfare” is an idle threat which we resist with all the weight of being right on our side. All your huffing and puffing and baring of teeth signifies nothing, because your cause is morally bankrupt, your Emperor has no clothes. The time has come for you to rethink your position and join collective humanity. We are here with love in our hearts ready to welcome you into the fold, but first you must shrug off the carapace of supremacist bullshit, that sits so heavily on those shoulders.

Love
Roger Waters