

## **UofT Student Groups Condemn Recent Violence against Peaceful Protesters at York University by the Jewish Defense League! No to War Criminals on our Campuses!**

The University of Toronto (UofT)'s Students Against Israeli Apartheid, UofT's Independent Jewish Voices, the Canadian Union of Public Employee's Local 3902 Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) Committee, and UofT's Graduate Student Union BDS Committee denounce the recent violence against human rights activists and peaceful protesters at York University by the hate group, the Jewish Defence League (JDL). The JDL has also targeted Palestine solidarity events and organizers at the University of Toronto for many years with physical and verbal violence. We express our solidarity with Students Against Israeli Apartheid at York University and with the York University student body that protested against members of the Israeli military speaking on their campus. We call on the York University administration and our governments to take appropriate measures to protect the York community and our campuses from future JDL violence, and thereby to affirm freedom of speech and the democratic right to protest.

On Wednesday, November 20th, 2019, hundreds of students, workers, Faculty and community members assembled to peacefully protest a talk by members of the Israeli occupation army organized by Herut Canada, a right-wing Zionist group sponsored by and affiliated with the Israeli government. The numerous war crimes and atrocities committed by the Israeli occupation army are well documented by, among others, the United Nations, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch. War criminals have no place on our campuses.

Protesters were met with physical and verbal violence by the JDL, a far-right Zionist organization with a history of hate crimes against racialized people that is listed as a terrorist organization in the USA and has been identified as a hate group by numerous organizations, including the Southern Poverty Law Centre. At the rally, members of the JDL were recorded hurling racist and sexist insults at protesters. They were also recorded choking a student with his scarf and punching another student in the back of the head, which led to his hospitalization. JDL members spat at and kicked students. They shoved people down stairs. The JDL has no place on our campuses. We salute the York students and their allies for taking a just and courageous stand against the presence of the Israeli soldiers on their campus in the face of threats, harassment and violence.

Despite its prior knowledge of the threat of violence by the JDL, the York University administration failed to take the necessary measures to protect the protesters and campus community. We condemn the inadequate response from the York University administration. We also condemn the response of the Ford and Trudeau governments for their support of the Herut event.

**FYI RELEVANT LINKS:**

Statement of BDS South Africa with York U: <http://bit.ly/2pPJcTs>

Dimitri Lascaris article, including info on York U letter to JDL and other communication:  
<https://dimitrilascaris.org/2019/11/23/justin-trudeau-sides-with-pro-israel-thuggery-at-york-university/>

Statement of SAIA at York:

<https://www.facebook.com/SAIA.York/posts/2712026162151523>

CUPE 3903's statement:

<https://3903.cupe.ca/2019/11/22/an-open-letter-to-rhonda-lenton-the-november-20th-violence-is-on-you/>

Statement of York University Graduate Students' Association (Local 84) and York Federation of Students (Local 68):

<http://www.yfs.ca/statement?fbclid=IwAR2SVCSR9PERAAIZLgH4IXONzslLoj00-H8IE2F0LQ963QTP51S-X0qbKhQ>

Joel Roberts article with key info on post protest government and campus reactions:

<https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/protesting-the-israel-defense-forces-is-not-anti-semitic>

Please let us know if you require any other information.