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Via filing on e-PERB

Mary Weiss Deputy General Counsel San Francisco Regional Office 1515 Clay Street, Suite 2206 Oakland, CA, 94612-1403

Attention: Informational Brief Concerning "Palestinian Solidarity Encampments"

Docket Nos: SF-CE-1462-H & SF-CO-246-H

Dear Ms. Weiss:

Pursuant to PERB Regulation 32210, non-party Daniel Solomon submits this informational brief concerning Unfair Practice Charge SF-CE-1462-H filed by the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of American Local 4811 ("UAW Local 4811," or the "Union") and Unfair Practice Charge SF-CO-246-H filed by the Regents of the University of California (the "University").

Daniel Solomon is a Jewish Ph.D. candidate at the University of California—Berkeley Center for Jewish Studies. He is also a worker within the ASE (BX) bargaining unit represented by the Union. As such, he has a different perspective from either the University—which Solomon believes negligently failed to enforce its own rules in permitting antisemitic encampments that endanger students like him—and the Union—which has breached its collective bargaining agreements by launching a strike in support of these dangerous encampments.

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I. Summary of the Informational Brief

In derogation of its contractual obligations, the Union has violated its collective bargaining agreement by engaging in a purely political strike which does not concern genuine worker or union issues. Instead, the Union demands that the University of California system "divest" from "profiting off of the suffering in Gaza" to support the so-called "Palestine Solidarity Movement." See UAW 4811 Demands in Support of the Palestine Solidarity Movement ("Union Demands").

While Solomon disagrees with the Union's demand to "divest," the Union's amnesty demand positively endangers him. The Union demands "amnesty" for all University-affiliated occupiers and student groups—not just graduate student workers—who have monopolized public spaces by excluding those with views they disagree. Solomon himself has been jeered and mobbed simply for crossing through the round-the-clock occupation outside of Sproul Hall at the heart of UC-Berkeley's campus prior to last week. The "Palestinian Solidarity Encampments" that the Union strikes on behalf of endangers Jewish workers like Solomon.

The Union claims that the University "suppress[ed] speech" by clearing encampments at UCLA and UC San Diego. Motion to Expedite, SF-CE-1462-H, May 15 ("Mot. Expedite"). In fact, the reverse is true. The encampments themselves stifled free speech. The University's belated enforcement of longstanding time, place, and manner rules instead allow *all* speakers (including UAW workers) to express their views—not just those who agree with the encampments. The encampments seized public spaces for the anti-Israel activists' exclusive use. Participants in the camps excluded (and continue to exclude) dissenting voices with barricades, "checkpoints," and self-appointed security guards. Solomon was himself "escorted" out of the former encampment at Berkeley by masked activists simply because of his Jewish identity.

¹ UAW 4811, UAW 4811 Demands in Support of the Palestine Solidarity Movement, archive.is/EtDqV (May 10, 2024 archive), identical to: web.archive.org/web/20240520233721/https://www.uaw4811.org/uaw-4811-demands-in-support-of-the-palestine-solidarity-movement (May 20, 2024 archive) and archive.is/AG03f (May 21, 2024 archive). Literally yesterday, the Union restyled its demands—the same demands that leadership promoted and members voted on when authorizing the strike—as merely a suggestion. "How UC Can Engage with the Broader Protest Movement." uaw4811.org/how-uc-can-engage-with-the-broader-protest-movement. However, the previous framing permeates Union publicity about their contract-breaching strike and shaped the strike authorization vote that concluded on May 15, 2024.

The Union offers a sham "workplace safety" pretext that their strike is *not* purely political, but the Union repeatedly admits otherwise. The Union initially titled its demands "UAW 4811 Demands in Support of the Palestine Solidarity Movement." *See* Union Demands. The demands are not in support of worker safety or even (more accurately) immunity from student misconduct citations—the Union strikes instead *in support of a political movement*.

Anyhow, occupied encampments are *not* graduate students' "workplace." No worker was stationed, as part of their duties, at the UCLA encampment at 3 am on May 2 nor the UCSD encampment at 7 am on May 6, when these sites were cleared by police. No student worker, as part of their job duties, was required to ignore multiple warnings by both campus administrations and the police to disperse prior to arrest. And no workers' free speech rights are infringed by observing minimal time, place, and manner restrictions at University of California campuses.

The Union attempts to obfuscate the issue by claiming the encampments were prejudiced by "newly implemented policies" (Mot. Expedite), but once again the reverse is true. The University campuses various time, place, and manner rules are longstanding and meant to ensure that *all* students can speak in public spaces—not only the minority who barricaded themselves on public thoroughfares. The only "new policy" was the University *disregarding its own policies* on campuses until they became palpably dangerous to the community. Far from being prejudiced by the content of their protest, the "Palestinian Solidarity Encampments" have been uniquely privileged by cowardly and recalcitrant University administrators. No other speakers have been allowed to erect fortifications in public spaces and occupy them for weeks on end as anti-Israel activists have. While the encampment activists may have believed (with some reason) that longstanding rules don't apply to them, the University's decision to reverse course at UCLA, UC San Diego, and UC Irvine does not even raise a legitimate student grievance, let alone a worker grievance severe enough to excuse the Union's breach of its contracts.

Even if the encampments were workplaces, they pose more risk of harm to Jewish students like Solomon than any University action to enforce reasonable, content-neutral rules designed to ensure free speech rights for all speakers. Solomon has been abandoned by his Union, which has become outright hostile to him through its fixation of achieving publicity for launching a political strike. While Solomon believes that collective bargaining can achieve substantial benefits for workers—as the Union did by negotiating improved wages and benefits in 2022—the Union's leadership has breached its duty of fair representation by launching a nakedly political strike seeking "amnesty" for non-labor misconduct.

In doing so, the Union elected to breach its own bargaining contracts to pursue political goals unrelated to the terms and conditions of employment. This is particularly harmful to Solomon because the University, his employer, has proved indifferent to disruptive protests that target of Jewish students.

II. Background

A. Solomon's interest in this dispute.

Daniel Solomon is a graduate student-employee who works as a TA in the ASE (BX) bargaining unit. While Solomon is off for the summer, like most Berkeley students, the Union's political demands affect him. "Amnesty" for activists will embolden them to redouble their encampments and other rule-breaking protests. These protests limit Solomon's access and speech rights on campus. This is particularly harmful to Solomon, who is legally blind.

This is not merely a hypothetical concern. Solomon was previously impeded from navigating through Sather Gate, the main entrance to the Berkeley campus, which activists blockaded in early February 2024. Activists closed the middle passage of the gate completely, wrapping it in yellow "caution" tape, and they singled out perceived Jewish students passing through the small side passages for abuse. The blockade only ended after Jewish students rallied to "liberate" the gate, and faculty shamed Berkeley's chancellor into post "observers" at the gate to ensure that Jewish students could pass.² Solomon, because of his poor eyesight, could not get through the gate prior to its "liberation," and even after observers allegedly protected it, he found it difficult to navigate until protestors moved their activity to the "encampment" at Sproul Plaza in late April. Solomon was also present on February 26, when a violent mob organized by a recognized student organization, "Bears for Palestine," attacked an event with an Israeli speaker, spat at attendees, called them "dirty Jews," and forced police to evacuate the attendees. While the administration "denounced" the attack, it has yet to discipline the student group or any participants in the attack. On April 9, Dean Erwin Chemerinsky of the

² Emma Goss, *UC Berkeley chancellor to post 'observers' at Sather Gate*, JEWISH NEWS OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (Mar. 21, 2024) https://jweekly.com/2024/03/21/uc-berkeley-chancellor-to-post-observers-at-sather-gate/.

³ AP, UC Berkeley Officials Denounce Protest That Forced Police to Evacuate Students at Jewish Event on Campus (Feb. 28, 2024), https://www.kqed.org/news/11977500/uc-berkeley-officials-denounce-protest-that-forced-police-evacuation-at-jewish-student-event.

Berkeley Law School was targeted by protestors, which administrators acknowledged to be antisemitic.⁴

Berkeley administrators have done precious little to protect Solomon from antisemitic attacks, but the Union's demand for blanket "amnesty," even for non-workers, will only compound the University's malign neglect.

More generally, to the extent the Union is not enjoined from launching political strikes while bound by no-strike CBAs, this will harm Solomon's academic career. For example, should the union strike again in the fall for similar political pretexts (or new causes that might later become fashionable), the University will likely respond by curtailing classes, which limits opportunity for all graduate workers—whether or not they are union members or they participate in the strike.

If not enjoined, the Union's tactics will erode the Union's ability to advance worker interests. An unlawful strike depletes the goodwill, financial resources, and political capital of the Union, hobbling its ability to execute core functions. While labor negotiations often become heated, they are also built upon good faith by the parties—an employer capitulates on worker demands in order to resolve concerted union actions, as they did in 2022. Why would the University agree to another contract with a counterparty that thinks a no-strike provision is just a suggestion that can be discarded in response to non-labor campus disruptions?

When the Union cannot be counted on to mediate and bargain in good faith, it harms all workers in bargaining units who depend on the Union as their sole recognized representative.

Solomon joined the Union shortly after orientation at the University in fall 2021 due to his long interest in (and support) of the labor movement. Solomon became a dues-paying Union member in 2022 when the University first assigned him TA duties for courses.

In November 2022, the antecedent union, UAW Local 2865, initiated a strike that had been authorized by Solomon (along with 98% of the workers in his bargaining unit). Solomon supported the strike because at the time graduate

⁴ Jaweed Kaleem, 'Please leave!' A Jewish UC Berkeley dean confronts pro-Palestinian activist at his home, Los Angeles Times (Apr. 10, 2024), https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-04-10/uc-berkeley-law-school-dean-clasheswithpro-palestinian-activists ("The individuals that targeted this event did so simply because it was hosted by a dean who is Jewish. These actions were antisemitic, threatening, and do not reflect the values of this university").

students earned less than a full-time worker under California's minimum wage. He felt that the University had not presented reasonable offers prior to the strike authorization vote. Solomon did not cross that picket line, because he agrees that a strike is an important tool for workers to extract concessions from employers—but strikes should only be deployed when in the best interests of *all* workers, not political demands that harm some workers for the primary benefit of third-party political activists.

As a worker the Union owes a duty toward, and as a worker who wants the Union to advance member interests, Solomon has an interest in the charges before PERB. And as a Jewish student harassed an obstructed by activists that the Union throws its weight behind, Solomon's interest is particularly acute.⁵

B. The Union Contracts and their origin.

The Union is an amalgamation of two antecedent union locals: UAW Local 2865, (representing Academic Student Employees and Graduate Student Researchers, BX/BR), and UAW Local 5811 (representing Academic Researchers and Postdoctoral Scholars, AR/PX). The antecedent unions called a strike in all four bargaining units in November 2022.

In December 2022, all bargaining units voted to approve contracts recommended by divided negotiating representatives. The BX and BR contracts do not expire until May 31, 2025. The AR and PX contracts do not expire until September 30, 2027. (The BX, BR, AR, and PX contracts will be collectively called the "Union Contracts" in this brief.)

A significant minority of workers and Union officers opposed the Union Contracts, especially in the BX bargaining unit, but the disagreements did not concern "divestment" or similar political demands. Dissenters urged members to vote to prolong the strike in hopes of achieving improved wages and benefits. The dissenting BX representatives issued a statement that became part of the "UC Santa Cruz Contract Ratification Resources," which suggested the strike

⁵ Solomon has reviewed the contents of this brief for accuracy, but cannot serve a declaration by overnight mail as required by the Board because he is currently summering in France. To the extent that facts in this brief concerning Mr. Solomon would be helpful to the board, he offers to file a declaration swearing to them, the original copy of which may be mailed to the Board in due course.

should continue because "we believe that we can win more." The Santa Cruz Resources expressed concern that the agreement to raise base wages would be offset by reductions in "departmental top-ups," offered to many graduate students, and that the wage increases, childcare allowances, and dependent benefits were insufficient. Some union members believed that the package should include a standing Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and a "Cops Off Campus" demand. However, *none* of the dissident demands presented to the University included: (1) divestment of any kind, (2) a provision to disclose and track all investments, grants, and contracts, (3) an ability for researchers to opt out of funding sources tied to the military or any other source, or (4) "transition funding" for those whose want to opt out. Moreover, no opponent to the contracts suggested blanket immunity on behalf of covered employees—let alone other students, groups, faculty, and staff—to the University of California's time, manner, and place restrictions on speech.

The antecedent local unions promised that there "shall be no strikes," which both agreed "<u>includes sympathy strikes.</u>" (emphasis in the executed BX Contract with UAW Local 2865, which covers Solomon). Relevant provisions are contained in the Unfair Practice Charge No. SF-CO-246-H ("University Charge"), Pp. 3-9 & Exhibits A-D. The Contracts also permit the University to set work scheduling and related procedures, which was freshly on the parties' minds due to the unpredictability of Covid-19. *Id.* Solomon will not repeat these arguments.

All of the Union Contracts also include "Grievance and Arbitration" provisions. These procedures vary slightly, but all of them define a "grievance" as a claim "that the University has violated a specific provision of this agreement during the term of this agreement." All of them also require that unresolved disputes be ultimately settled though binding arbitration.

This process is intended to mediate and avoid strikes during the life of the Union Contracts—which is the reason that employers seek CBAs with worker representatives in the first place.

⁶ "Statement from BT [Bargaining Team] Members who voted against the Tentative Agreement," available online at: docs.google.com/document/d/1bdwfcvlXwXCX3oyswi9vc9eEbRwG4k-xhwWppIwNGnM/.

⁷ See, e.g., Hazel Katz, The UC Strike Showed There's Power in a Union, but the UAW Still Has Work To Do, THE REAL NEWS NETWORK (Apr. 11, 2023), available at: therealnews.com/the-uc-strike-showed-theres-power-in-a-union-but-the-uaw-still-has-work-to-do.

III. Informational Commentary

Solomon does not want to duplicate arguments advanced by the University to enjoin the strike. He has no fond feelings toward the University, whose mismanagement of often-nakedly antisemitic pro-Palestine encampments harms students and workers like him.

Instead, Solomon presents evidence relevant to both parties' charges: that the University of California (and Berkeley in particular) have high rates of antisemitic incidents which have greatly accelerated since Hamas' incursion, mass murder, and mass rape of Israeli civilians on October 7, 2023.

Rather than act as a bulwark against the University's negligent toleration of antisemitism on behalf of Jewish workers, the Union has added to the problem by consistently promoting "anti-Zionist" activists itself. The Union and its officers have repeatedly referred to Israel's war in Gaza as "genocide," Israel as an "apartheid state," and has supported activists who would like to see the Jewish state of Israel wiped off the map. Of course, the Union has speech rights, and can speak freely about any issues it sees fit.

However, the Union crosses an important line and breaches its duty to fairly represent all workers when it throws its vitally important tools of concerted action into causes that *harm* many workers. The Union's strike not only breaches its Contracts with the University, it violates its duty to fairly represent all workers within its units, including Solomon.

Finally, the Union's conduct before and after the strike began Monday includes a spree of additional breaches against the Contracts and the Union's broad duty to fairly represent everyone. The chair of the Santa Cruz work unit launched a wildcat strike on May 1, and is now one of the most prominent faces of the "authorized" strike. This creates perverse incentives for other workers to strike without Union authorization so that they too can be the next savior for the cause against "Zionism."

Left unchecked, the Union's escalation threatens to make administration of the world-renowned University of California subject to veto by Union-backed activists for every conceivable political cause.

A. Antisemitic climate on University of California campuses.

In the wake of the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023, longstanding antisemitism erupted in campuses across the country, including on University of California campuses. Many administrators, including those at Berkeley, where Solomon works, have shrugged off the incidents and dealt gingerly with oft-violent and censorious activists. This is a problem because Berkeley, and several University of California campuses, are among the worst worldwide in terms of hostile environments as perceived by Jewish students.⁸

B. The Union's advocacy against "Zionism."

Jewish workers lacking support from the administration should be able to turn to their Union for help, but instead they face more of the same. The Union and its representatives repeatedly claim Israel is an "apartheid state" committing "genocide," alienating most Jewish students, who support the existence of Israel and find the exclusionary protests against "Zionists" disturbing.

On November 4, 2023, UAW Local 2865 posted a statement signed by its executive board calling for the "immediate de-escalation and the dismantling of the occupation and apartheid system in Israel-Palestine." Nov. 4 Statement. It read that "conscience demands that we say clearly: our hearts break for the Israeli families who have lost loved ones, and only break further as these deaths are now used to justify the siege, bombardment, forced transfer, and impending genocide of two million Palestinians in Gaza, over half of them children." *Id*.

⁸ See, e.g., Leonard Saxe et al., Hotspots of Antisemitism and Anti-Israel Sentiment on U.S. Campuses, Steinhard Soc. Research Institute 16 (Oct. 2016), hdl.handle.net/10192/33070 (over a third of students surveyed at UC Berkeley and three other University of California (UC) campuses perceived a hostile environment toward Jews on their campuses); The 40 Worst Colleges for Jewish Students, 2017, The Algemeiner (2017), www.algemeiner.com/list/the-40-worst-colleges-for-jewish-students-2017/ (Jewish publication ranking UC Berkeley as 5th in its list of works colleges for Jewish students, UC-Irvine 10th, UCLA 22nd, UC Davis 24th, UC Santa Cruz 25th, UC-San Diego 34th, and UC Santa Barbara 38th); Graham Wright et al., In the Shadow of War: Hotspots of Antisemitism on U.S. College Campuses, MAURICE AND MARILYN COHEN CENTER FOR MODERN JEWISH STUDIES 8 (Dec. 14, 2023), scholarworks.brandeis.edu/esploro/outputs/report/9924312184701921 (placing UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC-San Diego in the "highest antisemitic hostility" category, representing the highest quartile of institutions surveyed).

⁹ UAW2865, UAW 2865 Calls on California Leaders to Demand a Ceasefire and an End to the Occupation of Palestine, available at: https://uaw2865.org/ceasefirenow/.

An open letter and petition circulated in response to this statement. It argued that the "foremost problem" with the statement was the "lack of mention and condemnation of Hamas, a terror organization" which "brutally violated a ceasefire with Israel" and "executed, with other terror organizations, the October 7, 2023, massacre in Israel, murdering over 1,300 people and committing crimes against humanity." The statement continued that "[m]any institutions, including Amnesty International, have called for a ceasefire while condemning Hamas – we urge you to join them, calling for the hostages' release that will lead to a cease-fire, and denouncing violence and hate speech on UC campuses against Jews and Israelis."

The Union declined to respond, and their November 4 statement regarding "impending genocide" remains on the website of UAW Local 2865. However, Alexander Rudenshiold, one of the Union's head ASE stewards for UC-Irvine labelled it a "weird genocide-apologia open letter" and highlighted the demand for the Union to also condemn Hamas as "especially deranged!" He went on to opine that one "can't expect 'liberal' zionists to recognize the humanity of Palestinians when they can't even muster a performance of empathy for the people they're actively caping for genocide on behalf of!" ¹²

Pro-Palestine activists and Union officers sometimes derisively refer to "Zionists," which the speakers generally do not define, but which is often used as a hateful substitute for "Jews" or "Israelis." To the extent that Union speakers sincerely means "Zionist" as the term is commonly meant—"someone who belongs to or supports a political movement that had as its original aim the creation of a country for Jewish people, and that now supports the state of Israel," CAMBRIDGE

¹⁰ Taking Action in Academia, Subject: An Urgent Call for Revision of UAW 2865 & UAW 5810 Statements on Recent Events in Gaza, available at: takingactionacademia.org/.

¹¹ The open letter cited Amnesty International, *Israel: Palestinian armed groups must be held accountable for deliberate civilian killings, abductions and indiscriminate attacks* (Oct. 12, 2023), available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/israel-palestinian-armed-groups-must-be-held-accountable-for-deliberate-civilian-killings-abductions-and-indiscriminate-attacks/.

¹² @rudenshiold (Jan. 4), twitter.com/rudenshiold/status/1743103979025010879. Note that this brief quotes many social media posts, which are liable to be deleted by the poster. The undersigned have prepared archives of all of these citations should they disappear, but for concision has not included parallel archive links in this brief except where they are currently necessary to access the cited content.

¹³ Naomi Nix and Elizabeth Dwoskin, THE WASHINGTON POST, *Inside Meta, a debate over when the word 'Zionist' is hate speech* (Feb. 9, 2024): washingtonpost.com/technology/2024/02/09/meta-zionist-hate-speech/

DICTIONARY¹⁴—then the distinction makes little difference because most Jews *are* "Zionists" in this sense: they support the existence of a Jewish state in Israel. Many "Zionists" therefore oppose the current ruling political party of the nation of Israel, as of course do many Zionists living in Israel. While activists sometimes claim they only mean "Zionist" in the sense of "the ideology that supports the occupation and the subjugation of Palestinians in their indigenous land," these same activists undermine that definition because they smear organizations like Hillel International—a Jewish campus life organization with no connection to the Gaza war—as among those "Zionist" groups that the University must boycott. ¹⁵

Zionists, including Solomon, disagree about the necessity of the war in Gaza, and many Zionists abhor tactics used by the Israeli government in waging the war, including Solomon. Many Zionists believe that a Palestinian state should also exist—the core defining feature of Zionism is simply supporting the existence of the Jewish state of Israel, as the vast majority of Jewish people do.

In other communications from Union social media accounts, the Union, its antecedents, and its divisions have repeatedly referred to Israel as an "apartheid" state¹⁶ and the war in Gaza as "genocide."¹⁷ The Union and its antecedents have also posted photos from rallies where union banners accompany a banner reading "Unity Confronting Zionism," a similar message in Arabic, with the image of a fist grabbing

¹⁴ Zionist, available online at: dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/zionist.

¹⁵ Linda Dayan, 'Starve the War Machine': Workers at UC Santa Cruz Strike in Solidarity With pro-Palestinian Protesters, HAARETZ (May 21, 2024), www.haaretz.com/us-news/2024-05-21/ty-article/.premium/workers-at-uc-santa-cruz-go-on-strike-in-solidarity-with-pro-palestinian-protesters/0000018f-9bf8-da35-a3af-dffa0a620000, archived at: archive.is/nQocI.

 $[\]begin{array}{c} ^{16}\ @uawuci\ (Dec.\ 4,\ 2023)\ \underline{twitter.com/uawuci/status/1731890254922338441};\ @uawuci\ (Dec.\ 1,\ 2023)\ \underline{twitter.com/uawuci/status/1730627247416242499};\ @UAW5810\ (Nov.\ 21,\ 2023)\ \underline{twitter.com/UAW5810/status/1727036610611458199};\ @uaw_4811\ (Nov.\ 21,\ 2023)\ \underline{twitter.com/uaw}\ 4811/status/1727012312605966385;\ @uawuci\ (Oct.\ 21,\ 2023);\ \underline{twitter.com/uawuci/status/1715758148227666172};\ @uawuci\ (Oct.\ 20,\ 2023)\ \underline{twitter.com/uawuci/status/1715378927877722273};\ @uawuci\ (Oct.\ 14,\ 2023)\ \underline{twitter.com/uawuci/status/1713372225196466656}. \end{array}$

¹⁷ Answer Coalition, Labor Union Leaders Say: End the War on Gaza, Cut All Aid to Israel! www.answercoalition.org/labor_leaders_palestine (statement referring to "genocidal massacre being perpetuated by Israel" signed by UAW 2865 and UAW 5810 presidents and promoted on Union social media on November 7, 2023); Instagram posts by: @uaw_4811 (Apr. 25, 2024), www.instagram.com/p/C6MZtLUPIA4/?img_index=2; @uaw_4811 (May 6, 2024), www.instagram.com/p/C6ogxgNOs39/?img_index=2.

a snake's tongue. Perhaps not uncoincidentally, the same banner illustrated an oped written by UC-Berkeley Dean Erwin Chemerinsky who wrote in October, "never in my life have I seen or felt the antisemitism of the last few weeks." And another photo posted by the Union from the same rally included a sign that reads "Labor Says No! To Genocide Joe!" The Union has also highlighted an event it encouraged members to attend, where activists blocked traffic at Oakland intersections near the Federal Courthouse in putative support of Palestine. The protest was inspired by a lawsuit attempting to enjoin President Biden's foreign policy, as expressed by a block-long street drawing written by the protestors: "Biden: Complicit in Genocide."

The animus toward "Zionism" is reflected in statements by the Union's officers. ASE Statewide Chair Tanzil Chowdhury (then a UAW organizer) apparently joked about the destruction of Israel, when he wrote on May 11, 2021 in response to a Meghan McCain tweet, "i am praying for one very specific thing about israel, that's for sure."²³ Alexander Rudenshiold, an ASE steward at UC-Irvine labelled as "apartheid apologia" UC-Irvine Chancellor Howard Gillman's condemnation of Hamas's mass rape and murder as a "horrific massacre."²⁴ Ten days later, the twitter account for the UC-Irvine chapter of the antecedent union locals likewise condemned the Chancellor's message about "Israeli apartheid" as "deeply offensive."²⁵

Rudenshiold also opined that "citational politics" require academics to not cite works written by "Zionists and apologists." Following the Union's vote to

¹⁸ @uaw_4811 and @ uaw5810, <u>www.instagram.com/p/C3RM0Bvpj0D/?img_index=7</u>.

²⁰ @uaw 4811 and @ uaw5810, www.instagram.com/p/C3RM0Bvpj0D/?img index=8.

²¹ @uaw 4811, (Jan. 26, 2024) www.instagram.com/p/C2lCbhRysCI/.

²² Henry Lee, KTVU, 'It's genocide': Protesters in Oakland rail against Biden administration, call for ceasefire (Jan. 26, 2024) https://www.ktvu.com/news/its-genocide-protesters-rail-against-biden-administration-call-for-ceasefire-in-oakland.

²³ @only_tanz (May 11, 2021), twitter.com/only_tanz/status/1392030054306127873.

²⁴ @rudenshiold (Oct. 10), twitter.com/rudenshiold/status/1711886366714544191.

²⁵ @uawuci (Oct. 20, 2023), twitter.com/uawuci/status/1715378927877722273.

²⁶ @rudenshiold (Oct. 12), twitter.com/rudenshiold/status/1712687792231415817.

secure a ceasefire, he wrote "proud to have voted yes! the work will continue! from the river to the sea!" On April 16, 2024, by a vote of 377-to-44, the U.S. House resolved that this phrase "is outrightly antisemitic and must be strongly condemned." The Anti-Defamation League calls it a "hateful phrase" suggesting a denial of Israel's right to exist, which makes "members of the Jewish and pro-Israel community feel unsafe and ostracized." In any event, the "river and the sea" are the Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea. If all this land belonged to a Palestinian state (as the flag character in Rudenshiold's tweet suggests), it would leave no place for Israel.

Several chapters of the Union passed resolutions calling for a ceasefire in October and November 2023. Solomon and other Jewish students emailed Union officers with concerns about the Union's November 4 statement and the later resolutions, and workers received apparently-canned responses from different Union representatives emphasizing the Union's diversity and inclusion and concluding: "I would love to sit down and chat about this further and what you would like to see your union do."

On December 14, 2023, the antecedent unions issued another joint statement calling for "an immediate ceasefire and an end to US funding of the Israeli apartheid regime." The Union's official statements and communications from official accounts caused some Jewish union members to resign from the Union. ³¹ While Solomon made several inquiries about resigning, he never formally resigned his membership before this week.

On January 31, 2024, the Berkeley chapters of the antecedent unions adopted a resolution in support of BDS "Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions" against Israel

²⁷ @rudenshiold (Jan. 10), twitter.com/rudenshiold/status/1745204046858957054.

²⁸ Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, Roll Call 134, Bill Number: H. Res. 883, https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/2024134.

²⁹ Anti-Defamation Legue, *Slogan: "From the River to the Sea Palestine Will be Free"* (Oct. 26, 2023), available at: https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/slogan-river-sea-palestine-will-be-free.

³⁰ UAW Local 5810, *UAW 2865 & UAW 5810 Statement on Palestine* (Dec. 14, 2023), https://uaw5810.org/2023/12/14/uaw-2865-uaw-5810-statement-on-palestine/.

³¹ See, e.g., this Reddit post: https://www.reddit.com/r/Judaism/comments/18b5m15/ jewish_uc_graduate_students_and_postdocs_in_uaw/.

by the University.³² The Union apparently made no effort to pursue BDS demands with the University through grievances, mediation, or arbitration.

1. Palestine encampments and the Union's support for them.

Since the October 7 attack by Hamas, student activists have ramped up their protests on campuses throughout the University of California system. Berkeley law students and professors alike wrote about the rise of antisemitic activists on the campus starting immediately after the attack.³³ As discussed above in section II.A, Solomon himself was victimized by some of these actions including the activists' blockade of Sather Gate, the main entrance to the Berkeley campus, where activists harassed individuals they perceived to be "Zionist" (Jewish) from passing. He was also present on February 26, when a violent protest organized by a student group against an Israeli speaker where police had to evacuate attendees for their safety.

These and similar activists turned their attention to "Palestine Solidarity Encampments" after the first one was established on April 17, 2024 at Columbia University in New York City. Activists soon squatted on Sproul Plaza at Berkeley by April 21, and the encampment grew rapidly with no push-back from the administration, which never attempted to clear it.

Activists erected about 30 tents to establish the UCLA encampment on Thursday April 25 at the Royce Quad on the UCLA campus. *See Mercury-News* Timeline.³⁴ By the very first afternoon of the camp's existence, Jewish students reported "feeling unsafe on campus" and expressed "discomfort with protest chants such as 'from the river to the sea' and 'intifada, intifada,' which they interpret as a

³² Labor for Palestine, Resolution: Committing to a Labor Strategy towards Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions at the University of California (UAW 2865 and 5810 Berkeley), laborforpalestine.net/2024/01/31/resolution-committing-to-a-labor-strategy-towards-boycott-divestment-and-sanctions-at-the-university-of-california-uaw-2865-and-5810-berkeley/.

on college campuses now, LOS ANGELES TIMES (Oct. 29, 2023), https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-10-29/antisemitism-college-campus-israel-hamas-palestine; Charlotte Aaron, Noah Cohen, Billy Malmed, Adam Pukier, We're Jewish Berkeley Law Students, Excluded in Many Areas on Campus, The Dailly Beast (Oct. 17, 2022), https://www.thedailybeast.com/were-jewish-berkeley-law-students-excluded-in-many-areas-oncampus">https://www.thedailybeast.com/were-jewish-berkeley-law-students-excluded-in-many-areas-oncampus.

³⁴ Clara Harter, Here's what happened at UCLA before pro-Israel counterprotesters attacked pro-Palestinian protesters, THE MERCURY NEWS (May 2, 2024); www.mercurynews.com/2024/05/02/tick-tock-to-chaos-a-timeline-of-escalating-tensions-atucla/.

call to wipe out the Jewish population in Israel." *Id*. A small group of pro-Israel counter-protestors formed near the encampment and there were reports of minor scuffles between the two opposing groups. *Id*.

The Union posted its first "update" to its newly-established website for the amalgamated UAW Local 4811, likely between April 25 and May 1: "Solidarity with University Encampments Across the Country." The message, signed "UAW 4811 Executive Board" read:

As the largest union of academic workers in the country, we stand in solidarity with students around the nation exercising their right to protest the ongoing war on Gaza by Israeli forces. We condemn the use of violent force against peaceful protestors at Yale, Columbia, NYU, USC, UT Austin and other institutions demanding that their administrations divest from companies profiting from the war on Gaza. The freedom to assemble and protest are fundamental rights in a democratic society and core to union members' ability to demand meaningful change. Deploying police forces to arrest and prosecute these individuals is a litigious waste of taxpayer resources designed to intimidate and silence dissent.

As students across the University of California continue to protest the war on Gaza and begin to mobilize against this latest attempt to curtail freedom of speech on campus, we call on the UC administration to live up to its values of academic freedom, and guarantee the right to peacefully assemble and protest.

On Friday, April 26, the UCLA administration issued a statement accommodating the protestors and indicating that it would not request law enforcement intervention at that time. *Mercury-News* Timeline. The encampment continued to grow. *Id.* On Sunday, April 28, a pro-Israel counterprotest prompted the UCLA administration to set up metal barriers to separate the two groups, but the barriers were breached and several physical confrontations between the two groups of protestors occurred. *Id.*

³⁵ UAW Local 4811, *Solidarity with University Encampments Across the Country*, www.uaw4811.org/updates/blog-post-title-one-7wkrf. The date of this post is unclear; the site labels it as May 28, 2018, an obvious error. The text references encampments not cleared until May 1, but the union posted a similar Twitter thread, without linking the post, on April 25. @uaw_4811, x.com/uaw_4811/status/1783567794484965824.

During one such confrontation, a young Jewish student was physically assaulted and knocked unconscious. A video posted on Instagram on April 30 showed the immediate aftermath of that attack. An *LA Times* investigation into the subsequent violence that night called the video a "flash point," which was spread widely in WhatsApp groups and on social media. A local NBC news outlet later interviewed the student, named Eleanor, who recounted what she could recall of the assault and indicated that she had been peacefully protesting to support Israel with her family. 37

On Tuesday April 30, Vice Chancellor Mary Osako issued a statement that UCLA was investigating allegations that the protestors had blocked student's access to classes and condemned such actions. Osako also stated that campus security was being expanded because of the altercations



Figure 1: Viral video posted April 30, which became a "flash point" for violence later that night.

between the two different groups of protestors. *Mercury-News* Timeline. Later in the afternoon of April 30, UCLA issued a notice that the encampment was unlawful and violated school policy and requested that students vacate the encampment or risk disciplinary action. *Id*.

The pro-Palestinian protestors responded with a statement reiterating their intent to remain at the encampment and criticizing the UCLA administration for not providing sufficient protection against the counter-protestors, who they accused of verbally and physically threatening the protest encampment every night. *Mercury-News* Timeline. This complaint is ironic, since many of the pro-Palestinian protestors across the different UC campuses also actively support the Cops off Campuses ("CoC") movement which seeks to have police presence on college campuses eliminated.

³⁶ Matthew Ormseth, et al., 'Shut it down!' How group chats, rumors and fear sparked a night of violence at UCLA, LA Times (May 10, 2024), www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-05-10/how-social-media-rumors-sparked-a-night-of-mayhem-at-ucla, archived at archive.is/geYPC.

 $^{^{37}}$ Jewish student recounts injury during UCLA protest, NBC LOS ANGELES (May 1, 2024), www.nbclosangeles.com/on-air/jewish-student-recounts-injury-during-ucla-protest/3402539/.

The night of April 30 into the early morning hours of May 1, large groups of counter-protestors descended upon Royce Quad and attempted to dismantle the barricades of the encampment starting at about 10:50 pm. *See NYT*. ³⁸ Counter-protestors hurled fireworks and mace-like chemicals into the encampment and at activists. There were several physical confrontations between the two groups. *Id*.

Early on May 1, Osako issued a statement condemning the violence at UCLA and stated that police were on the scene to break up the confrontation. *Mercury-News* Timeline. Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass also issued a statement stating the LA Police Department was responding to the clashes. *Id.* LAPD and CHP officers arrived in riot gear around 1:30 am on May 1, but waited approximately until 2:42 am before moving in to break up the confrontations and disperse the counterprotestors. *Id.*, NYT. Police stood between the encampment and the counterprotestors until the latter group dispersed, although a reporter was attacked by counter-protestors after the bulk of the mob left. *NYT*. Local Muslim *and* Jewish groups condemned the attack. *Id.*

In response to the chaos and violence, Chancellor Gene Block issued a statement condemning the violence, but noting that "these incidents have put many on our campus, especially our Jewish students, in a state of anxiety and fear." *Id*.

Police arrived on the UCLA campus in force the next evening, Wednesday May 1, and were met by protestors lined up arm-in-arm to prevent police from reaching the encampment on Royce Quad.³⁹

During the early morning hours of Thursday May 2, police in riot gear moved onto the UCLA campus and issued an order to disperse. *Mercury-News* Timeline. They then began to dismantle the pro-Palestinian encampment while protestors resisted, including by spraying police with fire extinguishers. Police arrested over 200 individuals. *Id.*

Chancellor Block issued a statement that UCLA allowed the encampment "to remain in place so long as it did not jeopardize Bruins' safety or harm our ability to

³⁸ Neil Bedi, Bora Erden, Marco Hernandez, Ishaan Jhaveri, Arijeta Lajka, Natalie Reneau, Helmuth Rosales and Aric Toler, *How Counterprotesters at U.C.L.A. Provoked Violence, Unchecked for Hours*, NEW YORK TIMES (May 3, 2024), nytimes.com/interactive/2024/05/03/us/ucla-protests-encampment-violence.html.

³⁹ Matthew Ormseth, et al., *UCLA struggles to recover after 200 arrested, pro-Palestinian camp torn down*, Los Angeles Times (May 3, 2024), www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-05-01/la-me-ucla-camp-police.

carry out our mission." *Mercury-News* Timeline. Block's statement indicated that once the encampment became a focal point for violence as well as a disruption to normal campus life, it had to be removed. *Id*.

On May 1, 2024, students associated with the UC San Diego chapter for Students for Justice in Palestine erected what they called a "Gaza Solidarity Encampment" outside the Student Health and Wellness Center on that campus. According to UCSD administrators, the camp participants were contacted "within minutes" concerning "free expression rights and rules for campus and relevant state laws, including those for non-affiliates." *See* UCSD Encampment Summary. ⁴⁰ In Lieu of a safety plan, the camp agreed it would not grow or impede the Library Walk. According to the administration, "police officers, and university officials received written and verbal feedback that the encampment was everything from a minor nuisance to outright terrifying to campus students, faculty, and staff members." *Id.* The protest camp at UCSD also attracted peaceful counterprotestors, but their presence did not result in violence. *Id.*

As the San Diego administration tells it, May 4 was a "turning point" because the camp "added an entry table and implemented an admission procedure, involving use of an encrypted messaging app and wrist stamp that restricted access to the camp" while roughly tripling in size. *Id.* The camp on that date denied entry to a fire marshal and health inspectors, and drove back inspectors from the camp entrance at the instruction of a "camp speaker." *Id.* The administration noted the presence of "[n]on-affiliates including members of the Black Panthers, Antifa, and the Communist Revolutionary Group arrived at the camp site, provided perimeter security to the site positioned at intervals around the camp perimeter, and trained the camp participants in physical techniques to resist arrest." *Id.* That said, student newspapers disagree with this characterization, observing that "Black Panthers only announced a 'self-defense lesson." *Triton.* ⁴¹ Encampment organizers posted an Instagram statement arguing that the camp was "too small to protest safely" in view of "threats of arrest, suspension, physical harm" and in view of confrontations

⁴⁰ Available online at: https://triton.news/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/UC-San-Diego-Fact-Sheet-Re-Encampment.pdf.

⁴¹ Triton staff, *Live Updates: Community Reacts to Encampment Clearing, Release of 64 Arrestees*, The Triton (May 1-10, 2024), https://triton.news/2024/05/live-updates-students-establish-gaza-solidarity-encampment-along-library-walk/.

between police and protestors at UCLA. *UCSD Guardian*. ⁴² The UCSD camp expanded.

After a combative confrontation at a counter-protest on Sunday May 5, "University leaders determined that waiting for something more dangerous to happen (e.g. fire in the camp, attack by outsiders seen at other campuses including UCLA just the week prior, etc.) was unconscionable." UCSD Encampment Summary. At 2:45 pm, the UCSD Chancellor issued a message, sent to all students, academics, and staff, stating that the "unlawful encampment" had "become dangerous," that commitments to "not to increase the size of the area" had not been honored, and calling on "our students, faculty, staff and non-affiliates participating in the encampment to peacefully disperse." That night, the administration posted signs at the north and south ends of the encampment stating that "UC San Diego will hold students and student organizations fully accountable under the student code of conduct for any and all violations including participating in encampments on campus." *Triton*.

The next morning, the UCSD administration invited several police departments to disperse the encampment. "As law enforcement arrived on the scene, one camp participant ran into the camp and woke up everyone in the camp site. Individuals in the camp donned hard hats, goggles, pepper spray and bear spray, and positioned metal and plywood shields to resist arrest." UCSD Encampment Summary. At 6AM, SJP posted on Instagram that the "UCSD encampment is facing police presence on its campus for a sweep. We are calling on the community to show up immediately to protect the students." *Triton*. Four loudspeaker announcements, five minutes apart, ordered "participants to leave the area without consequences." *Id.* Following this the perimeter barricade was removed and 64 participants arrested. *Id.* The arrests occurred by 8:55 am, although it required several more hours for the detainees to be removed from campus due to protestors blocking police and vehicles. *Triton*.

Detainees were processed at the nearby Price Center, where activists "attempted to break into the Price Center through doors and windows" and "lunged at police officers, grabbed their batons, and used barricades to force officers around

⁴² Guardian staff, *Updates—Police sweep UCSD Solidarity for Gaza Encampment*, THE GUARDIAN (May 6, 2024), <u>www.ucsdguardian.org/2024/05/06/daily-updates-ucsd-solidarity-for-gaza-encampment/.</u>

⁴³ UC San Diego, *A Message from Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla* (May 5, 2024), https://adminrecords.ucsd.edu/Notices/2024/2024-5-5-1.html.

streets and into buildings." UCSD Encampment Summary. Police retreated to the Structural and Engineering Building and closed the doors on protestors, but shortly thereafter, a mob of protestors forced the doors open and flooded into the building and then crossed over to an amphitheater building. *UCSD Guardian*.

Late in the morning, the police formed a blockade to prevent students from going past the Visual Arts Building, but protestors continued to press forward and surround the police who held the protestors at bay with their batons. *UCSD Guardian*.

Protestors used fences, chairs, and gates to barricade police in one campus building into which some had retreated. The protestors eventually turned their attention to the 64 arrested compatriots and advocated for their release, while all evidence of the protest encampment was removed and disposed.

In spite of numerous warnings to abandon the



Figure 2: Ninja-style sword recovered from UCSD "Palestine Solidarity Encampment" (Triton)

camp prior to the raid (which some activists took advantage of), the cleanup crews found "a sword, propane tanks and grill, pepper spray and bear spray, metal and plywood shield, mallets, wooden stakes, etc." UCSD Encampment Summary.

No coverage of the UCLA, UC San Diego, or UC Irvine encampments suggests that union or workplace conditions motivated either activists or the University in clearing these sites.

At 11:05 am, the Union announced its strike authorization vote would occur between May 13-15.44 The multi-image message on Instagram described the UCLA and UCSD sweeps as an "unprecedented crackdown on free speech on University campuses."

On May 7, the Union established a "Union Village" at UC Berkeley's former "Free Palestine Encampment." ⁴⁵ In a speech announcing the Union's installation,

⁴⁴ @uaw_4811 (May 6, 2024), www.instagram.com/p/C6ou9vMvLqt.

⁴⁵ Riley Cooke, *UAW workers establish 'Union Village' as hundreds rally for Rafah on Sproul*, THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN (May 7, 2024) https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/student-life/uaw-workers-establish-union-village-as-hundreds-rally-for-rafah-on-sproul/article_e23177f6-0cf8-11ef-9ede-d7857caa73f1.html.

ASE Statewide Chair Tanzil Chowdhury said that "UC is so committed to its investment, apartheid Israel so committed to supporting the genocide on the Palestinian people, that they would rather attack their own students and workers than de-escalate, negotiate, and divest." ⁴⁶

In support of the strike authorization vote, the Union has posted a series of videos by purported members and why they support the vote. One video has attracted more attention on Twitter than any other: a May 12 video statement by a self-described Israeli and Israel Defense Forces veteran who said he returned to from his "apartheid"-inflicting "home country" to have his visa renewed and was "heartbroken" because "no one spoke against Israel's ongoing war with Gaza." ⁴⁷

The video continues that "as an Israeli" the union member "felt welcome safe" in the UCLA encampment until students were "brutalized by a violent mob and my friends violently arrested." But the abusive comments in response to the video by self-described pro-Palestinian activists tell another story.

A union member who previously wrote about her experience in the 2022 strike wrote "Wait are you guys serious? How many Palestinians did this guy just murder? You're pandering to Zionists to get your SAV passed? And it's a shame that he ever felt safe for one moment at the encampment. Unreal."

Another self-described union member and encampment activist at UCSD criticized the video, writing "yall are so thirsty to rehabilitate veterans, former genocidaires, and average white men that you dismiss the concerns, criticism, and outrage of bipoc--specifically palestinians, arabs, and muslims in this instance."

⁴⁶ Free People's Park!, *UC Berkeley UAW rep. Tanzil Chowdhury speaks at rally for Rafah*, YouTube (May 7, 2024) at 7:18, www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfQp-pgkLVs&t=438s.

⁴⁷ @uaw_4811 (May 12, 2024) twitter.com/uaw 4811/status/1789799878685823463. Incidentally, the video's claim that "no one" in Israel opposes the war is peculiarly false. See Wafaa Shurafa and Melanie Lindman, Israelis stage largest protest since war began to increase pressure on Netanyahu, AP (Apr. 1, 2024), https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-war-news-03-31-2024-2dfbc154409ae6160b4e594b1b346e13 (describing protest of tens of thousands of Israelis who demanded a ceasefire from Israel's government).

⁴⁸ Hazel Katz, @dripping_hazel (May 13, 2024), <u>archive.is/1anRe</u> (archive of formerly public tweet posted at: <u>twitter.com/dripping_hazel/status/1789868838978203650</u>.

⁴⁹ @islamomarxist (May 14), <u>x.com/islamomarxist/status/1790596457734844795</u>. This user apparently participated in the UCSD encampment (see, e.g. @islamomarxist (May 1, 2024) <u>x.com/islamomarxist/status/1785772754924609866</u>) and previously criticized

Somone who appears to be a literature professor at Stockton University in New Jersey wrote "Why tf did you let a IOF soldier into your encampment?" ⁵⁰

A pro-Palestine activist quote-tweeted the video with the message "Have y'all lost your minds?" In response to this, a user who claimed to be familiar with the UCLA encampment, assured her that the video wasn't true: "the IOF soldier goes on & on about feeling safe & welcomed, when I know for a fact that is NOT what happened on the ground." He issued a twelve-tweet thread that says "this guy was not waving his military background haphazardly, so stating that he felt safe as an IOF soldier specifically is a total obfuscation of fact," that organizers issued wristbands to trusted camp members and that "organizers practiced further exclusivity" and that in the last days of the UCLA encampment "they created a vouching system where an organizer/trusted community member had to hand pick you," and as a result "Zionist entry became all [b]ut impossible." The commentator lamented that "UAW is conducting interviews & prioritizing Zionist opinions, effectively undermining & betraying the principles of the encampment organizers." became all of the encampment organizers."

Dozens of unidentifiable accounts smeared the union member in the video as a "genocidaire," "fascist," "war criminal," and "baby killer."

While the Union presents the "Palestine Solidarity Encampments" as inclusive spaces, the activists who control these encampments exclude individuals based not only on their ideology—which is bad enough in a public space intended to foster free speech—but also their identity.

2. Palestine encampments created the primary worker safety hazard—not the University's belated enforcement of rules.

The Union argues that the main reason for their unlawful strike is that the University's response to the protests have created a workplace safety issue, such

a statewide union email because it concerned employee benefits rather than Gaza. @islamomarxist (Dec. 11, 2023), x.com/islamomarxist/status/1734387831622246827.

⁵⁰ @Adam Miyashiro, twitter.com/Adam Miyashiro/status/1790201998299771116.

⁵¹ @theafroaussie (May 13), twitter.com/theafroaussie/status/1789892301981934050.

⁵² @akatmolasses (May 13), twitter.com/akatmolasses/status/1789899611034771959.

⁵³ @akatmolasses (May 13), <u>twitter.com/akatmolasses/status/1789914714656436689</u>. entire thread collected at: threadreaderapp.com/thread/1789914330042945993.html.

⁵⁴@akatmolasses (May 13), twitter.com/akatmolasses/status/1789914937482990047.

that members have endured abuse by police to clear protest camps or have been attacked by counter-protestors. But action by pro-Palestinian activists, not the University of California, created an unsafe environment on the campuses.

The encampments themselves are dangerous, especially to Jewish students like Solomon.

On Sunday April 28, 2024, Solomon videoed the encampment on Sproul Plaza at the Berkeley campuses while on his way to grade papers. He was confronted by masked activists who surrounded him and blocked his path and vision by holding Palestinian flags around him, even after he told them he is legally blind with poor eyesight. He was told to "go back to Europe, dude" by an activist who claimed that Europeans "got" the Jews when "they pogromed them." After darting between tents to evade the activists, they continued to follow him outside of the encampment, with one activist calling him a "fucking freak," possibly because of his noticeable disability. Another activist accused him of being a "pedophile" as he left the Plaza, while still being followed by masked activists.

The next day, a Berkeley law school student named Noah Cohen was similarly followed out of the encampment by activists, except one of those activists turned violent. On his way to report the incident of being denied access across the Plaza by activists, he was confronted by a pro-Palestinian protestor named "Jay" who followed him and hit Cohen in the face. The incident was captured on video, posted to social media, and was reported in the New York Post. 55

On Wednesday, May 1, three people were injured on Sproul Plaza in a confrontation between protestors and counter-protestors at the encampment. An Instagram post by Students Supporting Israel ("SSI") contains a video that shows an individual assaulting a peaceful pro-Israel protestor and attempting to steal an Israeli flag, while another pro-Palestinian protestor punched another SSI member in the head three times. Other pro-Palestinian protestors are heard yelling antisemitic and anti-immigrant statements to the counter-protestors such as "Go back to Europe." ⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Ronny Reyes, *Jewish law student punched in the face after trying to film UC-Berkeley anti-Israel protest*, NEW YORK POST (Apr. 30, 2024); <u>www.nypost/2024/04/30/us-news/jewish-law-student-punched-in-the-face-at-uc-berkeley-video</u>.

⁵⁶ Fight at UC Berkeley pro-Palestinian encampment leaves several people injured, CBS BAY CITY NEWS SERVICE (May 2, 2024), www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/fight-at-uc-berkeley-pro-palestinian-encampment-leaves-several-people-injured/.

Thus, the Union's proffered justification for the strike based on safety concerns rings hollow—particularly at the Berkeley worksite. Berkeley administration accommodated the pro-Palestinian protestors and the encampment, such that there had been no "arrests or disruption of campus operations." *Reuters.* ⁵⁷ Indeed, the Union itself cited Berkeley as a model, and the administration struck a deal with activists to disband the encampment on May 14, after classes concluded. University Charge, Ex. F.

Pro-Palestinian activists and their encampments, rather than University administrators, created and continue to create safety hazards. Solomon found this obvious long ago to his naked eye—even with his impaired eyesight—but now some protest-sympathetic campus administrators see it.⁵⁸

As for the clearing of the UCLA and UCSD encampments, the belated enforcement of University time, place, and manner rules cannot be said to endanger workers. These rules are not "new" or a "departure" from speech policies as the Union's PERB Charge alleges.

Grievances based on UCSD's and especially UCLA's failure to adequately protect the protest encampments from counter-protestors collapse into themselves because the encampments declared themselves to be police-free zones, and restricted entry of people it suspected to be police. True, the UCLA encampment especially attracted a lot of violent counter-protestors, and police inexplicably failed to intervene on the night of April 30-May 1, but these counter-protestors were drawn to the attractive nuisance of the camp.

The Union's demand for "amnesty" and advocacy for free speech are disingenuous because the fact is that "Palestinian Solidarity Encampments" are unique. No other ideology has been permitted to claim public spaces and control access on University Campuses for weeks on end, 24 hours a day. This is especially true at Berkeley, where pro-Palestinian protestors have been left comparatively unmolested, while Jewish students and peaceful counter-protestors have been physically and verbally assaulted without University action.

⁵⁷ Andrew Hay, *Berkeley takes light touchon Gaza protests*. *Columbia called the police*, REUTERS (May 3, 2024), <u>www.reuters.com/world/us/berkeley-takes-hands-off-approach-gaza-campus-protests-columbia-called-police-2024-05-02/.</u>

 $^{^{58}}$ Declaration of Dr. Allison Sutterland ¶¶ 7-8 (May 22, 2024); Declaration of Darnell Hunt ¶ 6 (May 22, 2024); Declaration of Hal Stern ¶ 5 (May 22, 2024).

3. Strikes in breach of Union Contracts.

The strike authorization vote purported to license a strike that, if called, "will go on no longer than June 30th. Should the University make progress in remedying the unfair labor practices (thereby justifying an earlier end to the strike), a statewide membership vote would be required to do so." Union Strike FAQ.⁵⁹ This is troubling, because it means any strike called will enormously disrupt the status *quo ante* at most University of California campuses on the quarter system, which continue to have several more weeks of classes. Even if the University were to capitulate on the Union's demands, the authorized strike, by its own terms, could not be ended until *another* vote is held, disrupting the entire end of the quarter. Union leadership apparently regards this as a feature, not a bug. President Rafael Jaime trumpeted that the Union intends to strike at a variety of University of California campuses without notice, to "maximize chaos and confusion." ⁶⁰

Limiting the strike to June 30 strongly suggests the Union itself considers it a *bona fide* Unfair Labor Practice, much "severe unfair labor practices that go to the heart of a contract." If it were, University's alleged failure to remedy the supposed unfair practice should not time-limit the strike. Does a "severe" unfair practice become nominal on July 1? No, but campus activism won't occur over the summer. The strike appears calculated to maximize disruption and attention to a political issue, not necessarily accomplish anything except publicity—at the cost of massive disruption to the University and tens of thousands of students.

While the executive board marched toward striking in support of a political protest, Union representatives at some sites took matters into their own hands by encouraging concerted actions.

⁵⁹ UAW Local 4811, Stike Authorization FAQ, www.uaw4811.org/sav-faq.

⁶⁰ Jaweed Kaleem and Suhauna Hussain, 'Maximize chaos.' UC academic workers authorize strike, alleging rights violated during protests, THE L.A. TIMES (May 15, 2024) https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-05-15/uc-academic-workers-strike-vote.

⁶¹ University Req. for I.R., SF-CO-246-H (May 21, 2024), at 10 (quoting Union FAQ). The University argues in its request that a line of NLRA cases permitting an on-contract strike for "severe" unfair labor practices does not and should not apply to HEERA charges before this Board. *Id.* at 6-7. Solomon is not so sure: surely the Board would seriously weigh fraud by HEERA employers during contract negotiation, or intentionally discriminatory acts, even if the contours of its decisions did not slavishly follow Federal law. However, Solomon strongly agrees that the Board need not decide the applicability of these NLRA precedents, because the Union has not identified any genuine unfair labor practice, let alone one so "severe" that it undermines the foundations of the active CBAs. *Id.* at 9.

At UC Santa Cruz, ASE (BX) Unit Chair Rebecca Gross orchestrated a one-day "strike for Palestine." The University contacted the Union about this breach, and in response the then-Union president replied that "[t]he Union is in touch with members that **we know are engaged in activity that may be in violation** of the contract and are informing them of their obligations under the CBA." University Charge, Ex. G at 3.

But instead of discouraging Ms. Gross from unauthorized strike, which the Contracts require the Union to do, they *rewarded* her by calling UC Santa Cruz as the first striking worksite—even though administrators at that campus have not attempted to clear the "Palestinian Solidarity Encampment." This raised Rebecca Gross's profile, and she was quoted by national and international journalists speaking on behalf of students "repressed" by *other* administrations. ⁶³

Whatever the reason for selecting Santa Cruz, union member activists at other work sites understood the perverse incentive for them to act out. A wildcat action, like the May 1 walkout at Santa Cruz, apparently proves that a worksite is "strike ready," and might put it to the front of the line. Union "rank and file" committees at several campuses have called for their own strikes in advance of any Executive Board decision. For example, the UCLA "Rank and File" movement promoted a "sickout" yesterday and today, where workers concertedly call out sick in ostensible support of the Santa Cruz strike and to "remind union leadership that we're strike ready." Meanwhile, the Santa Barbara unit conducted a walkout

⁶² @Becsgross, (May 1, 2024), x.com/Becsgross/status/1785697219351564707.

^{63 &}quot;Police were unleashed and given the go-ahead to arrest protesters." CBS NEWS, UC Santa Cruz academic workers strike to stand up for pro-Palestinian protesters (May 20, 2024), www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/uc-santa-cruz-academic-workers-strike-pro-palestinian-protesters/; "We are really disturbed to see what happened to our members at UCLA, UC San Diego, and UC Irvine." Lauren Kaori Gurley, UC Santa Cruz workers strike over administration crackdown on Gaza protests, Washington Post (May 20, 2024), www.washingtonpost.com/business/2024/05/20/uc-santa-cruz-strike-gaza-union/; "I find it sort of offensive that the university would try to scare workers out of striking by saying this is an unlawful action because it's really not up to them to decide that." Ryan Quinn, UC Academic Workers Strike Over Pro-Palestinian Protest Arrests, INSIDE HIGHER ED (May 21, 2024), www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/labor-unionization/2024/05/21/uc-academic-workers-strike-over-pro-palestinian; AP, University of California graduate students call strike over arrests of protesters, THE TIMES OF ISRAEL (May 21, 2024), www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/university-of-california-graduate-students-call-strike-over-arrests-of-protesters/.

⁶⁴ @uclarnf (May 22, 2024), www.instagram.com/p/C7Qd9mJt4P4/?img_index=4.

yesterday in "solidarity with striking academic workers at UC Santa Cruz." 65

C. The Union's political demands breach their duty of good faith in representing to all workers, many of which would be harmed by the University's capitulation to them.

The Union is recognized as the union representative of four bargaining units of graduate student employees and post-doctoral researchers, and therefore charged with negotiating on behalf of all covered workers—including non-members and specifically including Solomon.

The "Palestine Solidarity Encampments" are not workplaces. And the enforcement of minimal time, place, and manner rules are not unfair labor practices, let alone the sort of serious breaches going to the heart of a union contract that could permit a union to breach its agreements.

Instead, most of the demands are nakedly political. In support of the "Palestine Solidarity Movement," as the Union itself admitted. Union Demands. 66 The Union asserted five demands to the University, which it promoted to its members in advance of the strike authorization vote:

- a. Amnesty for all academic employees, students, student groups, faculty, and staff who face disciplinary action or arrest due to protest.
- b. Right to free speech and political expression on campus.
- c. Divestment from UC's known investments in weapons manufacturers, military contractors, and companies profiting from Israel's war on Gaza.
- d. Disclosure of all funding sources and investments, including contracts, grants, gifts, and investments, though a publicly available accessible, and up-to-date database.
- e. Empower researchers to opt out from funding sources tied to the military or oppression of Palestinians. The UC must provide centralized transitional funding to workers whose funding is tied to the military or foundations that support Palestinian oppression.

^{65 @}dailynexus (May 22, 2024) www.instagram.com/dailynexus/p/C7SVoOPSwXI/.

⁶⁶ Archived at: archive.is/EtDqV, see note 1, supra.

Only one of the listed demands—free speech and political expression—is a legitimate union objective, and it is ironically the one objective which the Palestine encampments flagrantly impeded, as discussed below.

The Union effectively concedes the political nature of most of these demands by now insisting that they bring three demands, two of which they have not widely publicized to their own members:

(1) demands by research employees that they have the right to opt out of work on military-funded projects, (2) protests against the discrimination and hostile work environment endured by Palestinian, Arab, Muslim and pro-Palestinian students and employees, and (3) opposition to the University's disparate negative treatment of pro-Palestinian speech in the workplace.

Union Pos. Statement in Res. to I.R., SF-CO-246-H (May 22, 2024) at 15.

The Union has gone as far to delete the URL on their website that until at least Monday afternoon displayed their original list of five demands it made in *express support* of the "Palestine Solidarity Movement." The Union provides no reason for running away from at least three of its original five demands, but the Union displays incredible *chutzpah* in accusing the University of inventing their decidedly non-workplace demand for divestment, *id.* at 7—especially given that the Union's Second Amended Charge, SF-CE-1462-H (May 17, 2023), *attached to their Position Statement*, alleges that UCLA encampment union members sought "workplace demands includ[ing] ... the disclosure and divestment of University funds from Israel's war effort."

Divestment was a *major* part of the Union's push for strike authorization. For example, ASE Statewide Chair Tanzil Chowdhury, while speaking at the former Berkely encampment (addressing his comments toward the Regents of the University of California) said:

There is one simple choice that you can make. Instead of violence, instead of repression, you can choose de-escalation. You can choose peace. You can choose divestment. That is what our union demands. That is what this encampment demands. That is what the people demand. But you must divest. You must end your financial support for those who perpetrate and support this

 $^{^{67}}$ See note 1, supra concerning the Union's curious attempt to memory hole the "UAW 4811 Demands in Support of the Palestine Solidarity Movement."

genocide from the campus administration, to the Berkeley foundation, to the entire UC endowment. You must make ironclad commitments now to divest from all of these. And until that moment comes, our union and the people—as the refrain goes—"we will not stop and we will not rest." 68

(Emphasis added, crowd chants omitted.)

The gaslighting displayed by the Union, which now denies its literal rallying cry for its unlawful strike undermines not only its credibility, but also the notion that any imagined impasse with the University could justify its strike. The Union has not only failed to go through the grievance process for its shifting demands, it apparently hasn't quite figured out what they are yet.

As for the Union's new demands: to the extent the Union can prove "discrimination and hostile work environment," this should be handled within the grievance process. The Union's claim of "disparate negative treatment of pro-Palestinian speech in the workplace" is precisely backwards as explained in the subsection below. The administration has allowed only pro-Palestinian speakers erect encampments in violation of numerous longstanding campus rules.

While the Union has sporadically postured that its demands concern a workplace "safety" issue, a review of the Demands confirms them to be predominantly political. If anything, the Gaza encampments themselves endanger Solomon more than the University's half-hearted efforts to maintain minimal time, place, and manner rules that ensure free speech for all students on campus public spaces. And the funding and disclosure demands harm students who work under grants some activist or another would find objectionable. And because the Union is breaching the scope of its representation to its members with its political demands, that unilateral action is a *per se* breach of multiple duties owed toward Solomon and other union members under California law.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Free People's Park!, *UC Berkeley UAW rep. Tanzil Chowdhury speaks at rally for Rafah*, YouTube (May 7, 2024) at 10:00, www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfQp-pgkLVs&t=600s.

⁶⁹ City of Sacramento, PERB Decision No. 2351-M at p. 13 (2013) (citing Vernon Fire Fighters v. City of Vernon, 107 Cal.App.3d 802, 823 (1980)) (duty to bargain); Regents of the University of California, PERB Decision No. 2094-H, p. 32 (2010) (duty of good faith in representation).

1. The Union's "amnesty" demand emboldens activist misconduct and endangers students like Solomon.

As the Bay Area Jewish Community Relations Counsel put it:

Today's strike does more than result in cancelled classes—it makes Jewish students feel targeted and deeply unwelcome. These students feel that there is no safe place for them on campus. ⁷⁰

Solomon agrees, and further believes that capitulation to the Union's "amnesty" demand would make matters worse for workers like him. An indiscriminate amnesty for non-labor misconduct—which is normally treated as a student disciplinary matter—will further encourage activists to engage in bolder and more threatening behavior.

Offering amnesty would be viewed as a license for the pro-Palestinian protestors to either continue or resurrect the protest encampments, thereby allowing one side to essentially hijack public spaces that should be available as forums for *all* viewpoints under reasonable time, place and manner restrictions. Amnesty essentially elevates the pro-Palestinian protestors and their message over those who are opposed to their message. Zionists have free speech rights, too.

The Union claims to support free speech, but this is disingenuous. The Union advocates for encampments that monopolize public space for the benefit of one viewpoint and excludes people like Solomon. This is why the Union's invocation of HEERA's support for the "the free exchange of ideas" implies the reverse of what they claim. See Union Pos. Statement on I.R., SF-CO-246-H (May 22, 2024) at 9. Pro-Palestinian activists remain free to speak and protest in every place that other speakers can—they just can't pitch tents and improvise barricades to seize public spaces for themselves. In fact, the *only* place that the free of exchange of ideas has been stifled was *within* "Palestinian Solidarity Encampments."

Solomon has no objection to peaceful protestors showing support for the Palestinian cause. Even those openly advocating in favor of Hamas, as distasteful as that is to him, have equal free speech rights. But neither the Union nor activists genuinely support free speech. The free exchange of ideas includes the rights of

⁷⁰ Quoted by CBS NEWS, *UC Santa Cruz academic workers strike to stand up for pro-Palestinian protesters* (May 20, 2024), https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/ucsanta-cruz-academic-workers-strike-pro-palestinian-protesters/

dissenting speakers to use public spaces that activists inappropriately seize as "Palestinian Solidarity Encampments."

2. The divestment demands are plainly political.

The demand for divestment represents an egregious power grab by the Union to make fiscal decisions on behalf of a large public research university, including the ability to exercise veto power over investment decisions. This goes far beyond issues related to the basic terms and conditions of employment. For example, UCSD, UC Irvine, and UCLA administrators met with their respective encampment to discuss a peaceful end to the occupation, but received "no indication that the protests were related to any labor disputes"—to the contrary, the activists claimed they were participating in a "Gaza Solidarity Encampment."⁷¹

Unions of private employers are forbidden under federal law from demanding that "any person ... cease doing business with any other person." 29 U.S.C. § 158(b)(4)(ii)(B). While this law does not apply to UAW Local 4811, it suggests that the Union's demand for a secondary strike on steroids is not seen as a legitimate union function, even for unions of private employers, which do not need to balance public interests as the Board does.

The people of the state of California have elected representatives charged with promoting the general welfare and balancing tradeoffs among stakeholders. Lawmakers might choose to make the University consider factors besides fiscal prudence when deciding how to allocate its investments, which constitute a public trust held for the benefit of all Californians. Elected governors may appoint regents who wish to plot a new course for how the University executes its vital functions on behalf of 300,000 students and the public at large. These decisions should be made by and for all Californians, not by groups of activists who take it upon themselves to disregard rules against seizing public spaces. Nor should these issues be dictated by public unions that lawlessly foment chaos to the detriment of thousands of students and some of the union's own workers.

⁷¹ Declaration of Dr. Allison Sutterland $\P\P$ 3-4 (May 22, 2024); see also Declaration of Darnell Hunt \P 8 (May 22, 2024); Declaration of Hal Stern \P 4 (May 22, 2024).

3. The "disclosure" and "opt out" demands put a target on the back of many Union workers, and will harm their careers.

Similarly, the Union makes a quintessentially political demand that the University disclose all funding sources in a publicly available database. The demand intrudes into the fiscal management decisions of the University with farreaching consequences. In particular, it almost certainly harms many covered workers, who use grants and funding that other students may find objectionable.

Grant writers that any student could conceivably object to would be reluctant to contribute funding in basic science and or other research that may get them blacklisted by politically-motivated students. If "protestors" monopolizing public spaces are to be protected under the Union's first demand for amnesty, what principle limits these occupations to library walks and administration buildings? With a centralized list of grants, protestors could and *likely would* target labs that conduct work through funding sources deemed to be "war profiteers," deterring contributions toward the University and deterring professors, principal investigations, post-doctorates, and *all* academics from using funds that might get them protested.

This demand therefore likely harms Union members since donors and entities that provide research grants and funding may refrain from funding research at the University for fear of being on a "blacklist" or a target for negative publicity.

As a dissident UAW member wrote on Twitter "What's weird about number 3 is that thousands of uaw 4811 members are on DOD/DARPA grants and hold part time consulting and research positions at private defense contractors. This was the problem with amalgamation." That is, the amalgamation of the largely teaching/assistant and part-time pre-doctorate researchers (former UAW Local 2865 members) conflicts with the interests of many post-docs (former UAW Local 5811). Post-doctoral researchers include many young scientists who work under principal investigator's grants and need to obtain grants and fellowships of their own in order to launch their careers. Some of this funding comes from companies that the "divestment" activists view as beyond the pale.

In making the "disclosure" and "opt-out" demands, the Union violates its duty of fair dealing toward members who depend on grants anyone might conceivably

⁷² Hazel Katz, @dripping_hazel (May 6, 2024), <u>archive.is/2vqoq</u> (archive of formerly public tweet posted at: <u>twitter.com/dripping_hazel/status/1787549014306529775</u>.

find objectionable. While Union presents its funding "veto" demand only for "funding sources tied to the military or oppression of Palestinians," no limiting principle limits it to these topics.

4. Permitting the Union's strike opens the floodgates to countless political demands without any logical limit.

For each of the Union's political demands, no limiting principle prevents their application to any political position that self-appointed activists could conceivably agitate for.

The problem emerges from the Union's central premise behind its "Demands in Support of Palestinian Solidarity Movement." This movement, like most unorganized movements, contains multitudes. It has no clear leader, and no single set of demands. Some activists want nothing less than the annihilation of Israel. Others would be content with modest resolutions.

Because no single voice or set of demands exists, no accountability exists either. This is illustrated by the disbandment of the Berkeley encampment, which purportedly struck a deal with administrators following the conclusion of classes on May 14. The University touts this as a success. University Charge, ¶ 27. And the Union cited it as a "model." Union Demands. In actuality, it illustrates the incoherence of negotiating policy with a movement composed of self-appointed activists—as the Union demanded the University do statewide.

Activist agreements only extend as far as the activists actually present at that particular negotiation. Before the ink was dried on the May 14 deal, *on the same day*, activists occupied and graffitied a vacant fire-damaged University building, pitching tents on the surrounding grounds. ⁷³ It turns out a deal with some activists didn't satisfy all activists. Should the Union demand negotiating with these activists? Is their cause not equally just? Instead, on May 17, the Berkeley administration finally took action against activist trespassers, who were arrested. ⁷⁴

⁷³ Sierra Lopez, *Pro-Palestinian protesters put up more barricades*, *pitch tents as UC Berkeley building occupation grows*, MERCURY NEWS (May 16, 2024), www.mercurynews.com/2024/05/16/pro-palestine-protesters-put-up-more-barricades-pitch-tents-as-uc-berkeley-building-occupation-grows/, archived at: archive.is/FHHoV.

⁷⁴ Alec Regimbal, 12 people, including student, arrested in occupation of abandoned UC Berkeley hall, SF GATE (May 17, 2024), https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/propalestinian-protesters-occupy-uc-berkeley-hall-19462655.php.

The incident illustrates the folly of Berkeley's approach up until Friday: when the University legitimates occupying public spaces, it encourages more occupations.

The episode also shows the Union's false promise that the University can "deescalate" by capitulating to self-appointed activists. There will always be more activists willing to act out for recognition, and boundless causes exist for activists to agitate over: animal rights, trans rights, abortion, climate change, gun control.

While the Union attempts to distinguish their favored Palestinian cause as being about "genocide" (at least an inapt description for a war), many political causes employ similarly inflammatory rhetoric. Fossil fuel executives are called "mass murderers," industrial meat production is called a "holocaust" of sentient beings, and so forth.

Should the Board permit the Union to engage in political demands in response to an employer enforcing ordinary rules against fanatics, *every* political cause will want the leverage that union concerted action brings. This is not a fanciful hypothetical: some activists at an active encampment want the ability to veto university funding over at least immigration policy too. In their words "my comrades use a code to sense the morphology of galaxies. This same code is used by ICE to surveil the border."⁷⁵

IV. Conclusion

The Union's strike should be immediately enjoined for sound public policy reasons and for the protection of all workers in the four bargaining units. Perhaps individual workers have specific grievances that require mediation, but grievances should be mediated in the normal way, as contemplated by the Contracts. The Union has dis-served the workers who rely on it to advance their interests by instead executing a strike on behalf of amorphous political movements without any logical limiting principle.

Solomon hopes that this informational brief is helpful to the Board; he appreciates all time spent considering it.

⁷⁵ Linda Dayan, 'Starve the War Machine': Workers at UC Santa Cruz Strike in Solidarity With pro-Palestinian Protesters, HAARETZ (May 21, 2024), www.haaretz.com/us-news/2024-05-21/ty-article/.premium/workers-at-uc-santa-cruz-go-on-strike-in-solidarity-with-pro-palestinian-protesters/0000018f-9bf8-da35-a3af-dffa0a620000, archived at: archive.is/nQocI.

Respectfully submitted,

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