

*Canadians for Justice and Peace
in the Middle East*
9880 Clark Street Suite 225
Montreal, Quebec
H3L 2R3
(438) 380-5410

September 20th, 2010

Ms. Heather Reisman
CEO
Indigo Books & Music, Inc.
468 King Street West, Suite 500
Toronto, ON, M5V 1L8

Dear Ms. Reisman,

I am writing to ask you to dissociate Indigos from the Heseq Foundation for Lone Soldiers. It has been brought to my attention that you and board member Gerry Schwartz indirectly encourage foreign-born individuals to volunteer for the Israeli army by founding and funding the Heseq Foundation for Lone Soldiers. Because of your prominent position at Indigos, and the many legal violations of the Israeli Armed Forces, I consider this association to reflect very negatively upon Indigos. I am urging this action on your part because it is the appropriate legal and ethical position for your company.

My organization, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is also considering the imminent launch of a boycott of Indigos. The boycott on indigo Books and Music Inc. is justified for two reasons:

- HESEG Foundation encourages individuals to participate in activities considered illegal under the *Fourth Geneva Convention*, *The Hague Conventions* and other instruments of international law (e.g. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.)
- According to the UN Human Rights Norms for Business, unanimously adopted in 2003, any involvement of society in war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of torture or violations of humanitarian and international law is illegal. HESEG Foundation, under this principle, should not a) provide any indirect support for the Israeli army; nor b) encourage the participation of beneficiaries in potential violations of international law.

The organization I represent, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), is an organization whose mission is to empower Canadians to promote justice, development and peace in the Middle East. In the coming months and years, we will be promoting a large and growing campaign to get Canadian citizens and organs of civil society to boycott and divest from Israel,

and to dissociate themselves from organs perpetrating legal violations in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. As a grassroots, secular, non-partisan volunteer organization, our policies are founded in 1) respect for international law, 2) a belief in a single standard for all, and 3) the position that violence is not a solution. We have 27,000 adherents across Canada, and active groups in numerous major Canadian cities. Our Website is www.cjpme.org.

The fundamentals of the situation in Israel-Palestine are simple. The UN Partition Plan of 1947 dictated that two states be created in Palestine: an Israeli one, and a Palestinian one. In 1948, the Israeli state was created, but the Palestinian one was not. In 1967, Israel took control of all the land that was to become a Palestinian state (including East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip), and continues to effectively control these territories, denying Palestinians their right to self-determination, as well as myriad civil, human and humanitarian rights. This occupation is recognized as a hostile military occupation – as reflected by the unanimous vote of the Signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention of Dec. 5, 2001.

The call for a boycott of Israel, and a segregation from its institutions perpetrating legal violations is not a frivolous one. The UN General Assembly votes yearly and decisively on the rights violations of the Palestinians by the Israelis. For illustration, I proved three examples below:

- Resolution 63/98 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, **passed by a vote of 165-to-8**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 156-to-7. A parallel resolution in 2006 passed by a vote of 157-to-9.
- Resolution 63/97 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, **passed by a vote of 171-to-6**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 165-to-7. A parallel resolution in 2006 passed by a vote of 162-to-8.
- Resolution 63/97 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Territory, including Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories, **passed by a vote of 173-to-6**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 169-to-6. A parallel resolution in 2006 passed by a vote of 165-to-7.

While the UN General Assembly votes decisively on these issues each year, action from the UN is stymied each year because the UN Security Council – the enforcement arm of the UN – refuses to intervene. This inaction is due to the political relationship between the United States and Israel: the United States typically vetoes Security Council resolutions which would put pressure on Israel to respect the norms of international law.

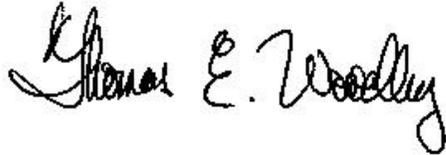
By creating and founding a scholarship that is available only to foreign individuals volunteering for the Israeli Armed Forces, both you and Mr. Schwartz have a strong link to the Israeli Armed Forces. Together, you are encouraging foreign soldier to join the Israeli Army, and participate in an Army which daily commits violations of humanitarian and human rights law.

For the reasons provided above, my organization is preparing to launch a boycott campaign focusing on Indigo Books and Music Inc. I urge you to separate the Indigos business and its benefactors from the Heseg Foundation for Lone Soldiers such that my organization and its adherents are not forced to boycott Indigos. The action against Apartheid South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s did not begin with states, but with an outcry and action from civil society, and with the most ethncial businesses being the first to participate in the boycott. May Indigos and its primary benefactors be Canadian leaders in removing any association with Israeli institutions

which commit legal violations, and thus further the aims of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

Should you have questions about the justification for my organization's campaign, or about specifics of the Israel-Palestine conflict, I would be happy to provide you any information you may desire.

I look forward to your favourable response and to encouraging our adherents to do business with Indigo Books and Music Inc. as an ethical place of business, once you have changed their association vis-à-vis the Heseg Foundation and the Israeli Army.



Thomas E. Woodley
President, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East