

THE BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL

Group Taunts Trudeau Government

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A group which promotes the boycott campaign against Israel challenges the Trudeau government to sanction it.

The organization Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) has taken the elected Liberals at their word. The Liberals supported last month's Conservative motion calling the government to "condemn" any entity promoting – in Canada or abroad – the campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel.

The president of CJPME, Thomas Woodley, photographed himself applying sticky-notes on Israeli products coming from the occupied territories. "Do not buy this product. [...] Stand up for human rights.", declared the sticky notes. The pictures, accompanied by an explanatory letter, were sent to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, to his Minister of Foreign Affairs Stephane Dion, as well as to conservatives Michelle Rempel and Tony Clement, and the NDP leader, Thomas Mulcair.

In his letter, Thomas Woodley calls the elected representatives to condemn Canadians promoting the BDS movement, as demanded by the parliamentary motion, or to "*renounce* this absurd and *insulting motion*." "If you do neither, then you prove that the goal of the motion was simply to intimidate critics of Israel, or worse, to score a few political points, at the expense of our right to free expression," states the letter.

The Prime Minister's office did not take the bait on Wednesday. It was pointed out that Justin Trudeau had already condemned the BDS movement. In November, Mr. Trudeau was "worried" to see the European Union approve a new labelling standard forcing Israel to identify products originating from its colonies in the occupied territory. "I think it's important that consumers have access to information on the origins of the products they buy, but in a broad context, not one that targets a specific country."

Stephane Dion's entourage also declined to react to CJPME's call. His office pointed out instead that Mr. Dion had argued during the debate on the motion that, while the BDS movement includes "some extremists, racists and anti-Semites," others support the BDS boycott in "honest error" and do not deserve to be "condemned in the slightest."

Close to 140 Liberal MPs — including Justin Trudeau — supported the conservative motion of February 22nd, while 15 of their peers refused, as did the New Democrats and the Bloc Quebecois.