

February 9, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500



Dear President Biden,

Our organizations – which are connected with tens of thousands of Jewish and Christian leaders and believers – ask that you reconsider the recent appointment of Maher Bitar to the post of Senior Director for Intelligence on the National Security Council.

As a student and in his career, Mr. Bitar has been involved with various organizations, including Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights. Each of these is highly problematic, and together evidence consistent animosity towards the State of Israel — a close and strategic U.S. ally — and at least callous indifference towards Antisemitism, if not the active encouragement thereof.

As a Georgetown University student, Bitar served on the executive board of SJP, a student activist organization that purports to be pro-human rights while exclusively honoring terrorists and those who justify the murder of Jews. SJP has been responsible for spreading Antisemitic propaganda and threatening pro-Israel groups on college campuses across the US. One would be hard pressed to find someone honored by SJP who is not a terrorist, a member of a terrorist organization, or an academic who assigns blame to Jewish groups when they are attacked.

While working with SJP, Bitar was one of the principal organizers of Georgetown’s 2006 Palestinian Solidarity Movement conference, which essentially served as an Israel divestment forum. At the conference, Bitar co-presented a session on ways to convince Christian groups that Christians are suffering and face decline in Israel due to its “occupation” of Palestine. Then as now, the SJP openly honors leaders of terror organizations and individuals, such as Rasmeh Odeh and Dalal Mughrabi, who themselves engaged in heinous acts.

In 2005 Bitar interned at the misnamed Foundation for Middle East Peace (FMEP), an anti-Israel advocacy organization that supplies grants to a number of anti-Israel, pro-BDS groups. FMEP characterizes Israel as an apartheid state and deems legislative efforts to combat BDS “unconstitutional.” FMEP President Lara Friedman has consistently made bigoted remarks about Israel, including promoting the notion that “the same ‘Greater Israel’ agenda that has eroded Israeli society is today poisoning America’s democracy.”

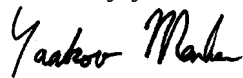
Bitar also held an internship position at UNRWA, an organization denounced by a Jerusalem City Council member as “one of the greatest obstacles to coexistence in Jerusalem, as it incites

the Arab population against Jews instead of encouraging integration.” To this day, UNRWA textbooks incite violence, glorify terrorism and deny Israel’s existence. The Middle East Forum describes UNRWA as deliberately perpetuating the Arab refugee problem “as a source of conflict rather than contributing to its resolution.” UNRWA works in conjunction with and in support of Hamas, designated by the US Department of State as a terrorist organization, employing Hamas members and transferring terrorist weaponry in UN vehicles.

In 2008 Bitar helped assemble a magazine for BADIL, a group that justifies violence, opposes EU policies that bar funding to organizations on the EU’s terror lists, and advocates for the Palestinian “right of return” in an effort to destroy Israel. In the magazine, writers discuss Palestinian “Nakba,” a term that refers to the 1948 establishment of the State of Israel, the refuge for Jews ethnically cleansed from Arab states, as a “disaster.”

We are gravely concerned that placing a staunch proponent of bigotry and ethnic cleansing at a critical intelligence post in the intelligence agency risks serious damage to both the unique US - Israel relationship and America’s international standing, and we urge you to rescind Mr. Bitar’s appointment. Obvious and compelling evidence of Bitar’s Anti-Israel and even Antisemitic advocacy clearly disqualifies him from a position that will directly influence the US’s security collaboration with Israel.

Sincerely yours,



Rabbi Yaakov Menken
Managing Director
Coalition for Jewish Values



LTG (Ret.) William G. Boykin
Executive Vice President
Family Research Council