



2833 Smith Ave Ste 225  
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.cjvalues.org  
office@cjvalues.org  
301.727.2700

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*Managing Director*

7 Tishrei 5785  
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Christopher Eisgruber, President  
Christine Gage, Secretary  
Members  
Council of the Princeton University Community  
One Nassau Hall  
Princeton, New Jersey 08544

Dear Members of the Council:

I write to you as an alumnus of the Class of '86 and past President of Whig-Clio, and also as Managing Director of the Coalition for Jewish Values, which, representing more than 2,500 traditional, Orthodox rabbis, is the largest rabbinic public policy organization in America.

Albert Einstein was living in the United States when Hitler came to power in 1933. This saved him from having to flee the Nazis, yet Hitler's minions still hoped for a time to assassinate the man who would come to personify intellectual brilliance. It is to Princeton's credit that Einstein found refuge from hatred and bigotry at both Princeton University and the Institute for Advanced Study. As Hitler advanced his Jew-hatred in Germany from 1933 to 1939, Einstein worked safely from an office in what was then Fine Hall; he also gave lectures at the Palmer Physical Laboratory, in what is today the Frist Campus Center.

As Einstein wrote to Princeton President Harold Dodds in 1937, "I feel doubly thankful that there has fallen on my lot in Princeton University a place for work and a scientific atmosphere, which could not be better or more harmonious." Princeton's international reputation was, of course, greatly enhanced as a result.

There do exist clear, objective markers for the unique form of ugly bias to which Einstein was subjected. German professors euphemized it as "anti-semitism" in an earlier attempt to give Jew-hatred an academic veneer, but traditional rabbis recognized it immediately for what it was. Indeed, if rabbinic leaders did not know how to recognize this hatred and educate their congregations to withstand it, the Jews would have long ago collapsed into history.

Without exception, all of our over 2,500 rabbis recognize the movement to "Boycott, Divest, and Sanction" Israel (BDS) as merely a new manifestation of the same ancient bigotry, as obvious as "anti-Semitism" was to our predecessors a century ago. This is not simply an opinion, but the result of years of education in thousands of years of Jewish wisdom, giving us insight into Jew-hatred and its facades.

Yeshiva-level study of Jewish texts is not offered at Princeton, but in this case the red flags are so garish that anyone knowledgeable in

European history should see them. Economic warfare against Jews explains ghettos outside which Jews were not allowed to reside or own property, the gamut of professions from which Jews were excluded, and, of course, what the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum identifies as the Nazis' "first nationwide, planned action against Jews"—a boycott of Jewish businesses on April 1, 1933, barely two months after Hitler came to power.

In other words, BDS proponents claim to believe that resurrecting an old Nazi tactic is a good way to convince Jews to compromise the security of their homes and their children. QED each and every BDS supporter demanding divestment from Israel is mentally defective or blinded by hate—or both.

What an embarrassment that so-called "academics" at Princeton are unable to perceive something quite so obvious. But if there is one thing the Nazis taught academia, it is that one can be an uncivilized Jew-hater with a PhD.

Equally obvious is that today, Jews are not fleeing *to* Princeton. Other Ivies may be far worse, but Princeton should not seek to compare itself to reeking cesspools of hate. The fact remains that what Jews have experienced at Princeton is unacceptable, and makes a mockery of your purported commitment to the non-discrimination clauses of Title VI. By considering a proposal endorsing blatant Jew-hatred, no matter how well couched in academic language, you have contributed to making the problem worse, not better. Who knows if Princeton has not already lost the next Einstein to a school in Florida or Israel?

Whether or not you vote to support the latest in millennia of efforts to boycott Jews will have no impact upon the objective reality of its hateful and bloodthirsty intent. It will merely evidence the extent to which Princeton has trampled its own history as a place that gave refuge to intellectual excellence, even when found in the mind of a Jew.

Yours sincerely,



Rabbi Yaakov Menken '86