

Berlin, February 17, 2019

**Inflammatory Pamphlet of the
Göttingen Liberals' Fraction Leader, Attorney F. Oldenburg**

against

**Jewish Voice for a Just Peace in the Middle East - EJJP - Germany
on the occasion of its being awarded with the
Göttingen Peace Prize**

RESPONSE

The Jewish Voice for Just Peace in the Middle East - EJJP Germany e. V. (JVP) formally and utterly rejects the defamatory statements made by the leader of the German Free Democratic Party (FDP) fraction in the Göttingen City Council, attorney F. Oldenburg.

We are delighted to have been chosen the recipients of this year's Göttingen Peace Prize by the Dr. Roehl Foundation and consider it an acknowledgement of our commitment to universal indivisible civil and human rights.

The JVP calls upon the party leadership of the Free Democrats as well as upon the Bundestag faction of the FDP:

- 1. To publicly dissociate themselves from the unsubstantiated, inflammatory statements of the Göttingen attorney, council woman and parliamentary group leader F. Oldenburg.**
- 2. To explicitly confirm that the party consistently stands for the implementation of fundamental rights and political freedoms.**
- 3. To proclaim emphatically that officials and persons responsible within their own ranks oppose categorically any and all forms of unconstitutional political censorship at the federal, national or local level.**

In the following we take a position in response to an inflammatory pamphlet about our organization and the work we do, in which F. Oldenburg, under the motto "No Peace Prize to BDS" calls on the Presi-

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dent and the members of the Presidium of the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, the Lord Mayor of Göttingen and members of the Board of Trustees of the Sparkasse (Savings Bank) in Göttingen to revoke the jury's decision and not to award the prize to the JVP.

Shocked and alienated, we ask ourselves with what authority this lawyer and leader of the FDP parliamentary faction dares to question our Jewish identity? We will, of course, inform our sister organizations in Europe, North America, South Africa and Australia that lawyers in Germany once again are taking it upon themselves to decide who is Jewish and who is not. Oldenburg goes so far as to accuse our own members and those of our European sister organizations - including Holocaust survivors and many direct descendants - of "sailing under a false flag" in "Jewish" disguise.

Here we are again: A German lawyer and politician wants to decide who is to be considered Jewish and who is not. "Sailing under a false flag"...? Haven't we heard this already during the Third Reich? That Jews pretended outwardly to be peaceful and law abiding citizens, but beneath their beards and yalmulkas hid their alleged conspiracies and claims for power. What flag might the *Jewish Voice* sail under to please the parliamentary chairwoman of the FDP? Is there even such a thing as "the Jew", as this politician insinuates? How else could a "false" Jewish voice be distinguished from an "authentic" one? Or are all Jews obliged to speak in a manner pleasing to the Göttingen City Councilwoman?

We will also inform the international community that representatives of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) in Germany have now turned to marginalizing the genocide perpetrated against the Jews in the name of anti-semitism and to cover up the current racism among the local old and neo-Nazis. Whosoever accuses the *Jewish Voice* of anti-semitism and goes so far as to compare it with the hatred of Jews held by the German National Socialists deliberately instrumentalizes the Holocaust for other purposes, trivializes the historical events and provides encouragement to anti-democratic forces and nationalist racism.

We find it unspeakable that the FDP faction in Göttingen is abusing the history of the Jewish mathematician Emmy Noether (1892-1935) to put pressure on the Georg-August-Universität not to award the

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Peace Prize to the JS. Emmy Noether was forced to vacate her apartment in 1932 because the gymnastics team of Albertia had acquired the house and did not tolerate any Jews with left-wing convictions in it. In 1933 she was one of the first to be expelled from university. Emmy Noether was a Jew who above and beyond her scientific merits was engaged in the struggle for justice. She would today be most welcome as a member of the JS.

The lawyer's demand that we distance ourselves from the federation "European Jews for a Just Peace" (EJJP), founded in Amsterdam in 2002, whose founding declaration, together with our own documents on the JVP self-conception and organizational statutes belongs, as we have publicly stated, to the foundations of our political work, is overbearing and groundless. She is in this demand also very close to political censorship, all the more strange when one considers that this is a party wishing to rally liberal democrats behind it. Oldenburg is obviously offended by our very existence and has such small regard for us and our work that she believes mere agitation is enough to thwart the acknowledgment for our work that the Göttingen Peace Prize represents.

The lawyer's arguments are not substantiated with facts in a single point. We now understand first-hand what the talk of post-factual populism is about.

(For your information we have attached the aforementioned documents as well as our web address.)

It is a remarkable coincidence that the representative of a small party which has been struggling for its existence in the German political system for many years accuses us and our umbrella organization EJJP of representing "a complete (sic!) minority opinion" in opposing the policies of the Israeli government (quite a few members of our organization as well as many of those who sympathize with it belong to the 30,000 Israelis who recently emigrated to Germany). It is quite true that we discredit the military occupation regime of the Israeli governments and demand that it be rescinded. To conclude however that we are therefore extremists and anti-Israeli is without any basis in fact.

Land theft and the settlement policy, the dividing wall on occupied Palestinian territory, undefined borders born of political intention

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(every state in the international community is defined by the borders of its territory), unequal rights for Jewish and Palestinian citizens, including the denial of any form of citizenship for countless Palestinians, have long been explicitly called upon by the United Nations, the International Court of Justice and other important bodies and organizations of the international community as violations of international law for which the governments of the State of Israel are responsible and which must be brought to an end under international law.

The political positions of the *Jewish Voice* are demonstrably proven to be in compliance with international law! It does seem strange when a German lawyer is so ignorant and flippant concerning matters of national and international law. All this allegedly in the interest of the rule of law in this country? Oldenburg is de facto instrumentalizing also this precious good of the Federal Republic of Germany and subordinating it to its vacuous interest in engaging in enraged foaming at the mouth agitation against our organization.

We ask ourselves whether the parliamentary faction of the FDP in Göttingen seriously intends to deny the citizens there the right to freedom of expression or whether perhaps only Jews in Göttingen, in Germany or even in the whole of Europe are to be denied freedom of expression?

We also strongly reject the false assertion that the international non-violent BDS movement (which was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize) is anti-Semitic. The *Jewish Voice* has at its inception and repeatedly thereafter, publicly declared that it had nothing in common with enemies of the State of Israel. We strongly criticize the policies of the Israeli governments, we show solidarity with the Palestinian people, who are struggling to achieve self-determination in their own sovereign state on integrated territory within secure borders on the basis of good neighbourly and lasting peace relations with the State of Israel, with Jerusalem as the divided capital of both states. We are committed to the fundamental and human rights of both Israelis and Palestinians and of all people worldwide.

Contrary to what the militaristic language of the Göttingen lawyer might suggest, we do not see ourselves as a "BDS troop", nor do we act under the "wrong coat" of an "Orwellian camouflaged name ... *Jewish voice*".

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We are the Jewish Voice for just peace in the Middle East! And we make very conscious use of our fundamental rights and political freedoms, when we follow the call of the Palestinian civil society living now for more than 50 years under the Israeli military occupation and we support the international movement "Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions" (BDS), albeit selectively.

The BDS campaign was initiated in 2004 at Birzeit University in the West Bank by scientists who had been arbitrarily forbidden by the Israeli occupation regime to leave the country in order to present their scientific findings and exchange information. On July 9, 2005, more than 170 organizations and associations of Palestinian civil society signed a call for an international, non-violent movement, which should be maintained and propagated until Israel complies with international law. In this respect, Israel has the power to legally end the BDS movement overnight.

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