

UC Irvine “Roundup”

By Gary Fouse

Having taught at the University of California at Irvine for 18 years and living in the neighborhood, I followed the encampment issue at that campus with interest. On two occasions, I went to the campus, first to observe the goings-on at the encampment, and later to attend a march on campus in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. When I observed the encampment, what I saw was about 50 or so young people in Palestinian scarves, many covering their faces, and the usual

assortment of Palestinian flags. The encampment was set up in a quad area surrounded by science classrooms and research buildings. There was the constant blare of the usual chants by people taking turns with a bullhorn,



accompanied by the beating of drums. Needless to say, it was not a conducive learning or research atmosphere in the adjacent buildings.

Then, yesterday, on May 15, the [situation changed](#). Up to then, Chancellor Howard Gillman, while calling the encampment a violation of campus rules and disruptive to students and staff, continued to negotiate with the protesters. Yesterday, however, the little rascals decided they were going to “liberate the university for Palestine” by occupying one of the adjacent buildings. At that point, Gillman decided enough was enough. He not only sent his campus police to the scene,

but called for assistance from Orange County law enforcement, including the Irvine PD, the OC County Sheriffs, the California Highway Patrol, and various police departments in the county. Literally hundreds of police arrived on campus. They issued a dispersal order, which was ignored. They declared it an unlawful assembly. Finally, in a highly organized manner, they advanced gradually to the encampment, began removing barriers, and arrested some 50 people, including at least one professor (from the Global Studies Department, don't you know?) who was positively hysterical, shouting, "I am a tenured professor" as she was led away by the gendarmes. By 11 pm, police operations had terminated.

All this time, I had gotten a call from friends who lived next to the university. One of them was on the scene and was feeding me reports. I decided not to go to campus myself. Rather I preferred to go home and post the reports on my own blog. At the same time, I was able to monitor the campus newspaper, the campus alerts, and other sources. By nightfall, all the local Southern California news outlets were live on the scene covering the story. It broke nationally as well as Fox News reported on it. Of course, to my knowledge, the local news said nothing about the anti-Semitic aspect to this story.

In today's New University, the campus newspaper, Chancellor Gillman says he is heartbroken.

While I applaud Gillman's decision yesterday and the professional manner in which it was carried out by police, Chancellor Gillman should have been heartbroken for the past several years, heartbroken over what his Jewish students have had to endure for years at the hands of these pro-Palestinian thugs and thugettes, including outside agitators and faculty. For years, we have been complaining, sending letters to the university administration, the president of the University of California system, the UC Regents, petitions, all for nought.

I should point out that it is a tiny minority of students at

UC Irvine who are guilty. There are about 36,000 students enrolled at UC Irvine. The overwhelming majority-99.9%- have nothing to do with this. Yet, the campus climate for Jewish students has been hostile for years, thanks to the pro-Palestinian activists, the Muslim Student Union, and Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP).

And it's not just the Irvine campus. Virtually every UC campus up and down the state has had similar problems. Look at UCLA since October 7. Chancellor Gene Block is under pressure from all sides. The pro-Palestinian side is condemning the attack by outsiders on the encampment followed by the break-up of the encampment by police. They say Block has made the campus unsafe for them. Yet, for years, Jewish students have been appealing to the university to do something about the harassment they been suffering at the hands of the pro-Palestinian students-and faculty. Block has done nothing.

As I write, the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law is filing a suit [against UC Santa Barbara](#) on behalf of a Jewish student-the president of the student government-who has been the target of non-stop abuse and harassment because she is Jewish and supports Israel.

I could go on and on, and need I mention the insane asylum at UC Berkeley?

Are we, the public, not fed up with the shenanigans going on at our universities, many of which are tax-payer funded? Have we not seen enough of these feckless, sniveling campus chancellors and presidents, who for years, have turned a blind eye to campus anti-Semitism? I have no illusions that the situation is going to turn around in California because this is a one-party state, and that party (Democrats) is on the side of the protesters-not the Jewish students. It is heartening to see states like Texas and Florida crack down, but they have sensible government leaders, unlike California. What we can do, however, is bring financial pressure to bear

in terms of asking donors to send their millions elsewhere. Lawsuits brought against universities that refuse to protect Jewish students is another avenue I favor, like the Brandeis action against UC Santa Barbara.

Pressure must also be brought upon university leaders to be fired or resign. The example of Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania stand out. UCLA Chancellor Block is stepping down July 1 though there is mounting pressure from all sides for him to resign now. Well he should.

As I have been claiming for years, with a few exceptions, most of the major Jewish organizations are not speaking out forcefully enough on this topic. They must step up to the plate and do better. Working with the universities through the "system" has not worked. Many of these organizations spent years denying the problem of anti-Semitism on our campuses. They stood in the way of all our efforts to shine the light on what was happening on our campuses. As to UC Irvine, that is something I can personally testify to.

I fervently hope that the arrests at UC Irvine will be followed, where appropriate, by prosecution. Enough is enough. It is time to clean house in terms of disruptive students and professors who encourage hate and disrespect for the law. Expulsions and firings are in order at UC Irvine and other campuses. Our universities need to get back to being centers of serious learning in a tranquil atmosphere rather than training grounds for activists and centers of indoctrination. Just as importantly, they need to be safe and welcoming to our Jewish students.