

No. 14-3

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In The  
*Judicial Board*

of the  
**Undergraduate Students Association**  
of  
**UCLA**

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*Students for Justice in Palestine*

v.

*Sunny Singh & Lauren Rogers*

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**P E T I T I O N   F O R   H E A R I N G**

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Students for Justice in  
Palestine

Kerckhoff 146

sjpucla1@gmail.com

22 April, 2014

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Sunny Singh

Singh: 519 Kerckhoff;  
usarep2@asucla.ucla.edu

Lauren Rogers

Rogers: 300A Kerckhoff;  
usafsc@asucla.ucla.edu

Signatures (official use only):

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Chief Justice

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Clerk

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Part I: Jurisdiction:

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This petition alleges that members of the Undergraduate Students Association Council violated the USAC Bylaws, thereby violating their oath of office as outlined in the USA Constitution. This matter falls under the Judicial Board's jurisdiction because it is empowered by the USA Constitution to rule on or comment on the constitutionality of the actions of the respondents.

**Art. III. Section D. of the USA Constitution:** Oath of Office: Each elected Officer of the Association shall take the following oath: "I (Name), do hereby solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will, to the best of my ability, support the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Undergraduate Students Association of UCLA, and that I will, to the best of my ability, promote, maintain, and extend the worth, value, and name of the University of California."

**Art. VI. Sec. B, Cl. 1 of the USA Constitution:** "The Judicial Board shall rule upon the Constitutionality of legislation and official actions of elected or appointed officials at the request of the Council or any other members of the Association."

**Art. VI. Sec. B, Cl. 2 of the USA Constitution:** "The Judicial Board may also question, comment, or rule upon other matters at the request of the Council or any member of the Association."

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## Part II: Violations:

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USA Bylaws, Article 1, Section D (Conflict of Interest) states: “No Association member, elected or appointed, shall directly or indirectly receive improper benefits, as defined below, as a result of his or her position. Officers or appointed members shall avoid even the perception of such a conflict of interest. No Association member, elected or appointed, may have an unauthorized financial interest or obligation which might cause divided loyalty or even the appearance of divided loyalty. In the event of a conflict of interest, the member shall fully disclose to the Council all material terms of such activity, and the member shall refrain from any vote in which such issue is involved.”

Respondents Singh and Rogers’ actions satisfy all parts of the above definition of a conflict of interest. The members received a monetary benefit in the form of free trips to Israel (Singh from the Anti Defamation League, Rogers from the American Jewish Committee).<sup>i</sup> These trips were provided as a result of their position as student government members because the trips listed student leadership positions in the criteria for eligibility.<sup>ii</sup> The parties that provided the trips have publicly articulated a prior interest in the votes these members took on the question of divestment.<sup>iii</sup> Furthermore, both groups describe the trips as having an ongoing political nature. In Singh’s case, the ADL clearly stipulated that trip participants were expected to apply what they learned on the trip through their various student leadership positions.<sup>iv</sup> In Rogers’ case, the AJC described Project Interchange trips as part of a comprehensive campaign against the BDS movement (including divestment).<sup>v</sup> Thus, by both taking the free trips and voting on the

issue of divestment, the respondents created a condition of divided loyalty between the UCLA student body and the groups that provided them with monetary benefits.

USAC Bylaws indicate that in such situations, the members should *both* disclose the material terms of the activity *and* refrain from any vote in which such issue is involved. Having failed to take these steps, Singh and Rogers thus violated the USAC Bylaws and their oath of office as outlined by the USA Constitution.

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### Part III: Ramifications:

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The effects of this violation include:

- Improper votes taken on the “A Resolution to Divest from Companies that Violate Palestinian Human Rights,”
- A widespread perception that the respondents engaged in a conflict of interest,
- The increased perception that such gifts are appropriate behaviors for outside political organizations with interests in USA Council’s votes,
- And diminished public confidence in the integrity of the USA Council.

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### Part IV: Remedy Sought:

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Petitioner seeks that The Judicial Board recognize the conflict of interest and perceived conflict of interest produced by the respondents’ actions. Petitioner also seeks that The Judicial Board affirm that the votes taken by members with conflicts of interest were inappropriate, based on the USAC Bylaws, and suggest appropriate remedies.

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**PART V: INFORMATION**

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Petitioner: Students for Justice in Palestine  
SID:

Council: Dana Saifan  
SID: 403-949-511

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**PART VI: STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY**

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By signing below, I hereby attest that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. Furthermore, I have read and understand the Judicial Board Procedure (Rules).

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Respectfully submitted,

DATED: 4/22/2014          Students for Justice in  
Palestine

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Name  
Petitioner

DATED: 4/22/2014          Dana Saifan

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Name  
Counsel for Petitioner

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Endnotes:

<sup>i</sup> The ADL states that “expenses covered by ADL include travel to and from Israel, accommodations, meals, and a stipend of up to \$200 for travel to New York.” <http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/campus-leaders-mission-2013-application.pdf>

The AJC (through its Project Interchange) states that it covers the costs of “round-trip economy airfare from Los Angeles to Tel Aviv, land and hotel accommodations, and most meals” [http://projectinterchange.org/?seminar\\_id=7398](http://projectinterchange.org/?seminar_id=7398)

<sup>ii</sup> The ADL’s “Campus Leaders’ Mission to Israel” defines eligibility as follows: “Qualified applicants must currently be college freshmen, sophomores, or juniors who are leaders on their college/university campus through political involvement, student activism, or editors of the campus newspaper.” <http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/campus-leaders-mission-2013-application.pdf>

The AJC defines eligibility for its “California Student Leaders” trip as follows: “Applicants should be undergraduate-level California student leaders from campus groups including student government (SGA); Campus Democrats/Republicans; Model UN, LGBT, environmental advocacy, pre-law, business, and other shared interest organizations; and religious/ethnic clubs.” [http://projectinterchange.org/?seminar\\_id=7398](http://projectinterchange.org/?seminar_id=7398)

<sup>iii</sup> The ADL website hosts article entitled "ADL Welcomes Statement from UC Officials Rejecting Israel Divestment" viewable at: <http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/5112c482-f24c-44d1-abc1-6bf8c3057b24,0b1623ca-d5a4-465d-a369-df6e8679cd9e.frameless.html>

The AJC launched a public petition against a similar divestment campaign at UC Berkeley in 2013: [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=131430053634059&story\\_fbid=367186936725035](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=131430053634059&story_fbid=367186936725035)

In 2014, the AJC issued a press release celebrating the outcome of the recent divestment resolution at UCLA: <http://www.ajclosangeles.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=mlI0IfN1JyE&b=8555443&ct=13666003>.

Both organizations are signatories to a public letter opposing divestment at UC Berkeley in 2013: <http://www.jstreetu.org/street-cred-blog/troubling-uc-berkeley-student-senate-bill-on-israel>.

<sup>iv</sup> The ADL’s trip description says: “On their return to campus in the fall, mission participants are expected to take what they have learned back to their campus communities. This will take various forms depending on the campus climate and each student’s leadership role on campus. ADL will offer assistance in this process by providing programmatic support.” See <http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/campus-leaders-mission-2013-application.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> The AJC’s recent “Help AJC Stop BDS email” lists Project Interchange’s trips under the heading “Here’s What We’re Doing to Stop BDS” <http://www.scribd.com/doc/217425607/AJC-Stop-BDS-email>