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BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN AGAINST MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL COMES TO LOS ANGELES Human Rights Group Says Americans Should Spend Our Money at Home Instead

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What: 23 billboards in Los Angeles and surrounding communities were erected on June 11, 2012. These billboards are part of an ambitious and tenacious campaign to further shift American public opinion towards ending carte blanche American support for the actions and policies of the Israeli government. Identical billboards have been on public display in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Denver, Colorado, for months.

Who: Sponsored by the Coalition to Stop \$30 Billion to Israel, a grassroots coalition of religious and secular communities and individuals in Los Angeles and New Mexico.

Where: Billboards are located in the San Fernando Valley, Burbank, Glendale, the San Gabriel Valley, the west side, West Hollywood, Atwater Village, the south bay, Long Beach, and northern Orange County.

How: Billboard is funded by donations.

Why: Because American tax dollars are better spent at home and because we want to ease the suffering of the Palestinian people.

At a time when many Americans are suffering with the slow recovery from the recession, 8% of the people are un- or under-employed, and the life savings of millions of people is at risk because their home mortgages are "under water," the United States should not spend American tax money supporting the Israeli military.

When the United States has an unacceptable budget deficit and an equally unacceptable infrastructure deficit, the United States should not support the Israeli occupation and settlement of the West Bank, blockade of the Gaza Strip, and dispossession of the Palestinian people.

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COMMUNITY SUPPORTS BILLBOARDS AGAINST MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL

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The Coalition has received many statements endorsing our billboard's message:

"All US aid for Israel should stop. Israel holds thousands of Palestinian political prisoners [and] denies Palestinians access to water, land and basic human rights. Congress must demand an end to human rights abuses and the wholesale killing of civilians by the IDF [Israeli army] before sending US dollars to Israel. I wholeheartedly support the billboard campaigns and I call on members of congress start paying attention and to cease the carte blanche support for Israel.

*--Miko Peled, Israeli peace activist living in San Diego, CA,
author of The General's Son, Journey of an Israeli in Palestine*

"I support this billboard project because we need to spend money on our children's education, not on the destruction of Palestinian homes. It's time we had a free and open debate on U.S. military support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine. U.S. military aid to Israel pays for the destruction of Palestinian homes, the bombing of water treatment plants, and the blockade of over a million people in Gaza. Enough of this blood money."

*Marcy Winograd, public high school teacher, former congressional candidate,
co-founder LA Jews for Peace, Green Party activist*

"The tragedy of what we did to the Native Americans is now played out every day in Palestine, all with our dollars. Here, hospitals and clinics are closing, tuition is rising, and pollution goes unchecked. There, we entirely fund a military that enforces racial and religious segregation as bad as South Africa, or what we had in our own country fifty years ago. It's crazy and it has to stop."

Mark Allen Kleiman, Activist

"When we Americans look at Israel-Palestine, what we see today is very different from what we saw 30 or 40 years ago. The Israelis were the good guys then. And we have supported them financially, militarily, and politically – and unconditionally. But now we know that retaining control of all of Palestine in total disregard of the Arabs' human rights has been Israel's agenda all along. To continue our support is to knowingly be accomplices in Israel's military occupation and in the flouting of international law and the laws of human decency."

Don Bustany, host of Middle East in Focus on KPFF

"Why are we sending billions in military aid to Israel, whose economy is better than ours while here at home hundreds of thousands of people are homeless, millions are unemployed, our schools are laying off teachers, our parks and libraries are closing and much more."

Karin Paley, Women in Black Los Angeles

"America must not give billions to Israel while American children are deprived of healthcare and

education. For peace in Middle East, American militarization of Israel must stop.”

Shakeel Said, Board Member American Muslims for Palestine

“We Americans find ourselves supporting Israel, a state that has no respect for international or moral laws, that continues to launch wars in the Middle East, and is currently pushing for a war against Iran. We find our government decreasing our social programs while increasing military aid to Israel. Our Congress seems to be "occupied territory," heavily lobbied by AIPAC to serve Israel’s interests rather than our own. These billboards will help rectify the situation. Cutting military funding to Israel says that Israel must respect U.N. Resolutions and be accountable for its actions.”

Nidal A. Barakat, Palestine Aid Society

“As the great Israeli General Matti Peled once said, “Receiving free money, money you have not earned and for which you do not have to work, is plain and simple corrupting”. “It is bad for Israel, it is wrong, and it is illegal.” These two sentences are quoted in his son’s autobiography “The General’s Son”. If there is to be a future for Israel it is with a peace based on justice with the Palestinians, and we Americans are responsible to make that very difficult change possible by stopping military aid to Israel.”

Rick Chertoff, Jewish Activist

“Military aid allows Israel to avoid making serious efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as conflicts with its other neighbors. It enables the occupation, contributes to the devastation of Palestinian society and fosters the increasing militarization of Israeli society. U.S. military aid to Israel should be suspended until the occupation ends. The occupation is of course in violation of both U.S. policy and international law.”

Estee Chandler, Jewish Voice for Peace Los Angeles Organizer

“We need to persuade people that America's support for Israel must be contingent on promoting peace and justice. By funding billions of dollars to Israel, America is making itself complicit in Israel's reckless and dangerous assault on the Palestinian people. We need America to encourage Israel to do everything possible to achieve peace.”

Lillian Laskin, Jewish activist