



THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

JONATHAN "JAY" SURES
Regent

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October 31, 2023

To: The University of California Ethnic Studies Faculty Council
c/o Sean Malloy – Professor of History/Critical Race & Ethnic Studies (CRES)
Founding Faculty School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts at The University of California,
Merced

There are absolutely no words to describe how appalling and repugnant I found your October 16, 2023 letter from the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council to the Regents of the University of California as well as our Chancellors and President. Your letter is rife with falsehoods about Israel and seeks to legitimize and defend the horrific savagery of the Hamas massacre of October 7.

Simply put, October 7 was the deadliest single day for Jews since the Holocaust. As you know, on October 9, the University of California Board of Regents Chair Leib and UC President Drake issued a statement clearly condemning this act of terrorism while also recognizing the impact and suffering this situation will have on civilians in Gaza. You have asked for us as a body to retract our "charges of terrorism, to uplift the Palestinian freedom struggle, and to stand against Israel's war crimes against the ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Palestinian people." Let me be clear, I will do everything in my power to never let that happen. Full stop. Our statement of condemnation of the October 7th massacre of Israeli civilians by Hamas was absolutely justified and necessary because terrorism has no place in our world. As human beings we need to condemn it immediately and forcefully without fear of retribution or that some may be offended.

The UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council's opposition to the Regents and President's characterization of Hamas's attack as an act of "Terrorism" intentionally ignores the reality of the situation and can be interpreted as a justification of Hamas' shocking brutality in which babies, children of all ages, the elderly, the disabled, and people from all walks of life were shot, raped, tortured, maimed, mutilated, decapitated, and burned alive. Over 230 more were ripped from their homes and kidnapped to Gaza, where their fate remains unknown. These are the facts behind this current conflict, and they are absolutely verifiable and undeniable. To whitewash them is a flagrant and willful abdication of your professional responsibility and indeed morality. It is beyond shocking and almost hard to believe that your entire council would stand by your letter's falsehoods, inaccuracies, and antisemitic innuendos.

It is even more disturbing that the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council and its signatories have demonstrated no empathy for Jewish life, nor seek to use their platform to advocate constructive paths to improve the situation for Israelis and Palestinians. Instead, your council has willingly chosen to be surrogates and supporters for Hamas' destructive actions.

The UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council letter does not come in a vacuum, but at a time when Jewish students across the country, including on all our UC campuses, are experiencing increasing antisemitic threats and intimidation. Your blatant and baseless rhetoric feeds into this hostile environment.



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Good people everywhere want a better future for Israelis and Palestinians, one that provides security, dignity and prosperity for both peoples. Such a future will not come from the barbarity of Hamas – whose evil actions are not only directed against the people of Israel but against Palestinian civilians of Gaza each and every day. Over the course of the last sixteen years of ruling Gaza, Hamas has built its military infrastructure underneath schools, hospitals, mosques and apartment dwellings with callous disregard to civilian life.

Equally distressing, the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council includes over 300 faculty members across the UC system who could very well be the individuals who are teaching and training - essentially shaping - the next generation of students and the next generation of professoriate ethnic studies teachers in our state. The thought that young and impressionable students might be taught the falsehoods of your letter absolutely sickens me.

The UC was built on the promise that we must all find ways to foster healthy dialogue, empathy and constructive paths to promote change for the betterment of society. Your letter does none of this. In fact, it does the opposite. It perpetuates hate and discrimination.

As a unanimously confirmed, twice appointed Regent of The University of California, I was tasked with creating a safe environment for all our students and staff at the UC. So let me be crystal clear with no ifs, ands, or buts - I stand by that commitment and will do everything in my power to protect our Jewish students, and for that matter, everyone in our extended community from your inflammatory and out of touch rhetoric.

I strongly urge your organization and your members to issue a public statement retracting the statements in your October 16th letter and clearly condemn Hamas's horrific attack on innocent Israeli Civilians (as well as other nationalities) on October 7 as terrorism. Plain and simple. In addition, your organization should commit to learning more about antisemitism and all forms of hate and how it lives on our campuses where you are tasked and trusted with educating our next generation of students and leaders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jay Sures".

Jay Sures
Regent of The University of California

Cc: University of California Board of Regents
University of California Chancellors
University of California President Michael Drake