

# LA Jews for Peace Endorses the Platform of the Movement for Black Lives

## LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement; August 10, 2016

[www.lajewsforpeace.org](http://www.lajewsforpeace.org) <https://www.facebook.com/LAJP.org>

**LA Jews for Peace** endorses “A Vision for Black Lives, Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, and Justice,” the Platform of the Movement for Black Lives<sup>1</sup>. The Platform is a strong and comprehensive statement for social, racial, political, and economic justice. We would very much like to live in the society it describes. We also note that some Jewish groups have criticized the Platform as anti-Israel. Their critique centers on three issues:

- **The Platform endorses Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel.** The Jewish American establishment objects to the Platform because they assert BDS’s goal is to destroy Israel. We disagree. Thousands of Jewish and other Americans support BDS as non-violent economic pressure on Israel to end its occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. They are not out to destroy Israel, and their BDS activities would stop when Israel ends its occupation and allows Palestinians to regain their political, human, and economic rights. This is why **LA Jews for Peace** urges the U.S. government to place comprehensive sanctions on Israel until it makes peace with Palestine, similar to the sanctions it placed on South Africa to end apartheid.
- **The Platform characterizes Israel as an apartheid state.** This is obviously true. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem Jews and Palestinians live totally apart and are subject to separate laws – Jews under Israeli civic law and Palestinians under military law. Jewish communities receive massive state infrastructure support while Palestinian community state support is extremely limited. Within Israel there are over 50 discriminatory laws that restrict Palestinian, but not Jewish, life. This is the definition of apartheid, an Afrikaans word meaning separation.
- **The Platform states that “genocide [is] taking place against the Palestinian people.”** That is a false assertion. Israel is not committing mass extermination; rather it extra judicially executes Palestinians; uses disproportionate force to attack Palestinian homes, civil, commercial, and municipal buildings like schools and hospitals; and expropriates private land and resources. There are more Palestinians alive today, and they comprise nearly half of the population under direct and indirect Israeli control, but their living standards and prospects have been destroyed.

In evaluating these critiques, **LA Jews for Peace** notes that none of the Platform’s statements are anti-Semitic. Critiques of Israel policy are directed at United States government policies that enable Israeli actions. And the Platform’s statements criticizing Israeli actions are directed at government policy, not at Israelis who are Jews.

**LA Jews for Peace** does not believe that the Movement for Black Lives Platform’s incorrect use of the term “genocide” negates an otherwise powerful statement for social, racial, political, and economic justice enunciated in the Platform’s other 37,000 words. That is why **LA Jews for Peace** proudly endorses the Platform of the Movement for Black Lives.

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<sup>1</sup> “A Vision for Black Lives, Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, and Justice.” The Movement for Black Lives.  
<https://policy.m4bl.org/>