



25 February 2008

Dr. Paul Davenport  
University President  
Room 113, Stevenson-Lawson Building  
The University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, N6A 5B8

Dear Dr. Davenport:

We have received a copy of your letter of 1 February 2008 to Professor Michael Lynk, replying to our collective 10 January 2008 letter where we expressed our deep concern about your acceptance of an invitation from the Jewish National Fund of Canada to be its 2008 Honouree. We wish to thank you for the reply, and for meeting with several of us on 25 January, where you received our concerns in person.

We are deeply disappointed that you are continuing with your plans to attend the Jewish National Fund dinner this June in the face of all of the evidence that we – and the many other correspondents who have written to you – have presented with respect to the exclusionary and discriminatory practices of the JNF. This institution is not the benign environmental organization which it presents itself to the world as, and that your comments appear to accept. The JNF is an institution that actively engages in the alienation of land and resources from the Palestinian citizens of Israel and the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation, for the exclusive benefit of the Jewish majority in Israel. As we have stated to you, these practices are contrary to modern international human rights and humanitarian law and to the core principles and values of every modern liberal democracy. These practices should not be endorsed and supported, as your presence at the June dinner will do.

We are quite taken aback that you have not responded, neither during the 25 January meeting nor in your letter of 1 February letter, to any of the specific and detailed points that we have presented to you with respect to the JNF's policies and practices. This evidence is substantial and compelling, and should profoundly trouble any one who is committed to tolerance, equality, diversity, social respect and minority rights. That you have not provided any responses whatsoever to the evidence can only lead us to conclude that: (i) these points are largely unanswerable, and (ii) that you are choosing to support an organization with a deeply discriminatory record with your eyes wide open. The criticism of the JNF by a number of respected international and human rights organizations reveals it to be an organization that is advancing high-minded ideals to camouflage low-minded purposes. In these circumstances, is it not disingenuous to state that you have accepted the JNF's invitation because it wishes to honour diversity, tolerance, the defence of human rights, and environmentalism?

Finally, we wish to thank you for your statement at the conclusion of your letter that you are strongly committed to promoting free speech. We trust that you will support all of our reasonable efforts to advance a debate at the University on this issue.

Yours very truly,

Prof. Michael Carroll  
Sociology

Prof. Rebecca Coulter  
Education

Prof. Randa Farah  
Anthropology

Prof. David Heap  
French

Prof. Michael Lynk  
Law