

HIGHLIGHTS OF CAMPAIGNS FOR ETHICAL INVESTMENT ADOPTED BY FAITH-BASED GROUPS WORLDWIDE ON BEHALF OF PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND A JUST AND VIABLE PEACE IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE

September 2008

Excerpted from an Ongoing Review by the Palestine-Israel Action Group

a subcommittee of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting (Quakers)

Email <PIAG_@mac.com> for full descriptions and Jewish, Palestinian, Secular, Gov't & University campaigns.

World Council of Churches Central Committee

WCC advocates selective divestment from US companies like Caterpillar that profit from the Occupation, and from Israeli companies that depend on settlements for materials and labor, or that produce military equipment used to violate Palestinian human rights.

Churches with investment funds have an opportunity to use those funds responsibly in support of peaceful solutions to conflict. "Economic pressure, appropriately and openly applied, is one such means of action." (Adopted 2/05; reaffirmed 8/06) (media@wcc-coe.org)

Sabeel (a Jerusalem-based international organization representing Palestinian Christians)

There is a spiritual dimension to all investment:

1. Earning money through investment in companies whose products and services are used to violate International Law and human rights is equivalent to profiting from unlawful acts and the oppression.
2. Continuing such investments, once the facts are brought to our attention, constitutes enabling harm to innocent civilians under Occupation.

Sabeel cites Israeli human rights lawyer Shamai Leibovitz: "If the Jewish people are ever to become 'a light of all nations' and return to their core values of justice and human dignity, Israelis and Jews of conscience must call for effective measures to end the occupation of millions of Palestinians. I believe that selective economic pressure is the most effective way to end the brutal occupation."

"The churches have exhausted all other options," says Sabeel founder Naim Ateek, Anglican priest. ("Morally Responsible Investment: A Nonviolent Response to the Occupation," 8/05: www.fosna.org)

Episcopal Executive Council (US), 10/05

EEC directs its Committee for Social Responsibility in Investments to undertake the following:

- 1) **Corporate engagement via dialogue and shareholder resolutions to encourage companies to adopt socially responsible practices** that advance positive changes in Israeli government policy and end the Occupation.
 - 2) **Urge the Palestinian Authority to oppose violence as a means of resistance.**
 - 3) **"Positive investment" – encourage companies to invest in the economic infrastructure of the West Bank and Gaza.**
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- www.episcopalchurch.org/
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Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), 8/07

Evangelical Lutherans, with nearly 5 million US members, back "**exploration of the feasibility of refusing to buy products produced in Israeli settlements**" and of supporting the purchase of Palestinian products, in measures adopted by The Churchwide Assembly, the denomination's key legislative body. The Assembly calls for **examination of the denomination's "entire investment activity,"** however excluding divestiture. The initiative builds on the Peace Not Walls campaign the Assembly adopted in 2005, and will be undertaken in consultation with Evangelical Lutheran churches in Jordan and the Holy Land. (www.elca.org/news/Releases.asp?a=3718)

Pax Christi: Catholic International Peace Movement. 7/06

Pax Christi announces support for a UK campaign aimed at multi-national companies that profit from the Occupation, including Volvo, Caterpillar and Daewoo. Australian Pax Christi convenor Fr. Claude Mostowik calls for the campaign to expand as a worldwide boycott. (cathnews.com/news/607/60.php)

Presbyterian Church, USA. 6/08

Representatives of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) report to the 2008 General Assembly that they are **in the midst of "corporate engagement" with both Caterpillar and Motorola and believe they are making progress.** MRTI aims to persuade corporations to change their practices through correspondence, direct talks, proxy voting, shareholder resolutions, and, if need-be, through a recommendation for divestment. The General Assembly voted in 2006 for the **church's investments "as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, [to] be invested in only peaceful pursuits."**

(I-P Mission Network: p.coffman@sbcglobal.net)

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers): American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). 3/08

AFSC is affiliated with the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). **The AFSC Board adopts an "investment screen" barring investments in companies that provide products or services (including financial services) used by Israeli governmental or military bodies or Israeli or Palestinian organizations or groups "to facilitate or undertake violent acts against civilians or violations of international law." The screen bars investment in companies that help maintain Israel's military occupation or that help maintain and expand Israeli settlements or the Separation Wall.** The Board states it is unwilling "to remain complicit with violence and oppression."

<www.afsc.org/israel-palestine/default.htm>

Unitarian-Universalist Association of Congregations. 6/02

The 2002 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association opposes Israeli settlements, land confiscation, house demolitions, and other violations of international law, as well as "all attacks on civilians, whether by suicide bombers, F-16 or helicopter gunships, or any other means." The US government "is responsible for a significant portion of arms sales to this over-armed region" and the GA **calls on the US to "suspend all transfers of those types of weapons and munitions used to commit human rights violations until Israel is clearly in compliance with the terms for arms transfers as expressed in United States law and bilateral agreements."**

(uua.org/socialjustice/statements/13983.shtm)

United Church of Canada (Presbyterian, Methodist, United Church of Christ). 8/06

The UCC General Council **adopts a Pro-Peace Investment Strategy** "to invite the membership, congregations, and organizations of The United Church of Canada to invest in companies that contribute to peace and a secure and economically viable Palestinian state alongside a secure and economically viable State of Israel" and to **"make financial investments, as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, with . . . companies that are engaged only in peaceful pursuits in the region."**

(www.united-church.ca/news/2006/0818.shtm)

United Church of Christ (UCC), Twenty-fifth General Synod. 7/05

Ask pension boards, conferences, local churches and members to use economic leverage in promoting peace in the Middle East: advocating reallocation of US foreign aid to constrain Middle East militarization; challenging corporations' practices that gain from the conflict and occupation; and divesting from companies that refuse to change these practices. Continue dialogue with Jewish, Christian and Muslim partners to work for Israel-Palestine peace.

(ucc.org)

United Methodist Church: New England Conference. 6/07

Israel's settlements and wall on Palestinian land violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Geneva Conventions and UN resolutions. **The Church affirms the right of Christians, Jews, and Muslims to freedom of movement in the Holy Land and to Jerusalem as an open city for people of all three faiths.** Selective divestment is consistent with the United Methodist commitment to a just and sustainable peace for all the people of the Middle East," says William Aldrich, of the Divestment Task Force. Divestment offers "a tangible way of working toward this goal." **Twenty companies have now been placed on a divestment list shared with Methodist churches and investment managers. They are Lockheed Martin, Blockbuster, Alliant Tech Systems, Boeing, Caterpillar, Cement Roadstone, General Dynamics, General Electric, Globecom Systems, Magal Security Systems, Motorola, Northrop Grumman, Oshkosh Truck, Raytheon, Silicon Graphics, TEREX, United Technologies, Veolia Environnement, ITT, and Volvo.**

(www.neumc.org)