



News Release
For Immediate Release

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“The Legal Assault on Palestinian Rights Activism”
Panel presented by the Institute for Palestine Studies, Nov 21st
Featuring: Prof. Steven Salaita, Andrew Dalack, Dima Khalidi and Yaman Salahi
Moderated by Rashid Khalidi

Washington DC, October 22, 2014 – The Institute for Palestine Studies is pleased to present [“The Legal Assault on Palestinian Rights Activism”](#), a panel discussion on November 21st from 12pm to 2.30pm at the SEIU building in Dupont Circle, 1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington DC. The panel will be moderated by *Journal of Palestine Studies* Editor, **Rashid Khalidi** and feature a distinguished panel of experts including, civil rights attorneys **Andrew Dalack, Dima Khalidi** and **Yaman Salahi** and **Professor Steven Salaita**, whose recent firing by the University of Illinois has drawn increased attention to the aggressive silencing of pro-Palestinian voices in the US. Event sponsors include, the National Lawyers Guild and Palestine Solidarity Legal Support.

These leading experts on law, civil rights, activism and Palestine will be discussing the attempts to silence Palestinian activism in the US through legal means, including the **criminalization of Palestinian advocacy and the targeting of individual Palestine activists for surveillance, investigation and criminal prosecution**. As the movement for Palestinian rights grows in size and diversity in the US, individuals speaking out against Israeli human rights violations and American involvement in Israel’s discriminatory policies are increasingly facing intense backlash, smear campaigns, threats to their employment and reputation, legal bullying, censorship and punishment. These attacks are often led by pro-Israeli organizations, but involve Universities and the US government among other powerful institutions.

The policies and programs the US government use to prosecute activists for Palestinian rights will be discussed by panelists, including the Attorney General’s “Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide,” which permits the FBI to **rely on an individual’s religious identity in determining whether a subject is worthy of investigation** and US government reports that demonstrate a disturbing trend of racial and religious profiling against those designated “suspected Male Middle Eastern.”

Dalack, Khalidi, Salahi and Salaita will examine the increased policing and criminalization of Muslim and Palestinian communities and the attacks those advocating for Palestinian rights face. Individual cases against activist include the prosecutions of The Holy Land Five, and Professor Sami al-Arian along with the **ongoing prosecution of longtime Chicago activist Rasmea Odeh**. Speakers will analyze the implications of a lawsuit against the Olympia Food Co-op for its boycott of Israeli products; complaints against Universities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act for allegedly tolerating an anti-Semitic hostile environment for Jewish students on campus; campaigns to pressure universities to take disciplinary action against students for engaging in speech activities; and baseless and inflammatory accusations of support for terrorism against activists.

“**The Legal Assault on Palestinian Rights Activism**” is a free panel discussion hosted by the Institute for Palestine Studies located at SEIU building in Dupont Circle, 1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington DC on November 21, 2014 from 12pm to 2.30pm. **To learn more and [reserve your ticket](http://www.palestine-studies.org), please visit www.palestine-studies.org**

Please direct all media, sponsorship or interview requests to Paige Brownlow at 202-342-3990 ext. 13 or paigeb@palestine-studies.org.

About the Speakers

Rashid Khalidi is the editor of the *Journal of Palestine Studies* and the Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University. He was also President of the Middle East Studies Association, and an advisor to the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid and Washington Arab-Israeli peace negotiations from October 1991 until June 1993. He is author of many books on Palestine, Israel and US foreign policy.

Andrew Dalack is a member of the Rasmea Defense Committee, an ad hoc group that formed shortly after Rasmea Odeh's indictment on immigration fraud. Andrew serves as co-chair for the National Lawyers Guild's Palestine Subcommittee and works with attorneys across the country to provide legal support to Palestine solidarity activists. Andrew currently works for a public defender office in New York City.

Dima Khalidi is the founder and Director of Palestine Solidarity Legal Support (PSLS), and Cooperating Counsel with the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR). Her work includes providing legal advice to activists, engaging in advocacy to protect their rights to speak out for Palestinian rights, and educating activists and the public about their rights.

Yaman Salahi is a Staff Attorney in the National Security and Civil Rights Program at Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco, which works to address the impact of post-9/11 government practices on Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian communities. He has worked on student freedom of speech issues related to the Israeli occupation and on various counter-terrorism practices.

Steven Salaita is an Arab American Professor of Native American Studies and formerly a professor at Virginia Tech. He was recently fired from a tenured position at the University of Illinois after tweeting about the Israeli assault on Gaza during the summer of 2014. The public outcry at his firing exposed the silencing and intimidation that those who speak out for Palestinian rights often face from Universities and other powerful institutions.

About the Institute for Palestine Studies

The Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS) is the oldest institute in the world exclusively devoted to documentation, research and publication on Palestinian affairs and the Arab-Israeli conflict. IPS is entirely independent and committed to preserving the collective memory of Palestine and educating the public on the realities of Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict. To learn more about the institute, visit www.palestine-studies.org