There is a checkpoint around this center!

Queers against Israeli apartheid

A zine from QAIA-NY
Who is QAIA?

New York City Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (NYC-QAIA) is a group of queer activists who support Palestinians’ right to self-determination, and challenge Israel’s occupation of the West Bank & East Jerusalem as well as the military blockade of Gaza. We stand with Palestinian civil society’s call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel, and the call by Palestinian queer groups to end the occupation as a critical step for securing Palestinian human rights as well as furthering the movement for Palestinian queer rights. Check out QAIA: http://queersagainstisraeliapartheid.blogspot.com

What is PINKWASHING & PINKWATCHING anyway?

“Pinkwashing” is attempts by some supporters of Israel to defend Israeli occupation and apartheid by diverting attention to Israel’s supposedly good record on LGBT rights. Anti-pinkwashing is pinkwatching. Pinkwatching activists (like NYC-QAIA) work to expose Israeli pinkwashing tactics and counter them through our messaging that queer struggle globally is not possible until there is liberation for all people, and that Israel being washed as a gay-haven instead of an Apartheid settler state is unjustly saying: human rights for some, not all. Instead of that, pinkwatchers say to Israel: Don’t pinkwash your apartheid! There is no freedom for queer Palestinians until there is freedom for ALL Palestinians! For info on global pinkwatching, check out: www.pinkwatchingisrael.com.

QAIA’s struggle with NYC’s LGBT Center:

FEBRUARY 2011
The New York City LGBT Community Center responds to threats of a funding boycott from Islamophobe Michael Lucas by banning the Siegebusters Working Group and canceling the event Siegebusters was planning for Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW).

MARCH 5
Siegebusters and allies demonstrate in front of the Center, whose management hires armed security personnel to police the demonstration.

MARCH 13
At a community forum attended by more than 200 people, the Center’s executive director (ED) and board defend the decision to ban Siegebusters.

MARCH 21
Progressives concerned about insensitivity, censorship and corporatization start Queers for an Open LGBT Center (QFOLC). The Center refuses to meet with or rent space to QFOLC.

APRIL 1
An alliance of community-based groups of color meet with the ED about the Center’s insensitivity to youth and people of color as well as the Siegebusters ban.

LATE APRIL
QFOLC members and others found NYC Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QAIA) to contest the occupation of Palestine. The Center rejects meeting space requests from QAIA.

MAY 26
QAIA’s meeting takes place in Room 412 instead of the lobby. Planning proceeds for QAIA’s pride contingents. A meeting is scheduled for June 8.

JUNE
QAIA participates in Queens & Brooklyn Pride Parades, Trans Day of Action, Dyke March, and NYC LGBT Pride March in Manhattan, eliciting positive responses in all; but one group of pro-Palestinian queers with a different contingent is pushed and shoved by a pro-Israel contingent.

JUNE 2
The Center announces a ban on Palestine solidarity organizing and a moratorium on discussion of Israel/Palestine. The ED refuses to meet with QAIA.

JUNE 8
QAIA holds a sit-in/meeting in the LGBT Center lobby.

JUNE 20
QFOLC and QAIA members demonstrate at the Center Garden Party.

LATE SUMMER & EARLY FALL 2011
QAIA holds sit-in meetings at the Center. QuAIA Toronto members attend in August.

MARCH 3, 2012
QAIA organizes a two-hour occupation of the Center that draws over 200 activists which is the basis of this zine.

SPRING 2012
QAIA participates in the initiative to press for a referendum on a boycott of Israeli goods at the Park Slope Food Co-op, a majority of members who vote against it on March 27.

FEBRUARY 2013
QAIA invites Sarah Schulman to read from her new book, Israel-Palestine and the Queer International, for its IAW 2013 event. Gay City News reports on the Center’s rejection of QAIA’s space request, which provokes outrage, including a petition letter to the Center that gains 1000 signatures.

FEBRUARY 2013
The Center lifts the ban on Siegebusters and QAIA and the moratorium on Palestine solidarity organizing. Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Assembly Member Deborah Glick, Senator Brad Hoylman and Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer issue a statement commending the Center’s decision as well as the new guidelines prohibiting “hate speech”; the openly gay officials also praise Israel and attack the BDS movement as well as pinkwatching.
There is a checkpoint around this center!

Whose center? Our center!

New York City's LGBT Center

Words: Tara Tabass
Pics: Ethan Heitner
Performed at "Occupy the Center," March 2012

Checkpoint around this center!

Checkpoint: There is a ban on people organizing in solidarity with Palestine; a ban on talking about the oppressed conditions of Palestinians living under colonial apartheid and a brutal military occupation for 60 years.

This censorship is the agenda of the elite donors of this center.

Because yet again, the needs of the rich are held over the needs of the people. Because this ban on Palestinian solidarity one year ago was not a decision of the people.
CHECK THIS!
The U.S. GIVES
3 BILLION
OF TAX-
PAYERS'
DOLLARS
A YEAR
TO
ISRAEL!

"ISRAEL HAS
NOTHING
TO DO WITH
THE U.S."
OR "THAT
THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN
CONFLICT HAS NOTHING TO DO
WITH US, THE LGBTQ
PEOPLE OF THIS CENTER"

PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE, THOSE
WHO CLAIM
ARE EATING LIES
FROM THE SAME
POLITICS THAT
MAKES MOUTHS
SPEAK WORDS
LIKE:

"THOSE BLACK
KIDS ON THE PIER
ARE BRINGING DRUGS,
CRIME, AND SEX
WORK TO OUR
WEST VILLAGE."

"GO BEAT,
ARREST, AND
INCARCERATE
THEM!"

SO CHECK US OUT:
WE ARE THE
PEOPLE

DO NOT USE OUR
QUEER BODIES TO
PINK-
WASH YOUR
POLICING
POLITICS OF
DEATH

OUR POLITICS
IS A POLITICS
OF LIFE

STAND TOGETHER
IN SOLIDARITY ACROSS
BORDERS AND BUILD A
POLITICS OF LIFE AND
LOVE FOR ALL PEOPLE

THOUSANDS OF MILES
AWAY IN PALESTINE
FOR A POLITICS OF LIFE

WE WANT A CENTER
THAT ALLOWS
THE LGBTQ
COMMUNITY TO
STAND TOGETHER
AND LOVE FOR ALL PEOPLE

WITH A FEW BLOCKS
AWAY AT THE PEER

THOUSANDS OF MILES
AWAY IN PALESTINE
FOR A POLITICS OF LIFE

WE WANT A CENTER
THAT ALLOWS
THE LGBTQ
COMMUNITY TO
STAND TOGETHER
IN SOLIDARITY ACROSS
BORDERS AND BUILD A
POLITICS OF LIFE AND
LOVE FOR ALL PEOPLE

WITH A FEW BLOCKS
AWAY AT THE PEER
There is a checkpoint around this center! So check this, board of directors of the LGBT center, I’m gonna check you. You are accepting and upholding a policing politics that silences the people you are here to serve. We are queer, we are Palestinian, we are Muslim, we are activists, we are in the occupied territories, we are people of color, we are on the piers. This does not make us the terrorists or criminals of this world. This makes us the policed, militarized, and oppressed people of this world. And we will not be outcast or silenced. Because this center is promoting an elitist politics of exclusion and oppression.

There is a checkpoint around this center against the oppressed Palestinian people!
These same politics ban us from speaking about Israeli crimes in this center, a ban led by a man who I will quote: "I hate Muslims, absolutely, it's a horrible, horrible religion."

"It's a plague. Muslims have not contributed to civilization in any field nothing for century after century, what do they produce?"

"Carpet, that's how they should travel, because that is the only way they travel, without killing people."

The same politics that claim you want Jews to die!

When you are a member of the Park Slope Food Co-op working to boycott Israeli products, these are the same policing politics.

That have undercover surveillance cops go on white-water rafting trips with Muslim students.

That spy on Muslims praying in this city.

Bomb Iran!

The politics that control Israel are the same politics that make up our police state here in NYC.

The elites of our world have bought a colonial & racist politics of policing.

The police can buy control over lives.

They are policing our center, policing our city, policing our nations, they are policing our lives!