



January 16, 2018

Board of Commissioners, San Francisco Unified School District
555 Franklin Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Commissioners:

We write on behalf of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), the oldest and one of the largest pro-Israel organizations in the U.S., after being alerted to the inaccurate and hateful anti-Israel rhetoric that the KALW public radio station – owned and operated by the San Francisco Unified School District – has been unrelentingly promoting on Tangents, its weekly Saturday evening program. Tangents is a program about music. But since at least 2010, at 11:00 p.m. each week, the show features a segment called Gaza Corner. We have reviewed the Gaza Corner Archive on the KALW website, and it is completely irrelevant to music in Gaza or anywhere else. Gaza Corner is nothing more than a weekly poisonous invective against Israel, based on factual distortions and outright lies.

It is shocking and reprehensible that a public radio station – which is supposed to educate, with strict adherence to objectivity and balance – would instead knowingly permit the host of Tangents to use the station as a platform to promote his personal anti-Israel agenda, week after week. The host's bio reflects absolutely no knowledge or expertise about Israel or the Middle East conflict. He has no background or credentials in journalism. (See <http://www.tangents.com/about.html>.) The host is a disc jockey who simply hates Israel.

It is even more shocking and reprehensible that the San Francisco Unified School District would knowingly permit this misuse of public funding and the public trust, when the district's very mission is education. We strongly urge you to put a stop to Gaza Corner and if need be, to Tangents. At a minimum, we strongly urge you to ensure that this program lives up to its obligation to provide fair, balanced and accurate information about Israel.

The problem with Gaza Corner is longstanding and no secret. We understand that for more than three years, KALW has received numerous complaints about Gaza Corner's hostile bias against Israel. Matt Martin, KALW's station manager, reportedly acknowledged that a non-journalist hosting Gaza Corner was problematic and he promised to rectify it. He made that promise two years ago, and to date, has not taken any corrective action. In addition, we understand that the school district received many complaints, but it, too, failed to acknowledge, much less remedy the problem.

This misuse of a public radio station would be deeply troubling news to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), which is a huge funder of KALW. According to the station's

most recently-available audited financial report, the CPB provided funds to KALW in excess of \$193,000.00 in fiscal year 2016. There is ample reason for the CPB to terminate its funding based on KALW's use of the funds in a manner that violates the CPB's goals and objectives, as well as standards under federal law.

The CPB strives to “[f]acilitate the development and distribution of high-quality content, including news and information, that is accurate, fair, balanced, objective, transparent, and produced in a manner that is consistent with the editorial integrity of producers, distributors and stations.” (See <https://www.cpb.org/aboutcpb/goals/goalsandobjectives>.) Under the federal law authorizing the CPB, public broadcasting entities funded by the CPB must adhere strictly to “objectivity and balance in all programs or series of programs of a controversial nature.” See 47 U.S.C. § 396(g)(1)(A).

By broadcasting Gaza Corner, KALW is failing to meet these standards. There has never been anything accurate, fair, balanced or objective about the segment. Rather than educate the community about Israel and the complicated situation in the Middle East, it twists and ignores facts, and foments hatred of the Jewish state.

KALW also relies on the generosity of the community. Present and prospective donors will surely be deeply troubled to learn that with the school district's knowledge and consent, KALW is sacrificing quality programming and its educational mission, and is instead serving as the mouthpiece for an unabashed Israel-hater.

You must put a stop to Gaza Corner; it is completely irrelevant to the music program on which it is featured. If the host of Tangents refuses to comply with this directive, then Tangents should no longer be broadcast either. At the very least, you should require that the Gaza Corner segment be completely revamped to provide an accurate, fair and balanced perspective about Israel. Also, the show must be strictly monitored to ensure compliance with these standards.

We look forward to your prompt response. Thank you.

Very truly yours,



Morton A. Klein
National President



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