



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 22, 2014

Pro-Palestine Activist Attacks Jewish College Student, Calls Him “Kike”

College orientation is supposed to be a period of settling in, getting to know your school and fellow students and, hopefully, fellowship. But Temple University’s “Temple Fest” event — [billed](#) as “your first taste of Temple” — left one Jewish student with a bad taste in his mouth. Writes [Jewish Exponent](#):



Daniel Vessal, an upperclassman member of the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity and a fellow with the pro-Israel organization, Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, allegedly was assaulted during move-in day at Temple University’s main campus in Philadelphia on Wednesday.

Vessal had approached a table manned by members of Students for Justice in Palestine, known as SJP, during Templefest, where students gather information about campus activities and started talking with them, according to reports that were confirmed by Temple’s Hillel [Jewish campus organization] director, Phil Nordlinger.

Ben Shapiro’s Truth Revolt spoke to Vessal at Temple University Hospital, where the student sought treatment after the attack. Vessal stated, [writes](#) the website’s Daniel Mael:

“I go up to them [SJP] and I really just wanted to see what angle they were coming from. I went up to the table and started talking to them. I said, ‘listen, you shouldn’t be protesting Israel — if anything protest the terrorists.’”

“At that point I walked away...after a little back and forth,” Vessal explained. “I came back to the table after a little while and explained that the Palestinians have a right to a state just like anyone else but that SJP should come at the right people. I said, ‘when Hamas stops sending the rockets, that’s when there can be peace. That’s when we can start.’”

Vessal reports that this was met with intense laughter from a girl at the table, while some of her cohorts called him a “baby killer.” Vessal then reminded the group that this wasn’t conducive to “peaceful conversation” — and that’s when the real trouble started. Writes Mael, ““This kid just rocks me in the face as hard as he can. My glasses flew off. After a two-second blur I had no clue what had happened. I couldn’t believe the kid actually hit me,’ said Vessal [,] who added that he needs to obtain a new pair of glasses due to the extensive damage.”

Fellow students Josh Josephs and Alex Winokur witnessed the incident and confirm Vessal’s account of events. They also report that while Vessal was lying on the ground in pain, the pro-Palestine activists called him names such as “Zionist,” “stupid Jew,” and “kike.”



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And what happened next indicated that the SJP members didn't fear consequences, either. As Mael reports, "'When the police came over and were filing the report the kids at the table were screaming 'You Zionist pig, you racist, that's what you get,' Vessal explained. 'If anything, I thought they would be apologetic for someone in their organization doing something like that.'"

But there were still more surprises in store for Vessal. His attacker was not arrested, but merely sent home; moreover, the campus police refused to shut down the SJP table, claiming that sending Vessal's assailant away was sufficient.

And this isn't the first time SJP has caused problems, say many critics. For instance, Lori Lowenthal Marcus at [TheJewishPress.com](#) comments on the organization and Jewish groups' impotence in tackling it and [writes](#), "Students for Justice in Palestine has been responsible for the vast majority of the most heinous anti-Israel acts on U.S. campuses over the past several years, whether at Brooklyn College or Northeastern University, at Florida campuses and at Michigan. But now that the actions of the group have become violent, perhaps what passes for leadership at Jewish campus organizations and campus administrations will take steps to shut down the organization."

As for Vessal, he is considering taking legal action against the group.

Article update: Since this article was posted, we've become aware of the official response to the incident by Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), which acknowledges that an attack took place but disputes almost all other claims made by the victim, Vessal. To begin with, SJP claims that the student who "slapped," not punched, Vessal is not a member of SJP, that no one at the table knew Vessal was Jewish, that SJP is not anti-Semitic, and that no names were called by members of SJP. [Here is SJP's statement](#), in part:

SJP condemns and opposes anti-Semitism in all its insidious forms....

"I spoke with tons of students throughout the day. Several of them pointed out to me that they were Jewish, and they were not pro-Israel, and they were very civil and open-minded and we had productive conversations," Samantha Pinto, an eyewitness and member of SJP explained. "But this guy wanted to start trouble and insult us. He was calling all Palestinians terrorists and calling us stupid...." One of these students was not part of SJP, but a friend to some members of the club. He was standing near the table socializing when Mr. Vessal became involved in a heated conversation with him, even after continuous requests to leave. "I heard him say Israel was not occupying Palestine, but that Palestinians are occupying Gaza. I started laughing at the sheer absurdity because Palestinians are indigenous to Gaza and are also unable to leave because of the inhumane siege Israel has maintained since 2007," Samantha continued. "In response, I heard him say, 'You're sitting here laughing like idiots!' He aggressively moved closer to me as he said this. It was then that B., who is not an SJP member, slapped Vessal. His sunglasses fell to the ground, but he did not."*

Moreover, SJP claims it has Jewish members who support its positions and that it has eyewitnesses who verify its version of the story.



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