

Earlier today, *The McGill Daily* published an article about SSMU, AUS, and SUS leaders being offered free trips to Israel through Hillel McGill and funded by the Maccabee Task Force, an anti-BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) organization. Three of those who accepted are AUS Executives: VP Finance Stefan Suvajac and Arts Representatives Adin Chan and Andrew Chase.

This is not the first time McGill has dealt with controversy surrounding complacency with Israeli occupation, nor is AUS new to this either. Just last year, the summer course POLI 339 in Israel spurred exhausting and difficult debates in this very room which resulted in an unconstitutional and undemocratic use of power by the Executive in favour of the course.

Transparency of the Executive, particularly surrounding BDS, has become a sensitive issue at AUS. This trip will encourage students to oppose BDS and will likely provide them with slanted information in order to bolster this. Considering that our VP Finance (and the VP Finance of SSMU) was targeted illustrates exactly what the nature of this offer was.

While Andrew Chase and Adin Chan have both expressed that they believe this trip will “give a balanced and nuanced view” and that there are “no political expectations on [their] return” this is difficult to believe considering the fraught history of BDS at McGill and within AUS and the stated goals by the organization funding this trip.

For these reasons, we have questions we would like answered publicly and on record by VP Finance Stefan Suvajac and Arts Representatives Adin Chan and Andrew Chase.

- Are you aware of the organization funding this trip and their explicitly anti-BDS goals in promoting visits to Israel and do you think that this presents a problem?
- Some student leaders, when approached, were asked that this offer remain confidential—was the same asked of you?
- If you were not asked for this to remain confidential, why did you not include this offer in your reports to Legislative Council at previous sessions?
- Are you aware of the issues with transparency surrounding McGill’s involvement with Israel and BDS efforts during the controversy surrounding POLI 339 last year at AUS?
- What precedent does this set for student leaders to abuse their position of power to accept offers from particular interest groups for their personal benefit?
- Do you believe, in light of taking this offer, that you are justly representing your Palestinian students and all other student negatively affected by Israeli occupation?
- How can you be expected to act responsibly in the future on behalf of all students under your mandate, beyond the scope of the Israel-Palestine conflict?
- Were any other students in this room offered this trip who feel comfortable speaking up, whether they accepted or not?

Respectfully,

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