Open Letter: Campaign at Tufts University on Banning Police Exchanges With Israel

by Tufts Alumni and Criminal Justice Officials
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Dear President Monaco,

We are a coalition of Tufts University alumni, donors, and senior law enforcement professionals who are writing to express concern about a recent campaign at Tufts to ban police exchanges with Israel.

The so-called "Deadly Exchange" campaign against police cooperation between the United States and Israel has been promoted by anti-Israel groups nationwide since 2017 as part of a broader push to erode public support for the Jewish state. It depicts police exchanges, and their sponsors in the American Jewish community, as driving violence against minorities in America, rather than sharing lessons that save and improve lives.

Efforts to link Israel and American Jewish organizations to incidents of police violence in the United States are rooted in readily refutable falsehoods. Now that they have appeared for the first time in the US as a campus referendum — which Jewish leaders at Tufts said "is more about vilifying Israel than addressing police reform" — we would like to set the record straight.

Law enforcement cooperation programs seek to leverage the decades of experience that Israel has tragically accumulated in dealing with mass casualty attacks in order to better protect Americans of all backgrounds. They focus on subjects including the modus operandi of terrorist organizations, community policing, and minimizing casualties in the event of a hostage-taking situation, a mass shooting, or a terrorist incident.

These topics remain unfortunately relevant for schools and universities. As Kevin Maguire, the former Tufts police chief who participated in an exchange program in Israel in 2017, said last month, "Terror attacks in cities throughout the US, including Boston, and on college campuses, such as Ohio State University and some others have demonstrated the need for local and university police departments to prepare for potential terror attacks and to know how to prevent and respond to them."

Our lead signatory, who designed the preeminent US-Israel police exchange program run by the [Jewish Institute for National Security of America](#) (JINSA), can likewise directly attest that it does not teach racial profiling, protest suppression, arrest mechanics, or promote the targeting of vulnerable groups. Our law enforcement signatories can speak to the importance of the lessons that they learned during the program, and how their participation has made their communities safer.

The academy is a place to explore new and provocative ideas, and we strongly respect the right of students and faculty to freely debate, including about policing in America and police reform. Yet we also believe that when open falsehoods are being widely disseminated on campus, administrators can play an important and positive role by rejecting misinformation and acknowledging the benefits of programs that aim to improve public safety.

We applaud the university for [committing not to act against the exchanges](#), and we urge administrators to do even more, and stand firm as the truth is challenged.

Sincerely,

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