

Ovt 030

On Calling for a Boycott of All Hewlett-Packard Products—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

The Presbytery of New Brunswick overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Call for the boycott of all products manufactured and sold by Hewlett-Packard until the company ceases to profit from all non-peaceful pursuits in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the violation of Palestinian human rights.

a. Direct the Stated Clerk to:

b. Communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and strongly encourage these groups and organizations to endorse this boycott, calling upon all Presbyterians to be led by their conscience in the face of human rights violations, ongoing oppression and injustice.

c. Inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, encouraging them to do the same.

Rationale:

The History of Hewlett-Packard (HP)

HP began in 1938 as the creation of good friends, Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard. In that year they invented their first product: Oscillators for Walt Disney (model 200B). By 1942 the company became a health insurance pioneer. After entering the microwave field in 1943, HP incorporated in 1947, went public in 1957 and global in 1959. During this time the company developed Fast Frequency Counters and the first Oscilloscopes. In 1962 it made the Fortune 500 list and would reach the top of that list in 1984. In the 1970's HP took the lead in laser technology and became a leader in business computing. In the 1980's the company introduced the Touchscreen Personal Computer, the LaserJet printer, and the DeskJet printer. By 1993 ten million LaserJet printers had been sold throughout the world and the company introduced the Omnibook 300 laptop computer. The very first commercial all-in-one device went to market in 1994. By 2005 HP was called "the most trusted" industry leader. From 2005-2011, Hewlett Packard acquired these companies: Mercury Interactive Corporation, EDS, Palm Inc. and ArcSight. (<http://www8.hp.com/us/en/hp-information/about-hp/history/history.html>)

ON THE ONE HAND – HP'S POLICY STATEMENTS

HP Global Citizenship Statement

"At HP, we embrace our role as a global citizen. As one of the world's largest information technologies companies, what we do and how we do it matters. That's why we use global citizenship to help shape and advance our business strategy... We promote responsible practices in our supply chain, respect human rights, foster ethical behavior, and strive for a workplace where all of our employees can flourish..."

(<http://www8.hp.com/us/en/hp-information/global-citizenship/index.html>)

HP Statement on Corporate Ethics

"We use our size and influence to promote respect for human rights in all our business dealings. We do this by working with organizations such as the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI) and BSR, which promote awareness of the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights."

(<http://www8.hp.com/us/en/hp-information/global-citizenship/governance/ethics.html>) and see also those guiding principles as set forth in the document found at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf)

ON THE OTHER HAND – FACTS ON THE GROUND

HP Business Practices in Regard to Palestine

"The company sells hardware to the Israeli Navy, and as a contractor manages all Information Technology (IT) including its operational communications, logistics, and planning including the ongoing naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. This blockade has included interdicting humanitarian supplies by attacking or turning back international vessels carrying the supplies, and attacks on Palestinian fisherman.

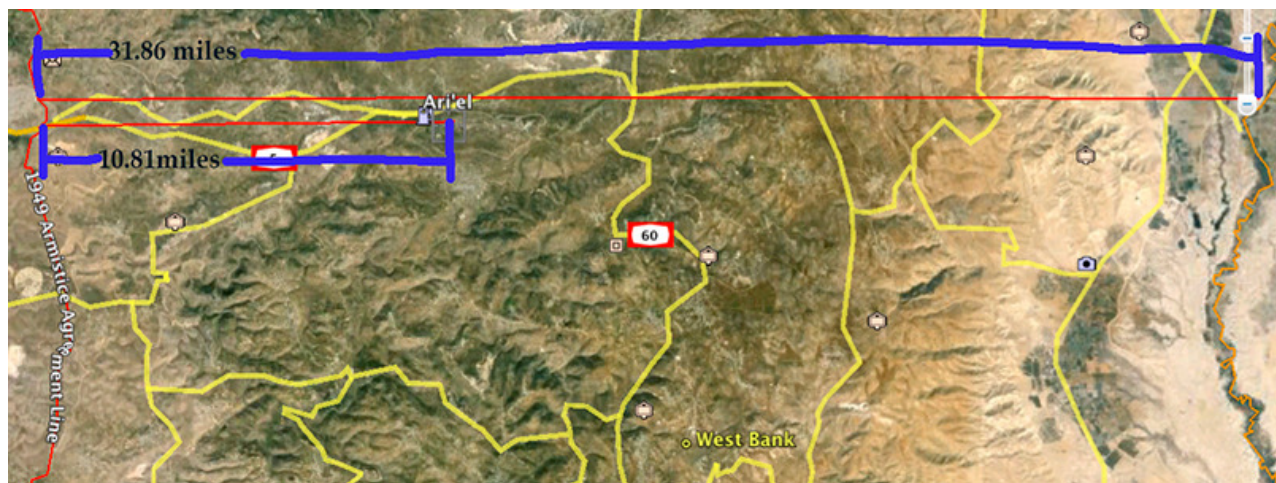
The company also is involved through its ownership of Electronic Data Systems (EDS) in providing electronic biometric identification scanning equipment to monitor only Palestinians at several checkpoints inside the West Bank, including as part of the separate road system, restricting Palestinian movement. At these checkpoints, the 2.4 million West Bank Palestinians are required to submit to lengthy waits as well as the mandatory biometric scanning, while Israelis and other passport holders transit without scanning or comparable delays.

Hewlett-Packard also has extensive involvement with the Israeli army. Soldiers in the IDF are issued a Tadiran Communications ruggedized personal digital assistant (RPDA) based on the Hewlett-Packard IPAQ (handhelds and smart phones) as part of the Israel's Anog soldier modernization program. This equipment is used to enforce the Occupation. In July 2009, Hewlett-Packard won a contract for the installation of software products in a three-year IDF virtualization tender worth an estimated \$15 million, with a two-year option to extend.

Hewlett-Packard also has business relationships with the illegal settlements in the West Bank. A subsidiary, HP Invent, outsources Information Technology services to Matrix and to its subsidiary Talpiot, which has its main outsourcing center in the illegal West Bank settlement of Modi'in Illit. By using Talpiot's services, clients of the company are profiting from the company's relationship with an illegal settlement and are helping solidify the Occupation.

In addition, Hewlett-Packard worked with the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel in the occupied West Bank to develop specialized solutions for government data storage, and used this project in marketing publicity. Despite the fact that Ariel is deep in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the company's published description of this work claims that Ariel is within Israel, including the use of a map making no reference to the Palestine as a separate occupied territory."

This information comes from the report of the PC(USA) Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) to the 220th General Assembly (Pittsburgh, 2012) and can be found at: <http://www.pc-biz.org/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=4021>.



Captured from Google Earth, information added in Photoshop. According to Google Earth, Ari'el is about 10.31 miles from the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line). The distance across the Occupied Palestinian Territories at this point is about 31.86 miles, Ari'el is thus more than a third of the way into the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Present General Assembly Policy on Boycott regarding Palestine

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following action by a 457-180-3 vote:

- 1. Call upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.**
- 2. Call for the boycott of all Israeli products coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including AHAVA Dead Sea Laboratories Beauty Products and all date products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Co-operative Ltd., often marked by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River.**

3. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and strongly encourage these groups and organizations to endorse the boycott until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk to inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, and call upon them to join the boycott of these companies.

<http://www.pc-biz.org/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3775>

In approving this boycott of all Israeli settlement goods, it was the intent of the 220th General Assembly to send a clear message that it will not tolerate the profiting of companies through military occupation, ethnic cleansing, the illegal appropriation of land and natural resources, and policies promoting displacement and disenfranchisement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Along with the United Methodist Church, which took the same action in 2012, Presbyterians have become leaders in what has become an international interfaith boycott movement. Through its Israel Palestine Mission Network, for instance, the PC(USA) has been a significant player in the U.S. Campaign to End the Occupation Interfaith Coalition's boycott of Sodastream, which is a product manufactured by an Israeli company in the illegal settlement of Ma'ale Adumim outside of Bethlehem. This boycott effort is in full accordance with the actions of the 220th General Assembly.

This is only part of the equation, however. At the same time that we are telling Israeli companies that they must not profit from the occupation of Palestine, we are still supporting American corporations that are doing the same through the sale and service of products in support of the occupation of Palestine by the Israeli government and military. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has longstanding policy and practice in which it does not invest in corporations that profit from non-peaceful pursuits, but also has a strong history of calling upon the consciences of individual Presbyterians to not purchase products from companies that through their business practices actively engage in the violation of human rights in our nation and the world. Through boycott Presbyterians have been an important part of the successful fight against apartheid in South Africa, ending the sales of Nestles infant formula to impoverished mothers in developing nations that caused infant affliction and death, and insuring the human rights of exploited farm workers in Immokalee, Florida through the Taco Bell boycott, to name only a few.

The time for Presbyterians to stand up against a U.S. company that is seriously violating the rights of all Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is now upon us. As seen on its own website, HP takes pride in making statements about its global citizenry and corporate ethics in our nation and in the world. As a Church of Jesus Christ, seeking to be a moral agent in, and prophetic voice to a fallen creation, it is our great responsibility to call upon HP to make good on its own moral and ethical claims. HP has been a great American company since 1938 and we can be proud of its innovation throughout the decades. Hardly any of us are able to do business, personal or otherwise, without exposure to and usage of HP products, which makes this particular boycott so challenging. We acknowledge that this is a hard decision to make because large numbers of us like their products and even have them in our homes, including the author of this overture. In that way, HP has been like a corporate friend to American businesses and households for a long time. It is now time, however, to tell our corporate friend that it is violating human rights in terrible ways and that we can no longer purchase its products until such time that it ceases to profit from this violation through an occupation that is causing and continuing the hardship, suffering and pain, and even death of innocent Palestinians.