

LGBTQ Community Comes Out Against Israeli Apartheid in Pride Parades

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—June 27, 2009

Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) will be marching in this year's Toronto Pride parade and dyke march.

In recent articles in the Jewish Tribune, the Canadian Jewish News, the Toronto Sun and the National Post, QuAIA has been criticized by pro-Israel lobby groups B'nai Brith Canada and the Canadian Jewish Congress for supporting Palestinian resistance against Israeli apartheid. El-Farouk Khaki, Pride Grand Marshal, has been singled out for attack as a gay Muslim.

QuAIA has not backed down, and neither has Pride.

The group will be joined by members of the Simon Nkodi Anti-Apartheid Committee (SNAAC), a gay activist group that campaigned against South African apartheid in the 1980s.

"We're coming out against apartheid once again because it was wrong then and it's wrong now," said Tim McCaskell, one of the members who founded SNAAC in 1986. "We can't stop and we won't stop fighting apartheid," he added, echoing the theme of this year's Pride parade.

Queers Against Israeli Apartheid is a diverse group of LGBTQ community members who are opposed to the ongoing occupation of Palestine and Israel's apartheid policies that treat people differently based on race.

"Our members come from all walks of life," said Chelsey Lichtman, a Jewish member of QuAIA. "We are made up of people of all different backgrounds working together out of concern for what's happening to Palestinians."

The group formed in response to the use of gay rights as a propaganda tool to build political support within the LGBTQ community for the Israeli government's actions. This has enraged many activists who say that gay rights should never be used as justification for other human rights abuses.

-30-

For more information, email quaia.toronto@gmail.com

website: <http://queersagainstapartheid.org>

twitter: <http://twitter.com/quaiaTO>