

## UCLA JEWISH STUDENT LEADER'S ASK TO NON-CAMPUS JEWS

On Tuesday evening, when we heard explosions at the UCLA encampment, Hillel student leaders together ran to campus. Tensions at UCLA have never been higher, and the encampment has attracted tremendous off-campus attention from media and activists. There's a palpable feeling that we are just one unfortunate incident away from tragedy.

The Jewish community is our entire world. Our collective years of serving on Hillel board, attending pro-Israel conferences, and years of Hebrew school have given us a strong dedication to Jewish advocacy. But we ran to campus to encourage restraint. We needed to warn the fringe members of the off-campus Jewish community that storming the peaceful encampment was endangering the Jewish students they were ostensibly attempting to protect.

Over the course of the night, we watched a petty fight over a plywood barricade draw shocking amounts of blood from protesters' heads. Fireworks were shot into the crowded encampment, burning and traumatizing students. Bird scooters, heavy speakers, traffic cones, and water bottles flew back and forth over the plywood wall. Pepper spray, bear spray, and tear gas were sprayed. Innocent writers for the Daily Bruin newspaper got chased and beaten to the ground by an angry mob of thirty Jewish men.

The truth is that a largely peaceful, pro-Palestinian encampment was attacked by an angry, violent mob comprised of fringe members of the off-campus Jewish community last night. They do not represent the estimated 3,000 Jewish Bruins at UCLA, yet those are precisely the people who will have to live with the reverberations of their aggressive actions.

**We can not have a clearer ask for the off-campus Jewish community: stay off our campus. Do not fund any actions on campus. Do not protest on campus. Your actions are harming Jewish students.**

We are not excusing the horrifying antisemitism exhibited by protestors, nor are we excusing the Chancellor's, administration's, and LAPD's inaction. We are simply a Jewish, Zionist-identifying student who live on campus and don't get to leave when the protest is over. It is our friends on the other side of the barricade--who in this moment, we disagree with but respect as fellow students--that were physically hurt.

What non-campus community members can do right now is support Jewish students by enriching our Jewish lives. The most meaningful moments during this encampment were not rallies, but a Kabbalat Shabbat service made possible by financial investments to Hillel. On Saturday, a woman dropped off several bags of fresh fruit to the Hillel building, reminding me that we hadn't eaten a fruit or vegetable since the encampment began. It is these moments where we feel the love and support of my mishpacha.

There is a screen placed by community members at UCLA playing the horrors of October 7th on repeat--and we can't learn over the constant noise of Jews being slaughtered. The wider community is prioritizing their own idea of activism over what Jewish students want. We want peace and a diplomatic resolution.

**We need our experiences as Jewish students on campus to be prioritized by the community over our shared feelings of anger.** It is our responsibility to recognize how members of the Jewish community escalated the events of last night, and we have to take accountability and change course.

