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Indigo granted injunction against activists through use of copyright law

Territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation (Ottawa, ON) — A Canadian federal court granted Indigo, Canada’s largest bookstore chain, an injunction against a group of activists calling for a national boycott of Indigo over its misuse of profits to fund the HESEG Foundation, a charitable organization that provides financial support to the Israeli military.

The national campaign, called “Indigo Kills Kids,” used social media and a website to provide public education on the direct support of Heather Reisman, the founder, Chair, and CEO of Indigo Books and her partner Gerald Schwartz, for the Israeli military, which UN watchdogs and aid organizations have confirmed are engaging in war crimes against the people of Palestine. Last month, there were at least [50 protests](#) at Indigo [bookstores](#) across Canada.

The two-year injunction, with the possibility of extension, utilizes Canadian copyright laws — customarily used for misappropriation of entertainment branding and similar usage — to force the removal of the Indigo Kills Kids online presence.

Despite the current injunction and the preceding interim injunction, the Indigo Kills Kids campaign continues to educate Canadians with rebranded online channels such as [boycottindigobooks.com](#), Instagram handle [@boycottindigobooks](#), and X/Twitter handle [@NotoIndigo](#).

“This decision is another manifestation of the use of corporate power to silence anti-genocide voices”, says Stephen Ellis of the Legal Centre for Palestine, continuing “This power uses the law which consistently values the profits of those who contribute to genocide and ethnic cleansing over the lives of the Palestinian people. In the face of such power, however, we remain undeterred.”

The misappropriation of Canadian intellectual property laws have been used, in this case, to silence critique of the actions of a company, despite those actions taking place in direct contravention of Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) laws. Although the CRA states that “supporting the armed forces of another country” is not charitable, the HESEG Foundation has maintained support and its official charity status.

Additional context:

Heather Reisman, the founder, Chair, and CEO of Indigo Books, and her partner Gerald Schwartz, have used their substantial share of profits from Indigo Books & Music Inc., to establish the HESEG Foundation, a Canadian charitable organization that provides incentives to foreign nationals (“lone soldiers”) to voluntarily enlist in the Israeli Occupation Forces. HESEG Foundation offers grants and scholarships that covers the recipient’s tuition costs at an academic institution in Israel, as well as their living expenses during study, on the condition that the recipient serves at least one term of active service in the Israeli military. According to Just for Peace Advocates, the foundation typically spends over \$5M annually on grants and scholarships supporting volunteers enlisting in the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF).

According to Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), the HESEG Board of Directors has consisted of several members or veterans of the IOF who have been criticized for major violations of international law under their command.

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