UN Watch Blasts UN Rapporteur Falk After He Demands “Investigation”

Hillel Neuer, UN Watch, June 10, 2013


Mr. Falk, in the first page of your report, you attack my NGO and ask this Council to launch an investigation in order to shut us down. Does your report allege a crime? No, you simply object to our words. We are the only watchdog at the UN, and we report what you say. In reprisal, you now seek to muzzle our voice, to avoid being held accountable. The real issue is whether your work, conducted under the banner of human rights, actually exonerates and exculpates the perpetrators of terrorism.

Exhibit A, which I am holding up, is this book by David Ray Griffin, the bible for those who blame America, instead of Al Qaeda, for the 9/11 attacks. Do you deny that this is your name on the front cover, praising the author’s “fortitude,” “courage,” and “intelligence”? Do you understand why Secretary-General
Ban Ki-moon, appearing in this room in January 2011, delivered an unprecedented condemnation of a UN expert, when he called your remarks, quote: “preposterous, and an affront to the memory of the more than 3,000 people who died in that tragic terrorist attack”?

Exhibit B: “The Wandering Who,” a book condemned as antisemitic even by your own top supporter, Ali Abunimah of the Electronic Intifada. Do you deny that, once again, this is your name on the front cover, endorsing it? Do you understand why the British Foreign Office has officially accused you of racism, on multiple occasions?

Exhibit C: Your article of two months ago, blaming the Boston terrorist attack—which left more than 300 dead and grievously wounded—on, quote “the American global domination project and “Tel Aviv.” Do you deny justifying the attacks as a form, of quote, “resistance”? Do you understand why the Secretary-General announced that he rejected your comments, saying they, quote, “undermine the credibility and the work of the United Nations”? And why this condemnation was echoed by Britain, Canada, the U.S., and many others? When we recently brought all of this to the attention of Human Rights Watch, within 24 hours they removed you from their committee. Finally, according to a cable revealed by Wikileaks, on February 16, 2009, the Palestinian delegate to this council complained to his US counterpart about your support for Hamas, saying that “he had called Falk personally and asked him to step down, something Falk angrily rejected.”

So, Mr. Falk, please feel free to investigate us — and to investigate the UN Secretary-General; Britain; Canada; the U.S.; Human Rights Watch; and the State of Palestine.

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The Canadian Parliament rose [June 12] for a standing ovation in support of UN Watch, as Jason Kenny, Canada's Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, called on the UN to fire Mr. Falk. Watch here.

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): “Mr. Speaker, Richard Falk has once again disgraced himself. Will the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Mr. Falk is once again attacking UN Watch, an NGO led by Canadian Hillel Neuer, and called for it to be investigated. This is McCarthyism in the worse sense of the term. inform the House whether the government agrees with Mr. Falk or not?”

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): “Mr. Speaker, Richard Falk is an embarrassment to the United Nations Human Rights Council. He has praised 9/11 conspiracy theorists repeatedly. He has suggested that the United States provoked terrorist attacks against it. He is now attacking Canadian-led UN Watch. We call on Richard Falk to be fired as a special rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Council. He is a disgrace to that body and the United Nations.”

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We are delighted to have been able to make Sean Wilson, from Regina U., CIJR’s Student of the Year, and to have brought him to Montreal, and to Toronto, to participate in our 25th Anniversary Gala Program.

An Economics-Business major, with a minor in Political Science, Sean single-handedly handled the anti-Israel “Israeli Apartheid Week” forces at Regina a Campus defeat, the first across Canada.

Sean, a product of Harvest City Christian College and City Christian High School in Regina, was put off by the aggressive, anti-Israel IAW propaganda. Having sought, initially, unsuccessfully to block
Student Council pro-Palestinian motions, determined to succeed, he returned enthused about Israel and the Jewish state after a CIJA Young Leaders’ Israel visit program.

Sean again took on the anti-Israel, pro-Palestinian Student Union “BDS” (“Boycott, Disinvest, Sanction [Israel]”) forces at Regina, and this time — persistently organizing the student body—he succeeded, by a large margin, 150-70, in defeating them, in a Student Council vote refusing to authorize IAW’s presence, and any BDS measures, on campus.

It is crucial to note that what Sean Wilson achieved was the first such victory for Israel on a Canadian campus, one which must be studied and made known in order to encourage similar movements on other campuses.

As Sean observes, although he was threatened by disgruntled IAWers, “I will not be quiet about speaking up on what I believe is right. I was once told to ‘play it safe’ unless ‘I find a hill I am willing to die on’. Well, democratic Jewish Israel is one ‘hill’ I am always ready to defend.”

The phrase echoes JFK’s famous 1961 Boston State House invocation of Jerusalem as “the city upon a hill”, that in defense of liberty “the eyes of all people are upon us”. The eyes of the Jewish People are, insofar as the well-being of our students, Jewish and non-Jewish, on campus is concerned, are indeed upon us—and Sean Wilson’s shining example is leading the way.

(Prof. Krantz, Director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, is Editor of the Isranet Daily Briefing).

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CANADA AND ISRAEL — BEST FRIENDS FOREVER?

Raphael Ahren

Times of Israel, May 19, 2013

On November 28, 2012, one day before the United Nations General Assembly voted to upgrade Palestine to a nonmember state, a few Palestinian protesters gathered in front of the Canadian representative offices in Ramallah. They were holding posters saying “Shame on You, Canada,” and other slogans accusing the country of being a “subcontractor of apartheid.” Many demonstrators also held up banners showing a photo of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, superimposed with a face of a dog, next to the slogan “This dog doesn’t hunt.”

Of course that didn’t change Ottawa’s determination: Canada voted against the Palestinian statehood bid, one of only nine countries to do so (138 nations voted in favor and 41 abstained.) Canada has always been a friend of the Jewish state, but in recent years — especially since the Harper government came to power in 2006 — Ottawa has redefined what it means to be staunchly pro-Israel. Indeed, in the Middle East conflict, no other nation, not even the United States, has been so unstintingly supportive of the policies of Israel’s government as the Great White North.

The UN vote was just one of many examples when Canada stood up for Israel, and against much of the world consensus. Just this Thursday, Harper rebuked the world for its stance on what he called the “one stable, democratic” country in the Middle East. “There’s nothing more short sighted in Western capitals in our time than the softening of support we’ve seen for Israel around the globe,” he said during a visit in New York.

Which begs the question: why? What is in it for Canada?

It has been argued, not unconvincingly, that the world’s second-largest country’s determined support for the world’s 153rd-largest country has cost Ottawa dearly in terms of influence on the international stage. Yet the support doesn’t falter. Could it be that Canada’s vast oil and gas reserves make it less dependent on resources from the Arab world, allowing the government to do what it pleases, as opposed to, say, oil-devoid European countries?

Or, perhaps even more important, would this uncompromising support for Israel disappear were Harper’s Conservative Party to lose power, as polls indicate it could in 2015? Canadian officials like to explain their government’s diehard friendship to Israel by pointing out that the two countries share many common
values. “I would characterize the position as one of moral clarity,” Canadian Minister of Natural Resources Joe Oliver told The Times of Israel earlier this month in Jerusalem. “If there’s a conflict between a democratic ally and terrorist groups that want to destroy it, we don’t see grays. The moral relativism that is sometimes a big factor is not what guides us. We think it’s important for countries to walk the walk as well as talking the talk.”

But other Western countries also don’t love terrorism but still criticize Israel, for example over settlement expansions. “We have said that unilateral action on either side isn’t particularly helpful,” the minister responded, emphasizing that Canada doesn’t support the settlements. “I don’t know what else to say in this regard. There’s willingness on our part to demonstrate moral leadership.”

Oliver then quickly added that he doesn’t mean to say Canada is more moral than other countries. But, he said, “when you confront a situation like one sees at the United Nations constantly, where Israel is singled out for special criticism to the exclusion of massive abuses in all parts of the world… it’s very obvious you’re dealing with double standards. And when the victim is portrayed as the perpetrator and the perpetrator as the victim, this is not something we want to be associated with.”

Canada’s support for Israel — and opposition to Israel’s enemies — doesn’t only play out at the General Assembly. In 2008, Canada was the first country to boycott the Durban Review Conference against racism because it anticipated, correctly, that the conference would turn into an anti-Israel hate fest. In September 2012, Canada severed diplomatic relations with Iran. Foreign Minister John Baird explained the move, by saying the regime in Tehran, among other things, “routinely threatens the existence of Israel.” When Jerusalem punished the Palestinians for the statehood bid by announcing to build homes in the controversial E1 corridor east of Jerusalem, the whole world forcefully condemned the plans. Except the Canadians: the government merely noted that such steps aren’t “helpful.”

Last month, however, marked a high point in Canada’s pro-Israel (and ostensibly anti-Palestinian) moves, when Foreign Minister John Baird visited Israel’s justice minister, Tzipi Livni, in her East Jerusalem office. Since the international community doesn’t accept Israel’s annexation of the eastern part of the city, foreign diplomats usually refuse to meet Israeli officials there lest it be interpreted as a tacit recognition of Israeli sovereignty.

“Either he’s ignorant of east Jerusalem being occupied territory, which is unforgivable in a foreign minister, or it’s a deliberate attempt to change the international consensus,” fumed Hanan Ashrawi, a spokesperson for the Palestine Liberation Organization. Baird tried to play down the issue, saying that where he “had coffee with Tzipi Livni is, I think, irrelevant [and] doesn’t signal a change in Canadian foreign policy.” Until relatively recently, Ottawa’s unequivocal support for Israel did not seem to have damaged its ties to the Arab world. But this is changing.

In 2010, Canada lost its bid to gain one of the non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council for the first time since 1945. Many observers, including Harper himself, linked the defeat in part to Ottawa’s support for Israel. Earlier this month, some Arab nations tried to push for the relocation of the UN-affiliated International Civil Aviation Organization, from Montreal, where it has been headquartered since 1947, to Qatar. This move should be seen as the “combined efforts to strike back at Canada for its stand on Palestinian issues,” the country’s Globe and Mail newspaper wrote. And Baird’s East Jerusalem meeting broke the camel’s back, claimed Michael Bell, a former Canadian ambassador to Israel and the Palestinian territories….

…Canadian politicians from both sides of the aisle continue to refute the notion that support for Israel is costing the country dearly on the international stage. “The argument is made that we could have more influence in the Middle East if we got on the Security Council. Is the recommendation that we should have been anti-Israeli in order to get on the Security Council so we could be pro-Israeli?” Oliver, the natural resources minister, said laughingly. “We’re willing to make the sacrifices necessary to stand up for what
we believe. Sometimes there’s a price to pay. Does it reduce our influence in the world or does it increase it? That’s something one can debate.”

Personally, Oliver actually believes that Canada’s global influence “has been enhanced” by the government’s principled stance. So far, he said, no Arab country has refused to do business with his government because of Israel. “They’re selling their oil to people who want to buy it,” he said. Canada’s vast reserves of natural resources, some analysts believe, allow the government to irritate the Arabs because it doesn’t depend on their oil. “Canada has its own oil and so it doesn’t really need oil from Arabia,” said Israeli-Canadian journalist David Sheen. “Even without Canada on the Security Council, Canadian mining companies aren’t having any problems getting what they want. So Canada hasn’t really had to pay any price for its Israel policy.”

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IN CANADA, TEACHING ZIONISM, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

*Alexandra Markus*

*Israel Campus Beat*, February 11, 2013

Five years ago, Concordia University professor Frederick Krantz noticed a lack of preparedness among Jewish students when faced with the growing anti-Zionist fervor he witnessed on his campus. “Zionism was becoming a negative term and we at the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research (CIJR) wanted to do something about it,” he said, “so we started the Student Israel Advocacy Program (SIAP), a year-long seminar with college faculty for the public, to give them facts and data about Jewish and Zionist history, the Arab-Israel conflict and the rise in propaganda.”

Krantz, a professor of liberal arts and humanities who completed his PhD at Yeshiva University on the history of anti-Semitism, is the director of CIJR, a 25-year-old organization that is connected with the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. The SIAP is one of its many outreach projects.

“Frequently, Jewish students, even those who went to Jewish schools, don’t know much history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, so when they are confronted with highly propagandistic Arab students, professors and speakers, they are not prepared,” Krantz noted. SIAP aims to change that by building upon participants’ knowledge of Jewish and Middle East history, their rhetorical skills and their ability to debate and organize on campus, through seminars and workshops. The program stresses the importance of mutual support among Israel supporters.

“Our overarching goal is to provide students with the truth about the history of the conflict, facts that allow them to dispute the assertions which are made on campus,” Krantz said, adding, “we try to not only teach these skills, but provide participants with the psychological confidence to put them to good use.”

Faculty from three of Montreal’s four universities work together to lead seven workshops each year. Enrolment in the program largely consists of college and university students, but a small contingent of older participants also enrols each year. Generally, 15-20 people complete the program annually. Krantz estimated that approximately 40% of program participants are non-Jewish: “Some of these non-Jewish kids become the most sincerely committed Zionists in the groups we have educated over the years, which has been very satisfying for us,” he said.

Laura Ariza Pena Corea, 24, who studies public policy at Concordia University and is not Jewish, completed the program two years ago. She hails from Colombia, a predominantly Catholic country with a small Jewish population. “When I came here, I made some Jewish friends and expressed an interest in learning more about the history and culture, so I was referred to the program,” she explained.

Krantz emphasized that the program aims to impart facts rather than opinions, giving participants enough background and history to make informed decisions as to their views on issues related to the conflict. Ariza agreed, saying, “I’m more informed, so when I hear people talk about it, I know the two sides of the coin.”
Several participants have gone on to be successful pro-Israel advocates. Hillel Neuer, who heads UN Watch in Geneva, is an alumnus. The program’s remarkable success has pushed it to think bigger. “We’re being imitated now,” Krantz said with satisfaction. “People want to do something similar in Toronto at York University and in Winnipeg at the University of Manitoba.”

In the meantime, graduates of the program continue to make positive change in their communities, armed with a new determination to combat ignorance. “A lot of people are brainwashed for such a long time,” Ariza said. “They don’t really know the story…. This program exposed me to a whole new perspective.”

(Please Note: Professor Krantz obtained his Ph.D. from Cornell University and did his post-graduate work at Yeshiva University – Ed.)

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THE FIRST ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

From: CIJR <cijr@isranet.org>
Date: Friday, October 06, 2000 3:45 PM
Subject: ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

**ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING**
A service of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research (CIJR)

**ARAFAT’S WAR:** by Charles Krauthammer, Published in The Washington Post, October 6, 2000

Fighting has broken out in the Middle East, we read. This use of passive phrasing, almost universal in media reports on the violence in Israel, is a way of deliberately expressing agnosticism about the cause of the fighting. It is a scandal. It is akin to writing that on Sept. 1, 1939, war "broke out" on the German–Polish frontier. . . .The plain fact is that Yasser Arafat . . . has done what he has always done: resort to violence to regain the initiative and, most important, mint new underage martyrs--on world television--to regain the international sympathy he had forfeited by turning down peace at Camp David.

His pretext was that the Sept. 28 visit to the Temple Mount by Israel's leader of the opposition so offended Islam that the faithful erupted in violence. The audacity of this claim is astonishing. Yes, the Temple Mount is the third-holiest place in Islam. But it happens to be the single most holy place for Jews. . . .

The Palestinians are less frustrated than emboldened. . . . Emboldened by an American administration so craven that it refuses to condemn Arafat for cynically starting this war. . . . It is not spontaneous. And it is not without direction. Arafat knows what he wants, and he is prepared to sacrifice as many of his own people as it takes to get it. Preferably on television.