

## Is it Liberalism or Normalization?

The Al Shorouq newspaper, in its last two issues, carried a letter from Jack Chivo (an extreme Zionist supremacist), an advertisement for an event for the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), a full report in the second issue about this same event and then publicized another event for the so-called secular "Peretz Center". With this pretense at objectivity, Al Shorouq has regrettably fallen into the trap of endorsing what the Zionists say, what they do and what they promote. In effect, Al Shorouq has simply given the Zionists yet another platform to spout their lies against the Palestinian and Arab people.

Mr. Jack Chivo always writes to the local Zionist paper "the Jewish Western Bulletin" (JWB) and protests any reporting that even mildly attempts to speak about peace, justice and equality for the Palestinians. For more info on this right-wing extremist, do a [search](#) for his letters.

Just a month before the Al Shorouq published his letter, Jack Chivo wrote another letter to the JWB on February 28, 2003 attacking the Canadian writer Deborah Campbell and her book. He denounced her because I had some remarks on the cover of her book, which was an objective eye-witness account of what she saw in Israel-Palestine - by the way, some of her observations were not very flattering to the Palestinians either. He wrote - "there are some laudatory remarks from Hanna Kawas, the chair of the Canada-Palestine Support Network, known to the readers of the Bulletin as the organizer of the anti-Israel propaganda event at Langara College a few weeks ago and numerous other similar events." Also - "No wonder that Mr. Kawas writes that Ms. Campbell is 'showing courage and morality as she unravels distortions and manufactured images. She stands on the side of humanity.' As a reward, the Web site run by Mr. Kawas at CanPalNet prominently displays Ms. Campbell's book on its home page."

I have never seen so many inaccuracies in two paragraphs and I would like to set the record straight:

1. I am not the chair of Canada-Palestine Support Network.
2. I do not run the CanPalNet Web site.
3. I was not the "organizer of the...event at Langara College".
4. We do not display Ms. Campbell's book on our home page.

The following are the facts:

1. I am the chair of the Canada Palestine Association (CPA) as stated on the cover of the aforementioned book by Deborah Campbell, "This Heated Place".
2. CPA has its own Web site and I will make sure to ask our web master to display Ms. Campbell's book on our web site, since the book irks Mr. Chivo so much.
3. When he wrote his letter, I was not even a member of CanPalNet.
4. It is true that as members of CPA and with other support groups, we organized "numerous other similar events."

For Al Shorouq to give a platform to such a racist supremacist who is full of hate for the Palestinians is outrageous.

The Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) has never cared about freedom of speech, telling the truth or the suffering of Palestinian Christians or Moslems. For that matter, they have never cared for the lives and well being of Jews, unless these Jews served the Zionist project.

When we started the VOICE OF PALESTINE (VOP) on Coop Radio 102.7 FM, in September 1987, the Zionists in Vancouver and Canada, led by the CJC, tried to muffle this voice. These Zionists were "outraged" that the radio station would allow us on the air, they accused us of being anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic and they complained to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications

Commission (CRTC) that Co-op Radio was "unbalanced" and demanded that the station provide "balance" to the VOP. They worked tirelessly for many months, even years, to try and silence the show and the station, just for attempting to tell the Canadian listeners the real facts about the struggle of the Palestinian people.

On September 20, 1987, the Vancouver Province reported:

" 'The Voice of Palestine' hit the airwaves on Co-operative Radio three weeks ago attacking 'Israeli aggression.' And the 25,000-strong Canadian Jewish Congress for the Pacific wants it MUFFLED. (my emphasis-hk). 'People in the Jewish community who listen are completely outraged,' charged Erwin Nest, CJC executive director. ' It's not just anti-Israel and anti-Zionist, but anti-Jewish'".

If Co-op Radio were a regular commercial station and not a community based cooperative, which depends on its membership for financing rather than businesses, we are sure that the VOP would have been off the air in the first few months.

And more recently, a leading member of the CJC slandered Palestinians and Arabs in a public meeting at the Unitarian Church, in which the topic of their event was how Palestinians teach their kids to "hate" Jews.

According to the report about this meeting carried in the JWB, July 5, 2002:

" (Michael) Elterman spurred a tirade of outrage from some members of the audience when he said that Palestinian Arabs do not share the sanctity of life that the Jewish religion teaches.

'This is hate,' yelled one man, leaving the premises as two police officers stood by.

'This is libelous to the Palestinians,' shouted another."

Accordingly, to give any legitimacy to what the CJC is doing is ludicrous. We have been struggling in the Palestinian support movement to isolate Israel and its supporters (in the Canadian government and media and the Jewish community) both politically and economically. Al Shorouq, which promotes the Arab causes, should be our instrument in this struggle and not the reverse.

The people who support Israel should realize that they are responsible for every atrocity, human rights violation and acts of dispossession that were carried out against the Palestinian people. In this context, I refused an invitation recently from the Canadian Jewish Outlook (a progressive paper that promotes peace, justice and equality between the two peoples) to speak at an event because they decided to hold it at the "Peretz Center for Secular Jewish Culture". This center had endorsed the Zionist campaign "We Stand With Israel, Now and Forever" which directly supported the Israeli settlements, occupation, oppression and war crimes against the Palestinians.

When we (I am personally speaking now as a person from Christian background) fought against South African Apartheid, we did not care that the white minority in South Africa were "Christians". When we opposed the war against Iraq we did not care that one of the main forces behind this war has been the fundamentalist "Christians" in North America. Then why should any Jew with conscience support the war crimes committed in her/his name against the Palestinian people? Why would anyone keep silent against such unspeakable atrocities against a whole civilian population? Nobody would tolerate the racist hatred of white supremacists just because they claim to be "Christian", so why should anyone tolerate the racist laws in the Israeli Apartheid system just because they claim to be "Jews"?

In giving a platform to people that support the Israeli Apartheid system in any shape or form, Al Shorouq does not help to solidify the front against this Apartheid. By confusing the issues and not having a clear policy on the basic principles, Al Shorouq does not help to widen the base (especially the

Jewish base which is growing steadily) against this brutal system that is supported by the most powerful governments on earth, including the Canadian government.

So what is Al Shorouq trying to promote - liberalism or normalization?