

From: Pepys, Mark [mailto:m.pepys@ucl.ac.uk]
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 07:15
To: 58 RECIPIENTS. NAMES AND EMAIL ADDRESSES REMOVED
Cc: NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS REMOVED
Subject: Complaint to Reed Elsevier
Importance: High

Dear Colleagues

The Lancet under the editorship of Richard Horton has published, for more than the past 10 years, many disgracefully dishonest and unacceptable articles about Israel. Horton has made no secret of the fact that these pieces express his own very strongly held personal views which he has published elsewhere in detail.

Last July, at the height of the Gaza war, The Lancet published a piece by Manduca and others which was at an unprecedentedly low level. It combines outright lies and slanted propaganda viciously attacking Israel with blood libels echoing those used for a thousand years to create anti-Semitic pogroms. It completely omitted the Hamas war crimes which initiated and sustained the conflict. There was no historical or political background. Crucially there was no mention of any conflict of interest among the authors despite the fact that Manduca and all the co-authors have long participated enthusiastically in not just anti-Israel but frankly Jew hating activities. All these individuals are close colleagues and collaborators of Horton.

Many of us have been trying as hard as we can since the Manduca publication to get it retracted, to get an apology for it and to convince Elsevier, the owners of The Lancet to both sanction Horton and to prevent any repetition of such shameful and unacceptable behaviour. So far there has been no satisfactory response. Indeed Horton continues to stand by the Manduca piece and refuses to accept that it is not factual and correct.

The goal of the attached protest to Elsevier document is to get the Manduca piece retracted. I hope that all of you will sign it.

Meanwhile colleagues at the Rambam Hospital have, as you know, invited Horton to Israel and shown him the reality of Israeli medicine, as opposed to the vicious anti-Semitic fantasy he has promoted. They have engaged in long discussions with him. Despite his refusal to either retract or apologise for his publications some colleagues are apparently convinced that Horton has reformed. Others, including Professor Peretz Lavie, the President of the Technion, who met with him for one and a half hours, were unconvinced by Horton's presumed change of heart.

My view is that the Manduca piece was written by dedicated Jew haters, though some choose to mask this by being overtly passionate only about hating Israel. But they all agree that a Zionist/Jewish lobby or power group controls the world and its destiny and must be brought down. The Manduca piece would have made Goebbels proud and Streicher would have published it in Der Stürmer as happily as Horton published it in The Lancet.

If Horton has reformed, the single simple thing he must do is to retract it and apologise for its publication. He published it on his own personal authority, with no objective independent peer review, no checking of facts and no compliance with any of the essential criteria for publication in a supposedly reputable medical or scientific journal.

He can equally easily retract it and apologise for it, on his own personal authority. He has no need to seek permission or approval or review by anyone else anywhere.

He has now been to Israel and seen Israeli medicine at first hand. He can, therefore, honestly acknowledge the falseness of the hideously misguided and totally inexcusable diatribes that he and other have written and published. He could also look at some facts for a change, such as in the attached scholarly and professional piece by David Stone, rather than promoting Hamas propaganda.

If he still refuses to do this, how can anyone believe that he has reformed? How can the vile anti-Semitic Manduca tract be tolerated and allowed to remain in the public domain by any honest objective person who has been shown what Horton has seen?

Of course, anybody who was not a committed anti-Semite would firstly not have published Manduca, and secondly would have retracted instantly when her long track record of blatant anti-Semitism were exposed. In Horton's case he already knew and liked her and her co-authors well, fully aware of all their vicious anti-Israel and frank, overtly anti-Semitic backgrounds. And we are supposed to believe he has changed!

Horton was in Cape Town, South Africa, as a guest speaker last week. He was in good company as the student government at the Durban University of Technology has just been vigorously campaigning to exclude Jews from the universities there in conjunction with the visit of Leila Khaled, the murderous terrorist highjacker. A medical colleague spent quite a time with Horton and tackled him on the Manduca issue. Horton confidently asserted his current position as follows:

- He believes he has won the battle against his detractors
- That he has the strong support of the Israeli medical groups
- That he is playing this out psycho-dramatically
- That he has the full support of Elsevier
- That it and the Manduca issue/letter is all about freedom of speech, etc.

Our response is that freedom of speech just like that underpinned and led to the Shoah, and the word is still father to the deed as we see in Paris, Copenhagen, etc, right now, as well as in Israel.

The only robust, objective and verifiable evidence that should convince us of Horton's putative 'reform', based on the norms of scientific conduct, is compliance by Horton with one simple single criterion: immediate retraction and apology.

I do not believe that we should tolerate such vicious propaganda in the medical literature.

Best wishes and apologies in case of duplicate messages

Mark Pepys

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