

# Exploiting medicine to support terror

 The Canadian Jewish News

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The *Lancet* is ostensibly a “prestigious” medical journal published in London England, but behind this façade, it is a central platform used to support Hamas and the repetition of blood libels against the Jewish People. Reputable critics accuse editor Richard Horton of a long history of exploiting the moral imperative of healing the sick for unethical objectives, as seen in the publication of “An Open Letter for the People in Gaza” (July 23, 2014). This diatribe entirely ignores Israeli victims of thousands of rocket and tunnel attacks, while labelling defence efforts as “war crimes” committed under the “pretext of eliminating terrorism.” This attack is the most recent example of the deadly campaign that twists and perverts the halo conferred on doctors into an instrument of war and hate.



Mads Gilbert, one of the authors of the *Lancet* letter, is a veteran Israel-basher. The radical Norwegian physician arrived in Gaza during the 2009 conflict in order to demonstrate “solidarity with the Palestinians.” From Shifa hospital, he appeared on numerous media platforms with false allegations of Israeli “war crimes,” while turning a blind eye to the abuse of the hospital’s underground floors as the Hamas command centre, and to launch deadly rockets. In addition, Gilbert starred in a highly emotional video attempting to save the life of a Palestinian youth, and then pronouncing him dead. After evidence indicated that the video was staged for propaganda, news platforms took it down from their websites.

Gilbert’s Norwegian sponsors did not reprimand him, and, as seen in the letter to the *Lancet* and media appearances, he is playing the same role in the current war, with other serial violators of medical ethics. Swee Ang co-authored the letter and runs a dedicated anti-Israel non-governmental organization (NGO) called Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP). Ang and MAP are also experienced political warriors, frequently using their humanitarian platform for propaganda. They promote the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement, and repeat the false allegation that Israel is depriving Palestinians of water. (MAP is based in the United Kingdom and runs a fundraising and propaganda branch in Montreal.)

This virus has also infected international groups, such as Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF, or Doctors Without Borders). As Israelis were being targeted by Hamas, MSF issued a highly emotional and biased statement entitled “The limits of humanitarianism in Gaza,” which showed total ignorance of the facts, while referring to the area as “an open-air prison” for which Israel is to blame.

These attacks also involve small but influential Israel-based groups, including Physicians for Human Rights- Israel. PHR-I was one of the groups that provided unsupported allegations to the discredited Goldstone report (in 2009). Now, the group has joined nine similar NGOs (all funded by the New Israel

Fund and European governments), accusing the IDF of “grave violations of international humanitarian law.”

In assigning responsibility for these abuses made in the name of medical concerns, the funder-enablers of these organizations, including many government agencies, should also be held accountable. Gilbert’s blood libels are financed by the Norwegian Aid Committee (NORWAC), funded by the government ostensibly for promoting health care.

MAP’s funders, to the tune of approximately \$5 million annually, include the EU, Ireland, and the U.K. government, through the misnamed Department for International Development. And PHR-I also gets support from a number of European governments, in addition to the New Israel Fund.

By “naming and shaming” those who exploit the façade of healing the sick and their funder-enablers from Norway, the United Kingdom and most other western European governments, the impact can be reduced. This is not a simple or quick process, but has proven effective in the long term. The *Lancet* is a commercial enterprise, and the most effective (and admittedly difficult) strategy would be a mass cancellation of subscribers and advertisers in protest. Those who exploit their professional status for anti-Semitism and in support of terror make a mockery of the Hippocratic Oath that physicians take to “do no harm.”