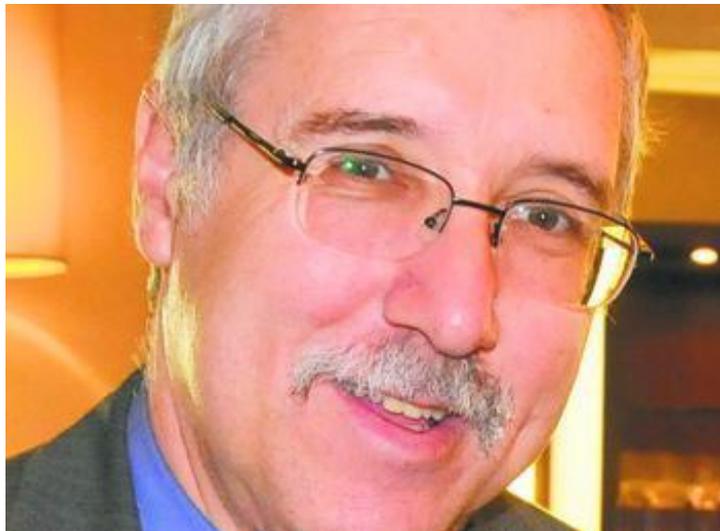


BDS and Oxfam defeated at the Super Bowl

 The Canadian Jewish News – February 7, 2014

The ongoing political war against Israel, being waged through a highly aggressive campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS), was handed its most significant defeat at the Super Bowl in New Jersey, and on hundreds of millions of screens around the world. The television commercials, including one for the Israeli firm SodaStream, featuring actress Scarlett Johansson, were more interesting than the game.

In the weeks before the big event, Johansson came under intense pressure from the BDS-bully squad, which demanded that she pull out and disassociate herself from the Israeli connection. The actress was also a “global ambassador” for the international humanitarian aid group Oxfam, whose leaders repeated these BDS-based demands, in sync with radical anti-Israel groups such as Electronic Intifada. To her immense credit, Johansson rejected the bullying and the accompanying personal attacks, and instead, told Oxfam to find another “ambassador.”



By standing firm, Johansson and the owners of SodaStream demonstrated that even the most full-blown BDS attacks can be defeated. In its counterattack, SodaStream exposed the myths that underlie the boycotts and the broader delegitimization campaigns targeting Israel, including the fact that the 500 Palestinian Arab employees at the Ma’aleh Adumim plant (a “settlement” located on the outskirts of Jerusalem) enjoyed the same pay and health benefits as their Israeli counterparts.

In contrast to previous battles, in this case, it was the proponents and enablers of BDS that were put on the defensive, and they didn’t do well in this role. Oxfam denied that it was involved in BDS, but the facts proved the contrary. Between 2011 and 2013, the Dutch branch, known as Oxfam Novib, provided almost \$500,000 (largely from government funds provided ostensibly for humanitarian aid) to one of the most radical BDS leaders, the Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP). This group also received funds from Oxfam GB (Great Britain). The discrepancy between Oxfam’s claims and the documentation of its role in BDS was highlighted by SodaStream executives and in a number of media articles.

Although CWP is technically an Israel-based NGO, almost all of its activities are focused externally in promoting boycott campaigns, particularly in Europe. (For political purposes, ever since the NGO Forum of the infamous 2001 UN Durban anti-racism conference, the Arab and European leaders of BDS often use fringe Israeli and Jewish groups as facades, and this is the case with CWP.) In addition to Oxfam, other funders for CWP’s radical and immoral agenda include government-funded German NGOs, as well the United Church of Canada and anti-Israel church groups in Ireland and Holland.

Another myth exposed in the SodaStream-Johansson showdown is the claim that BDS is “limited” to opposing the post-1967 war occupation and settlements. This myth was quoted by many journalists, who did not go beyond press statements. However, at the 2001 Durban NGO Forum, thousands of boycott advocates clearly stated that their goal is the elimination of Jewish sovereign equality, regardless of borders – in their words, “the

complete international isolation of Israel as an apartheid state.” This objective hasn’t changed.

Omar Barghouti, among the radical leaders and ideologues of the BDS bully squad, has said that the “only ethical solution is a [single] democratic, secular and civic state in historic Palestine” which means “by definition, Jews will be a minority.” In refuting the myth of limited goals, the fundamentally immoral objectives of BDS have been thrust into the open.

In order to move beyond this battle, a wider confrontation is necessary with the BDS industry, which is supported by tens of millions of dollars annually. These massive budgets, manipulated via hidden European government sources, are funnelled to radical NGOs, as well as anti- Israel church groups that often include classical anti-Semitic replacement theology (meaning that Christians have “replaced” the Jews). Beyond Oxfam, other “moral” superpowers taking an active part in the immoral war against Israel include Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, whose leaders repeatedly demonstrate their personal and highly destructive anti-Israel obsessions.

The most important lesson is that notwithstanding their financial backing and political support, BDS anti- Israel bullying and intimidation can be defeated, as demonstrated by SodaStream and Scarlett Johansson.