

Open letter from Steven Werner, November 26, 2021

Dear President Gertler, and Minister Dunlop,

Racist discrimination is currently on open display at the University of Toronto. I am specifically referring to the campaigns targeting Israel and anyone who supports or may be neutral towards Israel.

From the recent Hasbara Fellowships Canada statement:

"At its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Wednesday, Nov. 24, the SCSU passed its second motion in support of the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement. A subsection of the original motion passed in 2013 now requires that any kosher food brought to campus must come from an organization that does not support "Israeli apartheid."

<https://hasbarafellowships.org/u-of-t-scarborough-students-vote-to-eliminate-funding-from-pro-israel-student-clubs/>?

President Gertler, allowing such bigotry is an insult to every decent and fair-minded member of your university and a moral stain on its character. Furthermore, given that such anti-"Israel" / antisemitic campaigns are promulgated via malicious disinformation reminiscent of cold-war style Soviet and Nazi propaganda, these now normative anti-Jewish events can only harm a university's reputation. More importantly of course are the very real, harmful effects these have on students, faculty and the broader community. I am sure that these detrimental effects are clear and self-evident to you as well.

One's freedom of expression must never fall victim to repression by another, especially when the opposing narrative is fueled by distortion and guided by hate. Decency demands immediate action against the above-mentioned antisemitic motion and the people that promote it. Hate left unchecked grows, and anti-Jewish hate has grown within the U of T for years. Your university, while sadly not unique in the city or even the province when it comes to dealing with Jew-hatred within its community, has in the past hosted openly racist speakers and tolerates supporters of terrorists.

Furthermore, U of T will forever hold the dubious distinction of being the birthplace of the hate-fest known as "Israel Apartheid Week", a university sanctioned opportunity for hateful lies to be disseminated by opportunists with the specific intent of demonizing a liberal, western democracy that in reality is an example of coexistence. Belief systems of many and various persuasions coexist within Israeli schools, businesses, hospitals, governmental institutions and the military. To claim Israel is an Apartheid state flies in the face of all evidence to the contrary yet that is the narrative being employed to slander and marginalize Israel and any supporter of her. It appears that no one questions why Jews cannot be found working alongside their Arab neighbours within the territories governed by the Palestinian Authority or Hamas. In fact, Jew-hatred is openly promoted within the Arab political and religious institutions under their supervision and direction. Conversely, Israeli laws guarantee equal

protection for all its citizens regardless of faith, ethnicity, colour or sexual orientation. Facts be damned in the current campus environs, where the normalization of Inversion Politics means the replacement of evidence with unsubstantiated narratives driven by malice.

Anti-Jewish propagandists use volume and perverted buzz-words like "ethnic cleansing" and "genocide" to bully others into submitting to their agenda. Currently, campuses are eerily reminiscent of the early 20th century where it was commonplace for Jews to face discrimination. I am not asking nor expect special treatment for Jews or supporters of Israel, I am simply asking that fairness and equality finally and immediately be afforded to them.

President Gertler, while I can appreciate some of the difficulties you are faced with in addressing this situation, vis-a-vis bullying and intimidation from student groups, unions and professors, it is you who shoulder the responsibility for rectifying the poisonous environment that exists.

Minister Dunlop, you are ultimately responsible for providing guidance to President Gertler and for ensuring compliance with societal norms that foster inclusiveness.

Please let me know what measures each of you will take in order to rectify this untenable situation and when such measures will be implemented.

Please reply to all copied.

Yours truly,

Steven Werner

PS: U of T law professor Mohammad Fadel made a racist smear against Justice Spiro, with an association between Spiro and the Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt, who said, "The sovereign is he who decides the exceptions". Is it not ironic that the only thing Justice Spiro is guilty of is raising his concern about professor Azarova, an activist with a strong history of anti-"Israel" bias, while professor Fadel, attempts to shame and bully administrators into hiring Ms Azarova? And while Mr. Fadel said he was deeply sorry, after months of having that smear against Justice Spiro posted on his social media account, one wonders if he was deeply sorry for being called-out for his racist post.

"Justice is blind" was born out of sound reasoning; that within the laws and courts there should be no bias. It appears that professor Fadel may be blind to that principle or perhaps he chooses to follow a different set of laws? And if so, are those the governing principles that the U of T aspires to? Know that often silence is clearly heard.

Three important take-aways from the Second World War:

- 1) It all started with words.
- 2) It was the university educated that designed and led to the cruelest barbarism against fellow men, women and children and the murder of tens of millions of people.

3) Complacency and inaction fueled its birth.