

July 29, 2014

Dr. Richard Horton
Editor
The Lancet

Dear Dr. Horton,

Thank you for your prompt reply, which is appreciated. I am sorry for not being able to emulate the "cheerful" tone of your response. I do realize that a dialogue on **the** issue brought up in my letter and on the potpourri of issues peppering your answer is bound to be sterile. Thus, please trust me that what I have to say is not an attempt to "have the last word" and I would be pleased to have a friendly conversation face to face. This not being feasible at the moment, we shall have to do with the written word.

1. About three hours after reading your e-mail, last night, my wife and I awoke at the sound of sirens, allowing us 90 seconds to reach the staircase (our make-shift shelter). The Hamas (not the people of Gaza) have fired yet another long-range rocket at the Tel Aviv urban area. In fact, it was our dog that woke us; his Pavlovian reflex was to bark and rush to the door; sleeping without my hearing aid, I had to rely on his canine genes.
2. Of course, the above event can be interpreted as being "health-related" because it is possible that the research performance of Dr. Pick, in his laboratory, the next day, will be affected and a critical step in the biochemistry of oxygen radical production by phagocytes will not be discovered. At the veterinary level, our terrier dog might be more stressed than usual.
3. Dear Dr. Horton, it so happens that my laboratory was named after Julius Friedrich Cohnheim, a prominent student of Virchow. Thus, your correspondent knows "his Virchow" at least as well as the Editor of the Lancet. As a matter of fact, better than the Editor of The Lancet. What Virchow actually wrote was "Medicine is a social science and politics is nothing else but medicine on a large scale". Fine, we shall not engage in hair splitting! Politics may be medicine but **MEDICINE IS NOT POLITICS**. The Lancet is a medical journal and it is a pity and a shame that a partisan and biased Editor insists on turning it into a political journal.
4. Have a second look at paragraph 2 of my letter of yesterday. I wrote "I would like to protest in the most emphatic manner against the use of one of the foremost medical journals for the promotion of a political platform, independently of the nature of this platform". The underlined section is key to my argument; as far as you know, I could be an enthusiastic supporter of Hamas. You may have grasped the fact that my letter to you did not touch upon the content of the document by Manduca *et al.* I hope that many of my colleagues, from all over the world, have written letters focusing on the blatant perversion of truth in this travesty of science, written by committed supporters of a terrorist organization. The fact that this group is hiding behind their medical degrees should make no impression on honest people born in the 20th century; they have not forgotten that Mengele was a Dr. Med.

5. Your response is permeated by a deeply hypocritical attempt to place you and me in the same category, as lovers of freedom, supporters of free speech, seekers of truth, and forgers of consensus. I do not need you to flaunt the *Magna Carta* in front of me; you should have the intellectual courage to admit your affinity for a quite different document, the *Hamas Covenant*.

6. It is not up to the Editor of The Lancet to decide whether the military response of Israel is disproportionate and who is responsible for the loss of life among children in Gaza. At least, Neville Chamberlain, when faced with the threat by Nazi Germany to destroy Czechoslovakia, had the honesty to admit that this was a "quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing". Do your homework, before you express an opinion.

7. In my letter of yesterday, I suggested that the betrayal of your function as the Editor of a prestigious medical journal should lead to your resignation. In your response, you do not address this issue; apparently the "unvarnished engagement in strenuous debate" was not strong enough for you to take this step.

8. I shall, thus, express a more modest request. I guess that your experience as an Editor must have made you familiar with two editorial acts: "retraction" of a paper or "expression of editorial concern". These, as you well know, are routinely applied to papers containing fraudulent or unproven contentions (of which the Manduca *et al.*, pseudoscientific fable has plenty). The minimum that is expected of you, provided that you are interested in maintaining even a remnant of your already eroded prestige, is to retract the shameful concoction by Maoists and Hamas supporters.

9. Should you decide to be honest enough to resign, you can "put your heart where your mouth is" and go to Gaza to treat those children who were wounded when used as live shields by the darlings of Manduca *et al.*

10. Of course, I might be engaging in Talmudic analysis of your motives. Some of my British and American academic colleagues had a ready answer for your motives: you might not be too fond of Jews (in Manduca *et al.*'s vocabulary, Zionists or Israelis). Well, dear Dr. Horton, I have yet another idea for you to propose to the Editors of The Lancet. On the front cover, have a picture of Sir Oswald Mosley, and on the back cover, one of Mr. Khaled Mashal (remember, the Semites, both Arabs and Jews, read from right to left).

Have a good and rocket-free night.

My best,
Edgar

Edgar Pick, M.D.,Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus
Julius Friedrich Cohnheim Laboratory of Phagocyte Research
Department of Clinical Microbiology and Immunology
Sackler School of Medicine
Tel Aviv University
Tel Aviv 69978
Israel
TEL: 972-3-640-7872
FAX: 972-3-642-9119
E-mail: epick@post.tau.ac.il
<http://scholar.google.co.il/citations?user=Z98IHqcAAAAJ&hl=en>
<http://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.url?authorId=7005824890>
<http://www2.tau.ac.il/Segel/medicine/Research/ahheikije.pdf>