

July 28, 2014

Dr. Richard Horton
Editor
The Lancet

Dear Dr. Horton,

My first scientific publication was a "Letter to the Editor" published in The Lancet vol. 279, p. 487, 1962. I was, at the time, a fifth year medical student at the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical School in Jerusalem, and my pride in having a 27-lines Letter printed in such a prestigious journal, had no limits. This "feat" was repeated, when a second Letter was published in vol. 283, p. 833, 1964, at about the time of my graduation as an MD. Soon after these "contributions", I decided to pursue a career in basic bio-medical research and studied for a Ph.D. degree at the University of London under Professor John Leslie Turk (1967-1970). The Ph.D. Diploma is on the wall of my office, at the Sackler School of Medicine, Tel-Aviv University.

It is with an uneasy feeling that I resume my correspondence with The Lancet, after a fifty years hiatus on a non-scientific subject.

1. I read with dismay the "An open letter for the people in Gaza", by Manduca, Chalmers, Summerfield, Gilbert, and Ang + other signatories. I shall not enter into a discussion concerning the truthfulness of the letter. I am quite sure that the medico-scientific community, all over the world, will react to the claims made in the letter.
2. 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.
3. It was your duty, as Editor, to either reject this attempt to use the pages of a scientific journal for promoting a political agenda, or submit it to objective review. I hope that you will agree with me that the chances of this article to pass honest review successfully and be recommended for publication were zero.
4. In addition to the blatantly nonscientific nature of the letter, the signatories of the letter have provided false information by stating that they have no "competing interests". The most elementary search for the political affiliations of all the five main signatories will reveal to the most unexperienced "googler" that these are long-time pro-Palestinian and pro-Hamas activists. An indication for their extremism is that one of them (Dr. Mads Gilbert) was a justifier of the killing of innocents at 9/11.
5. It is simply unbelievable that the Editor of the Lancet was not aware of these partisan associations. I am an experienced scientist, who spent most of his life to find answers to questions. I, thus, have to conclude that you, purposefully, ignored these associations. This is a grave infringement of the most basic rules of scientific publishing.

6. My research into the reasons for your thoroughly unacceptable behaviour revealed that your political sympathies coincide with those of the authors. These heavily biased views were expressed repeatedly in the past. A good example is the essay, entitled "Palestinians: The Crisis in Medical Care", by Richard Horton, *The New York Review of Books*, March 15, 2007. I have distributed to hundreds of colleagues, all over the world, the content of this biased, vitriolic anti-Israel piece of writing, for all to judge.

7. You are, of course, entitled to your views and to publish these in *The New York Review of Books*. However, you are not entitled to let your political affinities influence your decisions as an Editor.

In the light of the grave infringement of your duties as an Editor, the only correct definition of which is perversion of scientific objectivity for the pursuit of a political agenda, I am asking that you resign your function as Editor of *The Lancet*, the prestige of which you have gravely tarnished.

Sincerely yours,



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cc: Mr Wisia Wedzicha, Ombudsman