

Supplementary submission from Tim Anderson

c/- Mr Frank Strbik

Workplace Relations Unit, University of Sydney

frank.strbik@sydney.edu.au

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Dear Review Committee

Supplementary submission to the Review Committee, on a proposed finding of 'serious conduct' against Dr Tim Anderson

My apologies for this late submission, but two matters arising from the meeting yesterday stick in my mind and seem very relevant. I ask that you receive this late note because these are recent matters and I was unrepresented and a bit distracted.

1. The Yemeni badge

I was disturbed to be asked by Neil, "you don't deny" some part of the Arabic translation of the Yemeni badge that was seen in the background of my photo of friends at lunch (A1). I was surprised by this question as I thought I had made it clear in past correspondence that I neither made nor endorsed ANY the expressions in that Yemeni badge. Neil's question suggests to me that perhaps I did not make that clear. Why would I "deny" something I did not say?

Since that badge was pointed out as in the background of my photo, the only issue for me was whether or not I should agree with a demand (by Dean Jagose) to censor the photo. I examined the text and, while parts of it do seem politically incorrect, I did not agree that the photo promoted racial hatred or racial violence. With that in mind I refused to censor the photo. The discussion I had with Stephen about the Channel Seven translation (which Dean Jagose and he adopted) putting "Death to Israeli" in place of the proper translation "Death to Israel" was (a) to criticise their general conflation of the state of Israel with a suggested racial slur and (b) to criticise the recklessness of their allegations in copying and not checking a bad translation. That argument was not to say that I supported any of the statements in the Yemeni badge. It would be wrong to suggest that my photo was a 'comment' by me, endorsing ANY of the particular statements in that Yemeni badge. By this same logic, photos which accidentally include a brand name or corporate logo in the background are not necessarily advertising statements.

2. Reactionary politics dressed up as ethics

I believe the discussion with Stephen about my 'Gaza casualties' graphic (B1) was revealing as to our different assumptions about history and pedagogy, but also as to what underlies his method in construing my graphic as both 'offensive' and sanctionable.

Stephen said he felt the fact that the Palestine flag was presented correctly, while the Israeli flag was altered and placed vertically, showed an 'imbalance' or a lack of 'even-handedness'. He commented that my unit of study 'Human Rights in Development' seemed a "good course", but that the graphic "undermined the credibility" of my teaching. He added that the imagery of altered Israeli flag was "not necessary". I asked him if he was talking about even handedness in relation to apartheid Israel? He responded along these lines: "Well you can produce studies saying Israel is an apartheid state but I can produce just as many saying it is not".

I see the matter differently. My course 'Human Rights in Development' begins by looking at imperialism and self-determination, and the history leading up to the twin human rights covenants of the 1960s. Both begin with the right of peoples to self-determination. That is a right implanted in international law by the formerly colonised peoples, specifically in reaction to imperialism and colonialism. As a result, no educational process in the 21st century has to regard colonial regimes as morally equivalent to anti-colonial movements.

Israel's several dozen racially discriminatory laws, its occupation and theft of Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian land, its racial ideology and its denial of equal citizenship to non-Jews all give it the character of a colony and, in recent years, of an apartheid state. Under international law an apartheid state is a crime against humanity. This is not me saying this, this is a series of UN statements and reports, as I outline in my essay 'The Future of Palestine'.

When it came to my text, Stephen did cite one of my comments ("How to read the colonial media, and untangle false claims of 'moral equivalence'. The colonial violence of Apartheid Israel neither morally nor proportionately equates with the resistance of Palestine") and my research article ('The Future of Palestine') as part of his set of 'allegations' (26 October 2018). However, even though my comment specifically disavowed moral equivalence for colonial regimes, and my research article discusses parallels between the racial ideologies of Nazi Germany and Israel, Stephen does not publicly object to them. He accepts that context is always important, but relies on a fragment of imagery which he told us was 'not necessary'. What is he doing here? He refuses to engage with my textual arguments but attacks an associated image, ostensibly because it is not fully explained. This again ignores the context of my graphic.

I conclude that Stephen's insistence that my 'Gaza casualties' graphic was offensive and sanctionable flows from his reactionary and outdated political views. He has attempted to elevate a reactionary political view into an ethical critique. I say that is illegitimate.

Best wishes

Tim Anderson (Dr)
University of Sydney