

To: Brith Sholom Media Watch Subscribers
From: Jerry Verlin, Editor (jverlin1234@comcast.net)
Subj: Brith Sholom Media Watch Alert #371, 2/10/08

A Status Report on The Project

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BSMW Reader,

There is no doubt that the mainstream Western media, including our hometown Inq, will prominently cover the 60th anniversary of the restoration of Jewish independence in the Jewish people's homeland, The Land of Israel, this spring. Left to itself, the mainstream media, including our Inq, will undoubtedly portray that milestone occurrence with the anti-Israel imbalance that has characterized the Inq's Israel coverage as chronicled weekly in Brith Sholom Media Watch for these past seven years. There is, perhaps, but little hope that our protesting this fundamental grave imbalance – with specificity and documentation – will “make any difference.” But if we dejectedly make no protest, there's none. And there is value to standing up as an act in itself. What I've tried to do these now 371 weeks beyond raising Israel supporters' awareness of persistent mainstream media anti-Israel imbalance, even on the conflict's core issues, as exemplified in the Inq, is some weeks to evoke actual action. These current weeks of run-up to Israel's 60th anniversary of restored Jewish independence in Israel certainly qualify as action weeks.

So last week I put in the media watch a brief letter to be sent in a batch to Messrs. Toll and Tierney of the Inquirer, objecting to the Inq's years-long fundamentally imbalanced portrayal of Palestine's UN Partition as the abrupt, unilateral, artificial “1948 founding” or “creation of Israel”; the Inq's religious rechristening of the multi-nation Arab invasion as “the war that followed Israel's creation” without the invading Arab states so much as named; the Inq's insistent attribution of seemingly exclusively “Palestinian” (nee Arab) refugees to that “war that followed Israel's creation”; and the Inq's insistent ignoring of that era's greater number of indigenous Middle Eastern Jewish refugees from Muslim lands, the bulk of whom Israel absorbed. I asked you to sign a copy of that letter and mail it to me c/o Brith Sholom. Some of you did, and others of you emailed me back copies with your name as the sender.

I wrote last week that I'd bundle your letters with mine, including with them a chronicle of quotations from the Inquirer over the seven years of our weekly Brith Sholom Media Watch, documenting these fundamental Inquirer anti-Israel imbalances. I've been spending my “BSMW time” culling these quotes and assembling them, along with comments upon them and excerpts of my letter and email exchanges with the Inq, into the document supporting the objections we make. When the document's done, I'll email copies to you on request.

So the short letter is included in this week's BSMW issue as well. If you agree that the mainstream media's Arab-Israeli conflict's core issue portrayal I've summarized above is in fact imbalanced and wrongfully damages public perception of Israel, and that this spring of Israel's 60th year of restored Jewish independence in Israel is a right time to protest it, you can do so by SIGNING AND MAILING OR EMAILING ME BACK THIS LETTER WITH YOUR NAME AS THE SENDER. If you're in doubt, ask me to email you the long Inq quotations document when it's done. Either way, thanks.

Regards,
Jerry

From Last Week's BSMW #370:

BSMW Reader: Will You SIGN This Letter?

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Brith Sholom Media Watch reader,

WILL YOU SIGN a copy of the following letter to Messrs. Toll and Tierney of the Philly Inquirer, calling upon them in the coming season of the 60th anniversary of Jewish independence in the Jews' historical Homeland to cease the Inquirer's persistent purveying to the public of Israel's enemies' narrative of Palestine history?

This letter, backed by a Word doc tome of citations I've culled from BSMW weekly Alerts and am currently shuffling into a semblance of logical sequence, and which I'll be pleased to email on request when done, will come from me alone if that's what it comes to, but if I've made any sense to you over these past seven years during which I've culled these Arab narrative-supporting citations from the Inquirer, that's not what it should come to.

So DO THIS, if you're so moved: Copy and paste the letter portion of this BSMW issue into your word processor, print it out, sign it and mail it to me:

Jerome Verlin
c/o Brith Sholom
Suite 106
3939 Conshohocken Ave.
Philadelphia PA 19134

If you wish, append your email and address and, if you're so blessed, Inquirer subscription account number. If you're so moved, get your friends and fellow members of your groups and organizations to sign the letter as well.

[Or cut and append your name and email it back.]

Stand up for us!

Regards,
Jerry

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Mr. Bruce Toll, Chairman
Mr. Brian P. Tierney, Chief Executive Officer
The Philadelphia Inquirer
Box 41705
Philadelphia PA 19101

Dear Mr. Toll and Mr. Tierney:

May 15th, in Western calendar reckoning, will mark the State of Israel's 60th anniversary of its independence, a milestone that the Western media, including the Philadelphia Inquirer, will prominently cover.

I'm gravely concerned, based upon years of quotations from your paper enclosed with this letter, that the Inquirer will portray this milestone occurrence in a manner grossly unfair to Israel and the millions of Jews and Christians who recognize Israel not as a state artificially "created" or "founded in 1948," but as the Jewish people's continuous historical homeland since ancient times.

Specifically:

I object to the Inquirer's insistent substitution of expressions like "Israel's 1948 creation," "establishment," "founding," – i.e., anything abrupt, unilateral and artificial – for what actually historically happened, the UN's Partition of the remaining League of Nations Palestine Mandate between its Arab and Jewish populations, c. a million and six hundred thousand people, respectively.

I object to the Inquirer's religious rechristening of the multi-nation Arab invasion rejecting UN Partition as "the war that followed Israel's creation" without those invading Arab states so much as named.

I object to the Inquirer's adamant attribution of seemingly exclusively Arab refugees to that "war that followed Israel's creation" and not to the multi-nation Arab invasion.

I object to the Inquirer's persistent portrayal of these Arabs as "having fled or been forced from their homes," when many left with the encouragement of the Arab invaders.

I object to the Inquirer's incessant references to these Arab refugees from tiny Israel with virtually no reference whatever to that same era's greater number of indigenously Middle Eastern Jewish refugees from vast Muslim lands, the bulk of whom Israel absorbed.

For years, with as recent an instance as 2007, the Inquirer repeatedly preposterously exaggerated the c. half-million Arabs who left tiny Israel as “millions of Palestinian refugees and their descendants,” sometimes as “nearly four million Palestinian refugees and their descendants,” poisoning Western public perceptions of partitioned Palestine’s actual 1947 population, which was less than two million, a good third of it Jews. That the Inquirer has apparently stopped repeating this preposterous exaggeration has not undone the persistent poisoning of public perception it wreaked. Real, if but partial, rectification can come only from the Inquirer ceasing to purvey the remainder of its persistent mis-portrayal of seemingly exclusively Arab (retrospectively called “Palestinian”) refugees from a sudden “1948 creation” or “founding of Israel,” a mis-portrayal of which these preposterously exaggerated “millions of Palestinian refugees and their descendants,” still deeply ingrained in public perception, were a key formative part.

Very truly yours,