

Letter to the Editor, Toronto Star

March 3, 2010

RE: Apartheid week one-sided but not anti-Semitic

By Thomas Walkom

I am not sure if Thomas Walkom has ever been victimized by antisemitism, although he alludes to an expertise in it. I have, and it was at Israel Apartheid Week (IAW). It is unfortunate that someone uniquely unqualified to decide what does or does not cause Jewish students to feel intimidated and frightened (and in a growing number of instances unwilling to attend classes altogether), is empowering the hate mongers on university campuses. It is even more regrettable that he listens to external speakers rather than Canadian leaders who have denounced IAW. The following posting on the Facebook site of a Jewish university student regarding IAW is typical of the type of hatred to which Jewish students across the province are subjected as a result of this event:

“ . . . i will make you regret the day not you were born in only , the day u existed, and israel as a nation existed. I will make regret everything you have done racist and hated. Zionist civilization is only 62 yrs, while other countries exceed 1000's... of years, shame on you and your people, there not even people , there apes. Mido Mishakel”

This is the true face of IAW and it is clearly quite different than the one presented in public lecture halls. The end goal is one and the same as that espoused by Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran: to wipe Israel off the face of the map. IAW is merely part of the strategy, one which does absolutely nothing to further the cause of the Palestinians, true dialogue or peace.

Avi Benlolo
President & CEO
Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center