



January 20, 2009

Bernie M. Farber
Canadian Jewish Congress
100 Sparks Street, Suite 650
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B7

Sent via email COsheroff@on.cjc.ca and regular mail

Dear Mr. Farber:

On behalf of the officers, steering committee, and over four million affiliated members of the Canadian Peace Alliance I would like to reassure the Canadian Jewish Congress that we no more countenance anti-semitism in our internal or external activities than we would any other expression of racism or discrimination.

As your letter points out, any possibly objectionable conduct during the activities we have organized and supported to protest the brutal and unjustifiable attack on the people of Gaza by the Israeli armed forces are not sanctioned or condoned by ourselves or our allies. The videos surreptitiously taken and posted by CJC operatives in an attempt to smear the peace movement in fact demonstrate this point. They show individuals or small groups of very young people within very large gatherings vehemently and emotionally denouncing the illegal Israeli occupation and war crimes. In only one minor case apparently is there a reference to Jews rather than the Zionist state – which are not in fact synonymous; and only then if we can trust the captioned translation provided by yourselves.

As a Jewish Canadian I can also reassure you on a personal level that I, and the many other Jews of conscience who have participated in these rallies calling for peace and justice in Palestine - not in support of Hamas as you slanderously allege - have felt nothing but the warmest welcome and solidarity from our Muslim and Arab brothers and sisters.

Indeed, at the various events across the country, including the January 17 rally in Vancouver I just attended, the spokespeople of the Muslim community spoke explicitly and emotionally about the support the people of Gaza are receiving from within the Jewish community and how their struggle is against the ideology and practice of Zionism not the Jewish people. They even spoke of the imperative for forgiveness as written in the Koran and their hope that some day all the people of Palestine, Muslim, Christian and Jewish could live together in peace, justice and harmony.

As a Jew, I can only hope that someday the state of Israel and the Zionist movement that supports it realize the inhumanity and insanity of its policies of settlement, annexation, displacement – and yes, Apartheid – and earn the forgiveness the long suffering people of Palestine are willing to extend.

Sincerely,

Robert Ages
National Treasurer
Canadian Peace Alliance