

Fact and fiction, in Israel and in the US



Objecting to Obama's support of the Muslim Brotherhood's short-lived takeover in Egypt

by Lev Tsitrin

22 years ago, after passenger jets hijacked by al Qaeda terrorists slammed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon killing over 3,000 people, a medical researcher in Israel posted some on-line messages that denigrated al Qaeda – causing an uproar at his institution which promptly fired him because he “had hurt its reputation.” At this Israeli hospital, publicly saying something bad about al Qaeda was “an “intentional breach” of Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy”!

I hear the reader say, “come on, this never happened. If you want to try your hand at fiction, invent a plausible plot, and don't pull my leg. I am not stupid!”

Darn it, you are right. I tried to fool you, but couldn't. I am indeed no good at writing fiction.

And yet – and yet, there is an “and yet!” to it. Swap US for Israel, swap al Qaeda for Hamas, swap 9/11 for 10/7, and what do you get?

You get a *New York Times*’ report titled “[NYU Langone Fired Him for His Anti-Hamas Posts. He’s Suing.](#)” A simple change of time and place changes my narrative from fiction to fact.

A writer’s (and a reader’s) imagination can only take them so far. As is often observed, life is stranger than fiction – and so, brace yourself to learn that “Dr. Benjamin Neel, a cancer biologist whose laboratory at NYU Langone conducts research on breast cancer, ovarian cancer and treatments for leukemia ... was fired [after he] reposted a variety of anti-Hamas political cartoons, including two with offensive caricatures of Arab people, and messages on the social media platform X, like one that appeared to question the extent of the death toll in Gaza from Israel’s relentless bombing campaign. ... One of the cartoons takes aim at western defenders of Hamas’s Oct. 7 attack on Israel. The cartoon shows a protest in which demonstrators are holding aloft signs justifying torture and rape. Another cartoon questions whether negotiating a two-state solution is viable with Hamas in power. Dr. Neel also shared a post questioning the accuracy of a list of approximately 7,000 people that the Hamas-run Health ministry in Gaza said had been killed during Israel’s bombing campaign.” How ill-mannered it is of Dr. Neel to be not nice to Hamas, and to its supporters!

Does this mean that NYU Langone thinks that what Hamas did was justifiable? No, it doesn’t – in fact, it did fire “Dr. Zaki Masoud, a trainee at NYU Langone’s hospital in Mineola, Long Island ... after he was accused of posting a message on Instagram in defense of the Hamas attack.” So how come NYU Langone thinks that Dr. Neel was rightfully “being held accountable”? Go figure. Dr Neel attributes his firing to NYU’s need to look even-handed and show both-sideism.

Well, there was no both-sideism in Israel after 9/11. So why is there both-sideism in the US after 10/7? Is it that a generation later we turned a leaf, and are now in a new chapter in which we are beyond good and evil, in which there is neither right nor wrong, so Hamas and Israel are being “both-ed” at American universities?

Which leads to a frightening thought: are we on a cusp of making a piece of nightmare fiction (like Philip Roth’s 2004 [*The Plot Against America*](#)) a reality? We have not yet taken this final, fatal step, and American universities’ administrators are not yet openly supporting the likes of al Qaeda and Hamas – but one Squad-inspired, politically correct step like the dismissal of Dr. Neel at a time – and in no time America will find itself falling off the cliff into outright Hamasism and al Qaedism.

Perhaps Heaven – and Americans’ good sense – will save us from NYU Langoneism, Harvardism, and U. Pennism. It is sad that these presumed institutions of learning gave up their mission of imparting knowledge to the ignorant, reversing it into absorbing ignorance from them – either because they feel bullied, or because they are bought off. The remedy is to end both-sideism, and to firmly state the obvious – that Hamas is bad, as is al Qaeda, strongly supporting the people who affirm those obvious facts. Institutions of learning should stick with people who stick to facts, not fiction – people like Dr. Neel.

NYU Langone administrators are badly in need of some very basic education – they need to learn that political correctness is no correctness at all, and that only the factual correctness counts at a research institution. Champions of factual correctness must be embraced and supported, not shunned and fired. That’s a straight path forward – both in medical science, and in life. Stick to it, NYU Langone. Reinstate Dr. Neel and deviate from the path of sound fact into the delusional goody-goody fiction no more.