

Appendix 4: email to Dean Patrick Monahan complaining about the conference, April 22, 2009

Law Dean/osgoode
04/22/2009 09:34 PM

To [s. 21(1)]

cc

bcc

Subject Re: Israel/Palestine: Mapping Models of Statehood and Paths to Peace

Beri thanks for your note. Can I tell you in confidence that I am aware of this conference and in fact am attempting to see what can be done to address certain concerns that have been raised. I will get back to you at an appropriate time and respond to your concerns.

Patrick

From: [s. 21(1)]
Sent: 04/21/2009 02:40 PM AST
To: Law Dean
Subject: Israel/Palestine: Mapping Models of Statehood and Paths to Peace

Pat,

I hope this finds you well.

I have been copied on an exchange of e-mails regarding a proposed conference titled "Israel/Palestine: Mapping Models of Statehood and Paths to Peace" scheduled to be convened at York University this coming June. The conference is co-sponsored by both York and Osgoode.

You are certainly aware by now of the significant and quite angry reaction to this conference in the Jewish community of Toronto. This reaction, in my view, is highly detrimental to both York and Osgoode, particularly given other recent events at York that have negatively affected the university's reputation, certainly in the Jewish community in Toronto and elsewhere.

The concern raised by the conference is not related to its title or even to what appears to be a rather one-sided roster of presenters, or even to the map that graces the conference's Website which fails entirely to delineate the borders of the State of Israel (begging the question graphically don't you think?).

What troubles me about this conference is its very premise which is essentially to discuss whether Israel should continue to exist as a Jewish State. By implicitly opening to question whether the Jewish nation-state established with UN Recognition 61 years ago should continue to exist as such, this conference reopens the long-settled question of whether the Jewish people has the right of self determination afforded other peoples under the UN charter and international law. Moreover, there appears to be no recognition whatsoever in the loaded language that describes the theme of the conference that if the two-state solution has indeed "failed", it is demonstrably because of its consistent and repeated rejection by Arabs and other Moslems who simply don't want a non-Moslem state in the neighbourhood. (e.g., the 1947 rejection of the UN resolution dividing the remnants of mandatory Palestine (most of it having been already granted to the Palestinian Arabs by the establishment of Transjordan in 1922), the Khartoum Declaration of the Arab States after Israel's victory in the 1967 six-day war, and the unilateral rejection by the Palestinian Authority of the Clinton Camp David and Taba proposals for a two-state solution, etc.).

Why debate the right of a Jewish state to continue going forward without questioning the right of any other nation state to continue to exist? For example, what is it about the melange of tribes, clans and sects that comprise the dysfunctional "nation-states" of Pakistan, India, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, to name a few

examples, that immunizes them from this kind of academic scrutiny?

While I personally feel very strongly about free speech, particularly in the academy, and would feel compelled to readily support a general academic symposium on "the future of the nation state" for example, I think it is a genuine form of discrimination against Jews to convene an academic conference focused entirely on whether the Jewish state alone should cease to exist. Would York or Osgoode tolerate a conference called to discuss the possible abolition of synagogues-but not churches and mosques- Judaism- but no other religion? I hope not.

To my mind, the consideration of whether the State of Israel should continue to exist as a Jewish State is simply not a legitimate premise for an academic conference given its discriminatory nature. Discrimination against Jews is commonly referred to as anti-Semitism and that is not a tolerable sentiment in our society.

I simply cannot understand how York and Osgoode can allow this conference to proceed. Its insidious delegitimation of the idea of a Jewish state should be seen for what it is. I ask that you do all in your power to stop this abhorrent conference from taking place

[s.21(4)]

[s.21(1)]