

How Counterpunch Distorts the Truth

By Alan M. Dershowitz

Counterpunch editor, Alexander Cockburn, specializes in distortions of reality and half-truths. A recent incident illustrates his mendacious motus aperiendi. In an article posted on Counterpunch, former Senator James Abourezk praised Helen Thomas, who was fired from her job for making bizarrely anti-Semitic statements about Jews going back to Europe. In that post, Abourezk also claimed that I “wrote a column in the Jerusalem Post calling [him] an anti-Semite.” Anyone who reads the Jerusalem Post article (http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/dershowitz/entry/senator_abourezk) can easily determine that Abourezk was lying. My article quotes extensively from an interview Abourezk gave on Hezbollah television in which he accused “the Zionists” of causing 9/11, worldwide anti-Muslim attitudes and picking on the Soviet Union. It is a bizarre and bigoted screed. But in the Jerusalem Post article, I did not accuse Abourezk of being an anti-Semite. He simply lied about that as he has done about so many other things related to Jews, Israel and me.

Rushing to Abourezk’s defense, Alexander Cockburn points out that in another article, in a different publication, I added the following paragraph: “It is true that not all anti-Zionism is anti-Semitic, but just because it is anti-Zionist does not mean that it is not also anti-Semitic. If the shoe fits...” Cockburn then engages in a contorted conspiracy theory as to why that sentence was not included in the Jerusalem Post article falsely cited by Abourezk. I tried to clear up the confusion by writing a letter to be published on the Counterpunch website. That website published at least 67 comments mostly critical of me and supporting Abourezk and Cockburn, but Cockburn refused to publish the full text of my letter instead wrenching some words out of context in order to distort what I wrote. Typical of Counterpunch. I attach the entire correspondence so that your readers can decide for themselves whether they can believe anything they read on Counterpunch.

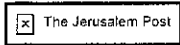
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Dershowitz Jerusalem Post article (http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/dershowitz/entry/senator_abourezk)

Dershowitz letter

Cockburn letter with update

Abourezk article “Honoring Helen Thomas” (<http://www.counterpunch.org/abourezk11222010.html>)



Mon, Nov 29, 2010 22 Kislev, 5771



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Wednesday Sep 19, 2007

Double Standard Watch: Senator Abourezk



Posted by Alan Dershowitz
Comments: 48

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It's a long way from the bad old days when sitting United States senators such as Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi would refer to Jews as "kikes" on the floor of the Senate. But it is still quite shocking to hear a former US Senator refer to a supporter of Israel as a "snake". Well I am that "snake"! And the former senator is James Abourezk who used to represent the great state of South Dakota. He used this ad hominem in an interview on you guessed it, Hizbullah television. He gave the interview while visiting his favorite democracy, Syria, on August 30, 2007. The "snake" part of it was probably his most moderate statement.

(To watch the video, click here.)

Former Senator Abourezk then went on to blame what he calls this "immense wave of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim sentiment" on the Jews. He says it began not on 9/11 but "after the Soviet Union collapsed." Listen to his "logic":

"The Zionists were looking around for another enemy to have, because to them the Soviet Union was an enemy because they wouldn't allow Jewish emigration. So they used that as an organizing tool, basically, and when the Soviet Union collapsed, there was no more organizing about the Soviet Union. So they looked around, and they said: Well, the Muslims. Let's find the Arabs and the Muslims, and make them the boogeyman. And that's what they did."

Get it? The Jews always need a "boogeyman". They picked the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union didn't pick on the Jews who they were discriminating against and preventing from emigrating. I guess the Jews picked on the Nazis before that.

Then Abourezk gets to 9/11 which he also blames on the Zionists. Listen again:

"Well, because the Arabs who were involved in 9/11 cooperated with the Zionists, actually. It was a cooperation. They gave them the perfect excuse to denounce all Arabs. It's a racist sort of thing, really racist – you know, picking out these 19 to 20 terrorists – they were terrorists – and saying all the Arabs are like them. So, you know, people in America don't really look at it that deeply, and they accept what the government and the press are saying."

Stupid Americans! They don't look at it "that deeply." They just fall for whatever the Jewish controlled government and press feed them. What an insult to his former constituents. No wonder he is a former senator.

Finally, Abourezk defends his favorite democracy, Syria, which he believes has been demonized again by the Zionists.

"Well, the injustice is that because Israel... I'm telling you, Israel is behind this move, because they wanted Syria weakened somehow, and to be made an enemy of the United States, so they got their people in Congress to pass the act. You see, the members of Congress are afraid to vote against anything the lobby wants. So, this is something the lobby wants..."

And of course the Israel lobby in Abourezk's view "is controlling the Congress."

Well maybe former Senator Abourezk isn't so different from the late Senator Bilbo after all.

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1 | John, Thursday Sep 20, 2007

Though Senator Abourezk said some clearly anti-Semitic stuff, he was right that Jews were also part of semi-terrorist organizations (etzel, lehi)

2 | Richard, Thursday Sep 20, 2007

Although I have voted for Democrats my entire life, recent remarks by Jimmy Carter, Abourezk and other liberal Democrats have prompted me to become an independent voter. Even if a presidential candidate promises universal health insurance to Americans, I cannot vote for someone who favors Arab terrorists over Israeli democracy. Rudy Guiliani is on my short list of acceptable candidates.

3 | Steve, Thursday Sep 20, 2007

As Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, approaches it looks as though Israel's leaders have taken to heart Alan Dershowitz's suicidal ideas espoused in his latest book "The Case For Peace." On page 4 Professor Dershowitz describes these "Ivory tower spectators -- who live, write and lecture far from the killing fields -- (they) have blood on their hands."

God help Israel. God help the Jews.

4 | DAVID KAPLAN, Thursday Sep 20, 2007

The real shame rests to a large degree with the people of South Dakota who elected this clown. There is simply no excuse for this in a democracy. You get the leadership you deserve.

5 | Larry, Thursday Sep 20, 2007

Why Mr Dershowitz do you not the attack the true Anti Semites,our fellow Jews in the USA.

Politicians who attack the USA daily on the war in Iraq,taunt the President,the show Biz types,Journalists,comics,etc etc their The New York Times is a continual scream of abuse against the policy of Bush.Just read the letters with signed by many co-religionists supporting this.

They all add courage and reason to our tormentors.I shudder when I see all those Jewish names en masse push Israel into another Ghetto.

As they destroy American will to fight the enemy gets strenght from the discord.

I am sick of them all,they will all be doing their token religious observance this week.

Then back to work in destroying our people for what reason I dont know.

I hear in my daily life many complaints on this 2 faced stance from non Jews.and they are getting angry at the sight of these prominent people lined up in hundreds undermining the USA.After all it is a volunteer army made up of mainly non Jews who are dying.we should all be doing our all to support them now,for the future would be bleak and deadly if they were not there

6 | Kit Childress, Thursday Sep 20, 2007

I, too, am a long-time voting democrat, but can't recognize anything about the party, ESPECIALLY this "universal health ins." debacle that sunk Hillary before. I am not a jew nor an arab, but jews are not killing Americans and vowing to crush us with nukes. America...wake up.

Zvi Aranoff, Brooklyn, NY: Dershowitz also doesn't tell us who are those radical leftists who "support the expansion of rape law to cover obtaining sex by fraud", while railing "against Israel when Israel actually enacts such a law and applies it." Without specifics, this is a specious claim. He's also ill-informed about the Kashur case, see here: <http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/from-rape-to-racism-how-and-why-did-charges-change-against-arab-man-1.314319>. Also, Eran Ben Avraham, the Jewish man Dershowitz is referring to, was not convicted of rape but of fraud. These are FACTS, and Darshowitz gets them wrong.

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Sarah Neely

From: Sarah Neely on behalf of Alan Dershowitz
Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 2010 11:34 AM
To: counterpunch@counterpunch.org
Cc: Sarah Neely
Subject: Response to Article

In his article entitled "Honoring Helen Thomas" dated November 22, 2010, James Abourezk makes the following statement:

"I once called Alan Dershowitz a snake on Al Manar television. Al Manar is Hezbollah's news channel in Lebanon. When he found out what I had said, he wrote a column in the Jerusalem Post, calling me an anti-Semite."

It is a lie. Here is a link to my article to which he refers. (http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/dershowitz/entry/senator_abourezk) I challenge him to find the term "anti-Semite" in the article. I also challenge your readers to read the article and judge Abourezk's credibility. Now I will characterize Abourezk: He is a liar.

Alan Dershowitz

“Well maybe former Senator Abourezk isn’t so different from the late Senator Bilbo after all. He uses the word ‘Zionist’ in precisely the same bigoted way Bilbo used ‘kike.’ [Huffington Post version ends here.]

“It is true that not all anti-Zionism is anti-Semitic, but just because it is anti-Zionist does not mean it is not also anti-Semitic. If the shoe fits...” (C2007 FrontPageMagazine.com 09/21/07)

“Anti-Semite”... “anti-Semitic” ... A minute difference on which the slippery prof. would no doubt try to hang his hat, but to any impartial observer it’s plain enough that Abourezk’s memory is true. Dershowitz was sliming the former distinguished senator from South Dakota as an anti-Semite. It’s maybe why Huffington Post dropped the final paragraph as libelous, unless Dershowitz reserved the slime for the version he sent FrontPageMagazine which, the vigilant reader will have noted, was credited as its source by the United Jerusalem Foundation.

Update: Dershowitz says that he corrected himself in a note to Counterpunch. "As soon as I found the Jerusalem Post version, I had my secretary correct my submission. She did so at 11:34AM on Tuesday, November 23, 2010... Nonetheless, Counterpunch has deliberately kept the version citing the Huffington Post on its site rather than the Jerusalem Post version..." Professor, a lie can go round the world in the time it takes the truth to tie its shoes, as Mark Twain said.

Tagged as: [Alan Dershowitz](#), [Alexander Cockburn](#), [American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee](#), [Anti-Semitism](#), [Helen Thomas](#), [liars](#), [Senator Jim Abourezk](#), [snakes](#)

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1 eljay November 27, 2010 at 8:02 pm

Dershowitz is an @ss. He seems like the kind of guy who understands why ethnic cleansing is “currently not necessary”, but who could just as easily understand why it might be “currently necessary” once again. I place him on the lower end of the “humanist” spectrum.

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2 Walid November 27, 2010 at 8:43 pm

He is dishonest. Phil smelled the skunk and flushed him out; bravo.

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Sarah Neely

From: Sarah Neely on behalf of Alan Dershowitz
Sent: Saturday, November 27, 2010 3:46 PM
To: 'counterpunch@counterpunch.org'
Cc: Alan Dershowitz; Sarah Neely
Subject: Submission from Alan Dershowitz

PLEASE CONFIRM RECEIPT.

In a recent article on Counterpunch, in which he praised the bigoted remarks of Helen Thomas, ("Honoring Helen Thomas") former Senator James Abourezk claims that I "wrote a column in the Jerusalem Post, calling "[him] an anti-Semite." I responded by citing my article (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-dershowitz/a-real-snake_b_65194.html?view=print) and challenging Abourezk to "find the term 'anti-Semite' in the article." It is not there as any reader can see. (I originally cited the Huffington Post version because I had difficulty accessing the Jerusalem Post version. As soon as I found the Jerusalem Post version, I had my secretary correct my submission. She did so at 11:34AM on Tuesday, November 23, 2010.

(http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/dershowitz/entry/senator_abourezk) Nonetheless, Counterpunch has deliberately kept the version citing the Huffington Post on its site rather than the Jerusalem Post version that directly puts the lie to Abourezk.)

In another version, as Alexander Cockburn pointed out, I added the following general point about the relationship between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism: "It is true that not all anti-Zionism is anti-Semitic, but just because it is anti-Zionist does not mean it is not also anti-Semitic. If the shoe fits..."

(<http://www.unitedjerusalem.org/index2.asp?id=971208&Date=9/21/2007>) I stand by that additional point and invite the reader to watch Abourezk's original statement made on Hezbollah TV in which he blames virtually everything from anti-Muslim attitudes, to 9/11, to the Soviet Jewry Movement on "the Zionists."

(<http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/1551.htm>) I leave it to the reader whether the shoe fits.

Alan Dershowitz

Sarah Neely

From: Sarah Neely
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2010 10:43 AM
To: 'counterpunch@counterpunch.org'

Dear Mr. Cockburn:

I think you owe your readers the right to make up their own mind based on the complete text of my second letter, which is attached, rather than on the basis of your out-of-context excerpt.

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Alan Dershowitz