

Toni Nissi cripples Mother Jones falsehood against Walid Phares

Contributed by John Hajjar
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In a devastating letter addressed to Mother Jones's headquarters in San Francisco, the main source used by the publication in 2011 to smear Dr. Walid Phares, Toni Nissi torched the radical magazine's credibility, leaving its ashes smoldering on the ground. Nissi, a Lebanese human rights activist who was contacted by Mother Jones's Adam Serwer, now working at BuzzFeed, claims the journalist and his publication were unethical and "sought only to smear a man who dedicated his life to defend freedom and justice."

Mother Jones published the scathing attack against the American-Lebanese author in October of 2011, just after U.S. presidential candidate Mitt Romney appointed Professor Phares as one of his national security advisors. The hit piece quoted Toni Nissi extensively and selected specific sentences to mold paragraphs to produce a very different sense of the man than described by Nissi. The unethical and unprofessional handling of the interview with Nissi painted Phares with very negative strokes. The piece was an attempt at identity theft by portraying the academic's life in his 20s as some sort of dark warlord advisor in Lebanon before he immigrated to the United States.

Serwer and Mother Jones's evil plans did not work as they failed to find any source that would corroborate their false narrative. Even at the age of 23, Walid Phares had already published a book on pluralism. In his twenties, he published more books, more articles and offered more lectures than anyone his age. He also formed a workers' union, a students' group, and a minorities' coalition. He even launched a small social democratic party within the besieged Christian community of Lebanon. But Serwer and Mother Jones ignored who that young man was and reconstructed a history that never happened. They asserted he was a "warlord advisor," a promoter of sectarian fights, and a member of a violent militia, all proven false, including by the central source from whom the radical publication extracted quotes. Ironically, Phares was a victim of political suppression and a leading force in an attempt to democratize his community. He left his mother country precisely because freedom disappeared in 1990.

Toni Nissi was a young student who joined Phares's social democratic group just one year before Phares left Lebanon in 1990. Over the subsequent years, they barely sent greetings to one another. More than a decade later, Nissi joined an NGO which was part of an international federation of democracy NGOs advised by Professor Phares. The federation called for the liberation of Lebanon from the Iranian-backed Syrian occupation of the country and support democracy in the Middle East. Nissi visited the United States several times and participated in events in Congress and with think tanks. He knew Phares's work in his adopted country, but Nissi had only heard about the man's public activities during Phares's 20s in Lebanon. Serwer wanted to quote someone who knew Phares and whom he could fool and use quotes from. Instead of interviewing people who knew the scholar when he lived in Lebanon, Mother Jones resorted to tricks.

As Nissi unveiled in his explosive letter to Mother Jones, Serwer misquoted him and built a story unfounded in reality. But the radical publication's fabricated story and Nissi's letter will have a negative impact on all the other radical media and those in the mainstream media who copied it without fact checking. They are all culprits in this journalistic malpractice. Accusing an intellectual, author of 14 books and coach for many NGOs representing endangered communities of extremism and links to violent groups is outrageous.

But the interests Mother Jones, et al. were serving are not journalistic. These entities are serving the interests of a bloody oppressive regime in Iran and a nebulous cloud of Jihadi entities, all fueled by Petrodollars. Here is Toni Nissi letter:

John Hajjar is a member of the American Middle East Coalition for Democracy

To Read the Toni Nissi Rebuttal Letter - Click [<http://bit.ly/1r6vBIY>]