How I Became an Object of Slander for Pamela Geller, Ronn Torossian and their Ilk

"The Art of Slander," Don Basilio’s Aria from The Barber of Seville (Gioachino Rossini, 1815)

Let me teach you the art of slander, So ethereal you scarcely feel it. Not a motion will reveal it, Till it gently, o so gently, Almost imperceptibly begins to grow. First a murmur, slowly seeping, Then a whisper, slowing creeping, Slyly sneaking, softly sliding, Faintly humming, smoothly gliding. Then it suddenly commences, Coming nearer, reaching people's ears and senses. First a mere insinuation, Just a hinted accusation, Slowly growing to a rumor, Which will shortly start to flow. What began as innuendo Soon is swelling in crescendo; Gossip turning into scandal, Stopping nowhere, hard to handle; Louder, bolder, brazen sounding, Stomping, beating, thumping, pounding, Shrieking, banging, booming, clanging, Spreading horror through the air. Rising higher, overflowing, Whipped to fury, madly growing, Like a stream of lava pouring, Like a mighty cannon roaring. A tremendous tempest raking, A tornado splitting, shaking, Like the day of judgment breaking, Pandemonium everywhere! And the victim, poor accused one, Wretched, slandered and abused one, Has to slink away in shame And wish he never had been born.

In the summer of 2013 I found myself to be in the fortunate position of having $50,000 in my bank account. Since the bank paid essentially no interest, I looked around for alternative ways to invest this money. Based on my research, I came to the conclusion that establishing a Charitable Gift Annuity is as reasonable a way as any, with the added advantage of supporting a worthy cause. Carefully looking around at many available alternatives, I decided that the [New Israel Fund (NIF)] is one deserving support, since it is working to achieve a peaceful solution to one of the worst festering problems of the world today. So I decided to invest my $50,000 as a Charitable Gift Annuity with NIF.

Little did I expect that this would result in my becoming a whipping boy for right-wing extremists such as [Pamela Geller] and [Ronn Torossian] who have ideas different from those of NIF about what is good for Israel. Being a scientist, I regularly check the Internet to see how my work is used, and suddenly I began to see my name appearing as a supporter of terrorism against Israel. Apart from communicating about this phenomenon with some of my Israeli friends, I tried to ignore the matter, hoping that it would go away. But it did not, it got worse.

When I saw the webpage [Supporting Terrorism] I decided not to “slink away.” I wish to declare loudly and clearly that there is no need “to name me” or “to out me”; as a lifelong supporter of the state of Israel, I openly and willingly contribute to NIF, because I consider that by doing so I help the state of Israel. The shameless and dishonest extremists who are spreading slanderous accusations about the NIF (and, by implication, about me) are the ones who are putting the long-term survival of the state of Israel at risk. To the person responsible for the webpage [Supporting Terrorism] showing a burning car with my name under it, all I can say is (quoting Joseph N. Welch addressing Senator McCarthy at the June 9, 1954 McCarthy-Army hearings): **Have you no sense of decency?**