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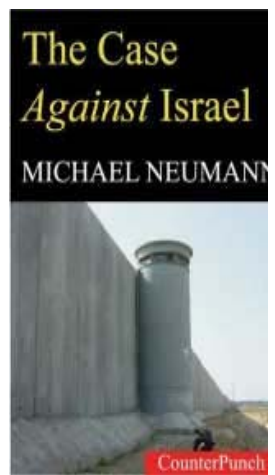
[John Chuckman](#)
[Bush in a Bottle](#)

"Melbourne University Publishing should drop this whole disgusting project. If they proceed, I urge the Australian Jewish community, and particularly *The Australian Jewish News*, to treat it with dignified silence. That is our best response. If, God forbid, it is published, don't give them a dollar. Don't buy the book."

Federal Labor MP Michael Danby, *Australian Jewish News*, August 25 2005

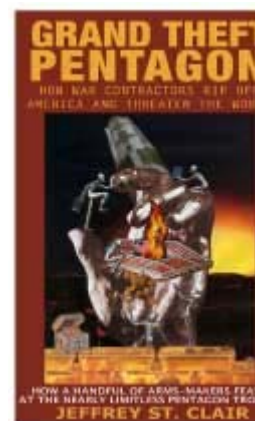
I'm currently writing a book on the Israel/Palestine conflict with Melbourne University Publishing (MUP) and it's due to be released in May 2006. After sending my articles on the subject to various publications around the world, I was already used to Jews and non-Jews writing and calling with abuse and outright hatred. After my recent column on the Gaza withdrawal, a Sydney doctor emailed me and asked: "How well do you think you would be doing with a name like yours if Adolf would have won?" and "As far as your book goes, I might just take a page out of Hitler's book on that one."

"The degree of abuse and outright threats now being directed at anyone - academic, analyst, reporter - who dares to criticise Israel (or dares to tell the truth about the Palestinian uprising) is fast reaching McCarthyite proportions", wrote Robert Fisk in December 2000. "The attempt to force the media to obey Israel's rules is now international". The



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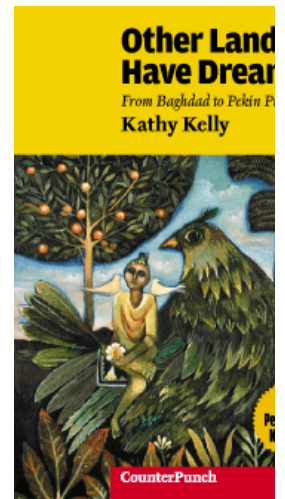
situation has only worsened since 9/11.

In late August, Jewish Federal Labor MP Michael Danby wrote a letter to the *Australian Jewish News* (AJN) and demanded MUP "should drop this whole disgusting project." He claimed that MUP head, Louise Adler, had made comments about Israel and himself that were plainly false. He wanted to "absolutely disassociate himself" from the book because it would be little more than a "propaganda tract" and "an attack on the mainstream Australian Jewish community."

The exact reason and timing behind his attack remains unclear though after Danby's refusal to answer some innocuous questions of mine in late 2004 his right, to be sure he seemed to be flagging his disapproval of even debating issues related to the Middle East question. This was true to form. He had slammed me in the past and has a long history of attempting to stop open debate on Israel-related matters.

Leaving aside the irony of a Jewish parliamentarian calling for the censorship of a book that didn't yet exist, it's worth remembering Danby is the member for Melbourne Ports, the electorate with the greatest numbers of Jews in Australia [Malcolm Turnbull's Wentworth is not far behind.] He sees his role as defender of the Israeli cause and he articulates what he believes his constituents want to hear.

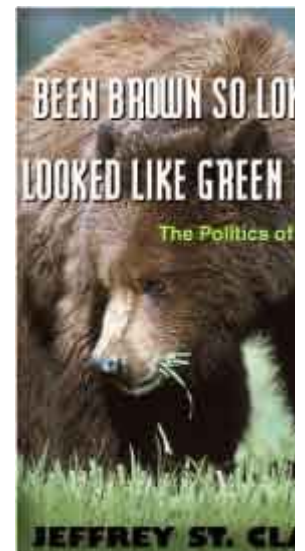
Online magazine Crikey picked up the story and asked whether it was appropriate for an MP to call for a boycott of an unpublished book. A few days later, Danby responded to Crikey, denied he had called for censorship and



The CounterPunch Tower



A Redwood Retreat on the Lost Coast
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The Politics of Nature
by Jeffrey St. Clair

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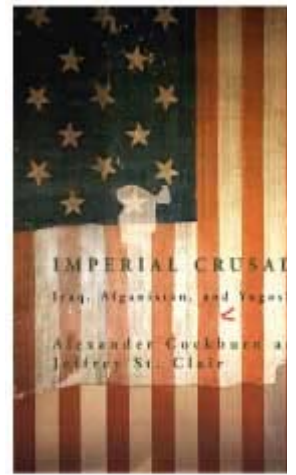
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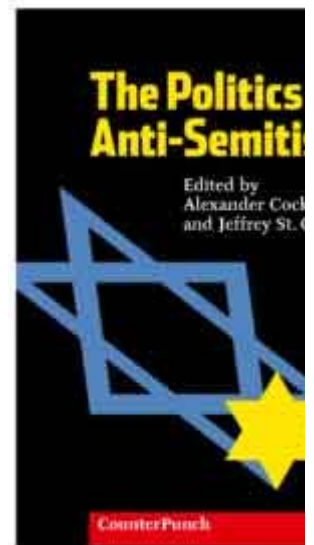
labeled my views on Israel "disgusting." He cautioned MUP - at a time when Israel was "making a painful withdrawal from Gaza and when the prospects for peace are improving" against publishing books that he thought inappropriate for the times. It begged the question: did Danby truly believe that publishing companies should only produce work that accepted the status quo on issues, rather than challenging or maybe demolishing them?

The intentions of my book are ambitious. I believe that the Israel/Palestine conflict is the defining foreign affairs issue of our time and yet remains woefully misunderstood. Danby and numerous pro-Israel supporters are clearly confronted by me posing questions about Australia's pro-Israel media, the Howard government's relationship with Israel and America, the role of the pro-Israel lobby, America's relationship with the Jewish state, my experiences in the Middle East, including through the Palestinian occupied territories and Jewish and Arab voices of dissent. I am a Jew who doesn't believe in the concept of a Jewish state, but then, I also don't believe in the idea of an Islamic or Christian entity either. There is surely room for a non-Zionist Jew to write about the true cost of Zionism both on Israel and the Diaspora.

A week after Danby's boycott call, the AJN was filled with letters, including one from Louise Adler. "I am dismayed that a fellow publisher such as the AJN gives space for proposals to boycott ideas", she wrote. "Danby's proposal is inimical to the central Jewish values of tolerance and open debate." Larry Stillman wrote that he fully understood the Danby



**Imperial Crusades
Iraq, Afghanistan &
Yugoslavia
Alexander Cockburn &
Jeffrey St. Clair**



**The Politics of Anti-Semitism
Edited by Alexander Cockburn
and Jeffrey St. Clair**



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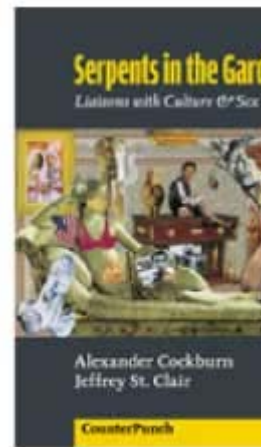
[Smith, Wood, Leas, and](#)

agenda: "I suspect the book will be central of the predominance of conservative views in the Jewish community about the current state of Israel, Danby included."

The *Melbourne Age* entered the debate soon after, chastised Danby for denying he had called for my book to be banned and discovered yet more evidence of the MP's history of "venting sight unseen." "In the Jewish publication, *The Review*, he says of David Hare's *Stuff Happens*, 'I haven't seen the play, nor will I', then cans it based on a review he read." The leading broadsheet also compared the controversy to Harvard Law Professor Alan Dershowitz's failed attempt to ban Norman Finkelstein's *Beyond Chutzpah*.

By the following week, the AJN was filled with coverage. A large news story featured another Danby justification for his attack. "If I didn't tell people about it [Loewenstein's book] beforehand, knowing what his views are, would I be representing the people I represent?" he said. The paper's editorial entered the fray. Although critical of Danby's censorship call, the AJN "unequivocally rejects Loewenstein's view of a Jewish state as 'fundamentally undemocratic and colonialist idea from a bygone era'", the public should wait for the book's release "before we decide to consign it to the garbage heap of literature." The letters pages were filled with both supportive and critical contributions, including from Danby himself. My ideas "stink" and he was simply "doing what I was elected to do: speak up for the people I represent." He again disingenuously denied having called for censorship.

A few days later, I received an



**Serpents in the Garden
Liaisons with Culture 8**



**Threatening Anthropology
McCarthyism and the FBI's
Surveillance of Anthropology
By David H. Price**



LIFE UNDER A BUSH

FOREWORD BY JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

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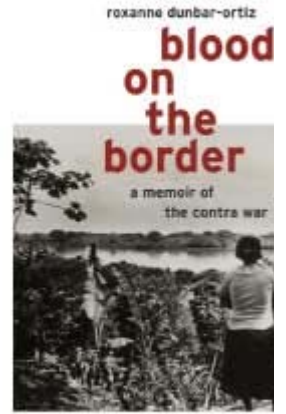
[Website of the Day Robert Pollin on](#)

unexpected call from well-known Jewish comedian Austen Tayshus. He demanded to know why I was writing my book, suggested Israel was a poor, defenceless Middle Eastern state threatened with annihilation, compared me to a German Jew who collaborated with the Nazis during the Second World War and asked why I had the right to air the community's "dirty laundry." I explained that he was clearly so insecure in his position that he felt the need to call and abuse me. I soon ended the call.

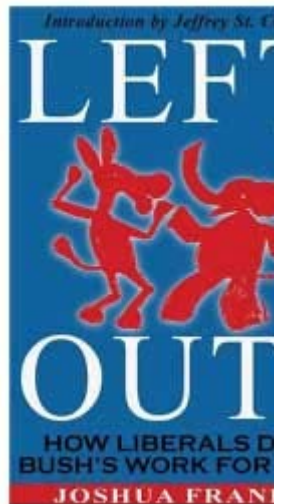
A few minutes after posting an entry on my blog about the initial call, I received another one from him. He said he would keep on calling me because I was an "ignoramus" and an "asshole." He suggested we have a public debate, which I declined. He suggested Palestinian Hanan Ashrawi as a moderator (after telling me earlier that she was a "terrorist.") The point of debating a man like this was negligible, for the simple fact that he didn't want to debate me - "a sad and lonely man", in his words - nor actually discuss the issues. He wanted to shout and rant. It may have made him feel good about himself. He clearly needed it.

I told the Green Left Weekly the real fear behind Danby's attack:

"These sort of people don't want discussion, because discussion is threatening. Discussion means that more people are aware, or might become aware, of what actually does go on over there: What does occupation mean, what does it mean that Palestinians often have to wait hours at



Blood on the Border
by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz



On the Justice of Roosting Chickens
By Ward Churchill

[the Global Economy](#)

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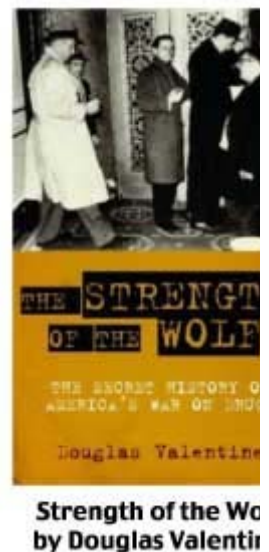
[Missy Comley Beattie Bush's Katrina Bling Bling](#)

checkpoints in searing sun, what does it mean that women often have to give birth at checkpoints and often die? They don't want people to know that, for obvious reasons, because it's shameful. And they know if more people find out that kind of stuff, their view about Israel and the relationship between Australia and Israel could change."

During this controversy, I received many supportive emails and even financial donations to my website. Mannie De Saxe challenged Danby to put his words into action:

"If Danby feels so passionate about Israel, and it is obvious that he does, why doesn't he take his supporters, all those vocal Zionists who, together with that publication which should be called the Israeli Zionist Times but is otherwise known as the Australian Jewish News, and move to Israel where Ariel Sharon has said that he needs all the Jews in the Diaspora to come and live to reduce anti-Semitism around the world."

I was extremely lucky that my publisher backed me 100% during this period. Many a publisher, I suspect, would have been scared to receive such vitriol months before the book's release. I received some ugly comments on my blog "you're the nazi Anthony you fucking mental midget. Whose side are you on anyway? THINK about it toolhead" but I remember what John Pilger told me recently; the more they



Jeffrey St. Clair
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attack you, the more you're having an effect and doing something right.

The difficulty in even raising questions related to Israel proves that serious debate is ever-more essential. The world is slowly waking up to the true reality in Israel and Palestine and Australians are joining the chorus of disapproval.

Antony Loewenstein is a Sydney-based freelance journalist and author. He can be reached at antloew@gmail.com.

He blogs at <http://antonyloewenstein.blogspot.com/>

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We published an article entitled "A Saudiless Arabia" by Wayne Madsen dated October 22, 2002 (the "Article"), on the website of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalistic Clarity, CounterPunch, www.counterpunch.org (the "Website").

Although it was not our intention, counsel for Mohammed Hussein Al Amoudi has advised us the Article suggests, or could be read as suggesting, that Mr Al Amoudi has funded, supported, or is in some way associated with, the terrorist activities of Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda terrorist network.

We do not have any evidence connecting Mr Al Amoudi with terrorism.

As a result of an exchange of communications with Mr Al Amoudi's lawyers, we have removed the Article from the Website.

We are pleased to clarify the position.

August 17, 2005

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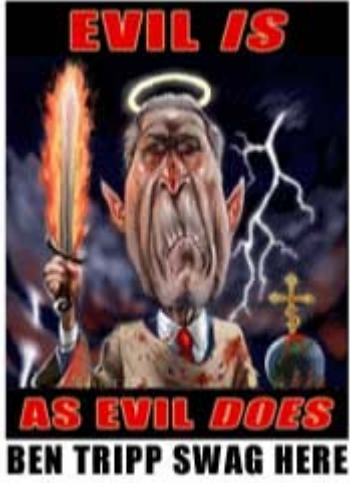
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