

Exposing Canadian Media Fauxtography



FAUXTOGRAPHY

Gaza Flotilla Fauxtography
Hamilton Spectator, 09/06/2010



cropped



uncropped

RESPONSE

HonestReporting Canada Op-Ed
Hamilton Spectator, 19/06/2010



The full frame of the photo distributed by Associated Press is above: The dotted line shows how it was cropped for space reasons by The Spectator. The knife blade is in the lower right corner.

Photograph was more than it seemed

BY MIKE FEGELMAN

I am writing in regard to Gwynne Dyer's column of June 9 ("Gaza Strip blockade must end") and the photograph that illustrated it.

The use of imagery in the media war against Israel is becoming more and more widespread. During Israel's war against Hezbollah in 2006, a Reuters photographer used Photoshop software to manipulate an image of an Israeli airstrike of an area of suburban Beirut to exaggerate the destruction that had been done. Utilizing digital cloning techniques, the photographer replicated large plumes of dark smoke rising from the buildings. This same photographer was also caught doctoring a photograph of an Israeli Air Force jet deploying a single flare over South Lebanon; the flare was cloned multiple times to make it look like several missiles were being fired at the jet. This photographer was terminated by Reuters. Unfortunately, The Hamilton Spectator has also contributed to the media war against Israel through its own inadvertent "fauxtography."

An Associated Press photograph

that was appended to the Dyer column appeared to show an injured Israeli soldier lying on the ground surrounded by the extremists aboard the Mavi Marmara passenger ship.

A Spectator editor changed the size of this photo, a common practice in the editing process, and inadvertently cut out a knife that was being wielded by one of the extremists on board.

It was quite an unintentional error, however the ramifications of this mistake left Spectator readers without an understanding of the true colours of these extremists and their deadly intentions.

As clichéd as it sounds, a picture really is worth a thousand words. Had the unaltered photograph been published in the Spectator, readers would have been given a better picture to understand that these individuals weren't "humanitarian activists;" they were knife-wielding extremists on a flotilla of hate.

Mike Fegeleman is executive director of Toronto-based HonestReporting Canada, which says on its website it is dedicated to defending Israel against prejudice in the media.

Defending Israel Against Media Prejudice
www.honestreporting.ca