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## LETTER OF THE DAY

# Mark Steyn: 'Why don't you sue me?'

**Re: 'Extremists' And The Muslim Debate, letter to the editor, Jan. 31.**

In their latest missive to you, Naseem Mithoowani, Khurram Awan and Muneeza Sheikh refer to the excerpt from my book published in *Maclean's*, as a "defamatory article".

OK, if it's defamatory, why don't you sue me?

Cue crickets chirping.

It's precisely because the article is not defamatory that the "plaintiffs" have had to rig the game by going to (at last count) three of Canada's many "human rights" pseudo-courts. In none of their plaintive reprises protesting that they're only looking for a chance to "start a debate" have they or their patrons at the Canadian Islamic Congress questioned the accuracy of a single specific fact, quotation or statistic. If they wanted to "start a debate," they could start one, via a blog, column or book. Instead, they started a "human rights" complaint, which is what people do when they want to end the debate.

This isn't merely a "freedom of speech" issue. Canada's Charter, much to its shame, explicitly abridges freedom of expression. However, it does not abridge the presumption of innocence, which is guaranteed by the Charter, as well as by the UN Declaration on Human Rights and Magna Carta. Yet there is no "presumption of innocence" in Section 13 "hate" cases. *Au contrai-*

*re*, there is a presumption of guilt, which is why no one hauled before the CHRC under Section 13 has ever been acquitted — with the exception of the "Canadian Nazi Party," which got off scot-free on the quaint grounds that it did not, in fact, exist. (The fact that Richard Warman, "human rights activist" and the CHRC's serial plaintiff, is reduced to suing entirely fictional entities tells you a lot about how necessary Section 13 is to the Queen's peace.)

Alas, if you do have the misfortune to exist in what passes for the real world at the CHRC, then your chances of bucking the spectacular 100% conviction rate are a lot slimmer. So *Maclean's* and my book will be convicted because that's the only menu option available. Section 13 and its administration are a public scandal. I hope Canadians will support Dr. Keith Martin, MP, who has introduced a private member's bill calling for its abolition.

As for the Osgoode Hall students' patron — and, in fact, the real "complainant," at least in the British Columbia suit — the Canadian Islamic Congress is headed by Mohamed Elmasry, who declared on TV that he approved of the murder of any or all Israeli civilians over the age of 18. Good for him: I don't begrudge him his freedom of speech. But, if he can dish it out so enthusiastically, shouldn't he be able to take it just an eensy-teensy-weensy bit?



Mark Steyn

Mark Steyn, Montreal.

to express to the Primate May. Her latest article is to Christians, and so I doubt about her fitness Anglican priesthood. Her fensive comments about crusaders are the words who knows very little about faith, and even less about of Islam. Perhaps it is tim both May to choose between priest and being a political *Roy Eappen, Montreal.*

## Afghan peace only come at point of a gun

**Re: Would-Be MP Takes Up Challenge, letter to the editor**

Letter-writer and federal Teresa Townsley states, "Afghans need disarmament and aid" — and she's right. I have a question for Ms. Townsley: a question informed by my experience in Afghanistan, Croatia, Iran, Iraq and other odd places. Just how do you provide "disarmament, demobilization and aid" without fighting folks I ever met — I was in units, the last one being Patricia Canadian Light Infantry in Kandahar in 2002 — who were "disarmed" weren't entirely compliant with requests that they disarm, even when the request was made on behalf of the United Nations. Those folks, I call, took some serious time to see the error of their ways, and some of them even needed kill orders before they complied.

I applaud your principled stance, Roy — but I deplore your *Roy Harding, Warrant Office, Terrace, B.C.*

NDP candidate Teresa Townsley's assertion that the Afghan peace can only come at the point of a gun is not only absurd as claiming that Europe have been rebuilt while still occupied by Nazi Germany. I can understand that if Ms. Townsley were to flee her comfortable Vancouver home for the war-torn parts of Afghanistan, would she favour a foreign policy that is so obviously ridiculous? Perhaps

Canadian had to live in today's economy under such restrictions. *Dave Owens, Winnipeg*

## Abortion's price

**Re: Why I Am An Abortion Doctor**

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