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Monday 14th March 2011.

Dear Sir,

I am writing concerning the online article by Melanie Phillips on Spectator blogs, “Armchair barbarism” (Spectator blogs, Monday 14th March 2010, available on: <http://www.spectator.co.uk/melaniephillips/6779100/armchair-barbarism.shtml>).

Ms Phillips commenting on news reporting of the murder of the Fogel family, residents of an illegal settlement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory of the West Bank, intersperses her comments on that event with language to describe Arabs that is, in our view, racist.

Ms Phillips refers to “the moral depravity of the Arabs,” to “Arab barbarism,” and to Arabs as “savages” in her comments on the ethnic identity of the alleged perpetrators of that crime.

It would appear to us that were the ethnic identities reversed and the victims of the crime Palestinian and the aggressors Israeli, the use of phrases such as “the moral depravity of Jews” or “Jewish barbarism” or of Jews as “savages” would be indefensible and wrong.

In light of the PCC ruling in the case of Mr Oli Bird vs The Spectator, we would welcome the PCC’s adjudication of this complaint on what seems to us to be Melanie Phillips’ deliberate use of racist and incendiary language to describe Arabs.

Yours sincerely,

Mohammed Asif
CEO