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This textbook has egregious errors, omissions, misrepresentations and falsifications in the areas of (A) the Crusades; (B) the Arab-Israeli Conflict; (C) the Palestinian Liberation Organization; (D) Terrorism; and (E) the Jihadist Terrorist Attack on September 11, 2001. Selected examples of problematic material with documented commentary are presented below.

(A) The Crusades

This textbook perpetuates Islamist Revisionism of the Crusades: the assertion that the Christians fought the Crusades to capture the Holy Land from the Muslims.

On page 296 of Chapter 12 “**The Cultural geography of Europe,**” Section 2 “**History and Government,**” in the subsection “**Expansion of Europe,**” the textbook states:

“Beginning in the 1000s, western European armies fought the Crusades—a series of brutal religious wars—to win Palestine, the birthplace of Christianity, from Muslim rule. Europeans failed to win permanent control of the area but did extend trade routes to the eastern Mediterranean world. Spices and other products that came with increased trade sparked the interest of the small number of educated Europeans in other parts of the world.”

The Crusades were waged to regain the Holy Land from Muslim rule, not to win Palestine for the first time, as this quote inaccurately implies. Further, the reference to the “**small number of educated Europeans**” is in keeping with the Arab claim that Islam civilized Europe. The paragraph is obviously biased against the Christians. The Crusades were brutal but so were the Muslim conquests that preceded the Crusades.

(B) The Arab-Israeli Crisis

On page 440 of Chapter 18 “**The Cultural Geography of North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia,**” in Section 1 “**Population Patterns,**” in the subsection “**Israelis,**” the textbook states:

“Jews living in Israel and elsewhere trace their religious heritage to the Israelites, who in ancient times settled Canaan, the land shared today by Israel and Lebanon. The Israelites believed that God had given them this area as a permanent homeland. Over the centuries, wars, persecution, and trade led many Jews – as the descendants of the Israelites are called – to settle in other countries. Their religious identity, however, kept alive their link to the ancestral homeland. Finally, in 1948, Israel was founded as a Jewish state.

“The Arabs of the region, however, did not want a Jewish state in territory that had been their homeland for centuries. Tensions between Arabs and Jews resulted in four wars that brought severe hardship to all the people of the area, including the Palestinians—Arabs living in the territory in which Israel was established. During this period of conflict, many Palestinians were displaced from their homes and lived in refugee settlements in neighboring Arab countries.”

There are several issues that make these two paragraphs problematic. First, they omit the historical fact that Jews have had a continuous presence in the same land since ancient biblical times.¹ In doing so the quote incorrectly implies that only Arabs had a claim to the region as their **“homeland.”** Second, both Jews and Arabs were called “Palestinians” until May 14, 1948 when Israel was established and the word Israelis came into being. The wording in these paragraphs perpetuates the faulty Islamist claim that the Palestinian Arabs are the indigenous people of the region. The paragraphs do not explain that there was no there is no such land or legally established country called Palestine and that everyone living there was called Palestinians. In addition, there is no explanation as to why **“during this period of conflict, many Palestinians were displaced from their homes and lived in refugee settlements in neighboring Arab countries.”** What is missing here is also the fact that most of the Arabs who fled did so at the instigation of their own local leaders and those of the five Arab nations that attacked Israel.²

On page 450, in the subsection **“Arab-Israeli Conflict,”** the textbook states:

“After World War II, hostilities broke out in Palestine among Jews, Arabs and British forces. Finally, the United Nations decided in 1947 to divide Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. When the British withdrew from Palestine, the Jews proclaimed the independent state of Israel in 1948. During the next 25 years, Arab opposition to Israel and Israel’s concern for its security led to four major wars in the region. In the 1948 and 1967 Arab-Israeli conflicts, victorious Israeli forces took over Arab lands that had been part of Palestine.”

This paragraph is problematic because of two egregious omissions. First, there is no mention of the Arab refusal to accept the Partition Plan, thereby eliminating the creation of an Arab state.³ Further, there is no mention of the fact that every time there was an opportunity for a peaceful resolution—in 1919, 1936, 1946, 1947, 1948 and 1967—the Jews were ready to accept the settlement which in 1948 and 1967 included the return of land and the Arabs refused.⁴

¹ Ruth Kark and Michael Oren-Nordheim, Jerusalem and Its Environs (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001), p. 28.

² Mitchell G. Bard, Myths and Facts A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Maryland: American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2001), p. 162; <http://www.beyondimages.info/b291.html>;
http://www.middleeastpiece.com/arabrefugees_causes.html

³ <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/transjordan.htm>

⁴ <http://israelipalestinian.procon.org/view.answers.php?questionID=00049>;
<http://israelipalestinian.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=000635#british>
<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace+Process/Reference+Documents/The+Weizmann-Feisal+Agreement+3-Jan-1919.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faisal%E2%80%93Weizmann_Agreement;
<http://middleeast.about.com/od/arabisraeliconflict/f/khartoum-declaration-faq.htm>

Page 451 of the subsection **“Israelis and Palestinians,”** contains additional problematic information on both the Palestinian refugee question and the UN Partition of Palestine:

“The wars that followed the birth of Israel forced many Palestinian Arabs from their homes to live as refugees or settlers in other lands. The status of the Palestinian refugees is an ongoing issue in the Arab-Israeli dispute. In addition, Palestinians—both refugees and those living in Israeli-occupied areas—want an independent state of their own in the West Bank and Gaza Strip areas.”

What is missing here is the fact that most of the Arabs who fled did so at the instigation of their own local leaders and those of the five Arab nations that attacked Israel.⁵ The final statement about the aims of the Palestinians omits their goal to retake all of Israel and drive out or exterminate the Jews. This goal was and remains the basis of Charter of the PLO.⁶

(C) The Jihadist Terrorist Attack on September 11, 2001

The textbook misrepresents the September 11, 2001 Islamist terrorist attack against America.

On page 163 of Chapter 7 **“The United States and Canada Today,”** in Section 1 **“Living in the United States and Canada,”** in the subsection **“United Against Terrorism,”** the textbook states:

“On September 11, 2001, terrorists hijacked four passenger planes, crashing two of them into New York City’s World Trade Center and the third into the Pentagon, the defense department headquarters in Washington, D.C. A fourth plane plummeted into a Pennsylvania field. The devastation and loss of so many lives made the United States firmly resolved to rid the world of terrorism.”

There are critical omissions in this paragraph: there is no identification of the terrorists as Muslims or Islamic Jihadists and there is no explanation as to why the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were the targets. It also fails to identify the White House as the fourth target. Further, there is a crucial piece of misinformation: the fourth plane did not “plummet” into a Pennsylvania field. The passengers on the plane gave their lives to prevent the hijacked plane from reaching its intended target.

http://www.sixdaywar.co.uk/khartoum_resolutions.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1967_Arab_League_summit

⁵ Bard, *Myths and Facts*, pp. 62-63;. <http://www.beyondimages.info/b291.html>;

http://www.middleeastpiece.com/arabrefugees_causes.html

⁶ <http://www.netaxs.com/~iris/plochart.htm>