

ETHNIC STUDIES in CALIFORNIA STATE EDUCATION

The resistance to openness in the projected Ethnic Studies curriculum as evidenced by the governor's initial veto highlights a one sided resistance by the Pro-Zionist camp. A plea for Holocaust observance and the dangers of antisemitism cannot be isolated from the actual history of the creation of Israel.

Ethnic studies should weigh the celebration of Israel's Independence Day against the Palestinian Nakba. It should include the preceding events of late 1800's into the 20th century highlighting Western intervention in the Middle East, the beginnings of the Zionist movement, and true exposure of the League of Nations and subsequent United Nations decisions that lead to Israel's creation.

If Israel is, in fact, a reaction to horrors of the Holocaust, then the complete history of Herzl, Balfour, the shaping of western opinion, and the unfair partitioning of what had been recognized as Palestine that, at the time, was predominately Arab, a small contingent of Christian, and merely seven percent Jewish. Over 50% of the land area was appropriated to Israel which immediately evolved into the ultimate goal of eliminating the native population (defined by Golda Meir as “a land without a people”).

700,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homes, villages either destroyed, buried, or occupied by Jewish settlers. A policy which culminates as Israeli policy today.

The timeline for this period, from inception to the present, is of course much more involved. Cause and effect in this ethnic studies program should be included. As it now stands, the revised outline of ethnic studies places major emphasis on conditions that led to the holocaust and in depth references examining that era of history. What's missing is the subsequent period of events that follow. If the relevance of this part of history is ignored, it would be best to remove the whole block of ethnic studies from the program.

References pertaining to actual history and current course of events are severely monitored by pro Israel parties. Accusations of antisemitism as a last line of defense only prevent open discourse. Any who counter the long repeated Zionist narrative are condemned as haters. Human rights groups who oppose Israel's colonialism are called out for singling out Israel. What's not recognized is America's empowerment of Israel's unaccountability. We defend their actions regardless of loss of civilian Palestinian lives through excessive force and disdain for international law.

Rather than rant on to deaf ears, I'm listing a resource library that has no overlap with reference guides already posted by pro Israel orgs.

Peace not Apartheid, Jimmy Carter

The Generals Son, Miko Peled

The Punishment of Gaza, Gideon Levy

The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, Ilan Pappé

Brokers of Deceit, Rashid Khalidi

Goliath, Max Blumenthal

Shattered Hopes, Josh Ruebner

Palestine in Israeli School Books, Nurit Peled-Elhanan

Tribes Triumphant, Charles Glass

The Invention of the Land of Israel, Shlomo Sand

The 51 Day War, Max Blumenthal

Paradigm Lost, Ian Lustig

