

To whom it may concern,

The elementary school classroom; one of the last havens of learning where the lower, middle, and upper classes of our society can obtain an education up until after their senior year in High School, for after 12th grade, the kids choices and economic/socioeconomic statuses will dictate what path these children's lives will take. These are the most formative years of a child's life and will shape their future.

I was considering reading what this proposed curriculum act would entail. But before I do, I have one question for you, who will see this letter (and I fear I know the answer): Does this curriculum talk about peace, a definition of peace, and/or a proposed discussion for peace? If these elements are not included, then I ask you, what is the purpose of adding these lesson plans to the curriculum other than to stir the pot? To bring out the issues that plague our society is a good thing, but to offer no proposed resolution or discussions for peace, is to expose a wound and to allow it to be susceptible to the elements of anger and racism already present in our society.

I will go to the article now and I may have to write this and throw it away if I am pleasantly proven wrong. The first issue will be if there is the presence of the definition of the term "*Islamophobia*" and not the word "*anti-Semitic*" for the simple reason that racism is across the board. [***** At this point it may be your instinct (Or not) to scroll to the end or disregard, but please dont, I Beg of you*****]. Racism (Ugly word) is non discriminatory and it doesn't just happen to one particular race/culture/religion/ethnicity/gender/age group/etc... To address racism and bias are definitely issues to be dealt with in a swift manner when possible, but what happens when that matter has gone on for centuries? This is the case of the Islamic/Jewish foundation of their traumatic relationship that stems back thousands of years. But for what purpose? I do not condone the actions attempting to subjugate an entire race but I also do not condone the actions of proposing an escalated heated discussion in a classroom that consists of young adults who are not yet adults.

I first took a world religion course in College (Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo, CA, 2005-2006) and am a world traveler. Upon every world religion course I have taken I have always heard an equal amount of time given to each religion and it was always presented in a very non-bias manner that was non-partisan as well. While my education goes a bit farther than Cuesta College, as does my experiences, the model used there that allows the children to see all sides equally and fairly, would be the one way to educate the students in a way that does not promote hate.

I have read the article but first, a few things. Yes, I am Jewish. Yes, I am a male. And yes, #MeToo.

Why do I include these things? To show that I speak on more than one level and that I am not someone who wants to purport only their personal agenda.

As a Jewish male, the first point in my critique of this curriculum is that the Holocaust was not included. **Please do not let this deter you from finishing the reading of this letter.** This may have been a sore spot for many but it did happen as much as the trail of tears, which was included in the curriculum. History is destined to repeat itself when it is forgotten and this time, with all points given, I would have to say it is

10-fold that we, the world, would feel it, for the current state of the world is tumultuous at best and we need to make sure that this *never* happens to *anyone* ever *again*.

Second, the proposed peace talks I had mentioned aren't included and for that I am saddened to be correct.

I could go on with that one but I will digress for a bit. Here is the state of the world as I see it:

It is my belief that the Islamic countries are currently the scapegoats because of one underlying current that has kept them alive:

Their strength

The people of the Islamic faith have a strength that is very formidable and is feared in the world as the blacks in the USA, and other countries too. It is only when the stigma of this fear is removed that they and the world will have a chance for peace. This fear should be replaced with understanding and education, not the purporting of one's own agenda. Only with understanding and education that is across the lines non-biased will world peace ever be achieved. The reason I indicate the word "world" peace is because that is the goal, isn't it? And, if we are all only as strong as our collective whole, strongest and weakest links all joined together, how can there be peace if not by the world?

Every entity be it corporation, trademark, brand, person, country and religion has their own strengths. Let's go with religion at the moment since this is the foundation of most of the world, despite the separation of church and state. What many people do not see is the strengths of these religions can only be most effective if they can learn to work with the others. Can you imagine what a world it would be to take "The Strength of Islam" + "The Faith of Christianity" + "The Peace and Calm Balance of Buddhists" + "The Knowledge and Tradition of the Jews"? I am afraid that the world would not be ready for this though, since we have always thrived on controversy and challenges, but what if? It would truly be a wondrous place since we are still as at the Tower of Babel at the moment.

Also, I hate to say this, and I recognize that this may make my letter discarded, but I question any foreign leader who says that they can bring peace to the Middle East. For one to say that would make them either:

1. Trying to further their own objective,
2. Trying to feed their own ego,
3. Or just plain ignorant.

How can someone who hasn't seen the bloodshed of their countryman, no matter what country it be: Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen, or any non-middle eastern country as well, say "I have the answers...I know how to establish peace....I can help". They have not lived the lives or seen their people killed. They may have studied the issues at the top of their political science classes at the finest Universities but does that qualify them to say that they "KNOW" the

struggle? Until they have seen their brother, their son or daughter, their mom or dad, their sister, their aunt or uncle slaughtered by the wakes of war, they are completely unqualified to say that they have any place or knowledge to do anything of the kind. For how can they know the pain and suffering, the mental anguish of the issues at hand that have affected them personally, and worse, their ancestors for thousands of years. This type of constant warring has laid opinions hard, fast and cold to stay as stone since it has shaped cultures. And when I say "Them", I mean all countries that have an adversary.

Any foreign political leader that tries to make peace has already overstepped their boundaries in even stating that as an objective. Peace has to come from the heart and if the foreign political powers that want to establish peace do not even know that warring heart then how can they conceive a way to establish a path to heal it?

I would like to ask the next President who thinks they can bring peace where they have no understanding to imagine themselves laying in bed, Jewish or Muslim, they awaken to a horrendous earth shaking **"BOOOOM!!"**. Bombs scream through the night, piercing the air with light as their explosive impacts make the ground tremble as though G-d himself had landed. There is panic, scrambling and a great confusion, fire everywhere and bloody cries of pain and despair. You see your people being slaughtered and you weep for the friends you will never see again. You run, dodging left and right. A painful, suffering cry for help reaches your ears and you recognize the voice. You see your teacher off in the distance, who you learned from just yesterday, her arm is missing and she is bleeding profusely. You drag her to safety and pray with tears for her to reach heaven in peace as you cover her eyes. You start to run again, you see your people, neighbors, enemies, friends, all begging for help with pleas for mercy and comfort but you search for your own family to know they are safe and for you to reach safety as well. You hear your father calling out for you frantically in the distance, you scream for him. You run to the voice as bullets fly by you, ripping at your skin as your only thought is to get to the arms of your loved ones where you have known only peace and love. A hand grasps at your arm and drags you down as the "enemy" fires bullets at your people. Your dear friend holds you down and says "I can get you out but you have to come now! There is a truck waiting! Let's GO!!". You shake your head and say that you have to find your father and family, if only to know that they are all right. You hug your friend as your brother and wish him G-d's speed. Your tears trail down your face, blackened with the soot of the fire and ash that floats freely through the night while you know you will never see your friend again as he races into the dark of night. You run faster and faster in the direction you last heard your fathers cries. More fires spring forth on the left, on the right, on all sides of you as explosions run rampant. Increasing and louder cries echo the night and your father's screams for you suddenly appear in the night once again! He is close and you race to him! Down a dark alley, a wrong turn!! Back to the main passageway as you hunt for him to bring safety to you and your family. Finally, through the fire and ashes, you find him. He is stumbling into a doorway, crashing through the door of a strangers house. You follow and scream out "Dad!" when you find him. He has been broken, beaten by the savages of the war. His face has been pummeled to barely recognizable with his nose broken and smashed, he grasps at his gutt, where he was stabbed repeatedly while he crumples to the floor. You shake your head uncontrollably and weep, screaming with the agony of seeing your father, the rock of your childhood, battered in such a horrible way. This was the man who was supposed to make everything ok and you

now question what will become... Sadly, he passes and, forged by fire, you are now the man of the house, the patriarch of the family.

Can any President say they went through this? I have not experienced it either but ask anyone who grew up in Israel if this thought doesn't cross their minds every now and then and I can pretty much guarantee the answer, even though I have been to Israel and know that it is a common way of life. If they have not ever known the issue, the problem, the root of this warring, and they cannot feel the pain that lies on the level that this story above tells, how can they ever have the hopes of bringing peace to an issue that they can know but not feel?

And what of that boy, now a man? What kind of a man will he be to have lived through such a disaster? Will he try to find peace or vengeance, resolution of escalation of conflict, and will his heart be filled with a malice that swears to avenge his father....or a desperation to bring an end to the conflict that took his father out of this world and away from him?

So what gives me the right to purport my statements as though I have lived them? As I mentioned...#MeToo. I was raped at age 4 by a Nazi Cultist. She forced me to endure things that no child, nobody, should ever have to go through. With the use of blunt objects, and worse, she took away my pride, my manhood, my innocence, my self-dignity and self-respect, my sense of being until I was a puddle of mush who lived to serve. She put me through unspeakable mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, and psychological trauma that I will, as much as I try, never recover from. And worse, as a Jewish male, it was done in Hitler's name, so that would destroy me, and continues to do so, in many ways that again, I will never recover from.

Back then, 1973, it was still not too long from the memories of WWII. So, the sensitivity level was still higher than it is now. But with the uprising of anger, hatred, and tensions rising on every front, should language that could bring controversy be brought into the classroom that could increase incidents like this and make them prevalent in our day? I will tell you at this moment and I hold fast to this statement 100% for all time: **Nobody of any demographic should EVER have to endure what I was put through.**

The only path to peace will have to come through the people themselves. And that is what should be taught to the students. It cannot start at the top for the leaders are too plagued with lobbyists and with differing opinions that contradict one another, and they are left to make hard decisions that no man should ever have to make. The path to peace is not an easy one, but without a lesson included for peace, how will peace ever be taught? And with that...what is the true objective?

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