



CENTER FOR MONITORING

THE IMPACT OF PEACE (R.A.)

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NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2001

On 12th October 2001 an article appeared in the Dutch Jewish Weekly, written by Ran Hacohen that the research of the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace is based on preconceived notions. Six main contentions were raised by Mr. Hacohen. These have been translated from the Dutch, summarized into point form, and are denoted below in italics, with CMIP's response following.

1. *CMIP is a political instrument, used by the director/settler Itamar Marcus for extreme right wing purposes.*

CMIP is an independent, non political NGO whose conviction is that education is the key factor in promoting genuine peace. In other words, if the education system instills recognition of the "other", respect for its identity and culture, as well as commitment to solving conflicts and differences by peaceful means, then the chances for peace will be greatly enhanced. By contrast, if the education system instills rejection and hatred of the "other", of its identity and of its culture, calls for and justifies the resort to violence to solve conflict, then peace will have no chance whatsoever.

Itamar Marcus is no longer associated with CMIP and has not been for some considerable time.

2. *CMIP as an NGO in New York is a post box trick and a cover up as the CMIP offices are really in Jerusalem.*

It is with this conviction that CMIP was established in the US in an endeavor to review the content of official state education of parties involved in conflicts. CMIP started with the Arab-Israel conflict, with a view to expanding this mission to other areas of the world. Since its inception three years ago, CMIP has produced five reports on the textbooks of the PA, Israel and Syria. CMIP will shortly release its sixth report, devoted exclusively to the review of 50 new textbooks produced by the PA and introduced into its system of education in the last two years.

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3. *The outcome of CMIP research is strongly manipulated.*

CMIP's findings do not lend themselves to manipulation, since it would have been extremely easy to contest the findings had the texts been quoted incorrectly. To date, no-one has suggested, including Dr. Ruth Firer and Ran HaCohen, that the quotes from the PA, Israeli and Syrian textbooks highlighted in our reports are inaccurate, forged or incomplete.

4. *CMIP does not have any pedagogical or didactical insight into the subject, but merely has an interest in showing that peace with the Palestinians is not possible*

In the absence of opportunity to contest the findings referred to in CMIP's report, Ran HaCohen tries to discredit CMIP, by portraying CMIP as "anti-peace" and accusing it of showing "that peace with the Palestinians is not possible".

5. *CMIP hides the fact that the textbooks in use are in fact Egyptian and Jordanian which indeed do contain a few anti-Semitic lines in them.*

CMIP has never attempted to hide the fact that many PA textbooks were of Egyptian and Jordanian origin. On the contrary this is clearly and explicitly mentioned in CMIP reports. However, the PA cannot be absolved of the responsibility for their decision to use these Egyptian and Jordanian textbooks in its education system. They could have utilized the list of textbooks authorized by the Director General of UNESCO, according to an international arrangement set up in 1968. But the PA preferred to demand the abrogation of this arrangement, which was actually approved in October 1995 by the General Assembly of UNESCO.

6. *The specialist on the subject is Dr. Ruth Firer, who has published four important books on the subject and has said about the new books that "there was less stereotyping about Jews and Israelis than in the old Egyptian and Jordanian book. It was quite an improvement, especially if you take the poor situation and the Israeli schoolbooks of the 50's and 60's into account".*

To the best of CMIP's knowledge, Dr. Ruth Firer's research deals with Israeli textbooks, rather than Arab or Palestinian textbooks. The research work on Israeli and Palestinian textbooks that she is carrying out together with Professor Sami Adwan from Bethlehem University has not yet been published. Her claim that there was an improvement in the few, new textbooks published by the PA, was actually based on CMIP's report on the New Palestinian Authority School Textbooks, for Grade One and Grade Six (p3). At a seminar organized jointly by the Truman Institute of the Hebrew University and CMIP in January this year, where this report was presented, Dr Firer confessed that she had not seen or read these new textbooks. Moreover, several months later, in April 2001, the Chairman of the Truman Institute asked CMIP to provide a set of these new PA textbooks for Professor Adwan and Dr. Firer to analyse. We indeed provided them.

7. *Dr. Yohanan Manor is not an expert on the subject. He published works about nation planning, a French history of Zionism and a book in English about the UN Resolution equating Zionism with Racism*

Professor Yohanan Manor has his doctorate in political science – specialising in Egypt, and has written books on the history of Zionism in general, especially with its confrontation with the Arab National Movement (and not on French history of Zionism as claimed). For several years he was Director of Research for a Jewish Agency educational institution.

CMIP welcomes and encourages all readers to examine and address the real issues arising from its reports whether it be regarding the Israeli, Syrian or Palestinian textbooks. CMIP is of the opinion that the integrity of the debate can only be maintained when all sides are prepared to openly and honestly examine and discuss the contents of the textbooks themselves and seeks to develop academic debate in the spirit held at the event hosted jointly at the Truman Institute to which Dr. Firer was invited to present her views.