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RECEIVED 3. 2017
JEW

Shawlands Academy
31 Moss-side Road
Glasgow G41 3TR

Thursday, 17th May 2017

Dear John Swinney,

I am a teacher in Shawlands Academy and over the past two years I have part of a working group developing teaching resources on Israel and Palestine. Now that all our hard work is finished, I am concerned that there has been a delay in using these resources in Glasgow schools. I am even more concerned that some resources have removed without any consultation whatsoever. It looks like steps have been taken to shut down any discussion of Israel/Palestine in Glasgow schools.

I believe the resources to be of a high standard and I would like to set out the reasons why they are a worthwhile resource for schools. I appreciate that you are a very busy person but I feel that I could not do the resources justice in a short email.

Teaching young people about the need for universal human rights and the horrors of persecution is a subject close to my heart because of the trauma my family suffered through the Holocaust in Auschwitz. Indeed, my family was sent to Auschwitz, Nazi labour camps and Siberia, so I have heard first-hand how trauma affects people.

I have been teaching French and Spanish in Shawlands Academy in Glasgow for around 15 years and have been heavily involved in International school and environmental work from the very start. Rest assured, I am not suggesting taking pupils to the Middle East! However, I have taken pupils on numerous trips (13?) in Britain, Europe and South Africa and consequently I am committed to developing the Global Citizenship initiative currently being taught as a discrete subject in the school in order to enshrine the values of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child which will in turn supports our bid in becoming a Rights Respecting School.

Which is a long-winded way of saying that I have always had a keen interest in the Middle East, so I was delighted when a proposal for Shawlands Academy to form a partnership with a school in Jen in, Palestine, was promulgated.

The proposal was made by a teacher from Jenin and raised by [redacted], teacher and Ambassador of the British Council, at a meeting of the school's International Committee.

This presented the challenge I was looking for and I threw myself into the project with gusto; I researched the subject thoroughly through reputable sources which include books,

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films , documentaries, media in Britain, Palestine, Israel, France and other countries, bodies such a as Oxfam, Amnesty and the Red Cross as well as attending numerous meetings which focused on the subject .

Early in January 2015, a group of teachers in the school formed the Jenin Partnership Committee to see how we could best support the Jenin pupils in and it soon became abundantly clear that much work was need to dispel prejudice in order to address this controversial issue and the first step would be to create explanatory lessons.

I have just been looking through some of the Minutes of our 35+ meetings of the last two and a half years and I am proud of the work we have produced and our commitment and determination to give pupils a voice to talk about Israel/Palestine in a safe environment.

As an illustration I cite the following Minutes :

Minutes of Meeting 22, Wednesday 21.01.2016

1. Achievements

- *BG has compiled two folders of all work developed by JPC over the last twelve months.*
- *A second folder has been compiled with course materials for the school based lessons.*

[redacted] workshop went successfully. It was a delight to have such a high-profile figure with relevant expertise delivering a workshop for pupils related to controversial issues in the classroom.

- *[redacted]{Scots Makar, who contributed to a book on Palestinian poetry, A Bird is not a Stone} poetry workshop was also very well received, taking place with senior pupils in English.*
- *{redacted]and [redacted]have worked as members of the International Committee to develop Hittin school link.*

2. Future Direction of JPC

- *Delivery of lessons prepared over the last twelve months around March time.*
- *Developing link with Hittin school through British Council Connecting Classrooms.*
- *Possibly offer course materials developed to be delivered in Global Citizenship.*
- *Teaching of Michael Morpurgo text in 2016/2017 – money has been allocated for this.*

3.

Throughout the year we were grateful for the encouragement in our aims from British Council Ambassadors, teachers from John Paul Academy who had a link with a school in Palestine, the Lord Provost Sadie Docherty, 8 teachers from an official Palestinian delegation who spoke to the Scottish Parliament and our own SLT.

There were several assurances from the SLT that our course would run in the school. After many discussions it was agreed that our 14 lessons would be pared down to just 4: Introduction, History and Media, Budrus and Olive Branches.

According to the Minutes of 2/9/15:

"[redacted] reported back from SMT. Course (renamed "Conflict Issues") to be delivered to all S4 during RE time by the humanities department."

Unbeknownst to us another group of teachers had also been creating resources to teach Israel/Palestine. Once we had nearly finished our own writing we discovered, via, [redacted], that [redacted] was heading a Writing Party .

This is how [redacted] explained it in a letter dated 12 September 2015:

When the North Lanarkshire story hit the press I was invited to the meeting between the Palestinian community and the director of education, CEO and political leader of the council due to my educational connection with Palestine. At that meeting I was asked to help support the school in question. I suggested to Education Scotland and my colleagues on the Glasgow and Clyde Group that there was a need for a teaching resource to avoid further incidents. I volunteered to explore how this could be done.

Education Scotland agreed to this and I subsequently formed a working group with membership from Education Scotland, the Glasgow and Clyde authorities and the EIS. Glasgow is represented on this group by [redacted] and 2 faculty heads from Glasgow secondary schools.

At a meeting arranged by Angela Constance with Dr Alistair Allan , Minister for Learning, Sciences and Scotland's Languages, the Minister approved development of the teaching resource and committed Education Scotland to support this development.

While I am not employed by anyone, I hope you can see that I do have authority at the highest level to lead this project.

Some funding for the development was provided by Glasgow's Provost and has been shared between some Glasgow schools including Shawlands Academy.

Regarding the materials you are developing, I am perfectly happy for you to develop a set of lessons that meet the needs of your school. I am grateful that you have agreed that I can incorporate some of your work into the teaching resource. Your school will be acknowledge for this work and I will make sure you are happy with how it is being used before the final resource is agreed.

Thank you once again for welcoming me to your school and sharing with me the excellent work being done there.

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As a result of this, we agreed with the SLT to wait for these resources to be ready and quality assured before they were rolled out in schools.

In the meantime, in the Spring of 2016 and 2017 I self-financed 2 trips to our link school in Jenin and our school group committed ourselves to raising £8k to help with the education of 8 exceptionally talented boys, some of whom live in the refugee camp.

From May 2016 to April 2017 we focussed on the following fund-raising events: Palestinian lunch, [redacted] Cabaret "Piaf" evening and a Curry Night. When I met the boys early in April this year they were stunned by the good wishes and generosity of the Glaswegians.

I was also surprised by the politicians and writers who came forward to support us. The boys were so grateful that someone cared in a world which they feel has abandoned them. Through no fault of their own these children's lives have been torn asunder by gross injustice.

Only when I met people who were in such desperate circumstances did I get a better understanding of the situation and empathize.

In the last few 2 years we have written this resource, changed and rewritten it, listened to all the consultation groups, refined, refined and refined and until we have found something that **most** can agree on. Certainly, it is all evidence-based with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and International law at its core.

I was shocked at the reaction we received from some of the ScoJec group when we met up on 29th November 2016. I wrote up the minutes verbatim in order that one could not dispute what was said.

Present were:

[redacted] - Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

[redacted]- Scottish Friends of Israel

[redacted] - Scottish Jews for a Just Peace (11:30-15:00)

[redacted] - Glasgow Jewish Representative Council

[redacted] (IT support, morning only) – Education Scotland

[redacted] – Glasgow City Council

[redacted] – North Lanarkshire Council

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[redacted] – Shawlands Academy

[redacted] – Project Coordinator

Afternoon only

[redacted] Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland joined the meeting.

Here is a sample of comments;

"Did you ever go to university?"

"You are going to get it for this!"

"These resources will cause more trouble than it is worth. When this goes pear shaped you are the man who is going to get it."

"Where do you start with what's wrong with it?"

"Who are you? You are nothing!"

"Your local authority has no knowledge of this. Who is [redacted]? [redacted] does not know anything about [redacted] or the group. I emailed her and she emailed back to confirm this last night."

A follow up email stated:

" I will do everything I can to stop you in your tracks."

"You will see where your good intentions get you."

My colleagues on the working group all felt intimidated and threatened in the consultation meeting with ScoJec group.

I think, though, that this is the moment when we have to show the moral imperative, to summon up our courage and not to slink away and be beaten by bullies.

The Jewish community in Scotland hold a whole variety of views on Israel/Palestine and it would be wrong of us to listen only to the most extreme of these.

There were various concerns raised by ScoJec.

1. There was no call for such a resource in schools.
2. The resources were deemed not good enough/favourable only to Palestinians.
3. These resources would stir up anti-Semitism in schools.
4. The writers of the resource were not sufficiently expert in the field to be impartial and knowledgeable.

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Let me address these concerns point by point.

(1) There was no call for such a resource in schools.

This resource was needed because of distortions put out in school materials depicting Palestinians as terrorists. Not to address the topic does not make it go away. In fact, what you will see is more distortions abounding, both anti-Islamic and anti-Jewish, if you do not address this. Teachers need to rely on reliable and thoroughly researched resources. The majority of Palestinians are Muslims and, as it was pointed out, co-religionists identify themselves with Palestinians as the underdog in their conflict with Israel which in turn breeds resentment.

There is also an increase of Islamophobia in the world today where Muslims from certain countries are refused entry to the US and this was recently the case for some British Muslims as well.

However, despite what is generally thought, it has to be made clear that this is not a religious conflict. Last month I met with the former Palestinian ambassador to France [redacted] and she spoke about the importance of Palestinian Christians (like her) remaining in the country to counter this argument.

Most Israelis have never met a Palestinian and Palestinians do not care if Israelis were Pygmies or Estonians, they simply identify them as a hostile, occupying, colonialist, military power: men/women in uniform carrying arms.

In Scotland there is increasing interest with Celtic football fans identifying themselves with the Palestinians in the "Match the fine for Palestine" initiative. Recently there were banners supporting the Palestinian prisoners held in Israel jails who have been on hunger strike since April 17th. There is a growing trend of Palestinian flags being flown at football matches. Israeli football teams as members of UEFA play football against Scottish teams.

Glasgow has a strong link with Palestine through its twinning with Bethlehem.

There are 3 important significant dates spoken about:

The centenary of the Balfour agreement, 50 years since the occupation, (the official UK title is "The Occupied Palestinian Territories for a reason!) and the 10th anniversary of the Gaza blockade.

Do not think for a second pupils do not speak openly about this. Just yesterday, a neighbour who I only know as a passing acquaintance stopped to chat. I knew that she was an English teacher in Clydebanks and she told me of essays submitted by the pupils about Israel/Palestine. The answer to, "but why Israel, why not the Middle East?", "why not

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India/Pakistan?”, is that pupils talk about Israel/Palestine rather than the Middle East or other parts of the globe with such passion.

Israel/Palestine is unique: a state formed partially as a response to the Holocaust which we teach in great detail in schools but do not go into the “what after- part”; a territory once governed by the British; a Middle-Eastern state peopled increasingly by European immigrants which is more Western than Middle-Eastern; a state with no defined borders; a sliver of a country not bigger than Wales but which dominates the media and which invites a polarization of opinions; a land that is sacred to three religions; Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

(2) The resources were deemed not good enough/favourable only to Palestinians.

Let’s face it, any resource would be criticized by either side for not being sufficiently sympathetic! All I can say are that we were rigorous in producing a resource based on undisputed facts and evidence –based. There are no two sides to human rights abuses and it is not an equal struggle. At the meeting [redacted] representing the children’s commissioner, asked ‘if you don’t want this then what?’ There was no answer.

Sometimes the truth is simply uncomfortable; especially if you have the baggage of prejudice.

You requested to check over the resources before passing them on to [redacted]and Education Scotland. You did not express any objections. Can you imagine the reaction of the Palestinian community, having being told that the resources were now being in a public arena one day then the next, that they were not good enough? Can you imagine how offended they will be?

Education Scotland is regarded in high regard for its rigorous adherence to quality work. I have had enquiries from around the world to talk about this resource and where they may access it.

There was a palpable fear of any discussion of Israel/Palestine being brought into schools because of suspected bias. The resource was rejected with little constructive criticism from ScoJec.

The following extract is from the verbatim minutes.

“[redacted] – I find the materials very repetitive (all about the wall, less water for the Palestinians, skewered towards Palestinians. Real – or fake vignettes, ie the school in Maine.) There are no Jewish refugees after 70 years. What are the financial incentives to be refugees? “

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To insinuate that people choose to be refugees for some financial benefit I feel displays an extreme viewpoint that that has no place in Scottish education. One only needs to view information coming from UNRWA and the UN to know that the biggest refugee problem in the world today is that of the Palestinians. I recently visited three Palestinian refugee camps in my endeavour to acquaint myself better with their plight. I defy anyone to find evidence of Palestinians who benefit financially from their desperate circumstances. I found this an absolutely heartless thing to say.

There were few concrete objections made, but if they were evidenced -based we took on board the criticism and amended accordingly.

“Jesus was born in Bethlehem West Bank,” was changed to “Jesus was born Bethlehem Judea” Some criticism could not be changed because the facts spoke for themselves. For example we were asked to use a certain map from the Jewish Virtual Library of Myths and Facts but decided to continue to use the world accepted UN map.

We were told :

“This is a shallow presentation. There is omission after omission, It’s called post truth.”

I found this comment very telling, just because you don’t like something doesn’t mean to say it is untrue! I felt like handing over the scores of books I had consulted and point out the blatant gaps of knowledge. Some of the community could not agree amongst themselves about certain points. For example, [redacted] commended on the resource and was very much of the view that:

“The crowded curriculum means that good resources are needed rather than not. i.e teaching the Holocaust is taught differently in each discipline. Teachers I think will give a balanced view. Years ago Israel /Palestine was a topic in Modern Studies along with South Africa- you had to teach pro and anti view of it. Some History teachers teach Holocaust and talk about racism but not about the history of the Jewish people. The Holocaust should be taught in every school.”

He also said:

“Controversial topics are those that people find it difficult to understand because there is no consensus. Sectarianism is a huge issue in schools, it is divisive but if kids are discussing this anyway then it is better to have a proper learning process in the classroom. It is not there to change opinion but shows there are alternative perspectives. Some cases are difficult to have consensus in Scottish schools; however if resources are balanced and fair then it is how you teach it in a structured and cohesive manner. Or else they are discussed through internet sites.”

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[redacted] was perhaps the most qualified, in academic terms in the room and as part of the Jewish community in Scotland he had a somewhat different view on the resources from the others present at the meeting. He is Vice-Principal of the University of West of Scotland and co-editor of 'Teaching Controversial Issues in the Classroom: Key Issues and Debates'. He is highly regarded in academia has been invited to speak on educational matters, in particular about the Holocaust, in universities around the world.

I note however, that he was shunned by the other representatives of the Jewish community who refused to invite him to join them for lunch!

The members of the working group have a track record of winning educational awards as well as other awards for our writing and have had articles published in professional journals. The team have had many years teaching History, Modern Studies, English and Global Citizenship, so it would really be insulting to Scottish Education to suggest we did not have the nous to write a resource such as this. What we were fully aware of was that each side would prefer to dismiss the interpretation of the other.

The Palestinian side also complained that we were too biased towards the Israeli interpretation by not discussing the right of return, the UN sanctions against Israel and the illegal settlements.

So, it was clear right from the start that a controversial topic such as this would involve a compromise having to be reached and accepted.

I attach the letter sent to [redacted] by [redacted](with his permission):

(3) These resources would stir up anti-Semitism in schools.

I believe this is an opportunity to teach young people not to conflate anti-Semitism with the policies of the Israeli Government.

Here is a short extract from the consultation meeting:

[redacted] – There are instances of anti-Semitism especially since the 2014 in Gaza that this actually backs the need for resources like this because Jewish children are being targeted.

[redacted] – We should have human rights in Israel and in Gaza – you are teaching something that is unbalanced.

[redacted] – If the instruction were to combat anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, to combat racial stereotyping, then you would not come up with this package.

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[redacted] – The increase of anti-Semitism is because some Islamists conflate what happens in Israel with Jewish communities. The key problem for anti-Semitism is Israel / Palestine.

Pupils have to have a safe environment to exercise their right to free speech and be given the facts to form their own opinions. Teachers have to be vigilant to counter any form of racism or sectarianism in our schools. This is especially true in the case of PSE, Modern Studies, English and Global Citizenship in which there is more leeway for debate. Political literacy is also being taught in our schools.

Absorbing the influx of minorities and refugees into our schools have presented challenges of racial stereotyping. On our own doorstep, in Shawlands, a local Muslim shopkeeper was murdered last year by an extremist member of his own religious community for his affinity towards Christians; 2 years ago a Pole was the first killed in Britain for being Polish. Brexit has opened up another can of worms, in targeting minorities, causing anxiety. I know this because pupils from different religious and ethnic backgrounds tell me this is the case. Surely we can all agree all forms of extremism and racism must be condemned.

(4) The writers of the resource were not sufficiently expert in the field to be impartial and knowledgeable.

Sadly, if you were to add up all the years the writers of this resource have actively worked as educationalists then it would be well over a hundred! Amongst us we had worked as QIOs, DHT, British Council Ambassadors, we have had work published, won countless awards for our writing and contributing to education. All would argue strongly that we must have learnt something in this time and, on the contrary, we have a wealth of knowledge. We were given an anecdote by the one Israeli present to illustrate how ineffectual teachers are.-how they really don't understand. I guess there is nothing like personal attacks to denigrate someone else's work.

Again from the verbatim minutes:

[redacted] – I talk about Curriculum For Excellence around the world and critical thinking skills. Global Citizenship is a benefit to Scottish education it gives a breadth of understanding. I taught at a school where they had very many refugees and we explored what it means to be a refugee and an asylum seeker. It gave the ethos of anti racism in school. Children needed to be guided by teachers.

It was argued that there never really existed a Palestinian people, in other words, a people with a distinct identity, a distinct character, a history of their own, with a legitimate claim to their own homeland and self-determination.

I beg to differ. Indeed, one book I could recommend is "Side by Side" Parallel Histories of Israel-Palestine" (edited Sami Adwan, Dan Bar-on and Eyal Naveh). which is a dual narrative

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of Palestinian and Israeli history. It seeks to show how different one viewpoint is to another and how children are being taught different things about the same events and which are deemed more important by each side. Quite an eye-opener.

There seems to be confusion between impartiality and passivity. Passivity in the face of unequal forces is anything but impartial. Impartiality demands an active attempt to create balance, to resist power, tell all the story, warts and all.

[redacted] asked the pertinent question. If not this (resource), then what? There was no answer.

What is there to gain from supporting Palestine? As politicians climb up the political ladder, their once courageous voices speaking out against injustice and human rights abuses documented by the UN become strangely muted. I was delighted that you as a politician had the foresight to approve this resource and let Israel/Palestine conflict be discussed in schools in a safe environment.

After all, there is no political kudos, it does not open the door to directorships of high-tech companies, no powerful brokers and little media sympathy.

Silences occur where powerful interests are at risk of exposure. They protect these interests from democratic scrutiny. Breaking such a silence requires a conscious and painful effort.

But you can't solve a problem without naming it.

It seems to be easy to shut down our feelings, shut our eyes, cover our ears, ignore the other who is part of our common humanity. People tend not to like being confronted by inconvenient facts. It is likely to harden their resistance to change.

The more I listened the more I realised how just how entrenched some of the viewpoints were.

In struck me too, that I as a child, and certainly far into my adult years, I was similarly indoctrinated. It takes a long time to unpeel prejudice and inaccuracies. There has to be a desire to know the truth, and once you do know it, you can't go back. A few years ago, I would have said many of the same things I heard that day; and now I am ashamed. Knowledge is a very powerful tool and I am not the same person as I was before I started this research.

In some respects I share a similar background with some members of the Jewish consultation group. My great-uncle [redacted] and his wife, [redacted] survived Auschwitz, and eventually found themselves in Britain. They set up a rehabilitation centre for concentration camp survivors outside Manchester, because no such facility existed, and people were told "just get on with it." My father, eventually joined them. His brother [redacted] had also been

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murdered in Auschwitz. Only recently my elderly mother has given public talks to large crowds telling the harrowing tale of her life first under Nazi Occupation, watching the Warsaw ghetto burn and living as a street child; then under the Soviets where she learnt two different versions of history. She realised that there are now very few living witnesses to this terrible time, and we must remember injustices to stop them being repeated. She was not allowed to mention her parents (whom she did not know) since they were then deemed “enemies of the state” of a brutal regime. I heard my mother speak for the first time 4 months ago and it moved me to tears. There was so much I didn’t know. I remember vividly, as a teenager listening to my grand-father [redacted] as he recounted his life in Siberia and great-aunt and uncle [redacted] talk about their experience in Auschwitz . My aunt was the first I ever heard quoting the famous words of Pastor Martin Niemoller and they have resonated with me ever since:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

So you see, I have no right to remain silent and this is why I felt so angry when the bullying started that day in December, in the Education Scotland Offices.

I also felt scared. I wanted to know, what comes next? Is this when our resource is pulled because of intimidation and pressure? Will I now expect a personal smear campaign to begin? Am I being completely paranoid? Are my words and actions going to be wrongly reported or distorted?

And what it teaches us is that this is not the time to stay silent. We have often been told that the moral arc of the universe bends towards justice. This will only be the case if we can put our fears aside, put our heads above the parapet and speak out for justice with courage and conviction.

I appeal to you to have faith in the professionalism of your teachers and not listen to extremists.

With best wishes

[redacted]

[Redacted - out of scope]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 27 January 2017 15:51:10
To: Public Engagement Unit
Cc: McAllister C (Colin)
Subject: FW: Israel/Palestine Teaching Resource

Attachments: Letter to Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning.docx

Hi,

For MACCS, MR please.

DFM has asked for a personal reply to drafted, with careful handling. Mr Swinney has also asked for Colin to be involved in the drafting.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted] | Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney MSP |
Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills |
Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: 0131 244 [redacted] |
E: [redacted] mailto:[redacted]

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 17 January 2017 12:20
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Israel/Palestine Teaching Resource
Importance: High

For the information and attention of Mr John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Dear Mister Swinney,

Israel/Palestine Teaching Resource

In June 2015, in my capacity as Honorary Secretary of Scottish Friends of Israel and representing voices of concern by constituents throughout Scotland, I wrote to the then Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Angela Constance, expressing those concerns in relation to the above proposed resource. My original letter is attached.

My correspondence was passed to Dr Alasdair Allan, then Minister for Learning, Science & Scotland's Languages who informed me that he had been involved in discussions regarding this particular issue and facilitated a meeting for me with Education Scotland.

I have now had several exchanges with representatives of Education Scotland on this issue during which some disturbing claims have arisen concerning Dr Allan's apparent decisions on the proposed resource not disclosed to me at the first instance and which now need clarification.

Following a meeting held on Nov 29, 2016 under the auspices of Education Scotland with Jewish Community representatives and [redacted], Project Coordinator, [redacted] produced a 'Note of Meeting', distributed to those who had attended the said meeting.

The 'Note of Meeting' contains several misleading statements and quotes taken out of context but which, for the purpose of this communication, are not directly relevant to your office. However, the 'Note of Meeting' does state:

'In a meeting with Dr Alistair Allan, the then minister of learning, a commitment was made to support the development of a teaching and learning resource on Israel and Palestine?.'

This is not a view disclosed by Dr Allan in his response to my letter. I would therefore ask you to clarify as to whether or not Dr Allan, in his then capacity of Minister for Learning, Science & Scotland's Languages, committed the Scottish Government 'to support the development of a teaching and learning resource on Israel and Palestine?.'

I would appreciate an acknowledgement of receipt of this request.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Hon Sec.
Scottish Friends of Israel.

[redacted]

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Scottish Friends of Israel

[redacted]

[\[redacted\]](#)

June 24, 2015

Cabinet Secretary for Education & Lifelong Learning
T3.21
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Ms Constance,

Access of political extremists into the Scottish education system

I write to you as Honorary Secretary of Scottish Friends of Israel, representing members throughout Scotland.

For some time now I have been concerned by reports of various organisations, some with extreme agendas, working to gain access within Scottish primary and secondary education with the express intention of influencing, indoctrinating, dare I say grooming, children towards extremist views, particularly in relation to the Arab-Israel conflict.

Following publication of a recent incident, when a homework worksheet was allegedly given to P7 pupils at New Stevenston Primary School, Motherwell, and which reportedly labelled Palestinians as "terrorists", I have been monitoring the follow-up actions of North Lanarkshire Council and those purporting to represent the interests of Palestinian Communities in Scotland.

North Lanarkshire Council was approached by [redacted], Chair of the Association of Palestinian Communities in Scotland who, reportedly, called for a public apology to the Palestinian community in Scotland, a meeting with education department officials in North Lanarkshire, with the leader of the council and Scotland's minister for education.

I believe that North Lanarkshire Council did issue a clear apology and that the aforementioned meeting with officials did take place. But it is the following demand by [redacted] ; "That all materials used in schools relating to the teaching of the history of Palestine is discussed between Education Scotland and the Palestinian community" that is disturbing .

Recent publications by the Association of Palestinian Communities in Scotland and related supportive organisations, at a recent meeting of the Cross-party Group on Palestine at the Scottish Parliament, have indicated that there are intentions to use this incident as a basis to further the anti-Israel causes of these organisations.

Among the many ideas being mooted are;

- a) The introduction to schools of a video giving an unbalanced re-run of the history of support for the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, known as the Balfour Declaration. The video and accompanying material is intended to be pitched at a higher level of study, i.e. Secondary 5-6, claiming that it would be a "valuable aid to study" in order to understand the present day situation. In order to achieve this it is being suggested that it would be best to work with Education Scotland to introduce this into the curriculum.
- b) Programme to link children with children of Palestinian communities via schoolchildren and their teachers in Scotland. Anti-Israel organisations interacting with schoolteachers to jointly produce material for primary schools. It is being claimed that the North Lanarkshire Chief Executive has already given a positive reaction.
- c) Resources being produced to link citizenship in primary and secondary schools with pro-Palestinian issues.

The homework worksheet complained of was inadequate in content and presentation. The Israel Embassy in London describes its content as "abhorrent" to both sides in the Israeli-Arab confrontation:
"It is deeply hurtful to Israelis affected by terrorist attacks, a betrayal of Palestinians who stand up against terrorist groups, and above all an educational and moral abuse of the young students themselves."

There are clear dangers, however, in the proposals of [redacted] which could allow access of political extremists into the Scottish education system, under whatever humanitarian label. Such a ploy is reminiscent of the 'Entryism' of the 70's and 80's.

The National Union of Teachers (2009, analogous to this, warned their members;

Teachers are bound by law not to promote partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in schools. The Education Act 1996 (Sections 406 and 407) requires governing bodies, head teachers and local authorities to take all reasonably practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of conflicting views.

The NUT also expressed concern that:

Teachers may be faced with the additional responsibility of helping pupils deal with their emotional responses to the conflict in the Middle East. Teachers too may need assistance in coping with the emotional demands made on them. Some Jewish or Muslim teachers may be vulnerable in schools, fearing abuse from pupils and/or parents. Teachers may also face discrimination, harassment, or isolation in the workplace.

[redacted] of the University of Zurich, one of the authors of a newly published study on the long-term effects of indoctrination of children of school age, in this case focusing on the Nazi era, has

found that Germans who grew up during the 1930s were far more likely than their younger countrymen to have negative attitudes about Jews. He believes that; “It’s not just that Nazi schooling worked, that if you subject people to a totalitarian regime during their formative years, it will influence the way their mind works..... The striking thing is that it doesn’t go away afterward.”

[redacted]—the head of Frankfurt-based media watchdog organization Honestly Concerned, which tracks anti-Semitism—has noted; “People are generally vulnerable to propaganda, especially children....Repeat the same lie over and over sufficiently often, and eventually something will stick. The Nazis were masters at doing that. Every second page of school notebooks were filled with Nazi imagery, teachers and preachers were indoctrinated, and a multitude of other all-round propaganda efforts were instilled, to brainwash the public from an early age.....These tactics are still in evidence among those espousing anti-Semitism today. Sadly, the haters of Israel have very much picked up on this very same idea and are using the same kind of propaganda tools against Israel and Jews in general”.

Those who seek to use our education system to promote their hateful propaganda, which can only serve to radicalize impressionable Scottish youth to violence, must understand that there is no room for targeting minority groups for hatred in Scotland.

Scottish Friends of Israel would appreciate your initial comments and an early opportunity to personally discuss these concerns with you and your department.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Hon. Secretary
Scottish Friends of Israel

With:

[redacted], Chair, Dumfries & Galloway Friends of Israel
[redacted] Chair, Edinburgh Friends of Israel
[redacted], Chair, Inverness/Highland Friends of Israel
[redacted], Chair, Grampian Friends of Israel
[redacted] Hon Secretary, Glasgow Friends of Israel
[redacted] Former Lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies, Newcastle University, Consultant to Scottish Friends of Israel

From: [redacted]
Sent: 14 June 2017 16:46:35
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Teaching Resource Israel/Palestine

Attachments: Denis 2.docx

For MACCS please.

[redacted] | Assistant Private Secretary to John Swinney MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | Ext 0131 244 [redacted]

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 06 June 2017 11:16
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Teaching Resource Israel/Palestine
Importance: High

Dear Mr Swinney,

Teaching Resource Israel/Palestine.

Thank you for meeting with me on May 9th last and taking the time to listen to my concerns regarding the aforesaid Teaching Resource.

During our meeting, you asked to be provided with further information that might assist your examination of the subject. I am attaching a report on the TR compiled by [redacted] which I trust will be helpful in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Hon Sec
Scottish Friends of Israel

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—

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has been swept for the presence of computer viruses.

Learning and teaching materials proposed for the Israeli/Palestinian learning and teaching resource have been examined in part by an acknowledged expert on Arab and Middle East affairs. [redacted] holds a doctorate from Cambridge University and has lectured in Arabic studies in Durham and Newcastle Universities and abroad. He has published widely on Arabic affairs and has been editor of the Middle East Quarterly, published by US think tank, Middle East Forum

Comments on items from Exemplars 2/3 and 3/4 of proposed pupil materials on 'Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory'

By [redacted]

In using such material on this subject, teachers need to be fully apprised of the two current major definitions of anti-Semitism: the [US State Department](#) (republished January 2017) and the 2016 [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#) definitions, which are very close in tone and language. A failure to understand that biased criticism of Israel (as distinct from fair criticism such as might be made about any other country) constitutes clear anti-Semitism will easily lead teachers and the pupils they teach into inadvertent hostility to Jews in the light of polemic against the Jewish state.

I Error: Egypt is not 'to the southeast of Israel' (clear from a Middle East map)

I Error: 'The state of Palestine was recognised by the UN in 2013'

This is not true. The UN recognised it only as a non-member observer state in 2012, by the General Assembly and not the Security Council. Currently, the only Palestinian state created from the League of Nations Palestine Mandate (still recognised under the UN Charter Article 80) is Jordan. Otherwise, there has never been a Palestinian state. And Jordan does not designate itself as a State of Palestine.

The UK Foreign Office uses the term 'Occupied Palestinian Territories'. However, this cannot be applied (as implied) to Gaza, which has not been occupied by Israel since 2005. Two conflicting territories cannot form a state, one occupied, one not, with two different governments.

● **Error:** 'Palestine is an ancient land and Palestinians have lived there for thousands of years'

This is far from as straightforward as it seems. There has been a geographical region in southern Syria that has borne related names since ancient times (see Wikipedia, [here](#)), but it is an enormous leap to say that its inhabitants were Palestinians in the modern sense of the word. At best, some of today's Palestinians came into the region in the 7th century and later following the Islamic conquest of Syria in 634-35. Other Arabs from Egypt or Iraq or northern Syria immigrated there later, as well as Turks. And the original inhabitants in the 7th century were mainly Christians belonging to the Byzantine (Eastern Christian Roman Empire) provinces.

It was only with the establishment of the League of Nations Mandate of Palestine that the term Palestinian came into use—for both Arabs and Jews. Before 1922 (and long afterwards), the Arabs living there called themselves Syrians. Many of the inhabitants of the

current Palestinian territories entered southern Syria in the late nineteenth century from the surrounding regions.

According to [redacted], a 'Palestinian' Arab:

As I lived in Palestine, everyone I knew could trace their heritage back to the original country their great grandparents came from. Everyone knew their origin was not from the Canaanites, but ironically, this is the kind of stuff our education in the Middle East included. The fact is that today's Palestinians are immigrants from the surrounding nations! I grew up well knowing the history and origins of today's Palestinians as being from Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Christians from Greece, muslim Sherkas from Russia, muslims from Bosnia, and the Jordanians next door. My grandfather, who was a dignitary in Bethlehem, almost lost his life by [redacted] (the leader of the Palestinian revolution) after being accused of selling land to Jews. He used to tell us that his village Beit Sahur (The Shepherds Fields) in Bethlehem County was empty before his father settled in the area with six other families. The town has now grown to 30,000 inhabitants

- **Error:** It is totally false to say the ancestors of all modern 'Palestinians' thought of themselves as Palestinians

Neither the Canaanites nor the Philistines were Arabs, and today's modern Arab Palestinians are not descended from them. The link of the Jews to the area termed Palestine in 1922 is well established in the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the writings of Greek and Roman historians, and vast tracts of modern archaeological evidence. In his *Histories*, the Greek historian Herodotus referred to the area as a 'district of Syria, called *Palaistine*.'

Even early 20th-century Syrians rejected the idea of a place called Palestine:

There is no such country as Palestine. 'Palestine' is a term the Zionists invented. There is no Palestine in the Bible. Our country was for centuries part of Syria. 'Palestine' is alien to us. It is the Zionists who introduced it.

—Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi, Syrian Arab leader to British Peel Commission, 1937

As Abd al-Hadi says, there has never been a state of Palestine in history and that the implication that modern Palestinians have a natural right to the territory within international law is debatable. Unless these historical details are made clear, the text draws pupils into a swamp of disputed assertions.

- **Error:** Gaza and the West Bank are described as 'the occupied Palestinian territories'

Gaza has not been occupied since 2005. The Palestinian Authority exercises full control over Area A of the West Bank, and half control over Area B.

- **Error:** 'In the state of Israel, approximately 21% of the population are Palestinians.'

Not true: they are full Israeli citizens. By reasoning back to the modern use of the term Palestinian, from 1922, Jews too are Palestinians. But the current use of the latter term dates largely from the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war. Arabs in the West Bank, which had been illegally annexed by Jordan in 1949, considered themselves Jordanians, but when Jordan was pushed out in 1967 they overnight became Palestinians. (See [here](#))

- **Error:** Again, writing of the population of the West Bank, we read '6.5% are Jewish settlers who are considered illegal in international law'

This is seriously inaccurate. Settlers in the West Bank number more like 13% of the population of the West Bank. But the legality of the major settlements is at best contested. UN Security Council Resolutions 181 (1967) and 338 (1973) make it clear that Israel will be

entitled to retain a portion of the West Bank, meaning that settlements are legal. Israel is not obliged (under carefully worded clauses in those resolutions) to pull out of the whole of the West Bank, and is required to pull out only to whatever extent once the Palestinians agree to peace and establish secure borders for Israel, something they have not yet done.

The text continues by referring to '5 million Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.'

This is such a complex issue that it should not find its way into a school textbook. Understanding it requires quite a lot of historical and political knowledge. The figure given raises serious questions as to whether five million Palestinian refugees exist at all.

● **Refugees**

Here are a few pointers. First, it is customarily reckoned that between 600,00 to 750,000 Arabs living in what became Israel in 1948 became refugees. However, [modern scholarship](#) based largely on contemporary UN reports brings this figure down to some 300,000 or even lower. But even at the higher figures, a major question is raised. It is far from common practice for refugee status to be handed down to a second generation. Refugees are settled or resettled, acquire citizenship (in the US after five years), and have children who automatically take the same citizenship. Palestinian refugees are the only community of refugees to have remained refugees down to the third, fourth or fifth generation.

In real terms, Palestinian refugee status has been made permanent for three reasons. One is that of the Arab states in which such refugees live (mainly in camps), only Jordan has granted them citizenship (though some 100,000 in Jordan have been denied it). Lebanon and Syria keep their Palestinians in camps, deny them citizenship, and refuse to let them enter any professions or other non-manual labour. Second, by one of the most startling injustices in the modern era, the Palestinians are the only refugee population to have their own international agency (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine (UNRWA)). The rest of the world (which has far more refugees) has only one agency, the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights. The former is the largest agency of all in the UN, with an annual budget of around \$736 million. The latter, which works in 116 countries with 32.9 million refugees and displaced persons receive less funding of around \$7,309 million. (The real figures are much more complex, but these will suffice by way of illustration.)

However, there is more to the question of the Palestinian refugees than meets the eye. The Palestinians blame their exodus on Israel and demand the right for all their refugees to return to Israel, thereby upsetting the demography of the region and in all likelihood destroying Israel. The problem here is that Israel was not responsible for more than a few thousand Palestinian refugees. Palestinian Arabs started to leave in 1947-48 when they started a civil war against the Jews. In 1948, five Arab states invaded Israel with the intention of wiping it out, and throughout the war Arabs started to leave in increasing numbers. Most were ordered to leave by their governing body, the Arab Higher Committee, and by the high command of the Arab Liberation Army from Jordan. (See *Palestine Betrayed* by Professor Efraim Karsh of London University.) In the course of fighting a defensive war, Israeli forces were often faced with Arabs who supported the invading armies, and whom they displaced to secure their own lines. In other words, Israel had no responsibility for starting the war or ordering Arabs to leave except in isolated places. Of the Arabs displaced by Israel, very few survive today. The remainder have never been Israel's responsibility.

I have tried to explain some of the complications involved here because a misunderstanding of the bare figure of five million could lead to future confusion. The

Palestinians demand a right of return for all five million refugees. When the text quotes from the UN Charter to the effect that people have a right to return to their own country, the phrase may be misunderstood in the Palestinian/Israeli context.

- **Error:** 'Israelis speak Hebrew . . .'

In fact, Israelis speak Hebrew and Arabic. Many Jews speak Arabic, most Arabs speak Hebrew. Both are Israeli citizens.

- **Error:** 'Occupied Palestine territories'

'Occupied Palestine territories' are repeatedly described as Gaza and the West Bank. Gaza is not occupied.

- **Misleading:** 'After World War 2, the United Nations recommended creation of independent Jewish and Arab states in Palestine. 55% was to be a Jewish state with 45% for the Palestinians'

This is somewhat misleading. If 'Palestine' is defined by both its historical geographical range and by the League of Nations 'Mandate for Palestine,' 77% had already been handed to the Arab Palestinians (and closed to Jews). Most of the land given to Israel was the large Negev desert. 'In 1948 the State of Israel was proclaimed. 750,000 Palestinians fled from their homes.' No mention of the civil war and the 1948 war that drove many Arabs out. As before, 750,000 is disputed.

- **Error:** 'As a result of the Arab/Israeli war, the State of Israel had a larger percentage of the land'

This is pure rubbish. The 1948 war did not establish any boundaries. Gaza was occupied by Egypt and the West Bank by Jordan (and later annexed). After the war, attempts were made by the British authorities to reduce the area to be given to the Jews. The UN partition plan was not a result of the 1948 war.

- **Misleading:** 'Soon after the Six-Day War Israel started to build settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. These settlements were declared illegal in 2004 by the International Court of Justice'

This is highly misleading. The ICJ resolution was only advisory, not confirmatory of illegality. In fact, the resolution ignored the chief grounds for a Jewish presence in the territories: the League of Nations Mandate, UN resolutions 242 and 338. The original Mandate (which calls for close Jewish settlement) remains in force under article 80 of the UN Charter.

- **Error:** 'In the first Intifada, or uprising in 1987, Palestinians rose up by throwing stones at the Israeli army, who responded with force'

This could not be more misleading and inaccurate. During the first intifada, Palestinians threw a lot more than stones. Over its four years, there were over 3,600 Molotov cocktails, 100 hand grenade attacks, 600 assaults with guns and explosives. All these attacks were directed by the Palestine Liberation Organization. In 1991, the number of Arabs killed by Palestinian death squads was more than the number killed by Israeli forces responding to acts of terror. Palestinians killed by Palestinians were stabbed, hacked with axes, shot, clubbed and burned with acid. The reference to stones followed by Israeli force serves to minimize Palestinian violence and exaggerate the Israeli response.

- **Error:** 'Since the beginning of the 21st century, Israel has been building a barrier with checkpoints. They believe that this barrier will keep their citizens safe from Palestinian attack'

This statement is accompanied by a photograph of the short walled section of Israel's 440-mile security barrier, well over 90% of which is a fence with gates. Israelis do not 'believe' that the barrier will keep them safe. In fact, the number of suicide attacks, high before construction of the barrier, has now fallen to around zero. The barrier has led to a massive reduction in the number of checkpoints and roadblocks that crossed the West Bank.

- **Photograph:** 'Despite many attempts to bring about peace between Israel and

the occupied Palestinian territory, there is no end to the conflict in sight' This is perfectly true. But the statement is accompanied by a photograph of US President Clinton with Israeli PM Ehud Barak to his right and PA chairman Yasser Arafat on his left. This was taken during the Camp David summit in 2000. It might be helpful to point out that Arafat walked away from the talks, despite very generous offers from Barak, and quickly called for the second intifada. The Palestinians have rejected every single peace offer made to them and have refused to end violence. The inability to bring an end to the conflict may be attributed in large measure to that rejectionism.

- **Detail:** Event card statements lack context

The questions (mainly 5, 7, 9, 10) beg answers based on event card statements which lack context and detail as described above. Question 11 asks 'what was the difference between the first and second intifadas.' There was little difference: both used terrorism. But the second intifada made extensive use of suicide bombings: 131 between 2000 and 2005. The event cards do not provide details like this to inform student answers.

- **Distorted:** 'Here everybody gets shot' [redacted] story includes this paragraph:

'[Israeli] Soldiers scare me more than anything else. Guns and soldiers. You don't have to be a bad person to get shot by them. Mostly, it is good people who get shot. You should have to do something bad to get shot but here everybody gets shot'.

This may represent her feelings, but the statement is extremely inaccurate. Shootings by Israel soldiers are recorded, and rare illegal shootings are dealt with under military law, which corresponds in detail to military law in all democratic states. Almost without exception, the Palestinians who get shot are engaged in some form of terrorist activity at the time. Those who are no longer a threat, including killers, are routinely arrested, tried and, if found guilty, sentenced to prison. None are executed because Israel forbids capital punishment.

Reading Mona's statement above will give pupils a distorted picture of how IDF troops behave and will reinforce the idea that there are no Palestinian terrorists. Detailed records of how many terrorist attacks (whether fatal or not) have been made by Palestinians show clearly that there are many bad Palestinians who get shot. Mona is too young to comprehend this sort of thing fully and to make an informed moral judgement.

Sadly, many teachers in Palestinian territories have been identified by the US State Department and other bodies as teaching terrorism and anti-Semitism (see [here](#)) and UNRWA and Palestinian Authority school textbooks have been recorded as teaching children

to kill Jews (see [here](#) and [here](#)). Israeli textbooks promote co-existence. Using [redacted] understandable bias will easily lead Scottish pupils astray.

- **Unbalanced:** [redacted] story

This is unbalanced. The Israeli side is represented by a boy who hates the Israeli army and wants nothing to do with it. This serves to reinforce [redacted] story, where Israeli soldiers are vilified. It would not have been difficult to find a more normative Israeli narrative.

One has to ask why the writers of this course have chosen to present repeatedly unbalanced or factually incorrect or decontextualized narratives and information. In presenting material dealing with one of the most controversial stories in the world, real facts and balanced narratives are essential if schoolchildren are not to leave without the knowledge that will allow them to form a more neutral opinion about the conflict. The underplaying of Palestinian violence and exaggeration of Israeli responses can only have been done to favour the Palestinian narrative and leave children vulnerable to Palestinian propaganda in their later teens and early twenties.

- **Error:** ‘Working Definition of Anti-Semitism from European Union Monitoring Centre On Racism and Xenophobia (adopted by UK Government December 2016)’

Incorrect. The EUMC working definition was never recognised. The writer has confused it with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition, which was adopted by the UK in 2016. A longer citation from the IHRA definition would have been helpful.

- **Error:** A map of Israel and ‘occupied Palestinian territory’ shows the Golan Heights as ‘Israel occupied’

That may be so, but the Golan is not Palestinian territory. It belongs to Syria, but given the near-total collapse of that country, will remain in Israeli hands.

- **Misleading:** Loss of Palestinian land

Four maps showing supposed loss of Palestinian land are decidedly misleading historically, geographically and politically. They have been doctored to present a strong anti-Israel position, unbalancing the narrative to an extreme degree. To understand this more fully, see [here](#).

- **No context:** Palestinian Arabs ‘forced to flee from their homes’

This states that in 1948, Palestinian Arabs were ‘forced to flee from their homes’. The implication is that they were all driven out by the Israelis, which is the opposite of the truth. As before, there is no mention of the Civil War started by the Arabs in 1947 following rejection of the Arab state offered by the UN; no mention of the 1948 Arab invasion; no mention of the timing of Arab departures; no mention of the orders given by the Arab Higher Committee and the Arab Liberation Army for the Arabs to leave in order to give free passage to the invading armies.

- **Misleading:** Jewish immigration

Under ‘1930s and 1940s’, we read:

Jewish immigration (moving to) Palestine increased greatly after WW1, especially in the 1930s. By 1936, Jewish people made up nearly 28% of the population. After WW2 there was greatly increased Jewish immigration from Europe.

This is misleading. There is no mention of the fact that the increase in Jewish immigration after WW1 was occasioned by the peace settlement regarding the defunct Ottoman Empire, which led to the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine, in part designed to create a homeland for the Jewish people in their ancestral home. Without that, it might appear that the Jews entered Palestine of their own accord and without a legal right to do so.

The statement that immigration from Europe increased after WW2 ignores the fact that the British government did its utmost to prevent Jewish immigration into Palestine. Large numbers of Holocaust survivors were kept in camps in Cyprus for years and attempts to bring in other survivors by ship were thwarted by British naval patrols. Other were brought in in defiance of the British blockade. Immigration only became easier following the British withdrawal and the formation of the State of Israel in May 1948. (See [here](#) and more widely [here](#).)

● **Inaccurate:** Objective of Zionism was the 'colonisation of Palestine'

Under 1897, we read: 'The Basle Declaration (1897) declared that the main objective of Zionism was the "colonisation of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers.' This is not a quotation from the Declaration, the relevant part of which reads:

[Zionism](#) seeks to establish a home for the Jewish people in Eretz-Israel secured under public law. The Congress contemplates the following means to the attainment of this end:

1. The promotion by appropriate means of the settlement in Eretz-Israel of Jewish farmers, artisans, and manufacturers.
2. The organization and uniting of the whole of Jewry by means of appropriate institutions, both local and international, in accordance with the laws of each country.
3. The strengthening and fostering of Jewish national sentiment and national consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps toward obtaining the consent of governments, where necessary, in order to reach the goals of Zionism.

Please note that the word 'colonisation' does not occur in the text. That it has been introduced seems to reveal an anti-colonialist attitude on the part of the writer even when speaking of Israel, which is not a colony nor was ever envisaged as one.

● **Inaccurate:** 'Six-Day-War—Israel occupies (puts troops into) Gaza and The West Bank including East Jerusalem. Palestinians in these areas are still living under military rule. Israel begins to build settlements in Palestinian areas'

Again, simplistic and inaccurate. Gaza is entirely free from Israeli military rule. Palestinians in Area A of the West Bank are entirely free of military rule and enjoy joint security with Israel in Area B. East Jerusalem, annexed by Israel, is not under military rule but is part of larger municipal Jerusalem under civilian rule. In 2011, 39% of E. Jerusalem Arabs stated they would prefer to live under Israel rule, while only 31% said they preferred Palestinian rule.

● **Error:** Under 1993, 'In the Oslo Agreement . . .'

There is no 'Oslo Agreement'. There are two: Oslo 1, 1993 and Oslo 2. 'Israeli and Palestinian leaders agreed that within five years there would be independent government for Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem'.

This is how Article 1 of the Accords reads:

To establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority . . . for a transitional period not exceeding five years leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

It has been argued (see [here](#)) that the Palestinians have never fulfilled their agreements at Oslo 1 and 2, and since they have also failed to carry out the requirements of UN resolutions 242 and 338, a permanent settlement cannot yet be reached.

- **Misleading:** Security barrier

Under 2002: 'Israel . . . began building a wall or barrier' As before, this implies a barrier that is a wall, whereas it is mainly a fence.

Under 2004, another reference to ICJ statement that separation barrier and settlements are 'against international law'—see earlier remarks on this.

Questions based on the security barrier. There is no mention of the dozens of security barriers in many other countries, some much longer than the Israeli fence. Some examples would give context. Some walls are in the UK: in Northern Ireland.

- **Unbalanced:** Video of Desmond Tutu

Tutu is notorious for his anti-Israel views. Why not balance this with a pro-Israel video by someone else of eminence?

Conclusion

Taken together, exemplars 2/3 and 3/4 are an imbalanced presentation of history, politics and legal issues. The imbalance is in all cases against Israel, and I can detect no passages that might be construed as anti-Palestinian. Such a degree of imbalance is simply unacceptable in a school textbook, especially one used to teach children who may lack the wider capacity to spot bias in a subject they will generally know little about.

I would be especially, though far from exclusively, concerned about Muslim pupils, since it is well known that anti-Israel and anti-Semitic sentiments are widespread within Britain's Islamic communities. (See [here](#), for example.) Exposure to biased material that would confirm views they may hear at home or in other places outside school would be a

backward step for community relations and social cohesions and may well run counter to regulations for schools under Prevent.

From: [redacted]
Sent: 16 August 2017 11:17:00
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Proposed Learning and Teaching Resource on Israel/Palestine

For MACCS, MR please.

[redacted] Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | Ext 0131 244 [redacted]

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 11 August 2017 11:25
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Proposed Learning and Teaching Resource on Israel/Palestine

Dear Mr Swinney,

Proposed Learning and Teaching Resource on Israel/Palestine

I refer to our meeting of May 9, 2017 with regard to the proposed Learning and Teaching Resource on Israel/Palestine being coordinated by [redacted]

I then referred to aspects of concern to the Jewish community and to the Scottish Friends of Israel/Education Scotland Consultative group. These are:

1. Support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement (considered anti-Semitic) by some of those named as proposing and preparing the Resource: previous offensive comments have been recorded.
2. Inaccurate and misleading claim, repeated by representatives of Education Scotland (ES), that the Resource is a product of discussions held in 2016 by the Glasgow and Clyde Child Rights Group (G&CRG), chaired by [redacted] membership of which is said to comprise representatives of eight regional councils from the West of Scotland. However, the G&CRG became inactive around 2014 and members were not replaced.
3. In email exchanges, Directors of Education have advised (and re-confirmed) that they were unaware of the Resource or of [redacted]; that their representatives were not mandated to discuss or implement a teaching resource on Israel/Palestine; that they are unaware that children's rights, in regard to Israel, have ever been discussed; and that they do not believe such a resource is needed.
4. The Resource, as presented, appears a sophisticated attempt, by known anti-Israel activists and promoters of the boycott of Israel, to indoctrinate children with an anti-Israel narrative.

You may recall that, following our discussion, I provided a detailed partial assessment of the 'errors/distortions/myths' by [redacted].

Please inform me of the result of clarifications sought on the above items and of the

assessments, and by whom, of [redacted] critique.

Your June 9, 2017 letter to [redacted], in which you make reference to the Resource, was copied by her to me. Please also indicate:

- a) The identity of the "partners" concerned with the "draft material"
- b) How many schools, and in which local authorities, are being considered for a "pilot exercise"
- c) The time for this exercise
- d) Changes effected in the "draft material" on the Glow Blog following the expressed concerns

Thank you for your continued engagement on these matters.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Hon. Sec.
Scottish Friends of Israel
Coordinator SFI/ES Consultative Group

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 August 2018 12:01:52
To: [redacted], [redacted]
scottish.ministers@gov.scot
Cc: scojec@scojec.org
Subject: Letter to John Swinney

Attachments: SCoJeC e-footer.jpg, 18vii30 Letter to John Swinney.pdf

I attach a copy of a letter sent by post to the Cab Sec on 29th July.
We are surprised not even to have received an acknowledgement, and
would be obliged for an early response.
Thank you.

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SCoJeC
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Jewish Communities



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Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation no. SC029438



John Swinney MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Skills and Education
The Scottish Government
St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

29 July 2018

Dear Mr Swinney

PROPOSED ISRAEL / PALESTINE TEACHING RESOURCE

You will recall that we met with you on 11 May 2017 on behalf of a broadly based stakeholder group representing the Jewish Community in Scotland, Israelis living in Scotland, and Jewish teachers, to discuss the above matter.

At our meeting we made clear our many reservations about the concept of teaching this material to schoolchildren in P6 and P7, and our view that the materials proposed were so biased and flawed that they could not be salvaged by any amount of consultative redrafting.

Education Scotland were then asked to take ownership of the materials and lead a review, and the stakeholder group representing the interests and concerns of the Jewish and Israeli community in Scotland therefore met with [redacted] and his colleagues at Education Scotland on 25 October 2017. We were reassured explicitly and unambiguously at this time that the teaching module would not be approved if Education Scotland could not reach an agreement from all parties involved. Only if agreement was reached would piloting proceed.

As requested, we therefore submitted a 23 page critique of the resource, which we submitted by Education Scotland's deadline of 14 December, while making it clear that we consider the subject divisive and potentially damaging, and that the resource is fatally flawed.

Since then we have received no further updates on the situation, apart from an e-mail from Alan Armstrong which indicates that, contrary to what we were given to understand, the Glasgow and Clyde Resource Based Learning Group remained in the driving seat as recently as May 2018, and only then did Education Scotland take over the resource.

Since then our colleague [redacted] has been trying to arrange a meeting with Education Scotland but the latest date offered was cancelled at their request.

We are therefore writing again to request a further meeting with you at which we can clarify for our own stakeholder group the status of this package and what the Scottish Government is now intending. In the absence of clear information and consultation, and in particular considering the current climate, the anxiety level in the community is running high and it is imperative that you agree to meet us again for a full discussion.

Yours sincerely

[redacted] Chair,
SCoJeC

[redacted] [redacted]
Joint Presidents, GJRC