

28 September 2004

To
"Haaretz", Letters to the Editor
Via Fax

Insofar as Akiva Eldar's article "Incitement? Not in Our Schools" ("Haaretz", September 10, 2004) relates to The Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP), it contains not a few inaccuracies.

"The report on textbooks presented by CMIP in November 2001", to which Eldar refers in his article, reviewed the new textbooks issued by the Palestinian Authority during the years 2000-2001, replacing the Jordanian and Egyptian textbooks used until that time.

CMIP is a non-political organization that researches textbooks in use in different countries in the Middle East. In addition to the above-mentioned report, and others published by the organization on textbooks in use in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel, three additional reports on the Palestinian Authority textbooks have been published during the last three years. Two thirds of the Palestinian Authority's textbooks have been researched to date. CMIP publicizes the findings of the different reports and make them known to interested parties, including the European Union.

As opposed to what is written in the article, the 2001 report, as with all other reports, was intended to research the content of textbooks in use in the Palestinian Authority, and was conducted as part of CMIP's ongoing activities and not, as Eldar suggests, "to convince the donor [countries] to cease their funding of the new textbooks".

In his article, Eldar mentions research "that was conducted through the initiative of the donor countries, members of the European Union, which relates to the above report.... [and which states] that the Israeli report, at the very least, does not reflect reality, as it presents Jordanian and Egyptian textbooks as the new textbooks of the Palestinian Authority." Is it possible that Mr. Eldar is confused? Even a superficial examination of that report would reveal that this contention is erroneous, as the report deals with Palestinian textbooks only.

Assorted accusations have been directed at CMIP by the European Union with regard to quotes that were not found, inaccurate translation and sections taken out of context. However, in spite of repeated requests by the organization and its stated willingness to correct any mistakes, the European Union was unable to provide even one example of their claims. Rather, the organization was requested by the European Union to focus its efforts on the future, in light of the fact that the main problem of the Palestinian textbooks was the lack of recognition of the State of Israel. Those interested in reading the correspondence between CMIP and the European Union, as well as the reports, are invited to visit the organization's website at www.edume.org.

Given the above inaccuracies with regard to CMIP and indeed other issues, we wonder why Mr. Eldar chose to present partial and misleading information on the organization and particularly on the subject of Palestinian textbooks? Is there a desire to blur the problematic nature of the Palestinian textbooks with regard to their lack of recognition of the State of Israel?

Sincerely,

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