

across California’s many major ethnic and racial groups, LESMCC leaders believe ethnic studies must focus only on four racialized groups: Black Americans, Chicano/Latinos, Native Americans, and Asian American Pacific Islanders (AA/PI).

Conspicuously absent from this list are Jewish Americans and Middle Eastern Jews living in California, especially since Jews are the targets of more hate crimes than any other ethnic group in California.

Even more telling, Palestinian Arabs have been—against all geographic logic—squeezed into the AA/PI category, while Jews, the indigenous people of the same Middle East region, are excluded.

Most egregiously, according to LESMCC’s website, its model curriculum shamelessly asserts “Zionism is a nationalist, colonial ideology.”

But LESMCC’s vision is not just anti-Zionist. It is fundamentally based in critical race theory—CRT—which holds that race and ethnicity should be the primary distinctions in social organization and that the focus of all political action should be on power struggles among racial, ethnic and “marginalized” groups.

Thus, proponents of the LESMCC’s model curriculum believe that ethnic studies must “Critique empire, white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism and other forms of power and oppression at the intersections of society.”

Perhaps you recognize these code words, which define “intersectionality”—a popular outgrowth of CRT. It holds that some identities are victims—and therefore inherently righteous—and some are privileged (like Jews, like white people) and thus are oppressors.

Though AB 101’s ethnic studies requirement doesn’t kick in until 2030, Los Angeles Unified School District moved the requirement up to August 2020 and is also committed to “integrate Ethnic Studies into the PreK-8 curricula.”

The Castro Valley (California) school board this January approved a contract with LESMCC to provide training and teaching materials. Nearby Hayward schools signed on to use LESMCC services in 2021.

LESMCC is now being sued on behalf of several California citizens by the legal aid group, The Deborah Project. The Deborah Project argues that the LESMCC is violating a number of California and Federal statutes that protect religious and ethnic groups from harmful bias and discrimination.

A crux of the case against LESMCC is whether Zionism is indeed an essential element of Jewish religion and/or ethnicity.

LESMCC maintains, outrageously, that Zionism is strictly a *political movement*, completely separate from religious Judaism—independent of Jewish belief, Jewish practice and Jewish identity.

This argument—that Zionism is not a fundamental component of Judaism

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—attempts to prove that belief in or commitment to Zionism and the Jewish State of Israel are *not protected* under laws that shield ethnic and religious groups from hate speech or unfair treatment.

But, as The Deborah Project’s legal complaint states, “Zionism is a central religious tenet of Judaism.” It goes on to explain that according to Jewish teaching, “it is essential for the Jewish people to have a physical home in the land of Israel, subject to Jewish sovereignty, so that the Jewish people can worship God together in that place.”

Indeed, the Torah is fundamentally the story of the birth of the Jewish people and God’s promise to them—repeated over and over—that the land of Israel is their eternal inheritance.

Not only the five books of the Jewish bible, but also the Talmud, Mishna and Psalms are replete with references to the return of the Jewish people to Zion. Jewish prayer is recited facing Jerusalem, and these prayers repeatedly express yearning for return to Israel, most notably the closing Passover prayer, which aspires to “next year in Jerusalem .”

But lest we become trapped in the argument of our enemies’ making, let’s step back and ask: Why should schools be teaching that Zionism—or any belief, whether creationism or capitalism, Marxism or holistic medicine—is inherently false and evil?

For that matter, should schools be teaching that racial and ethnic identities are the most defining political markers, rather than, as Martin Luther King dreamed: “. . . that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character”?

In short, the greatest danger from ethnic studies and critical race theory is their obsession with seeing the world’s people as indelibly defined groups (e.g., ethnic, religious, sexual) that are entitled to hierarchical social justice based on subjective judgments of their relative worthiness.

Students or teachers shouldn’t be condemned in any curriculum for being a Zionist in a land where speech is free—whether you’re a Jew, a Christian or an atheist. While Zionism is indeed an inextricable Jewish belief, it is also based on a powerful political commitment to the self-determination of all peoples.

Please point out to friends, family, colleagues, and your elected representatives that efforts to teach that some racial or ethnic groups are superior and others bad, that some religious beliefs are worthy and others evil, are themselves racist and bigoted.

Explain, too, while we may celebrate diversity in our society, we also treasure free speech and the ability to make political judgments without intervention by radical teachers and biased political curricula.

I hope you’ll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME’s lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME’s new *hasbarah*

campaign—"The Palestinian Catastrophe"—which exposes the false narrative of "Nakba Day," commemorating Palestinians' missed opportunity for independence.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, President
Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. U.S. Representative and "Squad" member Rashida Tlaib has introduced a bill that would make Palestinian Nakba ("*Catastrophe*") Day a national observance. The resolution promotes the false narrative that Israel's statehood in 1948 prevented Palestinian Arabs from achieving independence. I think you'll agree that truth is the only antidote to this lie. FLAME's new *hasbarah* message called "[The Palestinian Catastrophe](#)"—shows it was in fact Arab refusal to accept the U.N. proposal of two states for two peoples that created the problem. I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which recently ran in the *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Los Angeles Times* and other media nationwide. It spells out how it was actually Arab states who stole the land designated for Palestinians. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider [giving a donation now](#), as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate](#) now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Biden stay committed to fighting antisemitic actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

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