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Contemporary Conflicts in Light of the Cold War
Summer Workshop – UCSB - August 2-6, 2004

The Great Powers' Geopolitical Interest in the State of Israel- 50 minute version

General Goals:

- * For students to develop general knowledge about the history of the Cold War and the asymmetrical relationships of power between its main and minor actors.
- * For students to acquire skills in identifying and analyzing arguments, rhetorical methods of argumentation, and value of a close reading of documents.
- * For students to acquire skills in developing research topics, theses, ways of argumentation, source use, and other research skills.

Objectives:

- • For students to understand the history of the creation of Israel and its effects on the Middle East.
- • For students to analyze the creation of Israel as an episode in the Cold War and its relationship to American and Soviet geopolitical interests.
- • For students to analyze how the current United States support of Israel is rooted in its post-Sept 11 geopolitical interest, with special attention to combating terrorism and the war in Iraq.
- • Develop research topics based on material.

College Course Level:

* Upper Division course on the History of the Cold War, 20th World History, United States 20th Century Foreign Policy.

Time Structure:

* 50 Minutes

Materials:

Readings for background and context:

Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 4th Edition, 181-206.

Gabriel Gorodetsky, "The Soviet Union's Role in the Creation of the State of Israel," *The Journal of Israeli History*, 22:1, 4-20.

Readings for in-class discussion:

Speech by Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations Andrei Gromyko, May 14, 1947.

Memorandum by the Presidents Special Counsel (Clifford) to President Truman, March 8, 1948.

Michael Elliott "Facing Reality: George Bush gambled that overthrowing Saddam without the U.N.'s help and boxing out Arafat would pay big dividends." *Time*, Sept 22, 2003.

Pre-class Preparation:

Students and the instruction are to read the materials before class and prepare to discuss the following questions distributed a week in advance.

- * What are Gromyko's main arguments for the creation of the State of Israel?
- * What are Clifford's main arguments for the creation of the State of Israel? How do these arguments relate to the United States geopolitical interests in the region?
- * Turning to current US policy toward Israel and the Middle East: Compare Clifford's reason for supporting the creation of Israel in 1948 to the current administration's goals as stated in Elliott's article?

Talking Points:

- * Speak to the importance of conducting close readings of documents and stress how attention to words, rhetorical devices of argumentation, tone, and structure can reveal the mentality of the author.
- * Speak to the value of comparative analysis of documents from two historical periods to understand their continuity and divergence.

Activities:

- * Brief overview of key terms, concepts, and questions to the instructor. (10-15 min.)

Balfour Declaration

British Mandate

Zionist Movement

United Nation's Special Committee on Palestine (UNCSOP)

Morrison-Grady Committee

McMahon-Hussein Correspondence

Etc. . .

* Group discussion on questions. (30 min)

Students are placed into 3 groups to discuss above questions. The instructor will roam to each group. At the end of discussion, each group is to produce a research topic based on their discussion. These will be presented to the class.

Assessment: (15 min.)

Using the dialogue from the small group discussions, the entire class will discuss each group's research topics with attention to possible sources, subtopics, theses, and methods of argumentation.