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BY EMAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL

Mr. Markus Dohle
CEO, Penguin Random House
1745 Broadway
New York, NY 10019

Ms. Madeline McIntosh
CEO, Penguin Random House US
1745 Broadway
New York, NY 10019

Re: Falsehoods, Misleading Statements and Material Omissions in “A Promised Land,”
by Barack Obama

Dear Mr. Dohle and Ms. McIntosh:

We write on behalf of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), the oldest and one of the largest pro-Israel organizations in the U.S. The ZOA is a leader in fighting against antisemitism and anti-Israel bias wherever these problems arise.

Having received complaints from our supporters and conducting our own review, we are deeply concerned about the factual inaccuracies, material omissions and outright falsehoods contained in one of your recent publications – “A Promised Land” by former U.S. President Barack Obama. The many errors are serious and damaging. The book has already reached and influenced [millions](#) of readers and will impact many more. We expect that this book will be assigned reading in schools and at colleges and universities, affecting how young people and future leaders perceive Israel. Obama’s many factual errors and misleading statements will likely be repeated and quoted in articles and other books. As a result, millions of people will be misled into drawing false and negative conclusions about Jews and Israel.

To paraphrase Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, President Obama is entitled to his own opinions about Israel, which he expresses in Chapter 25 of his book. But he is not entitled to his own facts.

We believe that you value the accuracy of your nonfiction books and support appropriate vetting because reportedly, you provide a [stipend](#) for your nonfiction authors to hire fact-checkers. Given the many factual errors that we have identified and outlined below, the fact-

checking of “A Promised Land” was sloppily done, if it was done at all. Knowing that this book, written by a former U.S. president, would have enormous reach and influence, it was a mistake not to subject this book to the most scrupulous fact-checking possible.

To remedy the damage, we urge you to recall the books that have been printed so that the errors and material omissions are corrected. At a minimum, the necessary corrections should be made to the digital version and in future print editions. Furthermore, because this book is the first of two volumes, we urge you to include a chapter correcting volume one’s falsehoods and deficiencies at the beginning of volume two.

Obama Falsehood #1 (at p. 623): “The conflict between Arabs and Jews had been an open sore on the region for almost a century, dating back to the 1917 Balfour Declaration, in which the British, who were then occupying Palestine, committed to create ‘a national home for the Jewish people’ in a region overwhelmingly populated by Arabs.”

The Facts: This opening to Obama’s discussion of the Arab-Israeli conflict falsely suggests to his readers that Jews were relative newcomers to what was then called Palestine, and that they infringed on the rights of the many Arabs who were living in the land.

In fact, the Jewish people have lived in what was once called Palestine for [more than 3700 years](#), and have always maintained a connection to and presence in their religious and ancestral homeland. Even after the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD and the Jews were exiled, Jewish life continued there.

Before it became known as Palestine, the region bore a different name – [Judea](#), from which the term “Jews” is derived. After the Romans conquered the land in the 2nd century, they changed the name of the region from Judea to Philistia (which later became Palaestina or Palestine), to diminish the longstanding Jewish connection to the land.

President Obama knew or should have known that the Jewish people have an ancient connection to the land of Israel, going back thousands of years. Yet in disregard of historical facts, he is misleading his readers to believe that Jews were recent arrivals to the land, encroaching on Arabs who lived there.

Furthermore, in his reference to the Balfour Declaration in 1917 – a statement by the British government recognizing the right of the Jewish people to a national home in what was then called Palestine – President Obama refers to Great Britain as “occupying Palestine” at the time. This suggests to his readers that Great Britain lacked the authority to speak on this issue.

As President Obama knew or should have known, just five years later, in 1922, the League of Nations – the precursor to the United Nations – entrusted Great Britain with the [Mandate for Palestine](#). Obama also knew or should have known that the Mandate for Palestine specifically recognized “the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and . . . the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country.” In addition, understanding that the choice of words is important, particularly in a legal document, President Obama knew or should have known that the Mandate used the term “reconstituting” the Jewish nation in

Palestine, signifying an understanding and recognition that the nation state of the Jewish people had previously existed in this land.

Yet President Obama omitted all of these important facts, misleading readers to conclude that establishing a state for the Jewish people in their religious and ancestral homeland was baseless and illegitimate and unsupported by the international community. All of these conclusions are false.

Obama Falsehood #2 (at p. 623): “Over the next twenty or so years [after the Balfour Declaration in 1917], Zionist leaders mobilized a surge of Jewish migration to Palestine and organized highly trained armed forces to defend their settlements.”

The Facts: Again, President Obama minimizes the Jewish connection to the land, wrongly suggesting that few Jews were living in the land then called Palestine, and that they began migrating there after 1917 at the instigation of “Zionist leaders.”

In fact, as President Obama knew or should have known, Jews maintained a continuous presence in “Palestine” over thousands of years, even throughout their 2000-year exile, and that more migrated to the land by the thousands well before the 1917 Balfour Declaration. By [1844](#), a majority of the population of Jerusalem were Jews.

From 1882 to 1903 (called the [First Aliyah](#)), Jews from Eastern Europe and Yemen returned to their homeland to escape pogroms and persecution. From 1904 to 1919 (the [Second Aliyah](#)), approximately 40,000 Jews returned to their homeland. Many were young and inspired by socialist ideals; the first kibbutz in the land was set up in 1909.

From 1919 to 1923 (the [Third Aliyah](#)), approximately 40,000 Jews returned to their homeland, as Jews faced pogroms in Russia, Poland and Hungary. From 1924 to 1929 (the [Fourth Aliyah](#)), approximately 82,000 came to their homeland, after facing anti-Jewish policies in Poland and stiff immigration quotas by the U.S. From 1929 to 1939 (the [Fifth Aliyah](#)), almost 250,000 Jews returned to their homeland, escaping Nazi persecution.

As President Obama knew or should have known, Jews were drawn to the land of their forefathers. Many Jewish prayers speak of Jerusalem and the land of Israel; when Jews pray, anywhere around the world, they face toward Jerusalem in Israel. Jews facing hatred and oppression naturally sought refuge in their religious and ancestral homeland. Yet in disregard of historical facts, Obama misleads his readers to believe that Jews were “prodded” to populate their homeland.

Furthermore, in writing that the Jewish immigrants to the land “organized highly trained armed forces to defend their settlements,” President Obama knew or should have known why the Jews had to defend themselves. But, misleading his readers, he omitted the important fact that it was because Arabs were [attacking and murdering](#) them.

This was an important opportunity for President Obama to enlighten his readers that Arab violence and terrorism against Jews did not start after the State of Israel was established in 1948, or after Israel purportedly “occupied” Judea and Samaria (a region that Jordan renamed the West

Bank after illegally seizing it in 1948) and Gaza. As Obama knew or should have known, Arab violence and terrorism against Jews in “Palestine” was a problem even before there was a State of Israel.

Obama Falsehood #3 (at pp. 623-24): “Zionist leaders embraced the [1947] plan [to partition Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state], but the “Arab Palestinians, as well as surrounding Arab nations that were just emerging from colonial rule, strenuously objected. As Britain withdrew, the two sides quickly fell into war.”

The Facts: As President Obama surely knows, one’s choice of words is important. He chose to refer to “Zionist leaders,” rather than “Jewish leaders” who embraced the partition plan, diminishing the Jewish connection to the land, and downplaying the fact that those who considered and accepted the partition plan were Jews who wanted to live as a nation in their religious and ancestral homeland.

What’s even worse is President Obama’s false depiction of “the two sides quickly falling into war.” As he knew or should have known, after the Jews accepted the partition plan and Israel declared its independence, the Arabs did not simply “strenuously reject” to the plan. Five Arab nations attacked the fledgling Jewish state with the goal of destroying it. Israel was not destroyed, but it suffered [devastating losses](#). Almost 6400 Israelis were killed and 15,000 were wounded.

Obama Falsehood #4 (p. 624): The establishment of the Jewish state, was a “dream fulfilled” for the Jewish people. “But for the roughly seven hundred thousand Arab Palestinians who found themselves stateless and driven from their lands, the same events would be a part of what became known as the Nakba, or ‘Catastrophe.’”

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, Arab Palestinians did not “find themselves stateless.” They rejected a state, so if they decided to label the resulting situation a Nakba or Catastrophe, it was one of their own making. Moreover, prior to the partition plan, there had never been a Palestinian Arab state in the region known as Palestine.

President Obama also knew or should have known that most Palestinian Arabs were not “driven from their lands”; they [left on their own](#), or were [encouraged](#) by their leaders to leave, based on the ultimately wrong assumption that the Arabs would be victorious in the war and Israel would be destroyed. Jewish leaders actually [urged](#) the Arabs who had been living in what was called Palestine to remain and become citizens of Israel. Approximately [160,000 Arabs](#) did stay and became Israeli citizens.

President Obama also should have been more careful in identifying the number of Palestinian Arabs affected. [No more than 650,000](#) Palestinian Arabs could have become refugees; a report by the UN Mediator on Palestine concluded that the number was even smaller – [472,000](#).

Obama also knew or should have known that there were not only Arab refugees that resulted from the Arab war against Israel. Yet, misleading his readers, he omits the important fact that after Israel was established, there were [over 800,000](#) Jewish refugees who were driven

out of the Arab countries in which they and their families had lived, many for centuries. These Jewish refugees had to find refuge elsewhere, and were never compensated by the Arab governments that persecuted them, confiscated their possessions, and forced them to leave their homes, livelihoods and communities.

Obama Falsehood #5 (at p. 624): “For the next three decades [after the State of Israel was established], Israel would engage in a succession of conflicts with its Arab neighbors.”

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, Israel did not “engage in a succession of conflicts with its Arab neighbors.” In fact, Israel defended itself against attack after attack by Arab countries and Arab terrorists whose goal was Israel’s destruction.

Obama Falsehood #6 (at p. 624): During the Six-Day War in 1967, “a greatly outnumbered Israeli military routed the combined armies of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. In the process, Israel seized control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, and the Golan Heights from Syria.”

The Facts: President Obama’s description is misleading and omits essential facts. As he knew or should have known, the [armies](#) of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon assembled at Israel’s borders – backed by the armies of Iraq, Algeria, Kuwait and Sudan – and made clear that their goal was Israel’s destruction. Israel had to act to protect itself from annihilation.

In addition, as President Obama knew or should have known, when Israel captured the so-called West Bank from Jordan and the eastern part of Jerusalem, this land was not Jordan’s to begin with. Jordan occupied it in 1948 and illegally annexed it in 1950.

Furthermore, as President Obama knew or should have known, there was never a place called “East Jerusalem” and the term is thus factually inaccurate. [Jerusalem](#) was never a divided city until Jordan seized the historical heart of it (where the Old City, the Jewish Quarter, the Temple Mount, the Mount of Olives, the Christian Quarter, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher are located), and expelled its Jews. As President Obama also knew or should have known, Israel unified the city of Jerusalem in 1967, restoring equal access to all the religious sites there. The eastern part of Jerusalem is simply a neighborhood in that city.

In addition, Obama knew or should have known that immediately after the war, Israel was ready and willing to withdraw from territories it acquired, in exchange for peace. But Arab leaders responded with [three noes](#): no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel.

By omitting all these critical facts, Obama is misleading his readers to believe that Israel was the aggressor in 1967, that it occupied stolen land, and that this “occupation” has stood in the way of peace in the region. All of these conclusions are false.

Obama Falsehood #7 (at p. 624): The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) arose after the Six-Day War, as a “result” of “Palestinians living within the occupied territories . . .”

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, the PLO did not arise after the Six-Day War as a result of Palestinians living in territories captured by Israel. The PLO

arose three years *before* the war, in [1964](#), when Jordan occupied and controlled the so-called West Bank, and Egypt controlled Gaza.

Obama also knew or should have known that prior to the 1967 war, the PLO was not concerned about addressing “Palestinians living within the occupied territories.” The PLO never called on Jordan or Egypt to create an independent Palestinian Arab state in these territories. The PLO’s goal, set out in its [charter](#), was the destruction of Israel.

Obama Falsehood #8 (at p. 625): During the Camp David Summit, which took place from July 11-24, 2000, then-Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak made incredible concessions for peace [offering to withdraw from 97% of Judea and Samaria and all of Gaza, and to make the Arab neighborhoods in the eastern part of Jerusalem the capital of a new Palestinian Arab state], but “Arafat demanded more concessions . . . and talks collapsed in recrimination.”

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, the talks did not simply “collapse in recrimination.” In fact, Arafat rejected Israel’s generous offer, made no counter offer and, shortly after the Camp David Summit, on September 28, 2000, unleashed the Second Intifada. Arafat-funded Arab terrorists murdered over [1100](#) Israelis, and wounded over 8000. These terrorists targeted innocent Israeli men, women and children, on buses, in restaurants and on city streets, including [massacring](#) innocent Jews celebrating together at a Passover Seder.

Obama Falsehood #9 (at pp. 625-26): Ariel Sharon’s visit to Jerusalem’s Temple Mount – “one of Islam’s holiest sites” – in September 2000 was “deliberately provocative” and a “stunt” that “enraged Arabs near and far.”

The Facts: Obama wrongly implies that Sharon’s visit to the Temple Mount provoked the Second Intifada. Misleading his readers, he omits the important fact that the Temple Mount is *the* holiest site in Judaism.

As President Obama knew or should have known, Arafat planned the Second Intifada [far in advance](#) of Sharon’s visit to the Temple Mount. In March 2001, the Associated Press reported that a Palestinian cabinet minister [admitted](#) that Arafat began plotting the terrorism and violence in July 2000, after he rejected peace initiatives by Israel and the U.S.

Obama’s Falsehood #10 (at p. 626): “ Hamas rockets launched from Gaza into Israeli border towns [were] answered by U.S.-supplied Israeli Apache helicopters leveling neighborhoods in Gaza.”

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, Israel does not respond to rocket attacks by “leveling neighborhoods.” Unlike Hamas – the U.S.-designated terrorist group that rules Gaza and deliberately targets innocent civilians – Israel targets terrorists who fire rockets into Israeli cities and towns.

Misleading his readers, Obama omits key facts -- that Hamas uses Palestinian Arab civilians as [human shields](#), and launches rockets into Israel from neighborhoods, hospitals and mosques. He also tellingly omits the extraordinary steps that Israel takes to avoid killing civilians. That includes [airdropping leaflets and making phone calls](#) to warn people of an

imminent attack, even if that means sacrificing the element of surprise and allowing terrorists to escape.

President Obama's description of Israel "leveling neighborhoods" does not comport with the glowing assessment of Israel's actions by an independent group of military experts around the world, after Hamas' 2014 war against Israel. These military experts [concluded](#) that "Israel's efforts were entirely justified, appropriately conceived and lawfully carried out, and necessary in the defence of that country's national security." These experts, who had held top military positions in the U.S., Great Britain, France, Germany and other countries, reported: "No country would accept the threat against its civilian population that these rockets present to Israeli population centres."

As President Obama knew or should have known, all of this information would be crucial to understanding and assessing Israel's defensive actions in Gaza. But he failed to include any of it, misleading his millions of readers.

Obama Falsehood #11 (at p. 626): After Arafat's death in 2004, "Gaza came under the control of Hamas and soon found itself under a tightly enforced Israeli blockade."

The Facts: President Obama glaringly omitted the following essential facts, which led Israel to tighten its border with Gaza. As Obama knew or should have known, in 2005, Israel [unilaterally withdrew](#) from Gaza and uprooted the more than 9000 Jews who were living there, in the hope that this would bring peace. Since 2005, there has not been a single Jewish civilian or soldier in Gaza.

Obama also knew or should have known that the hoped-for peace that inspired Israel's withdrawal led to terrorism instead. The terrorist group Hamas seized control of Gaza and bombarded Israel with rocket, mortar and other terrorist attacks that deliberately targeted Israeli civilians. Israel had to tighten its border crossings to prevent Hamas from smuggling weapons and materials to build weapons into Gaza, and to prevent Hamas terrorists from infiltrating Israel's borders and murdering Israeli civilians. At the same time, Israel has ensured that [hundreds of trucks](#) filled with food, medical and other humanitarian supplies are delivered into Gaza each day. For reasons similar to Israel's, Egypt also tightened its border with Gaza and placed restrictions on shipping.

President Obama knew or should have known all these salient facts. But he omitted all of them, seriously misleading his readers about Israel's actions.

Obama Falsehood #12 (at p. 626): "Terrorist bombings and attacks within Israel had all but ceased, due in some measure to the fact that Israel had erected a wall more than four hundred miles long between itself and the Palestinian population centers in the West Bank, punctuated with strategically placed checkpoints to control the flow of Palestinian workers in and out of Israel."

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, Israel did not build "a wall more than four hundred miles long." Israel constructed a fence as a necessary security measure to stop the terrorist attacks that Israeli civilians were enduring from the so-called West Bank and

Gaza. Only approximately [15 miles](#) of this security barrier (less than 3 percent) is a 30-foot-high concrete wall. The wall was built in areas where it will prevent Arab snipers from shooting at Israeli cars, as they were doing for years along one of Israel's main roads.

Furthermore, as President Obama knew or should have known, Israeli checkpoints were not created "to control the flow of Palestinian workers in and out of Israel." Checkpoints were another necessary security measure, to prevent Arab terrorists from crossing into Israel and committing suicide bombings, shootings, knifings and other forms of violence that kill and maim innocent Israelis.

Like the security fence, checkpoints are an inconvenience. We in the U.S. understand that due to terrorism concerns, we too must endure heightened and bothersome security procedures at our airports and in buildings. But these measures are necessary and effective in saving lives. As President Obama knew or should have known, if there was no Arab terrorism, then there would be no checkpoints and no security fence. But he omitted these facts, misleading his readers about Israel.

Obama Falsehood #13 (at p. 628): "[M]illions of Palestinians lacked self-determination and many of the basic rights that even citizens of non-democratic countries enjoyed. Generations were growing up in a starved and shrunken world from which they literally couldn't escape, their daily lives subject to the whims of a distant, often hostile authority and the suspicions of every blank-faced, rifle-carrying soldier demanding to see their papers at each checkpoint they passed."

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, the conditions under which Palestinian Arabs live in the so-called West Bank and in Gaza are attributable to the actions and decisions of their own leaders, not to Israel. Obama omitted the following essential facts: that Palestinian Arabs could have had their own state, but their leadership rejected numerous offers for a state because they refused to accept the existence of a neighboring Jewish state; that most of the Palestinian Arabs living in the "West Bank" are governed by the Palestinian Authority, not Israel; that the Palestinian Arabs living in Gaza are ruled by Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist group, not by Israel; and that instead of directing the billions of dollars in [aid](#) that have poured into both regions from the international community to address the needs of the people living there, most of it lands in the hands of [corrupt Palestinian Arab leaders](#) who use the money to enrich themselves and promote their war against Israel.

Yet President Obama omitted all of these critical facts, misleading readers to believe the falsehood that Israel bears responsibility for difficulties that Palestinian Arabs face. Obama also takes an outrageous and undeserved potshot at Israeli soldiers – dehumanizing and demonizing them as "blank-faced" and "rifle-carrying" – who are simply doing what every U.S. soldier would be expected to do – safeguarding human lives from terrorism and violence.

Obama Falsehood #14 (at p. 631): Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas was preferred to lead the Palestinians after Arafat's death "in large part due to his unequivocal recognition of Israel and his long-standing renunciation of violence."

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, Abbas has never recognized Israel as a Jewish state. In April 2009, when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on Abbas to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, to enable peace negotiations, Abbas [responded](#): “I do not accept it . . . It is not my job to give a description of the state. Name yourself the Hebrew Socialist Republic – it is none of my business.” In November 2014, Abbas [affirmed](#) that “we [the Palestinian Arabs] will never recognize the Jewishness of the state of Israel.”

Furthermore, as Obama knew or should have known, Abbas has never renounced violence. In fact, he has [glorified and incentivized](#) it, naming streets, schools and sports teams after Arab terrorists who murder Jews, and rewarding terrorists and their families with lifetime pensions for murdering Jews. The more heinous the crime, the higher the pension.

In addition to promoting falsehoods about Abbas, President Obama omitted crucial facts about Abbas that demonstrate his hostility toward Jews and Israel. As Obama knew or should have known, Abbas is a [long-time Holocaust denier](#), who claims that the number of Jews murdered has been grossly exaggerated (Abbas says it is one million Jews, not six million), and he despicably claims that the Jews helped perpetrate the Holocaust.

As President Obama also knew or should have known, Abbas is racist; he has made it clear that if there is a Palestinian Arab state, it will be [Judenrein](#), i.e., cleansed of Jews: “In a final resolution, we would not see the presence of a single Israeli - civilian or soldier - on our lands.” Under Abbas’ leadership, even [selling land](#) to Israeli Jews is treasonous and punishable by death.

By omitting all these facts, President Obama is misleading his readers into believing that Abbas accepts Israel and its character as a Jewish state, and that he has been genuinely committed to making peace with Israel. Neither is true.

Obama Falsehood #15 (at p. 627): “. . . just about every country in the world considered Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territories to be a violation of international law . . .”

The Facts: As President Obama knew or should have known, there is no consensus that the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria are illegal. Numerous legal authorities affirm the legal right of Israeli communities to be there.

As President Obama knew or should have known, it is inaccurate to refer to Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem as “Palestinian territories.” In fact, Israel has the right to these areas under international law, including the [San Remo Resolution](#), the [British Mandate](#), the [Anglo-American Treaty of 1924](#), and [UN Charter Article 80](#). Jews have lived in these territories since ancient times, except from 1948 to 1967 when Jordan illegally occupied them and expelled the Jews. These territories never belonged to Jordan or to the Palestinian Arabs who never had sovereignty or sovereign rights there, or in any part of what was known as Palestine.

As President Obama knew or should have known, it was inaccurate for him to refer to Judea, Samaria and eastern Jerusalem as “occupied.” Israel cannot be called an occupier of lands to which Israel has the lawful sovereign right.

As for Obama's reference to international law, the [Fourth Geneva Convention](#) prohibits the forcible transfer of people of one state to the territory of another state that the first state has occupied as a result of a war. As President Obama knew or should have known, Jews were never forced to go to these territories; they actually moved there voluntarily, back to a place where their ancestors lived before they were expelled by Jordan in 1948.

Furthermore, as President Obama knew or should have known, [no U.S. President](#) since Jimmy Carter has ever described the Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria as illegal or a violation of international law. Disgracefully, during the last days of Obama's presidency, the U.S. [abstained](#) from a UN Security Council resolution that demanded that Israel "immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem." The resolution also declared that the establishment of settlements by Israel has "no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law." The Obama administration's abstention assured the resolution's passage. The resolution was a major departure from the previous U.S. vetoes in response to decades of anti-Israel UN measures.

The damage wrought by President Obama was largely undone in November 2019, when the Secretary of State [made it clear](#) that the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria are not illegal under international law and are not a "barrier to peace." Obama knew or should have known all these facts, yet he omitted them, misleading readers into believing the falsehood that Judea and Samaria, including the eastern part of Jerusalem, are Palestinian territories, and that Jewish communities there are illegitimate and illegal.

Obama's Personal Hostilities Irresponsibly Mislead Readers about Israel and Jews

In "A Promised Land," President Obama opines that Israelis have become less inclined toward peace talks with the Palestinian Arabs. In addition, he expresses his views as to why there is such enduring support for Israel among Americans. While Obama is certainly entitled to his opinions, they are plainly grounded more in his personal hostility toward Israel – and Jews – than they are in facts and truths – and thus bear addressing here.

In Obama's view, "Israeli attitudes toward peace talks had hardened, in part because peace no longer seemed so crucial to ensuring the country's safety and prosperity" (p. 626). Obama paints a negative and selfish picture of Israelis as uninterested in peace. The picture is false and offensive.

As President Obama knew or should have known, history proves Israel's unwavering commitment to the peace process, even to the point of making unilateral concessions – such as uprooting Jews from their homes and communities in Gaza – in the hope that this would bring peace. History proves that Israeli leaders made repeated, sweepingly generous peace offers to Palestinian Arab leaders, which were rejected and often responded to with more terrorism and violence, not peace. History proves that the Palestinian Arab leadership does not accept the existence of a Jewish state in the region, and that their goal remains Israel's destruction. These historical facts are surely what have influenced Israeli attitudes toward peace – but Obama omits them, misleading readers to doubt Israel's commitment to the peace process and to living peacefully in the region

In addition, President Obama chalks up continuing strong bipartisan support for Israel in Congress to “worries about crossing the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a powerful bipartisan lobbying organization dedicated to ensuring unwavering U.S. support for Israel” (p. 628). Significantly, Obama omits that many members of Congress understand the history of the Arab war against Israel; that Israeli homes and communities in the Jewish heartland are not the obstacles to peace; and that it is the very existence of a Jewish state in the region that is the real problem.

Most members of Congress also understand that Israel is the only flourishing democracy in the Middle East; that Israel shares U.S. values and interests; and that Israel is our country’s most reliable ally. These are the reasons why there is bipartisan support for Israel – not because of some supposed worry about AIPAC. In expressing such personal hostility toward Israel, Obama treads dangerously into promoting [antisemitic stereotypes](#) about the power of Jews and Jewish control over the government.

Obama’s book is riddled with errors and omissions that should have been caught and corrected before his book was published. This affects his credibility and yours, too. We assume that you want readers to trust you and your publications, particularly one authored by a former U.S. president. “A Promised Land” should be recalled and corrected. At a minimum, the digital version of the book and future print editions should be revised to reflect the facts. In addition, President Obama’s second volume should include a beginning chapter that corrects his falsehoods and misleading statements, and supplies the material facts that he omitted from volume one.

“A Promised Land” is described as President Obama’s “riveting, deeply personal account of history in the making.” Readers are counting on – and deserve – the truth.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We look forward to your response.

Very truly yours,



Morton A. Klein
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