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No Hope for the Middle East

Daniel Pipes, in his article “Hope for the Middle East,” makes an unsuccessful attempt to summarize the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as of mid-2002. By the end of his two-page digression, Pipes does manage to throw out a few useful comments on the situation, but for the most part his article is a tangent of random opinions about the socioeconomic and political situation of the Middle East with very little support. Pipes’ piece tries to suggest that there is hope for the Middle East, specifically referring to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; however, he mere refutes his own points with the support he uses. Through his use of overly-biased text, his failure to appeal to logos and pathos, and his misuse of ethos, Pipes does not accomplish his intent for the article; he does not show how there is “Hope for the Middle East”.

Pipes begins his article by dumbfounding the reader into a submissive state by throwing random facts that, though they may seem to be related, really have absolutely no relevance to his article. He has two major flaws in the first two paragraphs: he does not cite any sources, and he throws together quotes that may or may not be out of context. He attempts to use these paragraphs to introduce the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East. By quoting various sources, Pipes presumably projects that his passage portrays proof of credibility. The first sources seem legitimate; he quotes Yasser Arafat saying that the more conflict Palestine is involved in, the stronger they become (par. 1). If pipes had continued to use credible sources, such as Arafat, his paper would have been much stronger; however, he goes on to quote vague
and ambiguous sources, such as the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the *New York Times* (without citing a specific writer or article), and the *Christian Science Monitor*. He gives various quotes from the aforementioned sources without citing specific people, editions, articles, etc. for the reader to verify authenticity. This definitely weakens the credibility of Pipes' paper due to his lack of sound sources.

The remainder of Pipes' article is his own opinion based on the quotes at the beginning and a few more, which have the same problems mentioned about, interspersed throughout. Since the article has very little factual basis to being with, the author's commentary has infinitesimal value to the reader. Pipes makes use of many logical fallacies in his highly-opinionated statements, one in particular saying, "Judging by *all accounts*, Palestinians as a whole really do believe these days that they are battering Israel in submission," which show the use of a sweeping generalization (par. 6). This generalization apparently applies to all Palestinian people, though he gives no source to back this up. He also uses, vague, pointed language, like describing Palestinians as "supermen," without giving a definition for the word (par. 4). These ambiguities also take away from the author's ethos and actually make the author sound almost less intelligent, as he is drawing incorrect conclusions from his sources.

Throughout his article, Pipes makes many logical mistakes, including lack of valid factual sources, use of logical fallacies, including broad generalization and vague wording, and overuse of commentary without a supporting factual basis. All of his misuse of academic writing leads to his grand conclusion where he, for the first time, makes reference to the title. He introduces a new claim in his concluding sentence, saying that there is hope yet for the Palestinian and Israeli people. Whether the statement is true or not does not matter at this point in the article; this convoluted conclusion makes a fitting end to his flawed and fallacious article.