

Commentary

So it goes: free speech at the EMU

By WALTER WENTZ

A chilly breeze curls around the little clusters of arguing people on the concrete deck. The mutter of speech is pitched at an urgent, stubborn tone; now and then two voices rise swiftly to an outburst of shouting, then dwindle away again.

So it has been for the last week outside the EMU. No progress to speak of, but perhaps "progress" is too much to hope for in such a situation.

The Palestinian student, sad and

quiet-voiced, insists that the real Palestinians don't have a voice or a part in the war. The Egyptian and Syrian governments have only short-term goals, he insists. The refugees are still being repressed.

The American Jewish girl insists that she is not there to prove anything. She wants to present an alternative, to give a rational viewpoint. The advance into Syria is just to scare the Arabs. Israel is not foolhardy enough to try to hold land beyond the Golan Heights. She is an idealist, she admits.

The American Jewish man breaks in angrily. Those Arabs are ruled at home by totalitarian shieks and military dictators, he complains. Now they come over here to study, and denounce our government and our press, he growls.

The Israeli man is calmer, and his words, strangely, seem drawn from American news commentators. Yes, of course the war was started by the Arabs, and took Israel by surprise, he says. The Arabs have limited goals — they want to capture a little land to put

them at a slight advantage for negotiations, he insists calmly. But their eventual goal is to wipe Israel off the map. The Syrian incursion is only intended to disable the Syrian military.

And so it goes. Much talk, little communication.

And what about the refugees? insists the Palestinian. The refugees still don't have a voice, they're still without a home, still repressed...

Wentz is a graduate student.

Commentary

Beyond the war—Part V

Arab lands confiscated by Israel

By E. AMASHA

The establishment of the Jewish state didn't solve the problem for the Zionists. In spite of the number of Palestinians who left during the hostilities of the 1948 war, there were approximately one million Arabs while the number of Jews was less than one-half million. The Jews owned 10 per cent of the land, the Arabs 70 per cent, and the religious orders (mainly the Moslems), 20 per cent of the land. A state with a Palestinian majority wasn't the goal of the Zionists. It was necessary to confiscate Arab land and drive the people off. The military waged a campaign of forceable removal of over one-half million Palestinians and drove them to the border, confiscating their land. However, the sensitivity of world opinion prevented the continuation of this outright theft. To complete their goal, the new Jewish state issued a series of laws.

The first was the "Absent-Present" law. As the Israeli writer Ben-Yena stated, "By this law every man who at any period between November 11, 1947 and September 9, 1948 left his usual place of living for any period of time to visit or live either outside Palestine or in any place in Palestine not under Jewish rule is considered 'absent' even if 'present' in Israel...we are peculiarly democratic in stealing Arab property in Israel." Even the Islamic Waqf land which had been donated to the Islamic religious institution was expropriated under this law, as if God were "absent." This law is one of the cruelest of all the land expropriation measures. Under it, hundreds of thousands of dunums (one-fourth acre) have been expropriated, not to mention other forms of property (for declaring a person an "absentee" means all his property is also transferred to the Custodian of Absentee Property) valued at millions of pounds, which formerly

belonged to Arabs who are living in Israel.

The second series of land expropriation laws is the Defense Regulation Laws (State of Emergency) 1945, or to be more precise, Article 125 of these laws. Article 125 empowers the Military Governor to declare specific areas closed which no one may enter or leave without a written permit from the Military Governor or his representative. In addition to the restriction of movement imposed on the Arab population, this article is used to prevent Arab villagers from returning to their villages. The confiscated villages were given to neighboring Jewish colonies to cultivate. Dr. Yaacov Shimshon Shapira, Israeli Minister of Justice stated, "the regime instated with the enactment of the Defence Regulations in Palestine has no equivalent in any civilized country. Even in Nazi Germany there were no such laws..." A similar law, the Emergency Laws (Security Area), 1949, empowers the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee to confiscate land.

The fourth link in the chain of laws to expropriate Arab lands is the Emergency Articles for Exploitation of Uncultivated Lands. The Minister of Defence, under the Emergency Laws (Security Areas) 1949, declares a certain area closed and "for reasons of State security" will not issue permits to the owners of the land. The land therefore, becomes "uncultivated". This in turn gives the Defence Minister the right—"in order to ensure it is cultivated"—to have such land cultivated "by laborers engaged by him", or by "handing it over to another party to cultivate it." The "other party" is always the neighbouring Jewish colonies and kibbutzim.

To ensure the acquisition of all the lands owned by Arabs, additional laws were enacted. The fifth was the Law for the Requisitioning of Land in Times of

Emergency, 1949. This law empowers the government to appoint a "competent authority" entitled to "give orders for the requisitioning of land...required for the defense of the State and the security of the people." This law states that the "competent authority" may not retain requisitioned lands for more than three years, but before this period expired it was extended to six years, and then again to extend the retention date up to August 1, 1958. Lands retained after this date are regarded as having been expropriated by the State!

The sixth law is the Law for the Acquisition of Land, 1953. This law empowers the Minister of Finance to transfer lands already expropriated into the possession of the State of Israel. Seven months after the law was issued 250 Arab villages were expropriated because their populations were termed "absentee."

The seventh law concerning the confiscation of Arab property is the Law of Prescription, 1958. The object of this law was to facilitate the acquisition of thousands of dunums of Arab land in Galilee and other lands not registered; however, the owners of these lands have been farming it for generations and did not register it in order to not pay taxes to the Turkish ruler or Britain.

The statistics of the total area of Arab land expropriated under these laws varies according to the sources. We approximate that 1,000,000 dunums (250,000 acres) of Arab land have been expropriated.

Two more laws must be mentioned: The Forest Law and the Law for the Acquisition of Land in the Public Interest. There were numerous forests registered in the names of certain villages, used by inhabitants for their flocks, cutting wood, etc. Under the Forest Law large woodlands are being declared as Government Forest Areas, protected by the

Forest Laws. This means villagers are forbidden to enter such areas. This has happened to thousands of dunums. The Law of the Acquisition of Land in the Public Interest is enforced on all land in the country that the government or public institutions may wish to acquire for "public purposes."

The large-scale efforts to expropriate Arab land are based on two factors. The first is strategy and security—certain areas of land with an Arab majority constitute a security problem. The second factor is political. There may come a time when Arab communities on this land would want to be affiliated with an Arab or Palestinian state on the grounds that there is an Arab majority. This is why the Ministry of Defense is "hastening" to settle Jews in these areas, thus transforming Arab populations into a minority.

The expropriation of land has done great damage to Arab agriculture and caused a new generation of unemployed. The former owners of land are now unwanted in their own land. They must work as paid laborers for the new "owners" of the lands. The Arabs in Israel, according to a Zionist writer, mostly live in shacks of tin, sacking, or wood that they have erected on the outskirts of their villages. In most of the villages new Jewish immigrants have settled and most of the cultivatable land has been annexed to already existing Jewish colonies and kibbutzim for new ones.

The blatant expropriation by the Zionist government of the Arab lands is an outrage. It has led to violent convulsions in the life of the Palestinian Arab, and still constitutes one of the most grave injustices done to the Palestinian people and their society.

To be continued.

Amasha is a graduate in sociology and a member of the Arab Student Organization.

Letters

Vote no on bookstore

Section 8.4 of the proposed amendment to the bylaws threatens the independence of the bookstore's board of directors as a policy-making body. This proposal authorizes the bookstore manager to employ directors during rush periods, and for directors to be paid for this temporary work.

The board of directors should be free from the direct influence of the management. The board is responsible to the students, not to the management. The manager is hired by the board to carry out policies adopted by the board.

If the manager is given the option to employ directors as store workers, he will gain an extraordinary influence over them which could bias decisions made by the board. A situation could develop under this proposal in which board members, fearful of losing part-time employment during rush periods, might be reluctant to

propose changes in store policy that are opposed by the manager. For better or worse, management would gain a new way to influence store policy. I urge students to defeat this proposal today, and that section 8.4 should be rewritten to forbid the direct employment of board members by the management.

Stephen Buggie
Graduate, Psychology

Zeno is in town!

What I have to say may sound a bit "looney," but, as a concerned person, I feel I should issue a warning to the student body and faculty of both the U of O and LCC.

I have learned, through various channels (which I am not at liberty to discuss), that two members of a radical East Coast alternative education group are currently living in Eugene. The organization, known as the Lee Action Front, originated somewhere in New Hampshire, and is notorious for its vast resources and flagrant violations of good taste. Acting

under the pretense of being "regular guys," they will be watching our every move, and preparing their evaluations. There is, however, no cause for panic. Should you meet one of these agents, simply act as normal as possible and, above all, be friendly.

The only other information that I've been able to procure is that one of them may go under the nickname "Zeno," and does not have a rucksack and a ten speed bike. Both may be using disguises, and are said to be masters of that particular craft.

I will try to keep you posted on any further developments.

Kenneth MacLeod
764 E. 10 St.
Eugene

The padded ODE

The ode weekly entertainment section has truly outdone itself. The Oct. 18 issue surpassed all previous attempts at utterly self-conscious writing. It appears that the Emerald reviewers are more interested in telling us about themselves than in trying

to make an intelligent appraisal of the performances they are sent to review.

I refer particularly to the commentary on rock concerts. I have yet to read a review in which I am not obliged to wade through paragraphs of personal pronouns before I get to the subject matter of the article. Indeed, without the headline I wouldn't know who the review was about. I'm sure the Emerald readership is less interested in the audience's or the reviewer's personal reaction to a concert than in the performer himself.

Granted, any review is only one person's subjective opinion of a performance. But the ode writers would do well to take comments about themselves out of their own articles, and limit their critique to a few salient observations and straight facts about the subject under review.

I, for one, would rather read a four-page entertainment section of worthwhile reviews than eight padded pages of vacuous filler.

Nancy Hay
Journalism