

Commentary

Fighting distraction, avoidance, futility

By DAVID NOVICK

Students who show an interest in shaping their future at the University face three problems: distraction by other student needs, avoidance by governing entities, and finally a sense of futility.

The "distraction" is that of having to compete for support in the ASUO, the only real path now open for "student input," for the ASUO is not set up to act effectively in this area. Its purpose, and certainly its major activity in terms of money and time spent, is to distribute funds to various clamoring student factions, whose pleas are obviously louder than the voices asking for help in establishing a non-trivial role in University governance.

The "avoidance" is that of a system hampered by the inertia of a design for governance inherited from the times when students were taught instead of being encouraged to learn, the times when students had to accept the

University as a substitute for parental authority instead of being accepted as adults.

The "futility" is that of a string of University decisions in which the voices, and so the needs, of students have been passed over. This is the result of a system which seems to discourage student participation in direct proportion to the importance of the issues being considered. For evidence, turn to the figures for student membership on student-faculty committees.

Last year students voted overwhelmingly to abolish the ASUO Senate, no doubt as an expression of dissatisfaction with a number of things, persons and principles. But in that vote, they chose to aim for a system of joint student-faculty governance, and in doing so students took the first step in solving the three problems mentioned above.

How?

First, co-governance would separate the distinctly different functions of

support for student unions and participation in educational decision-making. Second, it would ensure participation in the actual process of decision-making—not just provide more "input" for others to consider. And third, while one cannot expect all student problems to clear up by a single institutional change, those problems could no longer be ignored. Of course, objections have been and will be raised: "Students are transients and will not consider the true welfare of the University;" or, "Students are just not capable of reaching rational decisions." The latter, it seems to me, is merely bigotry, and the former is hypocrisy. If length of stay is such an overriding concern, why then is no outcry raised to prevent faculty members with less than, say, four years employment from participating too? In fact, students may be on campus for only four years, but their education must serve for a lifetime.

Faculty, too, would benefit from a system of co-governance. Those who

attend faculty meetings are aware of how cumbersome and insensitive that process is. Those who do not attend are aware of the reasons for non-participation. In any event, a University Senate with delegated authority would attract those with sufficient interest to attend the meetings, and be much more efficient in decision-making—and should students be included, more sensitive as well.

The power of the faculty in affecting University policy has been likened by some to that exerted from a wheelchair. But if faculty power is in a wheelchair, then student power is lying on a stretcher on the sidewalk. We, students and faculty, are invalids from a systemic disorder, and must look to mutual reinforcement for cure.

Toward that end, I suggest a system of co-governance, in a joint student-faculty senate.

Novick was a member and acting chairman of the ASUO Co-governance Negotiating Committee last summer.

Commentary

Israel and the Third World

By E. Amasha

To make the relation between Israel and the Third World clear, two factors must be emphasized: Israel is a white European settler state on the Afro-Asian continent and it was established and is maintained by Western imperialism.

Israeli society has been shaped by the process of colonization. The permanent conflict between the settler society and the indigenous displaced Palestinian Arabs has never stopped. This continued opposition on the part of the Palestinians has also influenced the development of Israeli sociological, political and economical structure. As Dayan, Israeli Minister of Defense, himself stated in a speech at the burial of Roy Rutberg, a kibbutz member killed by a Palestinian guerrilla in 1956: "We are a settler generation, and without the steel helmet and the cannon, we cannot build a house or plant a tree." He went on to say, "the Palestinians have a good case since we are cultivating their fields in front of their very eyes." Also these two statements completely shatter the Zionist mythology about the "Promised Land" and "making the desert bloom."

Israeli society is not only a settler society shaped by colonizing an already populated country, it is also a society which benefits from unique privileges. In 1968 Israel received 10 per cent of all aid given to underdeveloped countries. The authors of "The Class Nature of Israeli Society" state: "Israel is a unique case in the Middle East: it is financed by imperialism without being exploited by it...Imperialism used Israel for its political and military purposes and paid for this by economic support."

Oscar Gass, an American economist who at one time acted as an economic advisor to the Israeli government, recently wrote: "What is unique in this development process...is the factor of capital inflow...During the 17 years (1949-1965) Israel received \$6 billion more of imports of goods and services than she exported. For the 21 years (1948-1968) the import surplus would be in excess of \$7½ billion. This means an excess of some \$2650 per person during the 21 years for every person who lived in Israel (within the pre-June 1967 borders) at the end of 1968. And of this surplus from abroad only about 30 per cent came to Israel under conditions which call for a return outflow of dividends, interest or capital..."

British capital has also been developing close ties with Israel. Twenty per cent of Israel's imports come from Britain, and

trade has nearly doubled since the June war. Marks and Spencers, a British firm which was the target of Palestinian guerrilla attacks in 1969, buy 2-3 million a year of goods from Israel, one-third being textiles and the rest being oranges, vegetables and fruit juices. British financial interests, led by Sir Isaac Wolfson and Charles Clore, are also major participants. Wolfson is the Chairman of Great Universal Stores (GUS) in Britain, which has a 30 per cent share of GUS Industries (Israel). Wolfson and Clore cooperate with Israel's largest domestic capitalist group, the Mayer brothers, in real estate in Israel and Africa, and built the only skyscraper in the country, the Shalom tower in Tel Aviv.

The entire existence of Israel is founded on the special political and military role which the Zionists and the settler society fulfill in the Middle East. Ha'aretz, a daily Israeli newspaper, stated in 1951: "Israel has been given a role not unlike that of watchdog. One need not fear that it will exercise an aggressive policy towards the Arab states if this will contradict the interests of Britain and the USA. But should the West choose for one reason or another to close its eyes one can rely on Israel to punish severely those of the neighboring states whose lack of manners towards the West has exceeded the proper limits."

Israel has fulfilled her duty to western imperialism many times. She was serving the imperialists during her military aggression in 1952 and 1954. In 1956, when Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, Israel collaborated with the imperialist powers of Britain and France to undermine the revolutionary regime of Nasser.

The same holds true for Syria—whenever social or economic development took place in Syria it has been met by the opposition of imperialism and aggression from Israel. The motivation for this aggression on the part of Israel was revealed prior to the 1967 war when Mr. Eshko, former prime minister of Israel, declared that the Israeli army would drive to Damascus to change the government during the confrontation between the foreign oil companies and the Syrian government.

The political role that Israel serves for imperialism is that of a channel through which money and ideology can be funneled to neo-colonial countries in Asia and Africa. U.S. imperialism often finds it more convenient to deal with Afro-Asian countries through the use of a third country. A joint project has been set up between the U.S. and Israel to:

1) place highly trained Israeli "experts" at the disposal of African states, often in strategically important positions.

2) give specialized training in Israel itself to various categories of African personnel, including students, civil servants, labor leaders and military cadres; this training is usually given quickly and efficiently; and

3) set up joint economic enterprises between the Israeli businessmen and their government and African states and private business.

Since the 1950's, Israel's aid program to Africa has been growing, serving as it grows both Israel's specific interests and the broader interests of world imperialism. One of the main means of implementing this policy is the trade union organization of Israel, the Histadrut. The Afro-Asian Institute, a subsidiary of Histadrut, trains thousands of delegates from 85 African, Asian and Latin American countries and sends them back to occupy high positions in their respective countries. Arnold Rivkin, former director of the 'African Research Project' at the 'Center for International Studies' organized by the CIA at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, wrote: "Israel's role as a Third force could also be reinforced...A Free World state wishing to enlarge its assistance flow (i.e. control and influence) to Africa might channel some part of it through Israel because of Israel's special qualifications and demonstrated acceptability to many African nations."

George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO, which finances the Afro-Asian Institute, clearly stated: "The Histadrut is a national center which has worked for the cause of democracy and liberty in the free world, particularly in Asia and Africa, through the intermediary of its Afro-Asian Institute."

Israel's pro-Western, pro-colonial policy, both politically and militarily has been shown by its continuing support for all western imperialist actions in Africa and Asia, even when these actions were opposed by most other Afro-Asian countries. Israel supported France when France was conducting atomic tests in the African Sahara Desert. The African peoples were enraged at the disregard being shown for them; the nuclear radiation from these tests was a definite menace. When U.S. Marines landed in Jordan and Lebanon and threatened the 1958 Iraqi revolution, Israel endorsed the intervention. In 1961, Israel supported Tshombe's secession movement in

Katanga. Israel also provided Portugal with arms to exterminate African nationalists in Angola and Mozambique. A Guardian correspondent asked Spartacus Monimanbu, commander of the Angolan Peoples Liberation Movement, about the sources of military aid for Portugal, the latter pointed out that they were NATO and Israel. Israel voted against the independence of Aden and Radio Israel still backs the Yemeni royalists in their reactionary war against the Republican regime.

Israel comes into its own with sensitive and highly specialized military and police-intelligence training. A myriad of programs provide African states the type of military and police know-how required to build up effective internal security forces designed to protect these neo-colonialist governments from being overthrown by their own populations. The practical help Israeli military training provides the objectives of U.S. imperialism is best illustrated by the situation in the Congo, one of Africa's richest and most strategically located countries. The U.S. engineered a UN intervention which helped topple the Lumumba government, which was opposed to U.S. imperialist intervention, and imposed one which would be servile to the U.S. The U.S. sought to maintain an active role in the Congo, but it needed to diminish an already overextended and politically embarrassing role. Israel was to do the dirty work for the U.S. It was the Israelis who took on the task of training the Congo's crack elite para-commando squadron. Israel is assisting the U.S. to build up elite sections within important military institutions which have the most significant U.S. penetration (Ethiopia and Congo (Kinshasa) and Iran). These programs give the Israelis and through the Israelis, the United States, intimate access and influence in the internal development of the respective countries. The Israeli programs are tied into a larger CIA and Western intelligence operation.

This is Israel, which western imperialism has to preserve. Now that Israel is getting a bloody nose in this confrontation, Nixon must send \$850 million of military equipment and grant \$2.2 billion more. This is why Israel as an oppressive colonial institution against Arabs, Jews and other Third World people must be destroyed if the Middle East is to begin its economical and social development.

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