

harry esteve

Soul searching

Last Friday, members of Oregon's media spent the day doing a little soul searching.

The forum was the University journalism school's Ruhl Symposium, an annual event dedicated to discussing journalistic ethics.

Listening to the speakers, the arguments and the sounds of self-flagellation, it became apparent that the American press is in the throes of a painful identity crisis.

Journalists hold a number of contradictory images of themselves, images that at times seem hopelessly naive, or when held up to close inspection, blur into indistinction.

One image the old-timers like to hold, in the words of conservative publisher William Rusher, is that of "a little reporter with a pencil behind his ear." Rusher, who publishes the "National Review," told Oregon newsmen that's the way New York Times editor Abe Rosen- thal still sees himself.

Yet the little reporter with the pencil behind his ear has the power to crush powerful men, to ruin reputations, to influence some of history's most important decisions.

Or so we journalists sometimes like to think.

Pulitzer Prize winner Seymour Hersh, keynote speaker at the symposium, tried his best to dispel that rumor.

That kind of thinking — that we can go around knocking on doors and bring down a President — can be blamed on Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman who played Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in the Hollywood dramatization of the

Watergate scandal, Hersh said.

Hersh won a Pulitzer for his coverage of the My Lai massacre, one of the Vietnam War's most publicized tragedies. His stories led to an investigation, a congressional hearing and, ultimately, disciplinary action against an Army Lieutenant.

But, Hersh said, in a moment of excessive cynicism that flapped an audience of usually unflappable journalists, "I don't think my reporting did anything. It didn't keep one bullet out of one soldier or one Vietnamese."

It's talk like that that makes reporters, editors and journalism professors wonder about their field. And that's exactly what it's meant to do.

It's been an embarrassing year for the news media.

In Germany, Stern Magazine glorified history's wickedest demagogue by printing bogus Hitler diaries.

Closer to home, an American television news crew photographed a man as he doused himself with gasoline and set himself on fire. The man was critically injured with third degree burns before the camera crew stopped their cameras and helped put out the flames.

Embarrassing. So we ridicule ourselves for our attempts at sensationalism, we hide ourselves for sitting in glass offices without touching base with our readers.

Like the proverbial masochist, the sting from our own whips feels good. It means we're thinking and it means we're changing.

And as we change, the image we hold of ourselves comes a little more into focus.



your turn

Palestinian struggle

Zionism explicitly has been and still is a colonialist movement. It has sought aid for its colonialist project (Israeli State) through an imperialist power, either Britain or America.

As Theodore Hertz, founder of the modern Zionist Movement described the advantages of such a Jewish State decades ago, "For Europe we would constitute a bulwark against Asia down there. We would be the advance post of civilization against barbarism. We would remain in constant touch with all Europe, which would guarantee our existence."

With this chauvinistic attitude as its backbone and brushing aside any attempt to find a less bloody solution, Zionism gained economic and political power and used this strangle-hold to finance the massive, illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine and the wholesale expulsion and extermination of the native inhabitants.

Thus it came to pass that the tools of this machine, the Zionist terrorists were unleashed in 1947-1948 to open the torrent of blood and terrorize the victims. In Deir Yassin some 250 village men, women and children were murdered and barbarically mutilated. Menachem Begin, the current prime minister of Israel, was the hero of that massacre. The Zionists were able to conquer 77 percent of Palestine and expel over one million people. As a result the racist, settler regime of Israel was created May 15, 1948.

Immediately the Zionist ter-

ror increased. On October 24, 1956, a new Deir Yassin massacre was enacted in Kafr Qasim. The Frontier force opened fire in cold blood on a group of Arab villagers returning from their work, killing 51 and injuring 13 of them.

On June 5, 1967, the Israeli Army swept through the Arab adjoining territories. The world witnessed a new round of horror and exodus of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

During 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1978 and 1982 terrorist acts expelled nearly 3.2 million Palestinians from their homes and properties in Palestine and have been condemned to live in 63 refugee camps scattered through the neighboring Arab countries. Their properties and lands were taken over by the new Zionist settlers who were shipped from Europe and America post haste.

The viciousness of Israeli violence was most visible in Lebanon. For the last few years, thousands of civilians have been killed as a result of continuous Israeli terrorism. The invasion of Lebanon in March of 1978, the continual air strikes on the civilian population in southern Lebanon, the air strike on Beirut in July of 1981 produced massive death, destruction, population dislocation and extremely desperate health, economic and social conditions.

The massive Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 has resulted in the total destruction of the Palestinian refugee campus, total destruction of

Western Beirut and the massacre of thousands of Palestinian old men, women and children in Sabra and Chatilla camps.

This was accomplished thanks to the aid of the American taxpayers' money. This aid went to Israel in the form of F-16, F-15, tanks, missiles, napalm, phosphoric bombs, cluster bombs and vacuum bombs. Each year the U.S. government grants Israel \$2.5 billion.

In 1984, every Israeli settler will receive \$1,250 from the American taxpayers, according to calculations from the newly published study by the Middle East Institute. The U.S. government has given more money to Israel than to any country in the world. The United States aid to Israel from 1948 to 1982 totals \$22.6 billion. That is twice the amount the United States has given the entire continent of Africa, for example.

After 35 years of terrorism, aggression and expansion, Israel stands now as a little Middle Eastern version of Prussia, ever proud of its power and ever ready for new rounds of terror and massacres.

The Palestinian people, led by their liberation movement and supported by all peace loving people, will continue to struggle for their right for self determination in their homeland, Free Palestine.

Saadah Khalil

Saadah is a member of the Organization of Arab Students. He is a graduate student in education.

letters

Oversimplified

In Andrew Beckwith's May 17 letter, one should question his assertion that homosexuals harass bus customers in the lavatories. It is an oversimplification to equate sexual harassment with homosexuality. Those who engage in the sexual violation of others, such as rapists and child molesters can hardly be called homosexuals or heterosexuals.

To immediately categorize

homosexuals with those who derive pleasure from degrading other individuals is reasoning perpetuated by prejudice.

Shouldn't we, who call ourselves humanitarians, be concerned with the essence of a sexual preference? If an individual respects and cares for another, why then should it matter what his sexual orientation happens to be?

J. P. Monroe

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