Letters to the Editor of The Times
New York Times (1857-Current file); Jun 8, 1967; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2002)
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Israel's Militancy

To the Editor:

I am writing to urge support for the long-standing United States policy in the Middle East, which would guarantee the territorial and political integrity of all parties in the area while remaining politically neutral in Arab-Israeli issues. In practical terms this will mean acting to bring effective pressure to bear on Israel to cease acts of belligerency and to return to her own positions as they existed prior to June 5.

Israel's long-established stance of inflexible militancy and her uncompromising attitude toward such outstanding issues as the Arab refugee problem must be modified if there is ever to be peace in the Middle East. Furthermore, she must be made to realize that a military solution to her problems, involving as it does an element of territorial aggrandizement, is neither a successful solution nor one acceptable to the world community. The United States must make it clear that a so-called "preventive war" by Israel is as reprehensible as a so-called "holy war" by Egypt.

W. SIBLEY TOWNER
New Haven, June 6, 1967

The writer, Assistant Professor in Old Testament and Hebrew at Yale University, is a former Fulbright scholar in Israel, and sometime teacher in Sidon, Lebanon.

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Peace Confrontation

To the Editor:

What is the price of peace in the Middle East? First, the recognition by the State of Israel and world Zionism that the Arab nation has suffered deep humiliation in world politics, humiliation in war and in peace, and sees in the Arab refugees people who have unjustly lost their homeland. Whether Arab nationalism is right or wrong, that is its viewpoint, and its viewpoint is a fact to be reckoned with.

Second, the recognition by the Arab nations that the Jewish people look upon the State of Israel as a homeland for Jews who have no other, and as a slight consolation for the holocaust. That too is a fact, whether right or wrong, to be reckoned with.

Both sides can destroy, but both can build. If the State of Israel wins, the future can hold only more conflict. If the Arab nations conquer, disaster will follow upon disaster, not only for the Jewish people.

It is time, therefore, for Jewish nationalism to come to grips with the sentiments and ideals of Arab nationalism, and the contrary is surely true as well. Now these two nationalisms, each sure of the rightness of its cause, each full of ideals for human society, each rich in promise for mankind, confront each other on the battlefield.

Can our generation not nurture another kind of confrontation, in which the price of peace will be paid, in part, by each, but the benefits of peace may be shared, in full, by all mankind?

(Rabbi) JACOB NEUSNER
Associate Professor of Religion
Dartmouth College
Hanover, N. H., June 5, 1967

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No Surrender by Israel

To the Editor:

I have just read the shocking letter by David Lelyveld (June 2) who argues that American support for Israel would amount to some sort of "high imperialism."

Just what evidence has ever been brought forth to indicate that Israel is an "outpost of American imperialism" or any other "imperialism"? If there is imperialism involved in this Aqaba crisis, it is that of Nasser's pan-Arabism, so similar to the pan-German policies of Hitler that led from the Rhineland, to Austria, to the Sudetenland and finally the Polish Corridor.

The Soviet Union, which exploited Hitler's aggressions to restore its traditional imperial holdings from the Baltic to the Black Sea, now seems prepared to back Nasser's aggressions, if it can gain the imperial Russian goal of a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean.

As in 1938, the West must make a crucial moral decision. Czechoslovakia stood at that time as the only democracy in Central Europe and she had a crack army and the will to fight. But the Czechs were sold out by the despicable "appeasement" policy.

Now democratic Israel stands besieged by aggressors who today strangle her vital trade route to the south and east, and who proclaim their plan for tomorrow is to destroy her very existence. The fact that Martin Luther King, Reinhold Niebuhr and Jean-Paul Sartre, who have criticized certain American policies in Vietnam, now call for Western support for Israel should indicate that this is no question of "imperialism."

Israel does not need Mr. Lelyveld's advice to "stand on her own." Israel would never surrender like Czechoslovakia. The Jews have had enough of the Auschwitz and Buchenwald treatment. The spirit of militant resistance, of the Warsaw ghetto, is the creed of modern Israel. Let America and the other Western powers show themselves worthy of standing side by side with this nation of heroes.

GERALD J. GRUMAN
Associate Professor of History
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Mass., June 5, 1967

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Envy of Britain

To the Editor:

If reports are true, Britain's stock has risen in the United States over the Government's attitude toward the Middle East crisis. How paradoxical when, if the American Government had backed up, instead of betraying, Sir Anthony Eden nine years ago when we were within 48 hours of victory, there would now be no crisis in the Middle East.

The world is paying dearly for your country's past jealousy and envy of what was once the British Empire. Now in place of orderly and just government, the former colonies are rife with Communism (which again paradoxically and tragically the United States is fighting in Vietnam) and dictatorship, loss of freedom, tyranny, assassination and intertribal warfare are the order of the day.

Dictator Nasser now threatens world peace and the freedom of the seas. When will your Government (whether Republican or Democratic) cease being childish toward Britain? Years and years of careful nurturing in the Middle East by men like Lawrence of Arabia and Glubb Pasha thrown overboard by the Macmillans, Wilsons and Browns of this country at the behest of the United States when those who knew the facts and supported Sir Anthony were overruled. Just as Winston Churchill was in the 1930's with such terrible consequences.

IVOR M. LISHMAN
Winterbourne, Glos., England
June 2, 1967

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India's Stand

To the Editor:

The curious behavior of India at the Security Council June 5 is yet another consequence of the meaningless "secularism" of the current Government of India.

Just as the Congress party chose to nominate and elect a Moslem president for India, the Indian action at the U.N. was obviously taken to please the Moslem population of India. In both cases, the action was based not on merit or reason, but on a blind effort to "prove" the point that India is a secular state. In practice, this hypocritical stand is spelling the disintegration of India at home, and it might result in alienating friends of India abroad.

NARENDRA PAUL LOOMBA
Englewood, N. J., June 6, 1967

The writer, a former national of India, is president of the Fund for the Advancement of Education in India.

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