

## Students, staff react to attack on the Israeli embassy in Egypt

By Bryan Dooley  
STAFF WRITER

On Sept. 9, Egyptian protesters broke into the Israeli embassy in Cairo, Egypt.

According to The Washington Post, the attack began on Friday when 1,500 protesters crowded around the embassy security walls. Using sledgehammers, and in some cases their bare hands, the protesters began trying to take down the walls.

The protesters trapped six security guards inside the Embassy building creating a diplomatic crisis for the two countries, and blatantly violating the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, which was facilitated by Jimmy Carter.

"The treaty created cold peace," said Director of the Friends Center and Campus Ministry Coordinator Max Carter. "It provided \$3 billion in foreign aid from the United States every year for each country, in exchange for a promise to buy mostly U.S. military equipment."

Carter explained that most of this money was kept by politicians while many Egyptian citizens live at or below the poverty line.

"I do not think [the peace treaty] ever

filtered down to the general populace as a popular thing, especially during the Mubarak era," said Carter. "So of course after he was ousted (the peace treaty) became extremely unpopular."

The United States' interest in the attack stems not only from its connections to the peace treaty but also from the long-standing U.S. alliance with Israel. This alliance began with the U.S. believing strongly in the creation of a "homeland" for the Jewish

community in 1948. Subsequently, the

U.S. was one of the first world powers to recognize the state of Israel in 1949, and, since then, the U.S. has provided significant monetary and military support. Today, the U.S. provides \$3 billion annually, mostly in the form of military support.

Although the attack happened on the other side of the world, its implications

have echoed across Guilford campus. Fourth-year Sarah-Jaana Nodell, co-president of Guilford's Jewish club, Hillel, said that the attack has increased animosity between the two countries.

"(The attack) is actually helping to increase the divide rather than bring peace," said Nodell, "which is not helpful given the number of terrorist and counter-terrorist groups in that region."

Third-year Sara Hussein, from Egypt,

provides an alternate look at the situation, citing previous violence that could have led up to the conflict.

"Apparently Israelis came into Egyptian territory and shot eight Egyptians, and the mass media there, which is now free, inflamed the situation," said Hussein.

Carter perceives a more deeply seated reason behind the attack.

"Egypt sees the treatment of the Palestinian people as if Israel was a colonizing power," said Carter. "They also realize that they will not be able to carry out the colonization without an alliance with the U.S."

Palestine's bid for statehood can also be seen as a possible catalyst for the attack. Israel's treatment of Palestine and the denial of statehood has created a volatile situation in the Middle East.

"While I do not agree with the violence, I do understand the reasons behind it," Carter said. "The extremely unfortunate thing is that it is likely to get worse on Tuesday, when the U.S. vetoes Palestine's attempt at statehood, which they already said they are going to do. If you thought this was bad, wait until Tuesday."

This attack is just one among several recent attacks on foreign embassies, reflecting how fragile the political climate is on a global level.

"There are a lot of embassies being attacked right now and it makes me very nervous," said Nodell. "People are not coming together to take a self-critical view and asking ourselves 'What have we done to provoke this?'"

### AL-SADR

## Anti-U.S. cleric al-Sadr orders his troops to cease attacking U.S. military to expedite withdrawal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of the occupation forces is complete," said al-Sadr on his website.

Though this is a step in the right direction as far as the safety of our troops, some Iraqis want a portion of the troops to remain in after the deadline, The Washington Post reports. Among them is the president of the Kurdish region Massoud Barzani. He wants some troops to stay past the deadline to ward off threats of sectarian violence and renewed civil war.

"As for me, and the sheiks of Nasiriyah, we want the U.S. Army to stay," said Sheik Manshad al-Ghezi of the southern Shiite city of Nasiriyah according to The Washington Post. "We are afraid of civil war. All the parties and groups in Iraq are armed and the Iraqi Army cannot manage to bring security to Iraq and stop the fighting among these parties."

This is a huge factor to consider when contemplating Iraq's future. With so many different factions fighting for power, stability seems a lofty goal.

"They don't have a stable government," said Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Duncan. "Nor will they ever have a stable government until they have a unified national identity that's not based upon religion or tribe. Until they have an economy, until they have an educated populace, until they have freedom of speech in press and the media, they'll never have a stable government. Period."

Other Iraqi leaders have privately expressed worries about the readiness of Iraq's security forces to operate on their own, and these leaders want some troops to stay behind to continue training them. According to The Washington Post, U.S. officials and Iraqi leaders have begun negotiations to keep a few thousand troops in Iraq to continue their security force training.

"They could hire Blackwater to come in there

and train them, or Triple Canopy," said Duncan. "They could hire the Brits, the special air force people. There are a number of people they could hire to come in and teach them law enforcement techniques and tactics and train their military. Doesn't have to be the U.S.; could be anybody."

The issue was complicated even further when al-Sadr issued a warning to the U.S. "If the withdrawal doesn't happen ... the military operations will be resumed in a new and tougher way," said al-Sadr on his website.

The question of whether the U.S. should consider al-Sadr's threat when considering the withdrawal of our troops is one Duncan answered quickly.

"Absolutely. The Mahdi army that he sponsored was very effective until we had a lot of troops (in Iraq) and we forced them out," said Duncan. "But still they're very strong. Let us get the hell out and then they can start their own civil war for power and control. We cannot imprint or enforce our own values or our own system on them. And as long as they kill each other off, as sad as that may sound, fine. As long as they're not threatening our national interests, fine. Let them beat each other up."

As Dec. 31 looms closer and closer, the plan for withdrawal of the American troops in Iraq seems to become less and less concrete. With a myriad of opinions and desires to consider from both sides, the best plan of action can seem almost impossible to decide upon.

Though the issue is complex and multifaceted, to some the most important objective is simple.

"I just wish we could get our troops out now," said Duncan. "The sooner the better. We're just pouring money and blood into the sand. It's a shame that there's too much graft, there's too much corruption involved all because of lack of government oversight, lack of clear objectives as to why we're there in the first place. Those are all political decisions that were improperly made in my book. And innocent men and women are paying the price. And that just really frosts my pumpkin."

## Nikky Finney to visit Guilford



PHOTO BY RACHEL ELISA GRIFFITHS

A poetry reading,  
Wednesday, September 28

7:30 PM

In the Carnegie Room  
(Hege Library)

Free and open to the public

Sponsored by The Greenleaf Review &  
The English Department