



ANNE FAWCETT

# Ties to Israel Make America Poor Mediator

As riots continued in Gaza and the West Bank on Tuesday, Palestinian and Israeli leaders agreed to a tentative peace.

Palestine's Yasser Arafat and Israel's Ehud Barak agreed to publicly call for calm and to consider reopening this summer's negotiations. The agreement also opens Palestinian territories and the Gaza airport and calls for a U.S.-led commission to investigate the causes of violence that led to the deaths of more than 100 people, most of them Palestinian.

The United States is strangely entangled in this conflict. President Clinton brokered the deal and acted as a mediator in negotiations this summer. The commission's leadership is a compromise between Barak's insistence on U.S. leadership and Arafat's desire for United Nations oversight.

It's not surprising that Arafat didn't want the United States to lead a commission that would lay blame for the violence - U.S. representatives actively support Israel on this issue.

The U.N. General Assembly will hold an emergency meeting this week to condemn the "excessive use of force" by the Israeli military, which fired rockets at Palestinian command centers after Palestinian mobs beat two Israeli reserve soldiers to death.

U.S. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke has said the United States will veto any new resolution.

The United States has a historical basis for its support of Israel, whose existence began with the firm backing of this country. The original plan was to divide Palestine into two nations - one for Arabs and one for Jews. Instead, Israelis have settled much of the Palestinian land and pushed the original inhabitants out.

When Israel began to occupy captured Palestinian land in 1967, U.N. Resolution 242 insisted on "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war" and the "withdrawal of Israel's armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict."

The international community has therefore recognized the invalidity of Israeli settlements in Palestinian holdings for more than 30 years.

So how does the U.S. government justify its unwavering support of a nation that breaks many principles our Constitution espouses - religious freedom, the value of private property and protection from oppression?

UNC history Professor Sarah Shields is quick to note that the conflict isn't primarily based on religion and that U.S. support shouldn't be construed as such. "This is a conflict over resources, land, water, houses, orchards," she said.

Shields said American support stems from this nation protecting its interests. Israel has worked as a U.S. proxy to South African and Central American governments when direct contact was forbidden by Congress. Israel is also a frequent purchaser of American arms.

There's also the issue of political ideology in a region ruled by dictators or royalty.

"The United States has the articulated policy that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, but that's problematic ... because people within the occupied areas don't have rights of citizenship, which challenges the definition of democracy," Shields said.

Shields said the United States cannot claim a neutral role in the peace proceedings. "It can hardly be called a neutral broker when the United States has clearly shown itself to be very much a supporter of the state of Israel, no matter what Israel does," she said.

Then it's up to the United Nations to take control. Although U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan was present at the meeting this week, Clinton took the lead in negotiations. Annan should use his consulting role in the fact-finding commission to become a major player in these peace talks.

Governments around the world created the U.N. to resolve international conflicts without regard to any one country's vital interests. Clinton and his successor should recognize this nation's bias and let a truly impartial body negotiate with fairness to both sides.

Columnist Anne Fawcett can be reached at fawcetta@hotmail.com.

# Students Take Mic to Share Race Experiences

By TORI KISER Staff Writer

Students and faculty shared their views on racial prejudices, exclusiveness of ethnic groups and perceived racial barriers at UNC during a discussion Tuesday night in the Union Cabaret.

The open-mic event, another installment of Race Relations Week, was presented by the Living with Compassion Series and the Cultural Diversity Committee of the Black Student Movement. "This was an opportunity to look at race and how it affects our lives and the University," said Jon Curtis, assistant director of Union student activities and a moderator for the event. "We wanted people to meet each other and relate in an intimate and comfortable way."

Discussions began after one of the moderators introduced a topic. Students then stated their opinions on such issues

as the relationships between blacks and whites and the importance of recognizing other minority groups. "So much conflict still exists (between blacks and whites) that (Asian Americans) begin to feel left out," said Rena Arora, a sophomore representative for Students for the Advancement of Race Relations.

The discussion also focused on minorities' roles in UNC classrooms.

Some students said they resented being the only minority in a class and said they felt they had to be a voice for their ethnic group. "I feel like I have to set an example and go above and beyond the normal expectations set for students," said Nididi Okeke, a junior psychology major.

Other students expressed views that suggested students at the University self-segregate. "When you are apart of a minority, you feel that you cannot be your true self, and when you get the chance to relate to someone of your own

background, you feel like you can relax," said Jokena Smith, vice president of BSM.

Moderators encouraged students to end the need to self-segregate by confronting their own issues of insecurity.

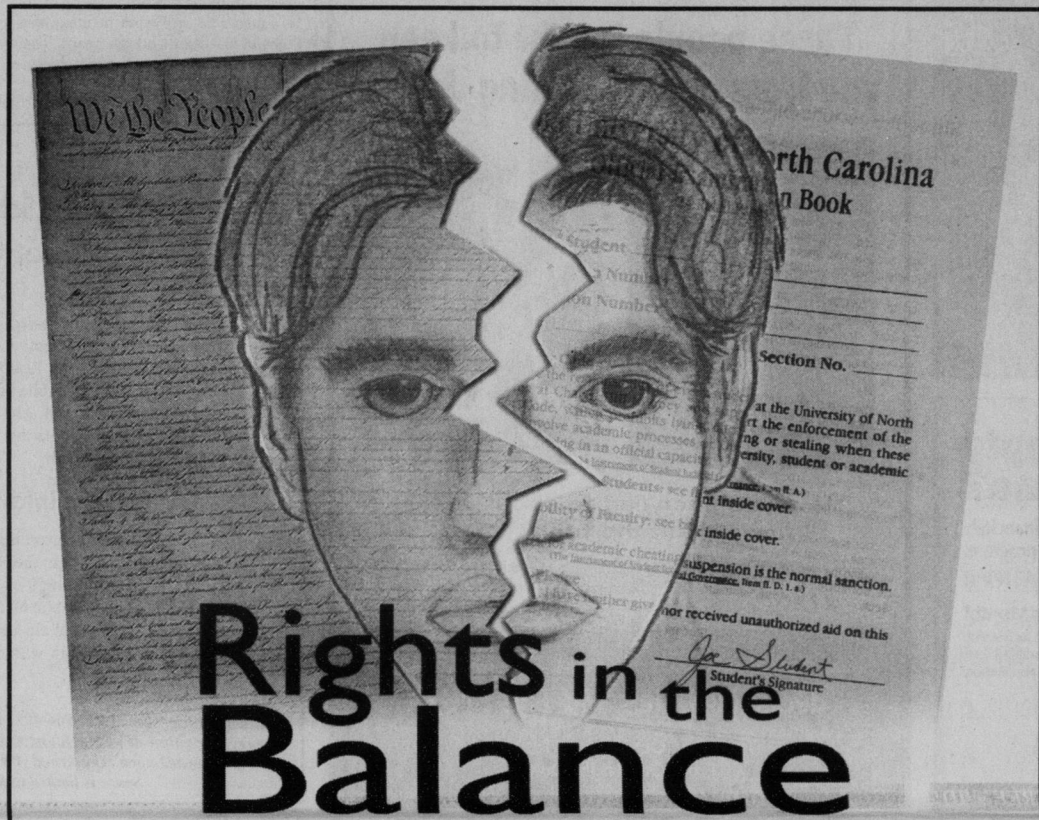
"Everyone needs to go inside of themselves and come to terms with their own prejudices," said Chimi Boyd, assistant director of Campus Y.

At the end of the discussion, members of various ethnic organizations invited everyone to their respective meetings. "There is opportunity every single day for dialogue between races," said Terri Houston, director of Minority On-Campus Recruitment and Support Program and a forum moderator. "People who are different should want to communicate with one another because they are genuinely interested."

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Terri Houston (left) and Kayla Hamilton lead an open-mic discussion on perspectives and anecdotes concerning campus race relations.



# Do Student-Led Courts Sacrifice Due Process?

By ROBERT ALBRIGHT Staff Writer

Winston Churchill once described democracy as "the worst system ... except for all the others."

With speculation swirling about UNC's Honor Court proceedings, some faculty and students might understand the relevance of Churchill's quote to UNC, as many say the student-led judicial system has its benefits and its drawbacks.

The debate centers on whether students' rights are compromised under a system in which judge and jury are fellow students, not professionals, who answer directly to the Instrument for Student Judicial Governance, not the due process laws that protect the accused in a criminal or civil proceeding.

Bob Adler, a professor in the Kenan-Flagler Business School and chairman of UNC's Committee on Student Conduct, said the University's judicial system strives to uphold a person's rights.

But he said the judicial system at UNC, just as at any judicial level, is never immune to mistakes. "It is absolutely not a perfect system, but there is nothing systematically bad about UNC's judicial system," Adler said. "I'm a believer in having students run the system."

UNC's judicial system has been hotly debated since the Honor Court, in an open hearing, found two of James Coggins' Computer Science 120 students guilty of academic cheating.

When there is a possible Honor Code violation, the University requires a faculty member or student to bring charges to Student Attorney General Taylor Lea or the vice chancellor for student affairs.

Lea speaks with both parties involved and then decides whether to send the case to the Honor Court, which acts as a jury would in a court trial. Before a case even goes before the five-person Honor Court panel, an associate attorney general meets with the person being charged in a preliminary conference.

The associate outlines students' rights in the Instrument for Student Judicial Governance, the 36-page document of UNC's judicial branch. "The associate attorney general's whole job is to make sure students' rights are upheld," Lea said.

Valerie Alter, one of UNC's three managing associate generals, said the Instrument's wording of students' rights is difficult to understand at times. "The language of the Instrument can be confusing, so the associates go through it step by step," Alter said. "It's the associate's job to advocate students' rights."

In the final stage of pre-hearing proceedings, the associate attorney general assigns the accused student a defense counsel, who represents the defendant in the Honor Court hearing.

Honor Court adviser Melissa Exum said it is important for students to know their rights. "It can be overwhelming (for the accused)," Exum said. "That's why they need to rely on their counsels."

Despite the important role that student

defense counsels play, law Professor Robert Byrd said some criticize the absence of professional attorneys in Honor Court proceedings.

But Byrd, who has served as chairman of the Committee on Student Conduct in the past, said having professional counsel would undermine UNC's student judicial process, making the system operate more like a criminal process.

Robert Mosteller, a law professor at Duke and UNC's student attorney general in 1970, voiced similar concerns. "When considering the right to counsel, it is very difficult for it to be professional and still be student-run," Mosteller said. "It's an inherent problem in any kind of student-run judicial process. If students are to be in charge, they may have to be held to a lesser standard."

In addition to the dispute over counsel, the right to a separate trial is another student right that has been discussed heavily, especially in light of the computer science hearings in which students' cases have been heard in groups.

Senior Evelyn Salazar, one of the 24 computer science students turned in by Coggins, had her case held in a closed hearing grouped with several other students.

After her case, she said the Honor Court proceedings need to be re-examined. "It's such a messy situation," Salazar said. "I think all the students charged (in the computer science cases) will be appealing."

Because of the unusual number of charges in the computer science incident, Honor Court Chairwoman Helen Holmberg said many students had to waive their rights to a separate trial during their preliminary hearing.

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# South Campus Construction Forums Planned

Forums will be held today and Thursday, allowing students to address issues before work begins in the next few weeks.

By SCOTT BRITAIN Staff Writer

Students living on South Campus had the opportunity Tuesday night to hear about the plans that will change their world when construction begins on four modern residence halls within the next month.

Fewer than 10 students attended the meeting at Morrison Residence Hall. The forums, which will be held throughout the week, are designed to calm any fears that students might have about the process, said Christopher Payne, director of housing and residential education.

The four buildings are part of the Master Plan, a blueprint for campus growth.

The halls will house about 900 students, and the exact date for the beginning of construction will be determined at a meeting later this week.

"(Construction will start) at the end of October or the first of November. The contracts have already been signed, and we are ready to start," said Rebecca Casey, associate director of housing and residential education.

Construction fences will be the first sign of change. "Fences will go up around construction area and laydown area," Payne said. "That will be one of the first things that people see."

Eight-foot chain-link fences will be covered in green construction fabric to block the sight of materials. Plywood might be attached to the fences so that murals can be painted on them, said Larry Herringdine, assistant director for facilities management. Construction is scheduled to last 18 months, with a completion goal of May 2002. Construction will begin at roughly 8 a.m. each morning, five days a week. "Funding for construction) was subsidized with housing bonds," Casey said. "The money has already been secured and has nothing to do with the (\$3.1 billion) bond referendum in November."

Housing officials have been working with students throughout the planning process to ensure that these buildings please students.

"All along the way, we've involved students in the process," said Al Calarco, associate director of housing and residential education. "We went to every school in North Carolina that was building to ask the students what those schools could have done better."

But this hasn't calmed the fears of some students. "I am concerned on how it will affect life. I know construction on the steamline here has been obnoxious," said Molly Wilkerson, a sophomore journalism major. "Parking is a problem, as it is on South Campus. How are they going to deal with all of the new students?"

Even though the department has worked to combat problems before they start, officials realize that unforeseen issues will come up.

"Until the project gets started, we won't be able to have all the details perfectly clear," Herringdine said. "We expect to continue these forums after fences go up and construction starts."

Calarco said he wanted input from students about the pending construction. "This will be an ongoing process. This (forum) is not a one-shot deal."

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# Bill Provisions Forgive Loans, Grant Aid for Tobacco Farmers

N.C. senators are pleased with loan forgiveness but hope to receive aid equal to other states' growers.

By MONICA CHEN AND MICHAEL MCKNIGHT Staff Writers

Concerns regarding a surprise amendment to a spending bill by an influential Kentucky senator were abated when another provision was added to help ailing North Carolina tobacco farmers.

Under pressure from N.C. senators, Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., agreed to a provision to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill that will forgive a

\$125 million federal loan to the Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation.

Most N.C. tobacco farmers grow flue-cured tobacco.

McConnell attached an amendment to the spending bill last week, giving \$510 million in aid to drought-stricken burley tobacco farmers.

Although most Kentucky tobacco farmers do grow burley tobacco, only 2 to 3 percent of all tobacco grown in North Carolina is burley. Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and Rep. Bob Etheridge, D-N.C., immediately went into action to get equal aid for the states' growers.

In an Oct. 12 letter sent to House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., the 12 members of the N.C. congressional delegation requested \$500 million in aid for

flue-cured tobacco growers be included in a spending bill before Congress adjourns. Broad Woodhouse, Etheridge's press secretary, said the action would allow the flue-cured tobacco corporation to cut current tobacco prices so they could sell at market, which will mean a higher quota for next year and a higher income for tobacco farmers.

Tom Sabel, a statistician with the N.C. Department of Agriculture, said quota



Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., pushed to get a \$125 million bill provision that will aid N.C. tobacco farmers.

cuts, which determine how much tobacco farmers can grow, have harmed many N.C. tobacco farmers despite a relatively good year with higher crop yields than previous seasons.

"Over the last three years, they've lost over half of their acreage due to quota cuts," Sabel said. "Anything that could get growers some financial help to alleviate the quota cuts would be helpful."

Although the \$125 million amount is far below what Helms and Etheridge requested in their letter, George Holding, legislative counsel to Helms, said it is sufficient.

"Kentucky is getting a lot. Last year we merely got down payment for need," Holdings said. "And because of this, we might get full aid in two installments. We're still lobbying for more."

As Congress prepares to adjourn, the

clock is ticking on whether this provision could indeed pass.

The rapidly approaching end of the 106th Congress was the original reason N.C. representatives did not propose a provision for more money to aid tobacco farmers.

But Woodhouse said he was very upset that aid for N.C. tobacco farmers was not included in the original amendment.

"Traditionally, the tobacco farmers of both crops have worked in tandem. (Etheridge) was disappointed that (McConnell) did not include us," he said.

"By gosh, if (McConnell) could get it for Kentucky, we could get it for us."

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