Opinion fuels Arab politics

By James Jones

The formation of a state for Palestinian refugees is becoming highly favored by public opinion in Arab countries, and will lead to pressure on Arab governments to work for such a state, an Arab journalist told an MIT audience last Wednesday.

"Palestinian Power," according to Lebanese journalist Ghassan Tueni, is becoming a strong issue even in such countries as Saudi Arabia, which is not directly involved in the Palestinian problem. The effect of opinion in the Arab world, Tueni said, might force governments there towards a "diplomacy in revolution" policy. Tueni, who addressed a seminar sponsored by the MIT Political Science Department, spoke prior to a decision by the heads of the Arab states, meeting in Morocco, to recognize the Palestinian Liberation Organization. That move, which threatened Israeli involvement in the Middle East peace talks in Geneva, was viewed as an endorsement of the idea of establishing a Palestinian state on the West bank of the Jordan River.

The Arab states have an increased "sense of community" since the Yom Kippur War of 1973, according to Tueni, who added that this factor must be taken strongly into account in considering future Arab politics. Extension of this sense of community, Tueni added, was the major challenge to the Arab nations now. Despite public opinion in America, the journalist said, Arab countries are "rich notions of poor people," and class pressures across the wealth chasm will provide as much trouble for Arab unity as pressures between conflicting countries.

Nixon personality blamed for W'gate

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Rowan cited the Special Prosecutor's investigation of the "milk fund" and other sources of Nixon campaign money as an example of the type of investigations that should be pursued by the press.

Ms. Rowan said that institutional changes would be needed to prevent future abuses of CIA power in developing countries. She cited the political situations in Southern European countries such as Portugal, Italy and Greece as "a prime target for the CIA to intervene if it wants to." Domestic strife in those countries and threatened takeovers by communist governments have made them headaches for American diplomatic authorities in recent weeks.

Harrington, Ms. Rowan said, is continuing his efforts to keep tabs on the CIA's activities, but is not sure what he can do to stop the agency from undertaking covert actions. Congressional legislation is necessary, she said, to prevent further incidents like those in Chile.

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