

**“When we have settled the land, all the Arabs will be able to do about it will be to scurry around like drugged cockroaches in a bottle.”**

**- Lieutenant General Raphael Eitan, then Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defence Forces (1983)**



# the Thistle

MIT's Alternative News Collective



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We at the Thistle hope you will take some time to read and consider the opinions and articles presented here.

Racism and prejudice are in all of us, and hardest to admit to in our own selves. We hope to promote openness and real and honest human-to-human dialogue on campus by providing in depth information on current campus events in their historical and present day contexts. We hope that you will look deep within yourself, and refuse to be a part of the wave of anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant hatred and prejudice sweeping our nation. We also encourage you to think critically about the “information” that our society is bombarding us with. Do you think of Palestinians first as terrorists, or first as human beings like yourselves? Do you feel nervous around people with brown skin?

We believe that the hard work of anti-racism rewards itself every step of the way, and we recognize that every one of us has a long way to go (especially those of us who benefit from the presumption of innocence that is a perquisite of white privilege). This Thistle issue is dedicated to all of us becoming better human beings.

## You Might Be A Domestic Terrorist

By Scott Cooper

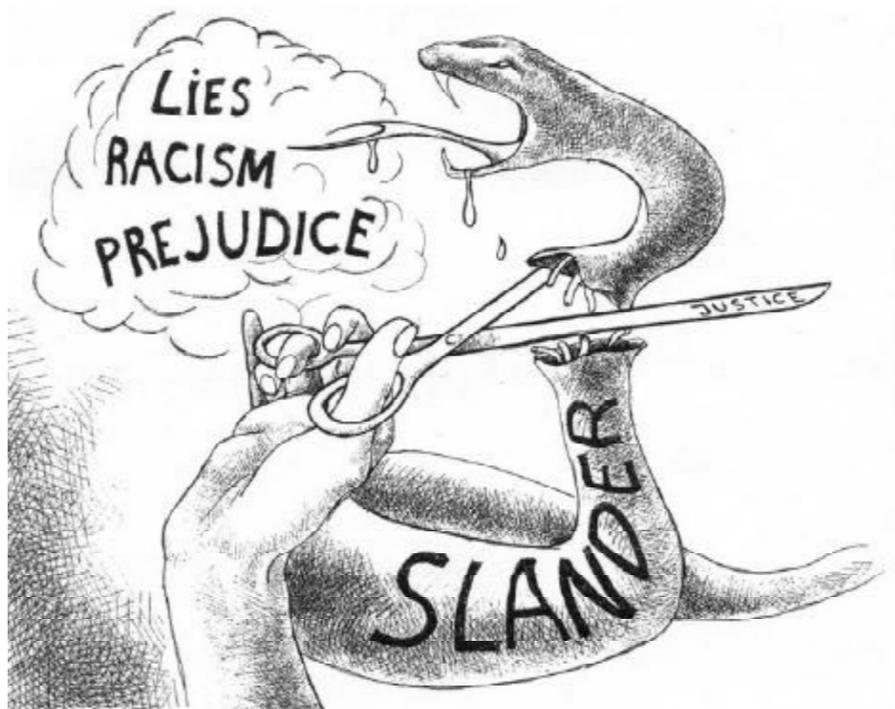
Drumbeats of war. Immigrants rounded up, interrogated, detained, and deported. Dissenting voices fired from newspaper staffs. “You’re either with us or you’re with the enemy.”

Sound familiar? These are some of the many components of the Bush-Ashcroft campaign for “homeland” security. (By the way, where did they come up with “homeland”? That’s not a word in the parlance of this country. Vaterland, however now there’s a word a Nazi can really sink his teeth into!)

But it turns out that there’s nothing new under the sun. The form may be different with all the new technology, it’s a lot easier to smoke out an alleged terrorist sympathizer but the content is familiar from an earlier day.

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## Recycled Snip-Art



**Damn, she sure snips head well.**

## The Green Scare

By Julia Steinberger

The topics of Israel and Palestine and the rights of Muslim students and immigrants are at the forefront of campus debate. MIT has had its own share of controversy, from the Israel divestment petition and counter-petition, to the issue of new regulations for student visas and restricted fields of study. The most recent episode involves a Palestinian activist, Amer Jubran, with ties to MIT, and issues of freedom of speech, government detention, and polarization of the campus community.

Mr. Jubran was arrested on November 4, two days after he lead a rally protesting the 85th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. His supporters lobbied assiduously to secure his access to his lawyer and bond hearing before a judge. According to Noah Cohen of the Amer Jubran Defense Committee, “the INS told Amer’s lawyer that they intended to hold him indefinitely - without holding a bond hearing - but refused to cite any legal grounds on which they had the power to do so. The FBI had threatened Amer with just this treatment at the hands of the INS for insisting on his right to have a lawyer present when they tried to question him. To demand that he submit to their interrogation without his lawyer was a violation of his rights.” According to Aimee Smith, who wrote an opinion column in The Tech about Mr. Jubran’s case (“Speaking While Palestinian”, Nov. 22, 2002), “we were afraid for his physical safety. We all remember that Jaoudat Abouazza, a Canadian-Palestinian activist, had four teeth extracted without anesthetic and against his will while in INS custody this summer.”

In a letter written in response to this column, Joshua Katz, alleged that Mr. Jubran’s arrest and detention were justified, since he was, according to Mr. Katz, “an active supporter of Hamas,” and that the “community in which he [Mr. Jubran] is active is one of terror, and to fight terrorism, the ‘activists’ must be stopped.” (Dec. 3, 2002). Many members of the MIT community were appalled at the publishing of these baseless claims. However, in the next issue of The Tech, there was no retraction. Apparently, Mr. Katz presented The Tech with a retraction which he later withdrew. “In the current political climate of racial profiling by our government, by printing Mr. Katz’s false accusations, and then not printing a timely and appropriate retraction, The Tech not only demonstrates irresponsible journalism, but recklessly endangers Mr. Jubran and his community,” said Lana Habash, a co-founder with Mr. Jubran of the New England Committee to Defend Palestine. During a meeting with Mr. Jubran and his supporters, chaired by neutral moderator Karim Abdul-Matin, the Tech executive board agreed to print an editor’s note admitting the error made in printing the unsubstantiated claims. Mr. Jubran’s supporters strongly requested that Mr. Katz’s claims not be repeated, so as not to compound the harm already done. The Tech also agreed to print a column by Mr. Jubran’s supporters and a letter critical of Mr. Katz’s.

The next day, however, the executive board expressed concern about the agreement that had been reached. “Mr. Katz had come to The Tech with a photograph showing Mr. Jubran wearing a green armband. He cited this as his reason for believing Mr. Jubran to be a Hamas supporter. We explained to the executive board that this photograph did not in any way mitigate their error in printing Mr. Katz’s letter. It was ludicrous that they would consider this any kind of validation of Mr. Katz’s statements,” said Julia Steinberger, of the Amer Jubran Defense Committee. “The fact that they felt that the wearing of a green peacekeeping armband (identical to those worn by other people at the demonstration, including MIT students) could imply anything about Mr. Jubran is ridiculous and suggests deep-seated prejudices. One of the Tech editors even went as far as to tell me that in the future, we should not wear green armbands. He didn’t even know that green is the color of Islam. Would he say the same thing of Massachusetts Green Party members?”

The Tech executive board members finally printed the original agreed-upon editor’s note. But “the Tech substantially modified the text of the guest column, without obtaining the assent of any of the signatories,” said Scott Cooper. In the interim, three Tech staff members resigned over the dispute. “In my opinion, what they wanted to do was unethical, both on a personal and on a journalistic level, and I wanted no part of it,” explained former Tech staff member Brice Smith.

In a dissent accompanying the editor’s note, Tech news editor Keith Winstein expressed his objections to the executive board’s decision. Relying on second-hand sources, he stated that “[At the meeting with the Tech executive board,] Jubran himself declined to comment, citing the sensitive nature of the accusation in the face of INS’s removal proceedings against him.” According to the moderator Mr. Abdul-Matin, “What is printed [in the dissent] is false. Mr. Jubran said nothing of the sort.” Mr. Winstein refused to comment on the accuracy of his reporting.

The implications of Mr. Katz coming forward with a photograph taken at a demonstration attended by many MIT students was not addressed by The Tech, whose editors preserved the anonymity of the source of the picture. To the students present at the Nov. 2 demonstration, the implications for their personal safety and open debate on campus are chilling. “Mr. Jubran was arrested less than two days after that demonstration, and threatened with indefinite detention without any charges. We don’t know who the people taking the pictures are, or what organizations they are affiliated with. And here they are trying to use these pictures to spread willful lies about us,” said Anton Van der Ven.

<http://web.mit.edu/thistle/>

# Race, Internment, and the Attacks on Immigrants

By Brice Smith

There is no freedom more essential to a democracy than the freedom to publicly challenge and criticize the government. It is chilling to see how so many (including members of our own community) seem so ready to take away this right from others in the name of “national security.” Since the earliest days of our country, those in power have consistently used times of national crisis (whether real or wholly fictional) to crack down, not on those who might actually pose a threat to the people, but on those who pose a threat to the political agenda of the elite. The sweeping powers so readily ceded in the name of “national security” have been used to crush legitimate dissent and to stifle important national debate, whether it came from the early Republican Party (see the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798) or labor activists (see the Espionage and Sedition Acts of 1917-18) or Arabs and Muslims like Amer Jubran (see the USA Patriot Act of 2001).

Of all the many attacks on the freedom of immigrants that have occurred throughout American history, it was in 1941 that this country launched upon one of its most shameful domestic acts of this century. In August 1941, Representative John Dingell of Michigan wrote a letter to President Roosevelt suggesting the incarceration of 10,000 Japanese Americans in Hawaii as hostages to ensure “good behavior” on the part of Japan. Following the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941, the FBI began to round up suspected Japanese “subversives” and within 48 hours had detained 1,291 “suspects”. These men were held under no formal charges and even their family members were forbidden from seeing them. In February 1942, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 that empowered



United Press International Kent, Washington (March 2, 1944)

General De Witt to round up over 70,000 U.S. citizens and 40,000 Japanese resident aliens (roughly half of them children) and ship them off to 10 bleak concentration camps in remote areas like Manzanar just west of Death Valley. In winter the temperature at these camps reached as much as 35 degrees below zero and summer brought temperatures as high as 115 degrees. All told, more than 1,800 people would die in these desolate desert camps

This horrific violation of basic civil rights was later held to be constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark case *Korematsu v. United States* (December 18, 1944). It held that “legal restrictions which curtail the civil rights of a single racial group are immediately suspect”, but not unconstitutional and that, in fact, the restrictions on the Japanese Americans were a military necessity in this case.

It should thus send a chill down all our spines when hearing that in July of this year, Peter Kirsanow (a Bush-appointed member of the US Commission on Civil Rights) cited the Japanese internment camps at a public meeting with Arab-American leaders called to address their concerns over the attacks on their community following 9/11. Kirsanow told the assembled group that in the event of another terrorist attack carried out by members of “the same ethnic group that attacked the World Trade Center, you can forget about civil rights” and that there would be a “groundswell of opinion” in support of detention. He went on to say that therefore the best way to “preserve” civil rights is “by keeping the country safe.” Jennifer Braceras, another Bush appointee to the commission, added that “there’s no constitutional right not to be inconvenienced or even embarrassed.”

Spokesmen for the Bush Administration attempted to distance themselves from Kirsanow’s comments, but refused the demands by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights that he be removed from the civil rights commission.

In the weeks following 9/11 more than 1,200 Arabs and Muslims were rounded up by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and held without any judicial oversight. A lawsuit brought by the Center for Constitutional Rights documents the extremely harsh treatment of some detainees including forbidding them from practicing their religion, contacting their families, or seeking help from their nation’s consulate. Despite the fact that more than a year has passed since they began, the attacks on Arab communities continue to intensify. In July, the DOJ announced that it would pursue criminal charges against immigrants and foreign visitors who failed to notify the government of a change of address within ten days. This followed on the heels of simultaneous raids by the INS and FBI in at least 5 cities targeting Pakistanis working at local shopping malls and the secret overnight airlift of 131 Pakistanis in which neither the prisoners nor their families were informed of their impending deportations. In addition, the DOJ issued an internal memo directing the INS and US Customs Agency to “seek out and search all individuals of Yemeni origin including US citizens.”

In such a climate of repression, it is no surprise that vocal activists from a marginalized community such as Amer Jubran have been targeted, harassed, and threatened by the government and their agents. What is far more troubling is that members of an academic community that supposedly values debate and the free exchange of ideas should be so quick to blindly support the destruction of our most vital civil liberties in the name of “security.” If, as the saying goes, “in times of war, the law is silent,” then it is even more vital that we as citizens raise our voice, reclaim our government, and demand protection for the rights of all people. That is the only path to true national security.

## Domestic Terrorist, from page 1

Eighty-nine years ago, a case that had made its way through the federal court system finally came before the U.S. Supreme Court (*Schenck v. U.S.*, 249 US 47 1919). Few readers will probably recognize this case by the name Schenck, but they will know one statement that came out of the court’s opinion. It was from the pen of the eminent jurist Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. And it’s a statement that has been generally regarded to be what one writer has called “a dictum of superb rationality ... until we read it in context.” His statement was that the outside limit of free speech should be “shouting fire in a crowded theater.”

Schenck was a World War I case that denied the “free speech” protections of the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution to those opposing the draft and the war. Holmes and the other justices equated speech (and cartoons, by the way) that opposed the draft and the war with shouting fire in a crowded theater. The court in Schenck overturned virtually every normal protection of free speech in its most basic form political speech and dissent. In 1919, Pres. Wilson’s attorney general, A. Mitchell Palmer, planned and executed raids in more than 30 cities that resulted in the arrests of between 6,000 and 10,000 immigrants. Property was seized, and suspected “communists” and “anarchists” were deported without any due process.

Howard Zinn, in his book *A People’s History of the United States*, describes what happened in our neck of the woods: “In Boston, Department of Justice agents, aided by local police, arrested six hundred people by raiding meeting halls or by invading their homes in the early morning. A troubled federal judge described the process: ‘Pains were taken to give spectacular publicity to the raid, and to make it appear that there was great and imminent public danger. ... The arrested aliens, in most instances perfectly quiet and harmless working people, many of them not long ago Russian peasants, were handcuffed in pairs, and then, for the purposes of transfer on trains and through the streets of Boston, chained together ...’” An historical aberration? On July 3, 1942, Pres. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which resulted in “relocating” 110,000 Japanese living on the West Coast to inland “internment” camps. The FBI searched their homes without warrants, looking for short-wave radios and other “contraband.”

So what about today? In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 events, the Bush administration unleashed a full frontal assault on civil liberties and democratic rights. Within hours, the government began a mass roundup and detention of at least 1200 foreign nationals (the number is likely much, much higher), with no evidence prior to incarceration of their having committed criminal acts. These people have become our “disappeared.”

On Oct. 25, 2001 came the adoption by Congress of the sweeping and draconian “USA Patriot Act,” gutting 4th Amendment protections against unreasonable searches and seizures; defining “domestic terrorism” so broadly as to place in jeopardy virtually anyone who dissents from government policies; giving the attorney general and secretary of state the power to designate domestic groups as terrorist organizations; permitting indefinite incarceration of non-citizens based on mere suspicion; imposing guilt by association on immigrants; and so on.

On Nov. 13, 2001, Bush issued an executive order empowering him to order secret military trials of any of the 20 million non-citizens in the United States who are suspected of being international terrorists and collaborators. These trials would bypass the U.S. criminal justice system and its rules of evidence, with no presumption of innocence and no rights accorded defendants to choose their own attorneys.

I could go on and on. The bottom line is that the rights of every one of us have been placed in jeopardy. The definition of domestic terrorism has been broadened to include “activities that appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, to influence the policy of government by intimidation or coercion.” Have any of your readers ever been involved in a strike, or rally, or demonstration, or sit-in? Have you ever packed a legislative hearing room as part of a lobbying effort? Been part of any social movement: antiwar, anti-corporate globalization, civil rights, civil liberties, women’s rights, immigrant rights, environmental, gay/lesbian/bi/trans? You might be a domestic terrorist. It’s only a matter of time before the word “sedition” again becomes part of the vocabulary of our misleaders. Thistle readers are at MIT, where almost everyone solves equations. Try this one: what is the sum of “sedition” and “homeland” and “internment camp” and “guilt by association” and “unwarranted search and seizure” and ... ?

## Letters to the Thistle

Dear Sir/Madame,

I absolutely agree with Mr. Katz! Those Arab ingrates need to be more thankful for any rights they are afforded in these united states. Look how the Arab countries treat Arabs! Better yet, look at how Arabs are treated in Israel and the so-called occupied territories! Force is the only language these dark-skinned curry-eating Hamas-loving polygamists understand. You can’t possibly hold them to germanic standards of law, hygiene, and honesty.

- Daniel Tripe from the Campus [Big Brother is] Watch[ing You] Website