

# Protests accompany Eban lecture Monday

by Lyndie Votaw

Protests by angered Arab, Iranian, and Palestinian students highlighted the lecture given by former Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban last Monday night in Powers Auditorium.

One-half hour before the 8 p.m. address was slated to begin, the students staged a demonstration in front of the hall. They urged all "freedom-loving people" to join them in protesting the presence of "Zionist Isreal representative Abba Eban."

The lecture began peaceably, with Eban stressing the importance of Isreal receiving worldwide respect and acceptance on this, "the eve of their thirtieth anniversary" as a nation.

Suffering has been a major part of Isreal's history, Eban stated. "None of us can forget how the curtain went up after the Second World War." The war he said, had been "saturated with Jewish blood. Six million of our kinsmen had been carried away. One million Jewish children had been thrown, unbelievably, into the furnace." This was put aside, but not to be forgotten, when Isreal became an independent nation by mandate of the United Nations on May 14, 1948. "Our birth symbolized the freedom and the equality of all nations," Eban stated.

Israel went from "tragedy to triumph; from despair to redemption," but was still to face problems. Eban said the most serious of these was the question "Would anybody in the international community give acknowledgement and recognition to our independence?"

Eban stressed that the impending threat of "Arab invasion" made the people of Israel "experience the joy of birth and the fear of death within a few short hours." Eban continued, "There is nothing in contemporary international relations quite similar to the Arab-Israeli dispute. This is the only dispute in which one of the parties has taken its stand on a total denial of the very legitimacy of the very existence of the other. It is the totality of the Arab negation of Israel that has made this the most implacable of all international disputes." He feels this is why the "relative tranquility" of the Middle East has "erupted into flames again and again."

In a particularly controversial segment of his address, Eban said there are two visions of the Middle East. He feels the first, the Arab vision, is "monolithic." He said the Arabs refuse

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# Abba Eban

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to accept the existence of any other nations in the region. "All others (including Israel) are regarded as artificial or external." As for his nation's vision, Eban stated, "The Old Middle East religions of Judaism and Christianity cannot be denied our place in today's Middle East. Israel is not the homeland and cradle of the Arab nations." He said the Israelis regard the Middle East, not as a "monolithic area, but rather as a tapestry of many colors. This tapestry has a central thread woven of the Jewish experience."

Further stating his position, Eban said, "Israel is a part of the Middle East. There has never been, there is not now, and there will never be a Middle East without the sovereign state of Israel!"

It was at this point that certain members of the audience mainly Arab, Palestinian, and Iranian, began protesting loudly, yelling "Up with Palestine! Long live Palestine!" The angered faction was quieted by the throng of policemen and security guards stationed around the auditorium. Those particularly verbal protesters were ushered from the hall.

After the disturbance, Eban did not even lose a breath before continuing his speech. The Arabs, he said, constitute only 3% of the world's popula-

tion, but control 60% of the oil supplies, and inhabit 22 sovereign nations. "Yet, in spite of all these advantages, they continually present themselves to the rest of the world as the underdog," he contended. "However, they are not the underdog at all. History has done very well for them. No peoples have ever achieved so much with so little sacrifice."

Referring further to the many Arab nations, Eban said, "From a tiny parched corner of the Middle East, Israel has risen, and lives!" He added, "We are not going to apologize for our few hundred square miles. If the world can get used to 22 Arab states, it had better get used to the existence of one Jewish state."

Regarding Arab-Israeli negotiations, Eban said, "If there was an even distribution of resources between the Arabs and Israelis, there would be less of a problem." He further stated, "In negotiations, two words to be avoided are 'all' and 'nothing.' Those who say 'all or nothing' are much more likely to get nothing."

Directed perhaps to his general audience, perhaps to the protesters, perhaps to the world in general, Eban concluded his lecture by saying, "To those who say 'Palestine instead of Israel', thank you very much, but the answer, quite frankly is 'Nothing instead of Israel!'"