THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE CONFERENCE REVISITED

The Summer issue of the Newsletter, which was devoted to Mary Clawson's report on the Middle East Institute's Conference on Arab nationalism, stirred up quite a bit of mail, most of it favorable. Reproduced below are two of the letters we have received. But first we must apologize for an error made in that report. It was erroneously stated that one of the exhibits displaying pro-Arab propaganda at the Institute Conference was set up by The American Bible Society. The Secretary of the latter organization, Mr. James Z. Nettinga, has written to set us straight on the matter. We are informed that "The American Bible Society distributes only the Scriptures and study guides relating to the Scriptures, and never has an Exhibit of this nature," a fact we should have known, or, failing that, have checked.

The first letter we are reproducing is from Mr. James Terry Duce, acting President of the Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C.

August 23, 1960

Dear Mr. Baehr:

I have read with great interest your Summer issue of the ACPC Newsletter.

I would remind you of that statement attributed to Voltaire: "I disaprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

This particular meeting of the Middle East Institute was devoted to the discussion of Arab nationalism. Anybody who wished to attend it was welcome; we did not specially invite such characters as Mr. Arrowsmith nor do we pretend in any way to control the opinions of people which may be voiced at these meetings.

We believe that anyone is entitled to his opinion on the many questions of the Middle East and you will note that there were members of the Israeli Embassy present.

In passing, I might also note that I have never known the American Christian Palestine Committee to invite an Arab from an Arab state to speak at any of its conferences.

Freedom is a two-way street, and I suggest it is one of America's tenets.

Yours very sincerely,

s/James Terry Duce

Karl Baehr's answer follows:

October 5, 1960

Dear Mr. Duce:

Thank you for your letter of August 23rd. The tardiness of this answer is due to the fact that I have only recently returned from my vacation.