



ABOUT a year ago I was invited to speak in New York at a fundraising affair for *The Nation* magazine. Before the speech, another magazine, *The New Republic*, delivered an attack on me and also on *The Nation* for inviting me to speak. The grounds for the attack were that I was associated with Arabs and terrorists.

Responding to this new kind of McCarthyism, one of the other speakers, a well-known journalist, denounced the author of the attack, saying if we are ever to end the conflict in the Middle East we must stop the kind of racism that is so evident in *The New Republic* article. He went on to say that anti-Arab racism is based on the tactics of Israel as an occupying power—that the only way to justify the occupation of Palestinians is somehow to make them seem less than human, so that Israel's military occupation appears less noxious than it is. This is the same tactic used by Hitler against the Jews—a tactic first of dehumanization, then of violence and finally of death. Hitler, said the speaker, counted on dehumanization to prevent any outcry against the violence his regime committed.

He was exactly half correct. The gathering clouds of anti-Arab racism also have their origin in domestic American politics.

During the oil embargo of 1973-74, the Israel lobby found in the Arab nations a convenient target for their propaganda. I can recall vividly full page ads in major American newspapers with the most racist overtones. Ads blanketing all Arabs in the worst kind of way—ads viciously defaming Arabs placed by the B'Nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League.

I can also recall that in spite of the fact that Arab countries provided only 6 percent of U.S. oil consumed in 1973, officials of the Nixon and Ford administrations repeated a thousand times over that the traumatic rise in oil prices here was due solely to the Arab oil countries. There was no question that those same politicians were busy giving the major oil companies the smoke screen they needed to raise their prices without public detection. The idea of "Arabs" as a convenient scapegoat caught on with every sector of our society. First OPEC was made to appear synonymous with