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The American Congress and the Suez Crisis

- a detailed study of Congress and its role in shaping Middle East policy and in various stages of the Suez Crisis.

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"In truth, the Suez crisis did not begin with the nationalization of the Suez Canal, any more than it ended when the canal was re-opened. What we call the Suez Crisis was simply a stage in the larger crisis in our relations with the Arab World."

-Michael Adams, Suez and After

"The Congress of the United States is the world's best hope of representative government."

-Ernest Griffith, Congress

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K.R.H.

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Foreword

This thesis is based on extensive research in the Congressional Record over a period of two and a half years, covering 1955, 1956 and part of 1957. It began as a study of the Suez Crisis, but in the final analysis any attempt at understanding Congress' role in and attitude toward the nationalization of the Suez Canal cannot be considered valid or complete without thoroughly examining Congress' position on the Middle East in the years and months just prior to the incident and the months which followed.

A distinctly salient characteristic of discussion of the events in the Middle East was the considerable importance and exceptional partiality attached to and associated with the Arab-Israeli problem, and in particular, with Israel.

This analysis was carried up to the point of the voting on the Eisenhower Doctrine, in March, 1957, the "Doctrine" itself being a primary vestige and product of the heightened tensions which surrounded the Arab World; an American effort towards filling the so-called "vacuum" which was occasioned by the dismal failure of the armed intervention by France and Great Britain and their subsequent loss of face among the Arab peoples.

This study was undertaken and carried through with the primary intention of examining and compiling the pertinent contents of the Congressional Record. There is naturally a voluminous amount of material dealing with the events leading up to and after the nationalization and subsequent invasion of Suez, and this writer has tried not to neglect important outside sources. This thesis, however, deals not only with Suez, but with Congress as well, and particularly with Congressmen as represented through their own speeches and conduct as registered in the official Congressional Record.

CHAPTER ONE

Foreign Policy and Congress

In international affairs, especially in the rapidly-paced world of the twentieth century, the need for expert and carefully-weighted decisions based on thorough knowledge of international problems, plus knowing the range of choice of alternatives available and the consequences, both immediate and far-reaching, of any decision to be taken, must be acknowledged.

This need for swift and balanced judgement has tended, in recent years, to "enhance the prestige and power of the President at the expense of the legislature."¹

The complexity of relations and diversity of knowledge required to make high-level foreign policy decisions has become such a tremendous burden in today's world, where every day a crisis emerges, continues or subsides, that it calls for much more specialized attention and understanding than can be given by some 500-odd Congressmen who are each under daily pressure

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Johnson, Donald, and Walker, Jack, ed.'s, The Dynamics of the American Presidency, (New York, 1964), p. 200, article by Lawrence H. Chamberlain, "The President as Legislator."

from sources in their own districts and dealing with a formidable workload of legislation.

"Under the United States system of government, the executive is in a position to make an accurate appraisal of changing international conditions and to maximize the achievement of foreign policy objectives through rationally defined policies. While the President represents the whole nation and stresses over-all objectives, Congress is sensitized to the diversities in American society and reflects these parochial interests with varying intensity. Congressional thinking, as compared with executive thinking, is also more closely associated with domestic matters and these are necessarily weighed more heavily in forming Congressional foreign policy attitudes."²

Congress was not conceived as a body which would have to deal in great measure with foreign affairs, and therefore, its machinery for handling foreign policy matters is slow-working and highly inadequate. But as American foreign policy has been formulated over the years and has emerged with all-encompassing global responsibilities, Congress has been called upon to participate

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Buck, Philip, and Travis, Martin, ed.'s, Control of Foreign Relations in Modern Nations, (New York, 1957), p. 109, article by Travis on the U.S.A.. See also, Dahl, Robert A., Congress and Foreign Policy, (New York, 1964), p. 106:

"The whole Congress is as deeply involved in foreign policy as it is in domestic policy; for measured by the demand placed on Congressional power, there is far less basis today for distinguishing foreign from domestic policy than there was a century ago."

more and more in its formulation and application.

"American foreign policy rests squarely on the kinds of 'powers' which constitutional doctrine stipulates for Congress. American foreign policy rests on government loans and expenditures which require appropriations; on military aid, trade negotiations, resources control, which require enabling legislation; on the existence of military forces in readiness, which requires legislation and appropriations; and on the imminent possibility of war, which requires a Congress ready to accept the responsibility of war, and beyond that, a nation ready to accept wartime sacrifices."³

Congress, therefore, has men who have their responsibility to their constituents, but who have also a larger responsibility in relation to sharing in the nation's participation in international affairs. This means that every Congressman ought ideally to be as well-versed in foreign affairs as he is in the politics of his own state or district. But for a man as busy as he is, to be able to do research on a large scale in any area of international politics requires more time than he has. He therefore finds himself relying almost exclusively on information provided by mass media, especially the press.* He is, as a result, subject

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Dahl, op. cit., p. 105

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"Commercial publications, chiefly the press, play a role of enormous importance in shaping Congressional opinions about foreign policy." Ibid., p. 27. A Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress has been established in order to provide information for Congressmen, but Dahl comments that: "So far...Congress has not seen fit to develop the Legislative Reference Service as an important staff aide for continuously exploring policy alternatives. The Service is employed primarily as an information-gathering agency. So far, too, Congress has been willing to grant the Service little more than enough funds to supply the committees - as in the case of foreign affairs - with their professional staffs." p. 159

to be influenced by the opinions and ideas of certain writers and journalists for whom he has respect.

As a result of this reliance on media instead of on expert advice, such as is available to the President and the State Department, "Congress is likely to have a less accurate understanding of the international situation than the executive, and a less precise appreciation of the policy alternatives which are available."⁴

This is a deplorable situation, since many times Congress, because of its different and necessarily more vague sources of information, often finds itself at odds with the State Department and its members.** The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the State Department has every year to ask Congress to approve more funds for foreign aid, and has no way of finding or creating immediate popular backing for its moves. Unlike the Departments of Agriculture, of Labor and of Commerce, which can find ways of arousing public sentiment through farmers, workers or businessmen, respectively, the Department of State "cannot easily mobilize citizen pressures on Congress."⁵

The Senator and especially the Representative has to be highly attuned to the wants and desires of his constituents. He is their man, and he needs their support and approval to

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Buck and Travis, op. cit., p. 104

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"One has only to spend a few days on Capitol Hill to realize how widespread is Congressional distrust and resentment of the State Department." Dahl, op. cit. p. 114

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Ibid., p. 112

keep his job. If a group of his constituents feels strongly about some element of foreign policy, he has to judge their strength and decide if they should be the primary factor in the formation of his own opinion.

Much depends on how active that group is, for it is a well-known fact of American politics that an active, vociferous minority will have much more effect on its Congressman than a passive or inactive majority. The Representative has to judge by what his voters do, and how they seem to be oriented. If he hears constantly from one group, he naturally begins to feel he should pay attention to them. If no case for the opposition is presented, he will usually feel that there is none, or an insignificant one, and will adjust his public views accordingly.***

"Perhaps the most notable issue of this sort in recent years has been the problem of American policy vis a vis Palestine, which evoked such intensity of feeling among Jewish voters that no Congressman with a significant Jewish minority could afford to ignore it."⁶

We shall be dealing with Congress and the Suez Crisis. But the role of the Jewish community in influencing Congress and therefore American policy towards the Middle East, of which the Suez Crisis was one phase, is so important that it

"Congressional action of foreign policy...is less guided by a rational understanding of the foreign situation than it is influenced by personal considerations involving re-election, sectional orientations and private convictions." Buck and Travis, op. cit., p. 104

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Dahl, op. cit., p. 42

must constitute a major part of this analysis.

Robert Dahl calls the Palestine problem one of the "basic issues of foreign policy" which was "automatically at the center of a field of forces of which the private pressure groups were the most important."⁷

The Suez affair must be seen and analyzed in the context of American relations with and foreign policy toward the Middle East, because, for one thing, it was an immediate result of the withdrawal of the offer to build the Aswan Dam, and because it constitutes a stage, not an isolated incident, in the relations between the Arab East and the West.

In Congress, the nationalization of the Suez Canal was viewed more in the context of Egyptian-Israeli relations, since Israel had ensconced itself as the champion of peace and progress in the minds of many, and Middle Eastern affairs were judged solely in the light of their relation to Israel.

"The pro-Israeli minority occupied a position of such strategic importance that both parties had to take pro-Israel stands if they did not wish to lose an important bloc of votes. Political candidates had almost nothing to gain by doing otherwise, and a good deal to lose."⁸

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Ibid., p. 55. He continues: "In this case, probably most citizens had no very decided views about the extraordinarily complex problem of Palestine. Those citizens who felt intensely about the future of a Jewish State were distinctly a minority; but the intensity of their convictions, that is, their willingness to translate their beliefs into political action, for outweighed their numbers." p. 56

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Ibid., p. 56

CHAPTER TWO

Congress and the Middle East, 1955

The Middle Eastern situation occupied little of Congress' time in 1955. This might well have been expected. Until President Nasser made his renowned "arms deal" with the Soviets in September, 1955, the West, including America, felt that it had, as yet, little to fear in the way of substantial communist penetration into the Arab countries.

The intrigues and delicate political situations prevailing in the Middle East up to this time were usually fully understood only by students of Arab affairs and by those few experts stationed in the State Department. Also, it had remained predominantly a British sphere of influence. Middle Eastern affairs were not thoroughly or frequently publicized in America, and as a result, most people knew very little about it.

The United States Congress, as a reflection of public opinion, naturally devoted little of its time to discussing an area with which it was unfamiliar, and which had not occupied the spotlight of international affairs in some time.

Those references made to the Middle East came mainly from men eager to arouse support for Israel and to claim that

it was the epitome of progress and success in an area benighted by feudalism, where the institution of slavery still existed, and illiterate peasants toiled under the reins of corrupt rulers.

It is unfortunate that in nearly every case where a Congressman was called upon to express his views on the Arab situation, those views were commonly the product of half-hearted research and nearly exclusive reliance on biased sources, plus a definite tendency to appease and court the Jewish vote.

At this point it would be pertinent to consider some of the remarks made in the House and the Senate in 1955, as well as selections of texts of articles and speeches delivered outside Congress and inserted in the Congressional Record by Congressmen.

On March 15, 1955, on the occasion of the presentation of a citation from the Jewish National Fund of America to Congressman Abraham J. Multer, Democratic Representative from New York, "in grateful recognition...In high appreciation of the unflinching loyalty and devotion he has brought to the cause of the State of Israel, and his great efforts on behalf of the redemption of the Land of Israel", (p. 2991)* an address was delivered by Senator Henry M. Jackson, (D., Washington) in praise of Multer and of Israel, wherein he stated that:

"Jealous of the progress of their youthful neighbor,

* Hereafter, in referring to pages of the Congressional Record for 1955, (Vol. 101), the page number will simply be noted in parentheses at the end of a quote, in order to avoid burdensome footnotes.

the Arab leaders have sought to divert attention from their own shortcomings by the fanning of ancient religious hostilities." (p. 2991)

Further on was the text of a speech made by Mr. Multer on March 6, 1955, part of which is worth quoting:

"Despite the fact that the initial attack was by the Arab States, and all of the fighting that has been continued down through the years has been instigated by the Arabs, Israel... has continually done thing against her own best interest in order to promote better feeling between the Arabs and Israelis. First, she allowed Arabs to rejoin their families within her boundaries. Then she allowed Arab infiltrators who had no right to enter the country, to remain there. Then she released to Arabs moneys and properties which Israel had a right to hold as indemnity against the damages caused by Arabs. She has continually offered to cooperate economically with her Arab neighbors.

"The Arabs have repeatedly answered by more killings and more robberies, by armed invasion, by guerilla warfare."

(p. 2992)

Keeping in mind that these two men were speaking not in Congress, but in front of a private organization, their zeal in justifying Israel's existence and in denouncing her Arab neighbors is understandable. One ought also to consider, however, that these words have been officially set down in a public record, and that these men are responsible for their

comments, for instance: Multer stated that "Arabs" were allowed to join their families in Israel - not exactly all or most of the Arabs who once lived there - just "Arabs".

One wonders how many, since to this writer's knowledge, there has been no sizeable effort on behalf of Israel to repatriate the ousted inhabitants. Israel "released moneys and properties", but he does not say how much. Israel "allowed" Arab infiltrators to stay. Were they allowed or forcibly detained?

Arms to Iraq

At this time, the United States Government was sending arms to Iraq, a potentially powerful ally of the West and a member of the Baghdad Pact. These arms shipments caused quite a stir in Congress.

Representative James Roosevelt (D., California) addressed a letter to the Secretary of State in which he claimed:

"Like most Americans, I was very proud that our country was able to play an important part in the establishment and growth of the State of Israel. It is one of the significant achievements of the last decade." (p. 3090)

He went on to say that arms shipments to Iraq had to cease unless that country sought peace with Israel. "It seems to me to be imperative that we suspend further arms shipments until the Arab States have agreed to the machinery of negotiation

with Israel, and to call off their present boycotts and blockades... Certainly the United States... will not ignore or help injure the only really democratic government in the whole area." (p. 3090)

Senator Warren Magnuson (D., Washington) added his voice to those protesting arms to an Arab country: "Our purpose in the Near East today is to fill the vacuum in that region and strengthen it against communist aggression or subversion" he claimed. (p. 7478)

"Our program to arm Iraq must surely be resented in Syria, which may someday lose its independence and be swallowed up if Iraq's expansionist plans are ever carried out." (p. 7478)

Warning against Iraqi plans "to dominate the Fertile Crescent", he affirmed that "Iraq has always wanted to annex Jordan", and that he for one was not going to support "existing dictatorial regimes which do not rest on the consent of the governed." (p. 7478)

He closed with: "It was the one state in the Near East which was so much dominated by Nazi influence that it went over to the Nazi side in 1941." And "the Iraqis have never seemed to get over the effects of Nazi propaganda, for they have always been virulently anti-Israel and anti-Jewish." (p. 7478)

Mr. Magnuson was joined by Senator Bender (R., Ohio) who expressed his opposition to arms because, he said, "I am afraid this program endangers Israel." (p. 7487)

He stated that the Iraqi people were strongly influenced by Nazi propoganda in World War II, and that "On June 1 and 2, 1941, there was a cruel pogrom in Iraq where hundreds of Jews were killed and many wounded." (p. 7487)

He told how the Arabs opposed the U.N. Partition plan of 1947 and of how they "now try to rewrite history by pretending that it was Israel that flouted the U.N. resolution." (p. 7488) "It is wrong, it is unmoral, it is indefensible" for the West to "condone anti-Israel strategy and policy as normal, understandable behaviour." (p. 7488)

These three Congressmen who have just been quoted criticized American foreign policy because it did not concur with their ideas. But their prejudices on this subject are undeniable and cannot be overlooked. They are perhaps unaware that they are presenting a distorted image of the Middle East. Be that as it may, they obviously feel well enough informed to make lengthy observations and recommendations on policy.

Mr. Roosevelt advocated compelling the Arabs to recognize Israel before sending any more arms or aid, but can the State Department direct the foreign policies of other countries simply because it sends them aid? He also stated that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, purposely omitting both Lebanon and Turkey, two countries where the government is operated on a democratic basis. Besides this, the United States is not committed only to helping democracies. If a country is

not run on the democratic system, it is not to be condemned forthwith. Sometimes internal conditions in a country do not correspond to those in which democracies can flourish, i.e., high standard of living, high literacy rates, abundant natural resources, stable economy and many other factors, and other means of government must sometimes, of necessity be resorted to.

Senator Magnuson's remarks about Iraq's plans to "dominate the Fertile Crescent" were ill-chosen. Although there were doubtless some elements in Iraqi politics who would probably have welcomed domination of Syria or Jordan, it has not been a singular or distinctive tenet of Iraqi foreign policy. Magnuson tried to make arming Iraq appear dangerous to the interests of Syria and Jordan, but it is probable that he does not have their interests at heart as much as those of Israel. As for his assertion that Iraq was "dominated" by Nazi influence, it could be explained at this point that a pro-German coup was carried out in April, 1941, against the pro-British government. This put the so-called "Golden Square" into power under a government headed by Rashid Ali Gaylani. The "Golden Square" was a group of four influential army officers who, disillusioned by Britain's seeming lack of interest and help, and by the misfortunes of the Allies in Europe, thought Germany would be able to offer Iraq more. It was not so much a movement directed towards or by the Nazis as it was a reaction against Britain and therefore

towards Britain's enemy, which was, in this instance, Germany. That Germany stood for Nazism was secondary in this case. Germany, occupied with other matters of greater importance, made no open recognition of the Rashid Ali regime, and by June 1, 1941, British troops had successfully restored Allied power. Thus, Magnuson was not unjustified in saying it went over to the Nazi side during the war, but it was actually a matter of only two months that the pro-German group were in power, and they were not necessarily representative of the majority of Iraqi opinion.

Mr. Benders allegations, especially in reference to the "pogrom" of June 1 and 2, were also rather exaggerated.* No organized or government-sponsored program against the Jews was carried out, although, on those dates, Baghdad suffered from extensive mob violence and hooliganism, while police stood by powerless to handle it. Order was finally restored by army troops.

Israel's Anniversary

A number of people spoke in Congress every year on the occasion of Israel's anniversary. In 1955, some of those who

* Longrigg, Stephen R., Iraq, 1900 to 1950 (London, 1958), pp. 296-297. "The outbreak had in large part been organized by the fugitive military officers on the scale, they hoped, of a counter-revolution; it represented partly also reprisals by the Youth movement ...and partly the brutality and avarice of the lowest mob elements."

spoke were:

Mr. Barrett O'Hara (D., Illinois) of Chicago, who called Israel "the torch of hope in that troubled area", and who said: "If ever two nations were brothers in a common cause, wedded by the same aspirations as well as the same interests, those nations are the United States of America and Israel." (p. 5155)

Congressman Charles Boyle (D., Illinois), also of Chicago, who related that Israel is "surrounded by forces ...who see in Israel a threat and living refutation of the systems of despotism and absolutism, whether same be the leftism of communism or the rightism of feudalism or colonialism, to which most of the surrounding nations...are clearly wedded and devoted." (p. 5171)

Mr. Joseph Martin (R., Massachusetts) who, in a speech before the American-Israeli Society on April 27, declared that "to help Israel is to make America more secure". (p. 5185) "If ever the Congress of the United States truly reflected the wish of the American people, it has done so in keeping its pledge to the people of Israel...I can tell you that the overwhelming majority of the Congress of the United States, in my opinion, is determined to see to it that the people of Israel shall have the opportunity to build their homes and evolve their culture in peace and safety. ...we have the same common foe, and we will be united in our defense against world communism." (pp. 5185-86)

These were by no means the only men who spoke, but they

have been quoted here because their words echoed the sentiments of all those who delivered speeches on this occasion. They inevitably linked Israel's destiny with that of their own country, America, and had little to say of Israel's neighbors except in scorn or derision. Mr Martin himself openly admitted that Congress was overwhelmingly determined to support the Israeli cause.

Two more remarks ought to be included at this point, first, because they are typical of what the Congressman heard at this time, and secondly, because they come from two highly respected members of the Senate.

The first statement was one made by Senator Wayne Morse, (D., Oregon), who said: "I take cognizance of the fact that Israel is the only area in the entire Middle East in which enlightened capitalism is the form of the economy of the nation..., that it is the only democratic country in the Middle East." (p. 7379)

The second was made by Senator Herbert Lehman (D., New York), who, in a speech advocating that the government stop its arms shipments to Iraq said about Israel: "There is no other country in this part of the world in which free elections are held- with the exception of Turkey - which is not really a part of the Middle East." (p. 7498)

Aside from the fact that it is undeniable that Turkey forms an integral and very important part of what is today called the Middle East," also.

called the Middle East," also, Lebanon holds free elections. Perhaps it could not be classified as the model Western democracy that Israel is, but it does not have the financial resources and/or educational background of the Israeli people. It can be criticized, but it must be recognized as a democracy. Also, its economy is basically and thoroughly capitalistic. Whether or not that capitalism could be defined as "enlightened" depends on the definition of enlightened, and might be a debatable point, but there is little doubt that the government and people are working towards a brighter future and more efficient economic system. Actually, in 1955, there was no country in the Middle East whose economy was not capitalistic to a certain degree. Certainly, any socialist measures were in their infancy at that time.

Neuberger on Aswan

There was one instance when Aswan was mentioned in 1955. Senator Richard Neuberger (D., Oregon) said that he definitely disapproved of the project to help finance the High Dam in Egypt, because he felt that the Federal Government ought to be spending that money on a High Dam on the Snake River in Hells Canyon (Oregon-Idaho border) - "the finest natural hydro-electric site left in our country." (p. E392)

* The American College Dictionary, (New York, 1956) p. 769: The Middle East: "The lands from the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean and Aegean to India: the Near East less the Balkan States."

The Senator did not seem to be influenced by the fact that the Aswan Dam would be more or less a matter of life or death to millions of landless and poverty-stricken Egyptians, whereas a High Dam in Hells Canyon, though it would certainly provide countless benefits for the inhabitants and industries of the surrounding countryside, would not have anywhere near the effect on the U.S. economy that the Aswan Dam would have for Egypt's.

This was clearly an instance where local interest overshadowed larger foreign policy considerations. Mr. Neuberger was understandably concerned with the progress of his region, with the benefits and welfare of his constituents and with re-election. In this context, however, one must begin to question just to what degree a Congressman can or ought to be influenced by localism, in relationship to foreign policy decision-making.

It is natural and desirable that any Senator or Representative be attuned to the needs of his voters. That is his function. But in a changing, fast-moving and ever-smaller world, in which the United States Government plays an ever-increasingly important role, the Congressman must occasionally put aside his parochialism and try to view events and changing needs from the point of view of a responsible American concerned with the future and welfare of the world as a whole, and not simply with his district or his state.

The preceding quotations establish fairly well the tone of Congress in 1955, in relation to events in the Middle East. They deal almost exclusively with Israel because Congressmen made virtually no references to Arab affairs save in connection with Israel. It is indeed interesting and even rather difficult to believe that no Congressman, Senator or Representative, said a word which might possibly have been construed as critical of Israel. No Congressman even seemed to be willing to approach the Arab-Israeli dispute objectively, acknowledging responsibility on both sides.

It therefore appears to be evident that most Congressmen knew very little, if anything, about the Arab countries, the Arab people, and their society, and that what they had learned was taken from definitely biased sources. Otherwise, Congress would not have been so entirely convinced that such a debatable and controvertial problem was so absolutely clear-cut.

There were about twenty major speeches on the Middle East made in Congress in 1955 by Democrats, and about five by Republicans. Eleven times the speakers represented the Northeast section of the country, seven from the West and seven also from the Mid-West. Ten were Senators, fifteen Representatives. Of the latter, twelve represented cities of over a million inhabitants. This seems to indicate a fair amount of concern for the sizeable Jewish vote in these urban centers.

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Thus Congress, in 1955, though not overly concerned with events in the Middle East, worked itself slowly to a point where the more vociferous supporters of Israel had been able to create a clearly inhospitable and intolerant attitude toward almost all of the Arab countries. This was more in evidence in 1956, when a great deal more was said about the Middle East, about Nasser, and naturally, about Israel.

CHAPTER THREE

Congress and the Middle East, 1956

On September 27, 1955, President Nasser announced to the world that he had completed an agreement through Czechoslovakia to be supplied with large quantities of Soviet arms.¹ This announcement marked a definitive turning point in Arab-Western relations and Arab-Soviet relations.

For years, the West had considered itself the exclusive supplier of weapons to the countries of the Middle East. All at once, Nasser, in defiance of American red tape and delays attached to arms negotiations, declared that his next supply of arms would be purchased from the Soviets.

"By this one bold stroke, he declared his independence of the West and his leadership of the Arabs."² The State Department was caught completely off guard and could only manage to

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"The agreement was signed with Czechoslovakia, but the negotiations were begun and the vital decisions were made on the communist side by the Soviet Union, as Abdul Nasser himself publicly acknowledged in his speech of July 26, 1956." Campbell, John, Defense of the Middle East, (New York, 1961), p. 73.

2.

Ibid., p. 73

make feeble representations to the Egyptian Government. "The magnitude of his political success probably surprised even Abdul Nasser himself."³

The West, in particular America and the United Kingdom, had quickly to revamp their former attitudes and policies to deal with this new development. It was probably not Nasser's assertion of independence from the West which truly disturbed American circles, but the fear of slow but eventual Soviet domination of the Egyptian economy, and subsequently, Egypt's political life.

The Egyptians themselves seemed little concerned with the eventualities of this move. They felt they had little to fear in the political respect if they could successfully play East and West off against each other. Comments one Egyptian author: "It remains to be seen whether the purchase of arms from the East ...will represent in itself an infiltration of communism into the Middle East."⁴

He calls attention to two points:

One: "At the moment Nasser was negotiating with Mr. Dimitri Shepilev, then Minister of Foreign Affairs for the USSR, in Cairo, communists were appearing before national courts and being severely judged."⁵

³

Ibid., p. 73; also, note Cremeans, Charles, The Arabs and the World, (New York, 1963), p. 147: "The Arab welcome for Nasser's move gave vent to feelings built up during decades of frustration at Western superiority and condescension, compounded by the deep humiliation of defeat in Palestine and the existence of an alien state...on Arab territory."

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Amer, Adel, Le Complot Continue..., (Cairo, c. 1957), p. 21, author's translation.

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Two: "Nasser has declared ...that if we are opposed to communism in doctrine, that does not prevent us from having amical relations with the USSR - and that, in brief, we will extend our hand to whomsoever offers theirs, refusing it to those who would refuse it to us."⁶

Finally, in December of 1955, the United States Government in conjunction with the United Kingdom and the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development, affirmed that it would offer to begin the financing of the projected High Aswan Dam, to be built on the Nile.*

This move on the part of the State Department was likely motivated in great part by the fear that if the Soviets were to finance such a huge project, as they were intimating they might be prepared to do, the control of the already-mortgaged Egyptian economy would surely slip into their hands. This proposal, however, was singularly unpopular in Congress, and became moreso as 1956 wore on and President Nasser increased his affronts to the West. In fact, it would be difficult to find a program which both houses of Congress disliked more. It counted not even one vigorous supporter.

Judged against the background of what had been brewing in Congress' attitude toward the Arab countries in 1955, Nasser's military agreement with the Soviet bloc only reaffirmed

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Ibid., p.22

*The United States offered \$56 million, the U.K. \$14 million, and the World Bank \$200 million.

the suspicions of many Representatives that the Arabs could never be salvaged and brought back into the Western sphere of influence.

Congressmen made constant representations to the State Department to change its "policy of appeasement" in the Middle East and to make an out and out declaration of support for Israel against her dangerous neighbors.

The fact that Israel had been asking for \$50 million worth of American arms, which the State Department had thus far refused to negotiate with her, served as the basis for many speeches by Congressmen who made it seem as though Israel were being sacrificed to the designs of international communism.

Senator James H. Duff (R., Pennsylvania), in his remarks to the Conference of Jewish Organizations on January 18, 1956, stated in connection with his plea to send arms to Israel: "This vitally critical area to the free world has been selected by the communists for the embarrassment of the West and the continuous further march of the communistic infiltration and expansion." (p. 954)*

Senator Lehman, in a speech a few days later asserted that: "The forces and dangers rampant today in the Middle East were not brought into being by Israel. They were there all the time.... communism...was potentially there all the time." (p. 1081)

As in the previous chapter, quotations from the Congressional Record (Vol. 102), 1956, will be referred to in parentheses at the end of the quotation instead of in footnotes.

"To both Arab leaders and the Kremlin, then, but for different reasons, Israel is a menace - for the Arab chieftains, a dangerous example; for the men of Moscow, a dangerous center of Western influence." (p. 1082)

He then accused United States foreign policy of "abandoning" (p. 1082) Israel, and that as a result, "we set the stage for the direct entry of the Soviet Union into the very center of the scene." (p. 1082) He concluded by listing what he termed the "bedrock facts of the Middle East today: grinding poverty, unrest and instability in the Arab States; and dynamism, democracy and stability in Israel." (p. 1082) His answer to Soviet intrusion consisted of three points: (1) A security pact with Israel, open to her neighbors; (2) Arms for Israel "to maintain the present precarious balance of forces" (p. 1082); (3) Large-scale and long-range economic aid to the Arab States and Israel.

That there is unrest and instability in some Arab states is a correct. However, Lehman's assertion that communism was "potentially" always present among the Arabs was misleading. Communism is a recognizably tempting doctrine to any people who have been under the sway of a colonial power and resented it, and to people who are searching for a better material life than they can manage to live at present. But its atheism and denial of private property go directly against the teachings of Islam.

Lehman also attempted to shift the blame for Arab-Israeli tensions to the communists. While it is definitely possible and even probable that communist propaganda plays up and fans

the Arab-Israeli dispute, that the communists are the direct cause of it is an unreasonable assumption.

His three-point answer to Soviet intrusion seems to be an economic and military aid project for Israel. The plan would be unacceptable to any Arab nation since all the provisions tend to the strengthening of their adversary.

Senator Kefauver (D., Tennessee) had this to say: "I think it is in our national interest that we let all the nations of the Middle East know and the world know, that we are not going to sit idly by and see a brave little democratic nation suffer aggression and be pushed into the sea." (p. 1817)

"It has been made to appear" continued Senator Lehman, "... that Israel was an interloper, and even an aggressor and took land and territory which had belonged to Egypt, or Jordan or Syria." (p. 1819) This he disclaimed as false. Kefauver agreed. This territory, he pointed out, was given up by the Turks in 1919, and the Turks have no dispute with Israel. (p. 1820)

Kefauver went on: "I have heard it said by persons who should know better that it would be dangerous to help Israel at this moment" (p. 1820) because (they say) the Arabs might be driven to side with the Soviets. "That frequent refrain is a libel on the record of American fairness and generosity." (p. 1820) "It is misleading and a dangerous oversimplification to suggest that Israel or our attitude toward Israel has turned Nasser's head to the Kremlin." (p. 1820)

It is not difficult to understand and appreciate Senator Kefauver's concern for a small nation in which democracy prevails and communism has very few adherents. But he seriously underestimated the hostile attitude which the Arabs held towards Israel's creation and perpetuation, and the poor reputation the United States has earned as a result of its early policy of immediate and unconditional support and recognition of the newly-created state.

Senator Lehman's statement on the establishment of Israel was not specifically correct. He said that the land now Israeli never belonged to Egypt, Syria or Jordan, and as far as that goes, it is correct. Arabs, however, do not allege that it did. The point of contention with Israel is that Palestine was inhabited by an indigenous Arab population which has since had to take flight. The Turks did surrender this area after World War I, but not to the Jews. It was to be a British mandate, with provisions for a Jewish National Homeland. Specifically included in the famous Balfour Declaration, which set up this Homeland, was a stipulation that the influx of Jews and the establishment of Jewish institutions would not prejudice the rights of the existing community, which had been 90% Arab.

Congressman Thomas Ashley (D., Ohio), in an effort to support Israel stated: "The hostile feelings which exist between the Arab peoples and the Jewish inhabitants of Israel can be traced

to early Biblical times." (p. 2273) He insinuated that the Arabs as well as the Romans were the factors which drove the Jews from Palestine in the second century A.D. .

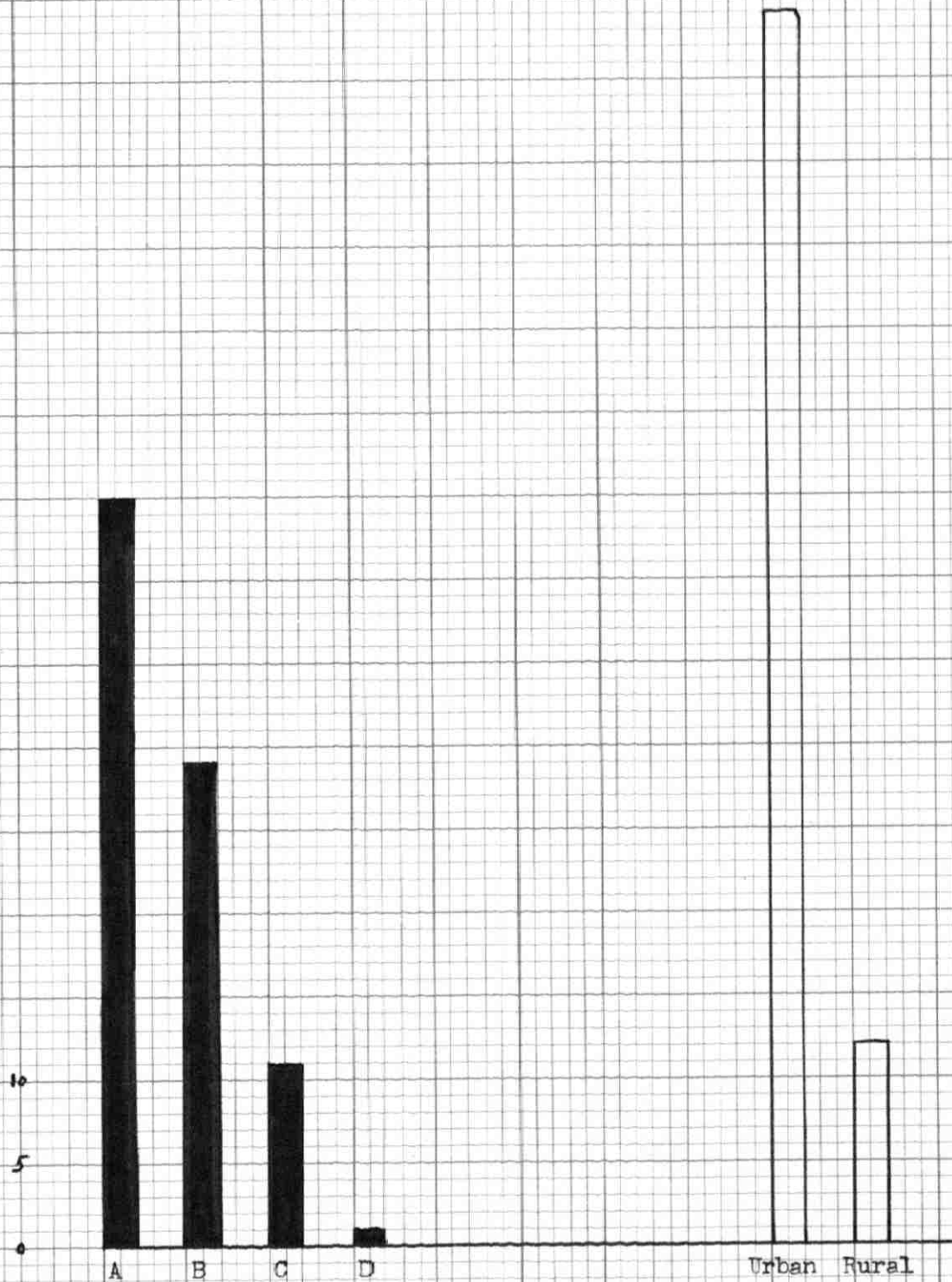
There can hardly exist any doubt but that this is a statement calculated to make the Arabs seem like a belligerent race who have had a long-standing feud with the Hebrews.

Arms to Israel Urged

Late in January a letter signed by 86 Democratic Congressmen was published in the Congressional Record, the letter being addressed to the Secretary of State. It urged the State Department to change its policy and to send arms to Israel. (p. 2275) The following chart indicates the geographic and demographic distribution of the Representatives. It is interesting to note that by far the greatest number (nearly 87%) were Representatives of urban areas, and that two-thirds of those from urban centers were from New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago or Detroit, the five largest cities in America. In them is concentrated a large section of the Jewish voters of the country, with 40% of all the Jews in the United States located in and around New York City. New York City counted 15 of those who signed the letter.

Shortly thereafter, in February, another letter was sent to Mr. Dulles in which 94 Democratic Representatives urged that arms be sent to Israel and pressure put on the Arabs to agree

Eighty-six Congressmen signing declaration for
arms to Israel - All Democrats
February, 1956



A - Northeast
B - Mid-West
C - West
D - South

to peace negotiations. The letter said, in part:

"We believe the danger of war will be seriously increased if the Arab nations attain a military preponderance capable of use for aggression because of the communist initiative... The American people will not tolerate anything so immoral as the sacrifice of Israel to communist infiltration of the Near East." (p. 2406)

Forty Republicans also joined in sending a notice to the State Department that arms should be sent to Israel and her boundaries guaranteed. (p. 2413) The chart follows. Again, the majority represent urban and urbanized areas, especially in the Northeast. New York alone claimed 14 Representatives.

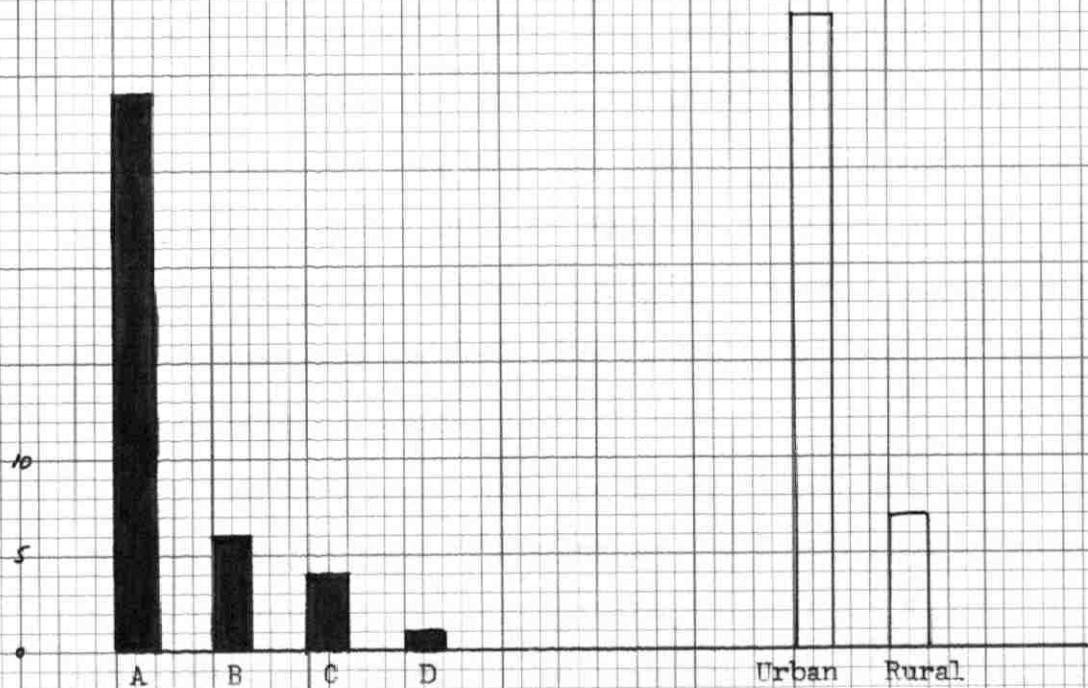
Israel and the Arabs

As February progressed, more people spoke about the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Congresswoman Edna F. Kelly (D., New York) spoke on February 8 about "eliminating" the risk of war in the Middle East by sending arms to Israel. (p. 2403) She warned of the threat of "communist domination". (p. 2403) "The Soviet Union has ignited old hostilities and is fomenting new ones between the Arab States and Israel for the purpose of increasing the tensions in that area and subverting it for communist activities." (p. 2403)

Her fellow Congressman, Mr. Victor Anfuso (D., New York)

Forty Republican Congressmen urging
arms be sent to Israel
February, 1956



A- Northeast
B- Mid-West
C- West
D- South

supported her statement, saying: "If we give arms to Israel, the Arabs will have more respect for the United States... The situation has now become a serious threat to the security of the United States , and the whole free world because of the adamant stand taken by the Arab States." (p. 2404)

At this point, Congresswoman Leonor K. Sullivan (D., Missouri) spoke together with Congresswoman Kelly about their "study mission" to Israel, which they had recently completed. "The visit to Israel was enlightening, impressive and inspiring" commented Mrs. Kelly. (p. 2405) Asked Mrs. Sullivan: "Did those people talk as though they looked forward to committing aggression against any of their neighbors, or was it not entirely a case of their merely wanting to defend themselves against aggression?" (p. 2405) Mrs. Kelly replied in the affirmative. "Israel is our friend", she added. (p. 2405)

The very fact that these two ladies visited Israel but none of her Arab neighbors indicated that their conclusions might tend to be slightly one-sided. Judging by surface appearances and testimony from one party only is hardly the best way to reach an impartial conclusion.

Mr. Anfuso's remark that the United States would earn more respect from the Arabs by sending arms to Israel showed that he had sadly misjudged Arab attitudes toward the U.S. and its policy vis a vis Israel. Such a move, in this writer's opinion would only tend to alienate the Arabs to a further degree,

since they would conclude (perhaps rightly) that the United States was primarily concerned with Israel's perpetuation, and working against the interests of the Arab countries. "Respect" in this instance would be better termed, "resentment".

His comment that Arab-Israeli tensions were endangering the security of the United States is admissible, since a conflagration of the dispute would be serious, and might involve both the Soviets and the West. But this could scarcely be avoided by heavily arming Israel.

Another New Yorker, Mr. Irwin Davidson, (D.) in a speech criticizing Secretary Dulles, quoted a United Nations report of January 27 on arms to the Middle East, in which it recorded that Israel had received about \$ nine million worth of arms in 1951-55, while the Arab States had received \$ thirteen million. This, he called an "overwhelming superiority of Arab strength".
(p. 2405)

He ended his statement by citing some "basic truths" about the Middle East:

1. Israel is "the only true democracy in the Middle East", and the Arab States "have been totalitarian since the dawn of history".

2. Israel is our ally in "word and action" while the Arabs "have courted the communist world".

"Israel, of all the nations of the world, has a history which most parallels our own." (p. 2406)

In the same context, Representative Celler (D., New York) gave a long speech in which he affirmed that "It is contrary to the very nature of the Israelis to wage any kind of war against anyone." (p. 2407)

In reference to arms shipments sent by England to Egypt, he remarked that "Great Britain has been guilty of bad faith here". (p.2407) Celler did not say against whom this "bad faith" was directed. He may have had in mind the Tripartite Agreement of 1950, which advocated avoiding an arms race in the Middle East, but he was not specific. In any case, Britain had the right to send limited amounts of arms, but Celler made it seem that the U.K. had betrayed the cause of the free world by sending Egypt these supplies.

He went on to warn of the menace in the Mediterranean. "Some six or maybe eight Russian submarines flying the Egyptian flag and manned by Russian technicians are in the Mediterranean in the very shadow of our sixth Fleet...They are a danger to our own welfare." (p. 2408)

Near the end of his statement, Mr. Celler waxed poetic. In a final appeal, he proclaimed:

"The doors of small Israel must be kept open to the driven Jew, the Jew that has been tossed about like dry leaves before the chilly autumn blast, year after year." (p. 2407) "The United States is like a mother to Israel. Whenever did a mother desert her child?" (p. 2407)

He closed by inserting in the Congressional Record five and a half pages (fine print) of "atrocities" "perpetrated" by marauding Arabs on the Israelis. These were taken from the Israel Speaks of January 29, 1956.

Democratic Representative from the Los Angeles area, James Roosevelt, commented that "when the record is written, there can be no question as to which side is right in this dispute." (p. 2415) He described the situation as "but one of the pawns in the great overall effort of Communist Russia to succeed in her plan of world conquest", which, he stated, "is perhaps being accomplished by the help and aid of the Arab nationalists." (p. 2415)

That is a rather serious accusation. It is also a short-sighted one. To charge Arab nationalists of furthering the communist designs to dominate the world is in itself contradictory. Arab nationalism, like other nationalisms, springs from a common pride and love of one's country, its traditions, its language and its history, and is directed in this case at breaking the chains of dependence on stronger powers and their domination. Communism is not necessarily the goal of the Arab leaders. They are seeking to make room in the world for their own philosophies - not for someone else's.

Congressman Boyle (D., Illinois) took the opportunity to warn against the "unconditional Soviet support of the Arab position and Soviet penetration of the Middle East, threatening

Israel's national existence and its democratic principles of life." (p. 2417)

His colleague, Mr. O'Hara, (D., Illinois), also from the Chicago area, claimed that he had been "moved deeply". "Israel" he said "has been brought by the wicked designs of an alien theology to the point of great danger... Abandoning her to the Arabs w.. would mean that the free countries of Europe and the Far East would be outflanked and our own security jeopardized." (p. 2418) Palestine under the Arabs, he claimed, was in a condition of "feudal squalor". (p. 2418)

This attack on Islam was wholly uncalled-for and in very poor taste, to say the least. Islam has no "designs" in relation to Israel, let alone "wicked" ones. He called "alien" a theology which is counted among the world's great monotheistic religions, which originated in the same area as Christianity and Judaism, and which has much in common with them.

Either Mr. O'Hara knew nothing about Islam, in which case he should not have exposed his ignorance in public, or else he felt that since it is not a predominant religion in America, he could freely malign it, in which case he is still unjustified in speaking so disrespectfully.

Besides the impiety of his statement, it has nothing to do with the Israeli problem, for the dispute is not between religions, but between political entities. That the two sides happen to be mainly of different religions is secondary. There

were a fair amount of Christian Arabs expelled from Palestine, also, who feel just as passionately about Israel as the many Moslems.

That these men have seen fit to link communism directly with Arab nationalism and to indicate that the free world is not safe from either one and even to attack Islam, is the unhappy product of misconceptions, misinformation and the tendency on the part of many urban representatives to court the Jewish vote.

A different opinion

One man spoke in a different tone. "I have participated only with extreme hesitancy" he remarked, but "I would rather be falsely accused...than to think that I sat idly by and said nothing, and, by doing so, betrayed my own conscience and my own country... I do not think the answer is arms now." (p. 2418)

He spoke of having visited the Middle East and having met with heads of state, including Nasser. He visited refugee camps.

"If we furnish arms to Israel" he continued, "we encourage greater arms shipments to the Arab countries". (p. 2419) As to what had been said about Israel, he commented: "there are other aspects to the matter...which are certainly to be evaluated if our government is to properly determine its course of action." (p. 2419) "I do not want...our State Department to be pressured into following a course of action which, incidentally, may be

politically expedient at the moment, but which may not be in our own national self-interest. ...I do believe that the Secretary of State is honestly trying to find a workable solution" he concluded. (p. 2419)

He was seconded by another Congressman, who rose to say that "I certainly agree...that this is a two-sided question" (p. 2419). In a very concise speech he related that he, too, had visited the Middle East, and had concluded that "we are responsible for the set-up there." (p. 2419)

It must have taken a good deal of courage and conviction for both these men to speak out in a Congress where anti-Arab sentiment was so strong. The man first quoted was Mr. Robert C. Byrd (D., West Virginia) and the second was Congressman William Winstead, (D., Mississippi).

The noticeable difference between their quiet speeches and the harangues of others was to their advantage, but unfortunately, their words seemed to fall on deaf ears. For a few moments the atmosphere seemed to clear, but it was soon clouded by further accusations.

Mr. MacCormack (D., Massachusetts) said that he acknowledged the "purity and honesty" of Mr. Byrd's motives (p. 2420), but that it seemed to him that "our national interest is more consistent with...Israel than it is with Egypt". (p. 2420) After all, he said, it "is the only democracy in that wide area of the world." (p. 2420)

Representative John Dingell (D., Michigan) of Detroit, claimed

that "It appears that Egypt dreams...of actually creating an Egyptian empire from the Atlantic to India." (p. 2421) Under the Jews, he said, Israel had become "desirable to the Arabs after being despoiled for years and having been an economic liability." (p. 2421)

An Egyptian empire of the magnitude of which Mr. Dingell spoke would hardly be credible. He was evidently mixing Arab nationalism with Egyptian imperialism. Also, Palestine could not really have been termed a "liability" before the Jewish occupation, although its inhabitants did not have the vast educational, economic and technical resources that are available to the Israelis today.

"America" he concluded, "must never let a people who love their land so much be overwhelmed." (p. 2421)

Israel, Jordan and Lebanon

Mr. Abraham Multer added to the discussion, saying that in Egypt, Syria and Jordan, the people "are still living as they did in feudal days, with a few people at the top in control and refusing to allow the masses to improve their standard of living." (p. 2422)

This must be regarded as a distortion of reality. That the leaders "refuse" to "allow" the people to improve their lot is unreasonable. They are all concerned with providing a better future for their citizens, and Nasser, in particular, has taken extreme measures to reorganize a fairer distribution of land and wealth in Egypt.

At this moment, Mr. Winstead (D., Mississippi) spoke to Multer, asking about Israel's military situation and saying: "Perhaps the problem that we have here is one that we helped to create through the United Nations, making almost an impossible situation for Israel or anyone else over there so far as a peaceful solution is concerned." (p. 2423)

"Aren't we" he continued, "largely responsible" for this division, for setting up Israel? (p. 2423) "Is it not true that all these Arab countries were our friends before we took such an aggressive stand in that determination, and are now not our friends?" (p. 2423)

To these questions Multer responded with a remarkable answer. If we created Israel, he said, we also "created Jordan and Lebanon". (p. 2423) Jordan, he said, did not exist until the U.N. partition of 1947, and Lebanon would not exist if the United States had not "stood up for the Wilsonian doctrine of self-determination." (p. 2423)

What the United States had to do with the creation of Jordan would be rather obscure. The British in particular would be interested to hear that Jordan did not exist before 1947, since it was a British mandate after World War I. True, the Jordan that then existed did not have the same boundaries as it now does with Israel, and was called Transjordan, but it most certainly was a legal political entity, and to deny its existence is unreasonable.

It is well known that Lebanon was a French mandate created out of Greater Syria after World War I, and which effectively

gained its independence in December of 1943. But the American role in achieving that independence was not a major one.

In both of these cases, also, it was the indigenous population which lived there and continues to live there controlling its own affairs - not a people imported by large-scale immigration.

Tanks to Saudi Arabia

In mid-February, 1956, one event in particular caused an uproar in Congress. This was the announcement that the United States Government was sending 18 tanks to Saudi Arabia for purposes of internal security.

Senators Humphrey (D., Minnesota), Symington (D., Missouri), O'Mahoney (D., Wyoming), Lehman (D., New York) and Morse (D., Oregon) joined to condemn this act of the State Department. Humphrey called it "a sad mistake of national policy." (p. 2674) Senator Douglas (D., Illinois) said that Saudi Arabia is the most "autocratic...irresponsible, warlike" nation in the Middle East. (p. 2881) Mr. Lehman called the move "incredible" (p. 2883) and quoted the New York Times as having said it was "preposterous" and the situation filled with "tragic irony". (p. 2883) Mr. Morse warned that "we do not help the cause of freedom by supporting governments that throttle freedom." (p. 2882)

Secretary Dulles announced officially on February 18, 1956, that the 18 tanks were to be used for "training purposes" and explained that the tanks had been requested in April, 1955, and that the United States had agreed to the sale on August 25, 1955.⁷

On February 20, Congressman William Granahan (D., Pennsylvania) of Philadelphia, brought to the attention of Congress a declaration sent to him, signed by 25,000 Jews living in West Philadelphia, to the effect that: The United States should sign a security pact with Israel; that the United States should send arms to Israel; and that the Arabs should be pressured for peace. (p. 2982) Said Granahan: the Arabs fear Israel as a "dynamic force for democracy", and suspect that Israel might "demonstrate...that people do not have to live in near slavery to a few rich and powerful leaders." (p. 2892)

Anniversary

On the occasion of Israel's anniversary (mid-April) in 1956 as in preceding years, many congressmen took the opportunity to express their support for the Israeli regime.

Mr. Boyle (D., Illinois) of Chicago, after a short speech on communism in the Middle East, published in the Congressional Record telegrams from eleven Rabbis in his district. The telegrams were all worded exactly the same, and called for U.S. protection of Israel. (p. 6387-88)

Mr. Celler (D., New York) of New York City, called United States policy in the Middle East "benighted" and "shortsighted". (p. 6389) Nasser, he claimed, wants an empire which would surpass the "Pharoos and Mohammed Ali" (p. 6389) He accused "Nasser and his gang" of wanting to "blot out...the flame of democracy." (p. 6389)

James Roosevelt (D., California) of Los Angeles exclaimed: "How dense and stupid can we be?" (p. 6391) "Russia is in the Middle East because she wants to take advantage of the tremendous hatred on the part of the Arabs against the democratic institutions of that little but brave and wonderful state." (p. 6391)

Said Congressman Rhodes (D., Pennsylvania): "The evil forces of world communism are attempting to destroy this symbol of democracy by incitement of the racial and nationalistic prejudices of its neighbors." (p. 6394)

And Representative Peter Rodino (D., New Jersey) claimed that: "Pulling the strings behind the whole Arab-Israeli conflict are the Soviet agents...we must not permit this nation to fall at the hands of communist conspirators," (p. 6396)

This writer believes that it may be safely said that although the Soviets might not mind seeing Israel and her Western affiliations eliminated from the Middle Eastern scene, the Arabs have legitimate complaints of their own against that state. They feel they have suffered a grave injustice.

Burleson Speaks

It might be relevant at this point to include sections of an address spoken by one of the members of Congress, as it came shortly after Israel's eighth anniversary celebration. This speech was given by Democratic Congressman Omar Burleson, of Texas, before the United Council for Judaism, in Chicago,

on April 28, 1956, and was printed in the Congressional Record at the request of Representative James P. Richards (D., South Carolina).

This was a man with some knowledge of the situation speaking out, albeit not in Congress, but before a private organization. The United Council for Judaism is a non-Zionist Jewish organization.

Burleson began his talk by referring to Zionism as a "tremendously powerful force" (p. 7725) The trouble is, he continued, that any attempt at objectivity "runs the grave risk of being denounced as anti-semitism." (p. 7725)

"As long as the question of United States policy for the Middle East continues to be a political football, on the domestic scene, we shall never arrive at any solution in the national interest." (p. 7727) "We have been callously playing politics with American national security" (p. 7727) he went on, and concluded by referring to the "vast sums of money raised in this country and made available to the Israeli government." (p. 7727)

Here then, is a statement by a member of Congress, in which he admitted that Middle Eastern policy was largely determined as the result of political pressures at home. But Mr. Burleson was a lone voice.

It is encouraging to note, however, that he was at that time a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Taylor's Letter

In the Senate, early in May, Senator Wayne Morse (D., Oregon)

read a letter which he had received from a certain Mr. Fred Taylor. It seems Mr. Taylor had gone to the Middle East and felt he should write his impressions to the Senator. Some of his comments were:

"I deeply regret our position of courting their feudal lords for their grimy oil dollars." (p. 8051)

"In their own sections, the Arab continues to live in his traditional way - living standards of 2000 B.C.." (p. 8051)

"Many people do not realize that the Arab, as an Oriental, actually thinks and acts contrary to an Occidental." (p. 8051)

Mr. Morse did not say who Mr. Taylor was, but he evidently expected his listeners to take his words as fact. Actually, his comments were exaggerated to an extent that made them virtually useless.

Senator Monroney (D., Oklahoma) made a speech late in May on the need for a stronger foreign policy in the Middle East. He included in his speech an article written by Joseph Alsop in the Chicago Sun-Times on May 23, 1956, about "Iraq's Strong Man". It is an interview with someone whom Alsop calls Nu al-Said. (Probably a typographical error. The article is about Nuri Said.) Alsop actually said little about Nuri as a person, his main comment being that he looked "remarkably owlish". (p. 8685)

Refugee Hearings

The House Foreign Affairs Committee held hearings on the Arab Refugee problem on May 8, 1956, and heard comment and this

testimony from Abraham Malter (D., New York):

"Before they left there 90% of them were living in poverty. To take them and send them back there would be utter folly - how are they going to live? Obviously, these people must be resettled in places where you can give them a piece of land, or an opportunity to earn themselves a livelihood that doesn't even begin to approach our standards, but which will improve their prior standards."

(p. 8853)

Malter did not think the Arabs should be repatriated. But one ought to keep in mind that he was hardly an impartial witness, since he was a firm supporter of Israel and doubtless counted a majority of Jews in his constituency. His implications as to the low standards of living of some of the Arabs may have had some basis in fact, but were exaggerated. And his recommendations were totally unsympathetic to the refugee community.

He then remarked that he was astonished that no one had ever explained to the Arabs that "This is not a Jewish problem at home" and that "neither party needs Jewish votes to elect our President, House or Senate." (p. 8855)

It is a basic fact of American politics, recognized by most political scientists that the Jewish vote is an influential and important one*, and Malter's statement does not hold.

Murphy Report

As June and July passed, both Chambers heard stormy speeches

*

See Chapter One, p. 6, last paragraph.

against the Arab governments and their dictatorial regimes. It would be of little value to include them here, since, in the main, they repeat what has been heard before.

One report, however, is worth mentioning, simply as an illustration of upon what Congressmen sometimes base their statements.

In July, Mr. MacCormack (D., Massachusetts) read the report of Commander-in-Chief Timothy J. Murphy, Veterans of the Foreign Wars of the United States. Murphy had gone on a fact-finding trip to the Middle East and sent his final report to MacCormack.

He began by describing his two or three days in Greece and Turkey. From Istanbul he flew to Beirut. He commented: "Had I had time, I should have enjoyed some sightseeing off the beaten track; for example, Damascus...but I was conforming closely to my original mission of learning all the modern history I could absorb." (p. 15270)

In Beirut he wrote: "In the short time, I was unable to get an embassy briefing on the Arab-Israeli controversy." (p. 15270)

He then flew to Jerusalem, where he spoke to one man at the United States Consulate and two U.N. officials. After spending the grand total of one and a half days in Beirut and Jerusalem, he crossed the border into Israel, where he said:

"There is no argument, it presents a decided contrast with the Arab countries, where in most areas sanitation, ordinary cleanliness and personal hygiene are unknown." (p. 15271)

It should be pointed out that Damascus is the seat of the Syrian Government and one of the largest and most important cities in the Middle East today. To consider it "off the beaten

track" on a "factfinding" trip indicates a lack of basic knowledge of the subject. It is only a very short distance from Beirut.

But if Mr. Murphy had no time for an embassy briefing in Beirut (which could have been done in an hour or so) he surely would not have had time to visit Damascus.

Murphy could hardly be said to have been in any Arab country long enough to find any facts whatsoever.

He concluded his report with glowing tribute to Israel and hearty recommendations for following a tough line towards the Arabs.

At this point, we shall turn from discussion on the Middle East in general to the problem of the Aswan Dam, and examine its reception in Congress.

Aswan

Although the State Department had, in December of 1955, gone ahead with its plan of offering the Egyptian people \$56 million in financial aid toward the building of the Aswan Dam, the scheme was intensely disliked in Congress.

Eisenhower, commenting on Aswan in the second volume of his memoirs, admitted that Congress was extremely unhappy about the Dam project. He and Dulles would have had to use all possible kinds of pressure to gain approval for the measure, and,

he confessed, "we had little zest for an all-out legislative fight in behalf of a nation that thought it could do as well by dealing with the Soviets."⁸

Very little was actually said in public about the High Dam-- some three or four speeches, at most. Those who spoke were voicing complaints about the project. All who spoke were from areas of the country where there were projected irrigation or power projects, which in their opinion, had not received due attention by the Federal Government, and which were important local issues.

In addition, some Southern Democratic Senators, "led by Holland of Florida"⁹ feared the Dam would increase irrigation in Egypt to an extent that its cotton production would rise and compete heavily with the American Southern states. "Pro- Israeli Senators supported Holland's move as a curb on Egypt's strength and belligerency."¹⁰

Robert Murphy claimed in his memoirs that "In fact, Congressional leaders were disposed at that moment (July, 1956) to disallow the use of American funds for the Aswan project even on a year-to-year basis."¹¹

The conservative Republicans in Congress tended to be against the Dam project because they were "indignant with Egypt's reluc-

8

Eisenhower, Dwight D., Waging Peace, 1956-1961 (vol. 2 of The White House Years), (Garden City, 1965), pp. 31.

9

Finer, Herman, Dulles over Suez, (Chicago, 1964), p. 45

10

Ibid., p. 45

11

Murphy, Robert, Diplomat among Warriors, (New York, 1964), pp. 419-420.

tance to join the fight against communism and with Cairo's firm commitment to Moscow."¹²

The two Senators from Oregon spoke on Aswan early in the year. Senator Morse (D.) called it "a complete giveaway of tax money" (p.1443), and his colleague, Senator Neuberger (D.) went on to say that:

"If we read this is Swift or Dumas, we would regard it as so fantastic as to be beyond human credulity." (p. 1443) "How can our treasury be so empty when we need a dam on the Oregon-Idaho border, but so full when the administration wants to put up a dam in Egypt?" (p. 1443)

Representative Miller, of Nebraska, (R.) spoke in Congress in February saying that 139 irrigation projects in 32 countries, sponsored by the American Government, had "drained the taxpayers of about \$ 50 billion." (p. 3202) He then asked support for a project to be built on the Colorado River.

In May, Senator Albert Gore, Democrat, of Tennessee, included in the Record what he termed an "incisive and provocative" (p.7760) article written by Mr. Morris Cunningham, the Washington representative of the Memphis Commercial Appeal. The article was entitled:

"Tax Dollars Denied TVA Would Be Given to Egypt under Administration's Plan - Foes of Public Power Are Anxious to Finance Aswan Dam Although Project Pses Threat to American Cotton Exports." (p. 7760)

It went on to say that the State Department was "pressuring"

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Rondot, Pierre, Changing Patterns of the Middle East, (New York, 1962), p. 156.

Congress to approve the project, which would take 15 to 18 years to build and cost a total of \$1.3 billion. "Its greatest potential is its effect on world cotton production and markets" and the author feared "large quantities of additional cotton being dumped upon already sagging world markets." (p. 7760) He then included the names of three Congressmen: Whitten (D., Mississippi), Stennis (D., Mississippi) and Eastland (D., Mississippi), plus Senator Walter George (D., Georgia) who were known to be working to oppose the project. Senator George was the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.*

Also in May, Idaho Representative Mrs. Gracie Pfost criticized the High Dam project. "I think" she said, "Hells Canyon Dam should come ahead of Aswan Dam." (p. 9709)

Soon after, Congressman Wickersham (D., Oklahoma) denounced the State Department's policy of giving money to Nasser, while Western Oklahoma and other states "were experiencing severe dust storms, droughts and water shortages". (p. 9819)

"Egyptian farmers along the Nile managed to finance and construct their own dams many centuries before this nation was born" he concluded. (p. 9819)

*

It may be interesting to note that Finer says in Dulles over Suez that since the dam was to take 15 years to complete and 18 years to produce more cotton, the fear of glutting the market was far-removed, plus the fact that the extra area brought into cultivation in Egypt was not planned for use as a cotton-growing area, since the market was too well supplied. He remarks that the opposing Senators did not number many, and could, with some effort, have been appeased. (p. 47)

It should be brought out that the very first effective dam built in Egypt was constructed in 1903. The earliest water control construction on the Nile was the Mohammed Ali barrage, built in 1861 and resited in 1939. This barrage is limited in effect to raising the local water level.¹³

The Egyptian farmer has for centuries relied upon the process of basin irrigation, which has become more and more unfeasible due to its inadequacy, inefficiency, unhealthfulness and the diminishing quality of the soil. Methods used in the Middle Ages have no place in the twentieth century.

Disapproval

It is small wonder that the Egyptian project was so universally opposed and disliked in Congress, since a hostile psychological attitude towards the Arab people, especially Nasser, had been successfully created by those who had spoken about Israel.

In this instance the opposition was composed of the pro-Israeli Congressmen, courting the important Jewish vote, who joined with the Conservative Right, which felt that there was considerable evidence to show that Nasser was playing up to the Soviets and using their influence to "blackmail" America into committing millions of dollars towards his own aims. To these should be added the Southern Democrats who opposed the plan on the grounds that it would endanger their own states' in-

¹³ See

Fisher, W.B., The Middle East, (London, 1961), p.486

come from cotton-growing, plus those who represented states where irrigation projects were needed and the supporters of Hells Canyon Dam.

In what way could Congress show its disapproval of the Aswan Dam project? Besides noisy denunciations of Nasser expressed in the two Chambers, the Appropriations Committee undertook to express its dissatisfaction by means of a note which was sent in June to the Secretary of State. It was worded as follows:

"The Committee directs that none of the funds provided in this act (for 1957) shall be used for assistance in connection with the construction of the Aswan Dam, nor shall any of the funds heretofore provided under the Mutual Security Act as amended be used on this dam without prior approval of the Committee on Appropriations."*

Mr. Dulles sent his reply on June 26, directed to Senator Carl Hayden (D., Arizona), Chairman of the Committee. He assured him that: "None of the funds which may be appropriated for the fiscal year 1957 will be committed to finance the Aswan Dam without specific prior consultation with the Committee." (p. 13061)**

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"The vehicles or instruments through which Congress exercises its degree of leadership and guidance are chiefly appropriations, laws, resolutions, hearings and debates. Of these, the appropriating process is more likely to be a tool of censure or disapproval than to be an affirmative instrument." Griffith, Ernest S., Congress, Its Contemporary Role, (New York, 1951), p. 94.

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Eisenhower, op. cit., p. 32: "I would not admit that the Committee's announcement could have any real effect on negotiations because if such a report could have the standing of law, it would render the Executive powerless in his conduct of foreign relations. Nevertheless, the Committee's report did reflect the existence of an anti-Dam coalition in Congress. It included Senators with pro-Israeli sympathies, Southerners concerned over the cotton market, and those who were opposed to any kind of assistance to foreign nations other than our own loyal allies."

It is remarkable that this project of the administration's did not have a single spokesman in Congress. If there were men who approved of it, they never bothered to make their views known. It speaks very poorly indeed of relations between Congress and the White House when no members of Eisenhower's own party would rise to ask support of the Aswan project.

The opponents of economic aid to Egypt had little against which to fight. Their anti-Aswan campaign found support in many quarters, one can be fairly sure, simply because no one presented the case for Egypt or for the administration.*

Dulles was constantly harassed from all sides, not only on Aswan, but other issues as well. As soon as he did or said anything which was interpreted as friendly to an Arab country he was subjected to abuses and criticisms in Congress.

"Dulles seems to be incapable of any firm decision" (p.6389) said Representative Celler (D., New York), on April 16, in reference to Middle Eastern policy. Senator Douglas (D., Illinois) went even further: "Every time he (Dulles) opens his mouth he seems to put his foot in it." (p. 6504) Congressman Multer (D., New York) claimed that "Our Secretary of State has proved himself insensitive and insensible to the facts and moralities of the area." (p. 6395)

Multer referred to the "ill will" (p. 6395) of a few people,

* "Our nation's foreign policy over the years has been seriously handicapped through failure of executive-legislative rapport." Griffith, op. cit., p. 96

such as former Ambassador to Cairo, Byroade, who had been made Advisor to Dulles. Said Senator Douglas: "It is commonly known that his (Byroade's) sympathies lie almost exclusively with the Arabs." (p. 1821)

No one can doubt but that Mr. Dulles and his associates were under a great strain. No one seemed to be urging them to go ahead with the good work. Nasser was doing his best to show that he would follow his own independent policy and associate with whomever he pleased, including the communist nations, if he felt like it. In May he recognized Communist China. He intimated that he was considering rival Russian offers to build the dam. The Russian Embassy staff in Egypt increased from 40 to 150.¹⁴

Congress was up in arms. It was an election year.*

"Mr. Dulles was under severe pressure from Congress to cut foreign aid appropriations. The Senate, anxious to finish the business for the session and escape from the syrupy heat of Washington, was in an ugly mood. The week before, its Appropriations Committee had asked Dulles to abandon the Aswan project. He had refused - hesitantly. Then on July 17, representatives of the Senate Cotton lobby, which naturally wished to prevent the increase in Egyptian cotton production which the dam project

14

. Johnson, Paul, The Suez War (London, 1957), p. 3

"On July 13 Foster reported to me that he had warned the Egyptians we were not now in a position to deal with this matter because we could not predict what action Congress might take." Eisenhower, op. cit., p. 32

would eventually facilitate, called on him and extracted from him the promise that he would reconsider the matter."¹⁵

It is interesting to note that a few days after the Aswan proposal had been rescinded, Representative William Green (D., Pennsylvania) of Philadelphia, reported in Congress that his colleague, Hugh Scott (R., Pennsylvania) "went to the State Department and told the Secretary that you (Scott) were very much concerned about the Jewish vote this election because of the treatment Eisenhower had given Israel." (p. 14128) This was just before the offer was withdrawn.

Mr. Scott is one of the most active Republicans. He was national chairman of the Party in 1948-49; chairman of regional organization, Eisenhower campaign, January-July 1952; chairman, Eisenhower Headquarters Committee, 1952; and chairman, Republican Assembly, Philadelphia, 1955.¹⁶ It was also he who headed up the 40 Republicans who sent the letter to Mr. Dulles on arms for Israel earlier in the year. (see p.29)

On July 19, 1956, Mr. Dulles informed the Egyptian Ambassador that the United States was withdrawing its offer of aid to Egypt for the construction of the Aswan Dam.* Within days, both Great

16

United States Congress, Official Congressional Directory, 1956, (Washington, 1956), 84th Congress, Second Session, p. 131.

* In a letter addressed to the President on September 15, 1956, Secretary Dulles explained that he had been confronted with "a Congressional attitude in the face of which it would have been impossible to finance the dam. If I had not announced our withdrawal when I did, the Congress would certainly have imposed it on us almost unanimously." Eisenhower, op. cit., p.

Britain and the World Bank followed suit, since the entire program had hinged on the provision of American funds.

Prime Minister Anthony Eden later wrote that although his Government had also decided earlier against going through with the offer, the way in which the American Secretary had gone about announcing the decision had met with some displeasure: "We were sorry that the matter was carried through so abruptly, because it gave our two countries no chance to concert either timing or methods, though these were quite as important as the substance."¹⁷

In Congress, the manoeuvre on the part of the Secretary of State was hailed as a stroke of strong policy, and praise for Mr. Dulles was heard from all quarters.

On July 21, Representative George Mahon (D., Texas) spoke out of order to congratulate Dulles:

"The Secretary deserves to be complimented for assuming this position" he began. "The Aswan Dam and assistance to Egypt for construction of the Aswan Dam were not in the best interests of the United States...I am unalterably opposed to the project... I hope...that our government will not cooperate in the construction of this dam." (p. 13837) Mr. MacCormack (D., Massachusetts) and Mr. Flood (D., Pennsylvania) joined to express their satisfaction with the move and the "strong point" taken by Dulles. (p. 13837)

Continued Mahon: "We have no business undertaking to underwrite even in part the proposed gigantic Aswan Dam in Egypt."

17.

Eden, Anthony, Full Circle, the Memoirs of Anthony Eden, (Boston, 1960), p. 470.

He closed with: "We cannot afford to subsidize Egypt to go into the cotton business in further competition with the American cotton farmer. Let there be an end to our gestures toward assistance to Egypt on this venture." (p. 13837)

Mr. Mahon came from a cotton-growing district of Texas.

A somewhat incongruous short speech was made by Representative Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (D., New York) of Harlem, on July 23, saluting the anniversary of the Egyptian Revolution. In 1955, Powell had simply inserted a speech by President Nasser on the occasion, without commenting himself. This time he praised Nasser, saying: "Devoted to the liberation of the masses, Nasser gave the people what they seldom had: hope." (p. 14149)

"The various reform programs have been executed with such vigor that many observers have remarked that in the brief four years since independence, Egypt has advanced more than at any other time in her history...I pray for the people and their leaders continued success and prosperity." (p. 14149)

Perhaps Powell felt that he could safely praise the Egyptian leader now that the State Department had pulled the rug out from under his feet. His reasons for bothering to congratulate Egypt at all are not obvious, but one could reasonably assume that his voters, as oppressed minority groups, might feel a certain sympathy for the Arab cause against imperialism and the superiority of the West. In addition, there is almost no Jewish vote in Harlem.

Support for Withdrawal

Senator Styles Bridges (R., New Hampshire) remarked in the Senate that: "I think the decision not to give aid for the construction of that Dam was the best foreign policy decision our country has made for some little time." (p. 14179) "The Senate Appropriations Committee rates an assist for the strong language it wrote into its report" he declared. (p. 14180) "Americans now hold their heads a little higher" and could now "well take a look at some of the countries we assist, rather than to be completely taken in." (p. 14180)

He was followed by Senator Holland (D., Florida), who tried to justify the action of the Appropriations Committee. He began by stating what the Committee had decided on Aswan. There were four points:

1. No funds from prior appropriations were to be used for the dam.
2. No funds were to be used "for that area of the world"
3. The President was directed not to use any money from his "Emergency Fund" for the dam.
4. If the Administration desired to go through with the Aswan proposal, the Secretary of State would have to confer with the Appropriations Committees of both Houses. (p. 14206)

Continued Holland:

In view of the recalcitrance of the present rulers of Egypt in recent months, their willingness to acquire arms from Russian satellites through the use of cotton in barter transactions, particularly in view of the fact that the United States is holding an umbrella over the cotton-producing areas in

the world, and that the very considerable surplus of cotton in the world is now in the hands of the United States, I am sure our committee felt that we are entitled to select where our funds, available for mutual assistance, should be used. We also felt that recent actions of the present rulers of Egypt were not sufficiently friendly to justify such use.

We further felt, in view of the apparent unwillingness of Egypt to participate in any way in bringing about a friendly or peaceful status in the Near East or to recognize any sense of responsibility on its part as a leader of the Arab group in working out peaceful living arrangements with Israel, and in working with the United Nations and with our country, and our allies in bringing about peace in the Middle East, that we were justified in taking that position. (p.14207)*

On July 24, Congressman John J. Flynt (D., Georgia) announced in the House of Representatives that "We have witnessed the exposure of what is perhaps the most elaborate and most extensive extortion scheme in the entire history of nations." (p. 14293)
 "I refer to the plan between Egypt and Russia to blackmail this country into financing the Aswan High Dam." (p. 14293)

"It never did make sense to me" he said "for this country to build a dam in Egypt for a dictator who is closely connected with Russia and who is actively fomenting strife in the Middle East and North Africa." (p. 14294)

He then implied that Nasser's "playing both ends against the middle" policy had "probably originated" in the Kremlin. (p. 14294) "The Russian offer has been continuously held over our heads in an effort to obtain more giveaway from the American taxpayers." (p. 14294)

*

"Congress is most interested at the present time in finding ways of insisting upon certain conditions as the price of foreign economic and military aid." Griffith, op. cit., p. 96

He concluded: "The commendable action of our State Department in withdrawing from the project called the Russians' hand and proved their bluff...For once during the three and a half years under Mr. Dulles the United States State Department" refused to give "one cent for tribute, blackmail or extortion." (p. 14294)

Mr. Dulles had finally earned a good word from Congress and a good deal of respect in some circles. For once, he had followed the tide of Congressional sentiment and given in to overwhelming pressure from many areas. He was now basking in the warmth of good feeling which flowed out of Congress. Perhaps he relaxed, knowing that he had re-asserted American pride, and feeling that he had done the morally correct thing at the time.

But the honeymoon with Congress was destined to be short-lived.

Nationalization

One week after the withdrawal of the offer to help finance Aswan, Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser announced to a cheering crowd of thousands in Alexandria that he had ordered the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, and that henceforth, "all its assets and commitments would pass to the Egyptian State."¹⁸ He "justified the nationalization on the grounds that

¹⁸

Lok Saba Secretariat, Suez Canal, Nationalization and After, (New Delhi, 1956), p. 3. See also, Azeau, Henri, Le Piège de Suez, (Paris, 1964), p. 119: which says that during Nasser's speech, "Toute l'Égypte se dresse comme un seul homme, vengée en un instant de soixante-quatorze ans d'humiliation."

the Suez Canal Company usurped Egyptian concessions, and said its revenues would be used to enable Egypt to build the High Dam independently of foreign aid."¹⁹

Says Robert Murphy in his memoirs: "Nasser's dramatic action came as a complete surprise to the American government, as it did to others."²⁰

Reaction to the act of nationalization was swift but confused. America's stake in Suez was important to her, to be sure, but it was not the vital lifeline that it was to Britain and France, who depended on over half their oil supplies to come from the Middle East through Suez. Reaction in those two countries took on an immediately belligerent tone.

In Britain, The Economist commented in its lead editorial, entitled, appropriately, "Europe's Achilles Heel", that "The real shock to the West has been not Colonel Nasser's bad manners, but the appalling discovery of its own vulnerability."²¹

Sir Anthony Eden's government was severely taken aback. They took, for the most part, the action of nationalization as a serious personal affront and insult, even though Nasser was supposedly exercising his rights within the law.*

19

Watt, D.C., Documents on the Suez Crisis, (London, 1957), p. 2.

20

Murphy, op. cit., p. 420

21

The Economist, August 4, 1956, vol. CLXXX, no. 5893, p. 381.

*

"The Canal Company was Egyptian. In nationalizing the Canal Company, Egypt was acting within her legal rights." Watt, op. cit., p. 10. Also, Lok Saba, op. cit., p. 1: "The sovereignty of Egypt over the canal is...beyond question."

An Egyptian author comments that the nationalization was "a banal act of sovereignty, the only audacity of which was to have been accomplished by an Oriental." He continued: "Juridically speaking, Egypt had not infringed any principle of international law or any contractual text."²²

But the governments of France and Britain were filled with apprehension and alarm. Their reactions tended to be somewhat emotional. To the French, "long acquaintance with Colonel Nasser as an impresario of the Algerian rebellion had ripened French opinion for a violent reaction to the Suez coup."²³

"The Canal Company and the economics of oil were overshadowed by fear of a collapse of Western influence throughout the Middle East, and of French policy in North Africa."²⁴ French interests in Egypt amounted to over a billion dollars, and half of France's petroleum supplies came through Suez.²⁵ In response to the Suez coup the French Government sent an official protest to the Egyptian Government, which was "couched in terms so violent that the Egyp-

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Amer, op. cit., p. 23, and also note statement by S.E. le Docteur Mohammed Salah ad-Din Pasha, Foreign Minister of Egypt, in preface to al-Hefnaoui, Mustafa, Les Problemes Contemporains Poses par le Canal de Suez, (Paris, 1951): "L'Egypte...est resolue a voir le canal appartenir a l'Egypte, et non l'Egypte au canal, et a faire de sa situation geographique privilegiee...un facteur de consolidation de la paix mondiale et non un objet de convoitises et de frictions qui risquerait de mettre cette paix en peril...Tels sont les convictions et les buts de tout Egyptien."

23

The Economist, August 4, 1956, vol. CLXXX, no. 5893, p. 413

24

Ibid., p. 413

25

Ibid., p. 413

tian Ambassador in Paris refused to accept it."²⁶

Congress, meanwhile, was working overtime and loaded down with business to finish before it was dismissed. As it was, several people still found time to speak about the Suez issue.

Congressman Emanuel Celler (D., New York) declared on July 27, the day after Nasser's announcement, that "Messrs. Dulles, Eden and Pineau have reaped what they have sown." (p. 15376)

"They have pursued a consistent policy of appeasement, subordinating national self-respect to the fog of fear. They were passive when Egypt closed the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping, failing to see that as a forerunner of Egyptian arrogance. Through United States Ambassadors Caffery and Byroade, they fed this arrogance and helped to build this outsize picture of Nasser." (p. 15376)

"Military and economic reprisals would be the least satisfactory of policies. There is, however, the proposal of good sense, and that is the building of an alternate canal from Elath on the Gulf of Aqaba - Red Sea - across Israel to Ascalon on the Mediterranean." "Little government cost would be involved", he assured, (\$150,000,000) and the plan should merit "immediate and serious" consideration. (p. 15376)

Mr. Celler was swift to place the blame for the seizure of the canal company on Dulles, Eden and Pineau, while he was himself one of the most outspoken opponents of aid to Egypt and

26

Watt, op. cit., p. 4

no doubt worked actively for the withdrawal of the Aswan offer, which had been the immediate cause of Nasser's action. Further, he cited Ambassadors Byroade and Caffery as having "fed Egyptian arrogance" because they were sympathetic to the aspirations of the Arabs.

He had a plan prepared for the United States Government to pour millions of dollars into building a new canal through Israel. However, it is odd that he proposed the new canal only one day after the Suez Company was nationalized, for although Nasser had announced that the company would change hands, traffic through the Canal went on at rates very close to normal. It would only have been to Egypt's detriment to arrest or block traffic, thereby losing precious revenue and also losing the confidence of the shippers.

On the same day, Congressman W.J. Bryan Dorn (D., South Carolina) announced that "The action of dictator Nasser in seizing the Suez Canal is another example of our ridiculous policy of buying friends with money. If any nation should be grateful to America, that nation is Egypt." (p. 15415) "Since the war, the United States has poured millions into Egypt in the form of economic and military aid. Now, because we did not advance the money to build the Aswan Dam on her terms, Dictator Nasser is ready to join up with Russia and possibly start another World War. If the United States had not sent her a single dollar, I believe she would be much more friendly to us today." (p. 15415)

"With our billions and billions we have only bought hatred, distrust, envy and jealousy" he continued. "Let us at the next session of the Congress abandon this policy of spending and appeasement and initiate a strong offensive policy that will win the respect and admiration of the whole world." (p. 15415)

In view of the fact that Nasser had just made his announcement the day before, Dorn's conclusion about commencing World War III seems premature.

It is of interest to note that he felt, as did many other Congressmen, that the money which the United States had contributed to Egypt had gone into Nasser's pocket. He hardly considered the Egyptian people and how they think and live. Says Michael Adams in his book, Suez and After, "The central error of American policy in the Middle East is that it is based exclusively on governments and takes no account of popular feelings (ignoring the fact that in the Middle East, currents of thought commonly endure longer than governments.)"²⁷

A particularly long and venomous speech was delivered on this occasion by Representative James Roosevelt (D., California). (See pp. 15455-56) It would certainly have been of much greater value and more constructive had he tempered it with some less vehement remarks and a few practical recommendations. Filled with grave implications and abuses, the speech was clearly designed to court local Zionist sentiment. In one paragraph Nasser

27

Adams, Michael, Suez and After, (Boston, 1958), p. 213

is a communist conspirator; in another he is a fascist dictator; then he is working against democracy and therefore against the West. He advocates Death to Americans, he threatens to close Suez to American shipping, and he "rains death" on helpless Jews.

After Mr. Roosevelt's speech, it was a relief to read a statement by Senator Mike Mansfield on Suez. He had composed a wise and clear analysis of the events and their implications.

"There is no doubt" he began, "but that President Nasser had the right to nationalize the Canal. There is no question but that since the seizure...normal transit of vessels through the Canal has been allowed to continue in the same old pattern." (p. 15571) He continued: "The mistakes leading up to the Suez Crisis must, in part, at least, be credited to the United States." He advised that 1.: the United States should not have urged Britain to evacuate her troops from the Suez area; and 2.: the United States should not have proposed financing the Aswan Dam at the time that it did.

He went on:

We are now faced with a reality which calls for cool and considered action on the part of the Western Big Three...Neither the West nor Nasser can afford a defeat on the question of the Suez Canal. The answer to this difficult question does not lie in the use of aggressive tactics or in war. The answer lies in the use of diplomacy and the development of new policies and ideas. The emphasis on re-arming and the calling up to the colors of reserves by both Britain and France is understandable in view of their economic interest and dependence on and in the Middle East...but their emotionalism in this situation is, in its own way, as bad and as dangerous as Nasser's...

President Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal Company was not a move made on the spur of the moment...nor was it made only because of the United States' refusal to

make a grant to Nasser to allow him to start on the Aswan Dam. It appears to be that Nasser's seizure was a carefully-worked out plan which was moved ahead of its scheduled timetable and used as a means of offsetting the United States' refusal to grant funds for the Aswan Dam. In other words, in my opinion, even if United States funds had been granted, it would have only been a question of time before the seizure of the Suez Canal would have taken place.

We cannot afford to become hysterical or emotional over Nasser's action. (pp. 15571-72)

He then advised consideration of the following:

1. The London Conference scheduled for August 16.
2. Can Nasser keep the Canal open?
3. Emergency exports of oil to Europe from the U.S.A.
4. The United States should recognize Egypt's right to nationalize Suez.

He closed by saying:

War is not the answer to the Suez incident. While the exasperation and emotionalism of France and Britain are understandable, it should be recognized that gunboat diplomacy in this day and age would only exacerbate the situation and make it worse. What we have to do now is work with the present, but think and plan for the future.

We should, in addition to the conference to be held in London, consider the possibilities in the light of subsequent circumstances, of referring the Suez question to the International Court of Justice at the Hague, and, if aggressive action is undertaken by either side on an unwarranted basis, taking the question immediately to the United Nations Security Council.

Aggression and force are not the answers. Reason, not passion, restraint, not fireworks - must prevail. (p. 15572)

This concluded the discussion of the Middle East in the second session of the 84th Congress, 1956.

Out of some 200 speeches made on the Middle East, three of them were reasonably sympathetic towards the Arab countries. One

other was printed in the Congressional Record but not spoken in Congress. (Burleson)

The disparity between these four references to the Middle East and the rest of what was spoken was definitely marked. It did not seem that Byrd, Winstead, Powell and Burleson were just favoring the Arabs. Having some acquaintance with the Middle East, they realized the large amount of ill feeling being created by some people in Congress towards the Arabs, and noting the sizeable amount of propoganda put forth in favor of Israel, they simply asked that their colleagues try to see both sides of a touchy question. There was nothing fanatic or hysterical about their speeches. They were not calculated to shock or abuse.

There was a different attitude in many instances on the part of those who denounced the Arabs. Although one can readily appreciate how many Congressmen were tempted to sympathize with Israel because of its Western leanings and democratic institutions, to voice such harsh sentiments so consistently against nearly every Arab state without exception seemed, to this writer at least, definitely unjust.

A number of Congressmen felt strongly anti-Arab and especially anti-Nasser. In many cases, it appeared that this was a product of misleading or incomplete information, plus a natural tendency to incline towards the Israeli stand, for reasons both political and personal.

Nasser has his faults, to be sure. But he also has a philosophy of his own. He is a man to be dealt with on particular terms, and should not be classified as a Communist a Nazi or anything

else that is familiar and easy to conceive.

It is readily apparent that Nasser, however, was misunderstood and intensely disliked in Congressional circles. Israeli propoganda and even his own actions had earned him an unenviable reputation as anti-democratic and anti-Western. The fact that he did not conform to American standards of democracy and certain American-made rules of conduct toward the countries of the Communist Bloc had been twisted and exaggerated into making him seem like a communist conspirator. It might be said that few heads of state ever had less sympathisers in Congress than President Nasser.

This was evident in relation to the Aswan offer, which had virtually no visible support in Congress and had a very active coalition of opponents who were instrumental in having the offer withdrawn.

In relation to Suez, Congress' psychological attitude had already been prepared when President Nasser announced the nationalization of the Canal, and reaction could not have been but bitter, as it was throughout most of the Western world.

For further consideration of Suez and its after-effects, it is necessary to extend this analysis further into 1956 and 1957. Congress had recessed by the end of July and its various members had dispersed the country over to prepare for the up-coming Presidential campaign and Presidential and Congressional elections.

CHAPTER FOUR

Developments to Invasion

While Congressmen and the Presidential candidates were campaigning, the atmosphere in the Middle East and in Europe was growing more tense with each day. A "mood of mounting frustration"¹ accompanied, especially in Britain, by a "pervasive sense of nostalgia"² for times past, was on the rise, when no upstart ruler would dare to so act against the interests of Europe's two most powerful and influential nations. Tempers were growing short. Britain and France were eager to teach President Nasser a lesson he would not easily forget. American spokesmen, on the other hand, tried to restrain their allies' restless desire for revenge, since they feared the uselessness or the disastrous effect of any armed retaliation.

Dulles himself emphasized that "legality was a basic issue, because, if it became impossible to avoid military action against Egypt, then President Eisenhower would need Congress' authority for any participation therein, and Congress would have to be convinced that the allies were on legal ground."³

1

Johnson, op. cit., p. x (introduction)

2

Ibid., p. x

3

Finer, op. cit., p. 95

On July 30, the French Prime Minister, Guy Mollet, described Nasser as "an apprentice dictator whose methods were similar to those used by Hitler." Later, he stated: "In deflating the prestige of a false hero who is trying to lead the Moslem world into dire adventures, we will be doing all Moslems a service that one day they will appreciate."⁴

Nasser announced on July 31 that: "Freedom of navigation on the Suez Canal is neither affected nor involved in any manner or to any degree. No one could be more interested than Egypt in the freedom of passage through the Canal."⁵

Three-power consultations were held in London on August 1 and 2, as a result of which a joint statement was issued by the conferees, the United States, Britain and France. It consisted of five points:

1. They recognized the "recent action of the Egyptian Government."
2. "The present action involves far more than a simple act of nationalization" since it involved the use of an international waterway vital to many nations.
3. They "consider that the action taken by the Government of Egypt...threatens the freedom and security of the Canal."
4. They "consider that steps should be taken to establish operating arrangements under an international system."
5. To that end, they proposed a conference of 24 nations

⁴
Lok Saba, op. cit., p. 8

⁵
Ibid., p. 4

who used the Canal most, to be held in London on August

also 16, 1956.⁶ The invitation) and terminated on August 23. Two

proposals were produced. One was a Western product sponsored

Nasser replied in the negative to the invitation to London, ~~led~~
by 18 nations. It consisted of four points:

because he felt that the "conference had no right to discuss any

1. An international board on which Egypt would be rep-
resented would be established to operate canal affairs;

the invitation therefore could not be accepted by Egypt."⁷

2. Egypt's right to a "fair and equitable return" was

Former President Eisenhower has revealed that a few days
recognized;

prior to the scheduled conference, on August 12, he had met with

3. The Suez Canal Company was to receive fair compensation
a bipartisan group of Congressional leaders in Washington. The

for nationalization;

purpose of the meeting had been to see if some sort of Senatorial

4. In case of dispute, arbitration was to be provided.

participation in the conference would be feasible. Senators John-

The other plan was proposed by India and backed by Ceylon,
son, Knowland, George, Russell and H. Alexander Smith were there,
Indonesia and the USSR. It proposed that:

in addition to eleven Representatives, headed by Sam Rayburn,

1. The users board would exist only in an advisory capacity;
Joe Martin, Charles Halleck and Les Arends. But efforts toward

to the Egyptian Canal authority;

Congressional representation were fruitless, for the Democratic

2. No sanctions would be permitted against Egypt if she
members of Congress were naturally anxious to participate in their

were to use her position against the users.⁸

party's convention, which was at that very moment in its preliminary

stages. "Soon after that meeting, the idea of Senatorial represen-

tation at the London Conference had to be discarded because none of

the appropriate Democrats found it convenient to attend."⁶ One of

the proposal, but said he would consider signing a U.N. treaty

Council on Foreign Relations, op. cit., p. 291

⁷ guaranteeing freedom of navigation.

Lok Saba, op. cit., p. 15

8

⁹ Eisenhower, op. cit., p. 44. "Senator Walter George was physically
unable to go; Lyndon Johnson and Mike Mansfield declined. Senator
Fulbright was then invited; he not only replied in the negative, but
also informed Secretary Dulles that the question of Democratic partici-
pation had been studied by the party's leadership and nobody was
available. As a substitute for actual Senatorial representation,
Senator George planned to remain in Washington and keep in daily touch
with the State Department. As a result of this, the Republican Senator,
H. Alexander Smith, reverted to his plan to attend the Republican conven-
tion in San Francisco." Ibid., p. 45

On September 19, a second London conference was held which came out by approving Dulles' plan for a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA). This plan envisioned an association of the users of the Canal which would have its own Canal pilots and which would pay dues to itself. If Nasser chose to oppose the association, the United States offered to assist its European allies by providing petroleum supplies and economic assistance while a general boycott of the Canal was carried out. This was to be a temporary solution only.

Meanwhile, a general arms build-up was being prepared in the Mediterranean, against which Egypt complained in the Security Council of the United Nations on September 24.

On the front page of the New York Times of October 2, Mayor Robert Wagner, the Democratic nominee for the Senate in New York, stated that "the United States should send arms to Israel as a gift" and "should not ask them to pay because it would break down their economy".

The following day Mayor Wagner attacked Secretary Dulles for his "ill-advised" actions in the Middle East and listed five points of Dulles' policy of which he disapproved: 1) His support of the Arab countries, 2) His endorsing British evacuation of the Suez zone, 3) His promoting of the Baghdad Pact, 4) He did not "react vigorously" to Nasser's arms deal with Czechoslovakia, and 5) His refusal to send arms to Israel.¹⁰

¹⁰

The New York Times, October 3, p. 24.

Republican candidate for the New York Senate seat, Jacob Javits, commented that Wagner, "by his ill-informed statements... has proved that he was and still is an apprentice in foreign policy." ¹¹

Senator Kefauver, then the Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate and Richard Nixon both spoke before the Zionist Organization of America on October 7 and both emphasized the importance of Israel. Nixon vowed that "we shall support the independence of Israel against armed aggression". And Kefauver called the Middle East the "scene of what history may tell us is the greatest failure in our recent foreign policy." ¹²

Settlement Principles

Negotiations were being held in private between the Foreign Ministers of France, the United Kingdom and Egypt and finally, on October 13, they adopted six settlement principles which were approved by the Security Council:

1. Free and open transit of the Canal
2. Respect for Egypt's sovereignty
3. Insulation of the Canal "from the politics of any country"
4. A "fair proportion" of the dues to be allotted for development
5. Arbitration in case of dispute. ¹³

¹¹ New York Times, October 4, p. 24

¹² Ibid., October 8, p. 19

¹³ International Review Service, The Suez Canal - Nationalization, Invasion, International Action, vol. III, no. 30, February, 1957, New York, p. 11

Therefore, a good deal of progress had been made by mid-October towards the settling of the dispute, and although difficulties did remain, the path was being cleared toward the drawing up of a definitive contract.

Suez was constantly in the news and in politics. As the elections drew closer more comments were made on the administration's policy. "We have put oil above principle in the Middle East" said Senator Kefauver.¹⁴ He also called Israel, Suez and Cyprus "tinder-boxes" which could erupt into World War III.¹⁵

Invasion

On October 29, ostensibly in retaliation to Egyptian guerilla raids, the Israelis invaded the Sinai peninsula and touched off a short-lived, disastrous, full-scale war between Egypt and Israel, France and Britain.*

Upon the Israeli attack, Britain and France sent notes to both parties ordering each to withdraw ten miles from the Canal on either side. If they did not, the Europeans said they would be forced to intervene. The Israelis had already penetrated

14

The New York Times, October 16, p. 19

15

Ibid., October 24, p. 20

* "Israel could not await the culmination of her enemies' preparations on a scale she knew she could not equal. No government of a small, free nation could rest on such frail hope. ...For my part, if the responsibility had been mine as the head of the Israeli government, I hope that I would have taken just such action as Israel took." Eden, op. cit., p. 579.

some hundred miles inside Egyptian territory and could therefore safely agree to draw back ten miles. But to the Egyptians the ultimatum meant evacuating their own territory which they were trying desperately to guard. The ultimatum could be said to have been directed mainly against the Egyptians. They refused.*

"Whatever the undoubted earlier and continued provocation of Colonel Nasser's policies, to invite Egypt to abandon its only tenable line of defense against attack from the East and Israel to take up positions more than 100 miles inside the Egyptian border was the act of a partisan rather than a policeman."¹⁶

On October 31, Egyptian air bases were bombed severely by British and French aircraft. Within the next few days a full-scale invasion of Egypt was underway and Egypt blockaded the Suez Canal by sinking ships in it.

On October 31, also, the New York Times reported that during a couple of Wagner's speeches, both delivered in front of predominantly Jewish organizations, the audiences "applauded...vigorously" at the mention of Israel and "broke into cheers" at the mention of the Middle East.¹⁷

* "The Israeli raid into the Sinai Peninsula prompted the British Government not to set about inducing the Israeli forces to go back to their own territory, but to offer Egypt two alternatives: an Anglo-French occupation of the Suez Canal with Egyptian assent, or an Anglo-French occupation of the Suez Canal against Egyptian opposition. As a result, statesmen all over the world are bracketing Britain and France with Israel as aggressors." The Economist, November 3, 1956, vol. CLXXXI, no. 5906, p. 391.

16

Ibid., p. 392

17

New York Times, October 31, p. 25

Mr. Javits urged on November 2 that the United States "resolve what brought this about - the intolerable pretensions of this man, Nasser, which the world can't afford."¹⁸

And Senator Lehman, though not in the race for office, accused Dulles of "building up" the dictatorship of Nasser and said that the Middle East crisis represented the "bad seed" sown by Dulles.¹⁹

The United Nations General Assembly (the Security Council was paralyzed by French and British veto power) passed on November 2 and 4 resolutions calling for a cease-fire in the Suez area and for withdrawal of troops. On November 5 a resolution was passed for the establishment of a United Nations Emergency Force to supervise the cessation of fighting and to police the area.

The United States in this instance was brought face to face with a dilemma she had long been seeking to avoid. She was now confronted with choosing between standing by the side of her traditional allies and old friends and siding with a young Arab nation struggling to throw off the last vestiges of colonialism and foreign domination. The question was one of extreme importance, and one which would pave the path to the future of American foreign relations. The underdeveloped nations of the world, the neutral nations and the communist nations sided with Egypt in this instance and the United States decided she had to do the same. By aiding her old friends she would have severely endangered her

¹⁸

Ibid., November 2, p. 22

¹⁹

Ibid., November 2, p. 20

future relations with all emerging nations and former colonial or mandated territories. She had to consider the future over the past, even though she found herself for the first time joining with the Soviets, her traditional foes and the antagonist of the democratic institutions for which she stands.

So the United States made clear its opposition to the armed invasion and did all in its power to work through the UN to stop hostilities.*

The Soviet Union sent threatening notes to both the British and French governments, warning that Russia would not hesitate to send volunteers to aid the Egyptians and stating that they were in possession of long-range rockets which could destroy European capitals.

On November 5 all parties agreed to a cease-fire, although British troops landed in Port Said on November 6. On the 7th a cease-fire was finally effected.

In the midst of this crisis Dwight D. Eisenhower had been elected President for a second term and Congress, likewise, had gone through another election.

* Says Eisenhower: "My conviction was that the Western world had begotten into a lot of difficulty by selecting the wrong issue about which to be tough." Eisenhower, op. cit., p. 50

CHAPTER FIVE

Aftermath

When Congress re-convened in January, 1957, and President Eisenhower delivered his State of the Union message, he made a special request. This has come to be called the Eisenhower Doctrine. What it embodied is as follows:

1. Authorization of Congress for the United States "to cooperate with and assist any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East in the development of economic strength dedicated to the maintenance of national independence."
2. Authorization to allow the executive "to undertake in the same region programs of military assistance and cooperation with any nation or group of nations which desires such aid.";
3. "To authorize such assistance and cooperation to include the employment of the Armed forces of the United States to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of such nations requesting such aid against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism";

4. "To authorize the President to employ for economic and defensive military purposes, sums available under the Mutual Security Act of 1954 as amended, without regard to existing limitations."

(Taken from a speech by Congressman Alvin M Bently (R., Michigan) on January 16, 1957, Congressional Record, p.924)

The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East quickly became the consuming topics for debate in both chambers of Congress as the voting on the Doctrine was to be done soon. It found a mixed reception in both parties. A statement by Senator Hubert Humphrey (D., Minnesota) accurately summed up the first week of Congress in 1957:

"Concern over the Middle East overshadowed everything else during opening week of the 85th Congress. The President's request for Congressional sanction to the use of force if necessary has been met with mixed reactions from Democrats and Republicans alike. On one hand, Congress certainly would not repudiate the power and responsibility the President already has as Commander-in-Chief. It is not conceivable that our country, in our interests, could ignore Soviet military aggression against any other country in the vital Middle East. On the other hand, there is wide-spread regret that the President felt it necessary to seek formal action of the Congress, which in effect, means little more than affirming authority he already has."* (p. 291)

Humphrey stated that many were concerned because the proposal

*

As in previous chapters quotations from the Congressional Record (vol. 103) will be preferred to in parentheses instead of in footnote form.

dealt only with overt armed aggression by the Soviets and not the more subtle and insidious methods of subversion and infiltration. He finally asked: "What could it do...to restrain Syria or Egypt if they wanted to attack someplace in the area and expand their own area of influence backed up by Soviet money, Soviet technicians and Soviet arms?" (p. 291)

Persecution of Jews

One of the results of the Suez War was a large amount of adverse publicity as to how the Egyptian Jews had been treated. In Congress Israeli supporters took up this subject and discussed it extensively. This writer has found references to this subject only by a few Congressmen and in no other sources and therefore doubts that the situation was quite as serious as it was pictured. One ought also to keep in mind that Israel had invaded and attacked Egypt and there had been an actual state of war.

In the Senate the topic was first brought up by Senator John Pastore (D., Rhode Island) who submitted a resolution sent to him by the General Jewish Committee of Providence and 30 local Jewish organizations, signed by 25,000 citizens of Providence.

"The signers of the resolution are all my personal friends" he claimed. (p. 394) The resolution, he went on, was for "the rescue of Egyptian Jews suffering under the terror and violence of Nasser, deprived of the citizenship they have earned in Egypt despoiled of their possessions, held as hostages or exiled forever from the Egypt they had called home." (p. 394) The resolution itself accused Nasser of being another Hitler, of keeping

Jews in concentration camps and of being a communist.

Representative Celler, of New York, (D.) said that the Egyptian treatment of Jews "must surely arouse the indignation of the civilized countries of the world." (p.445)

Mr. Victor Anfuso, also of New York (D.), called Egypt a "slaughterhouse for the innocent" where "brutal and inhumane... barbaric tactics" were being used in a "reign of terror...reminiscent of the Hitler methods of Nazi Germany". (p. 453)

And Senator O'Mahoney (D., Wyoming) stated that "Egypt's program of persecution and terror bears a frightening resemblance to the anti-Jewish program of the Nazis" (p. 478). Later he observed that "Nasser's order of expulsion directed against the Jews was an obvious violation of the faith in liberty which Moses preached from Mount Sinai." (p. 793)

It is tragic that so many people lost their homes and property and were expelled from Egypt during the conflict. It might be worthwhile to note, however, that British and French citizens were also expelled at the height of the crisis.

Multer on the Middle East

Congressman Multer (D., New York) in a testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee asserted that the Arab countries of the Middle East were dominated by Soviet designs.

"I say to this committee that when the history of these times is written one of the darkest blots upon its pages will be recording the shameful conduct of our country in rising up in the U.N. to

join with our sworn enemy, the communists, to denounce our sworn friends the British, the French and the Israelis." (p. 654)

He went on to speak of Suez: "No Egyptian money built the Canal" and Egypt, he stated, did not sink ships in the Canal during the hostilities for self-defense, but as a "deliberate act of sabotage" (p. 655) At that time he declared "We should have moved into Syria - yes, with armed forces" to protect the oil pipelines passing through that country. (p. 655)

"Syria" he informed "is fast being completely dominated by the communists". With communist aid, he warned, Syria would march on Lebanon, because "Syria insists that Lebanon must...be a part of Syria." (p. 655)

He accused the Yemenis of being communists and said that the people of Saudi Arabia "are slaves in every sense of the word" (p. 656) Ending, he proposed an addition to the resolution before the House of his own composition. It excluded aid to any Arab country unless it first agreed:

1. "that it will not be an aggressor nation";
2. "that it will not permit its citizens or residents to engage in acts of aggression, guerilla or otherwise, or in raids and pillaging or in causing injury, death or damage to any of its neighbors";
3. "that it will faithfully abide by and fulfill its international obligations and abide by the ethics and principles of international law; and will not discriminate on account of race or religion";

4. "that it will negotiate in good faith peace treaties with its neighbors; and
5. that it will not submit to domination by any foreign nation" (p. 656).

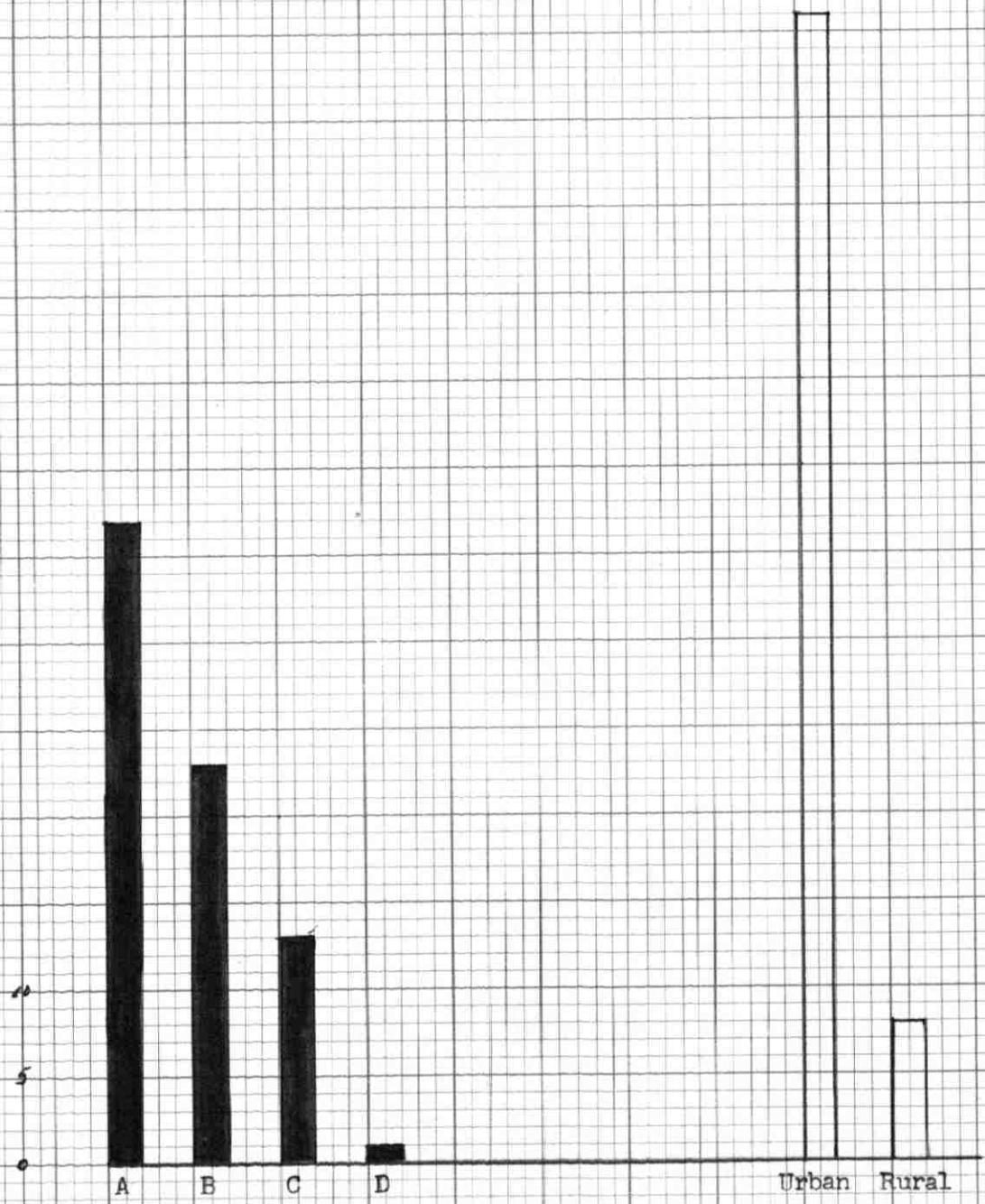
It can hardly be said that these five points were in the spirit of the Eisenhower Doctrine, which was directed towards the protection of the Arab countries. They dictate terms of internal and foreign politics which would be immediately refused by any Arab state, since they all lead only to a guarantee of peace with Israel.

Letter on Suez

On January 23, 1957, 74 members of the House of Representatives led by Congressman Celler sent a letter to the Secretary of State, questioning him on the Middle East. The text of the letter referred to the "importance of Suez" and stated that "It is a futile enterprise to erect defenses against external Soviet aggression if we ignore the danger that a communist-armed or communist inspired power is in a position, at any time, it wishes, to close this major waterway." (p. 921)

They advocated an alternate canal "across Southern Israel ...developed and secured from the threat of Egyptian or communist control". (p. 921) "Many of us fear" they concluded "that Colonel Nasser of Egypt is dictating the terms and conditions of the implementation of the November 2 resolution and that the U.N. force is merely clearing the way for the return of Egyptian forces

Seventy-four Democrats expressing fear of Nasser's policies in letter to Secretary of State, January, 1957



- A - Northeast
- B - Mid-West
- C - West
- D - South

wherever he wants them to be." (p. 921)

The following chart indicates the distribution of the signers, who are all Democrats. Again, as in the previous graphs, the great majority represent urban districts, with 16 from New York alone. Nearly 40 out of the 74 represent districts of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia or Detroit. It is interesting that the one Southerner was Mr. Robert Byrd, of West Virginia, one of the men who spoke in favor of the Arabs in 1956.

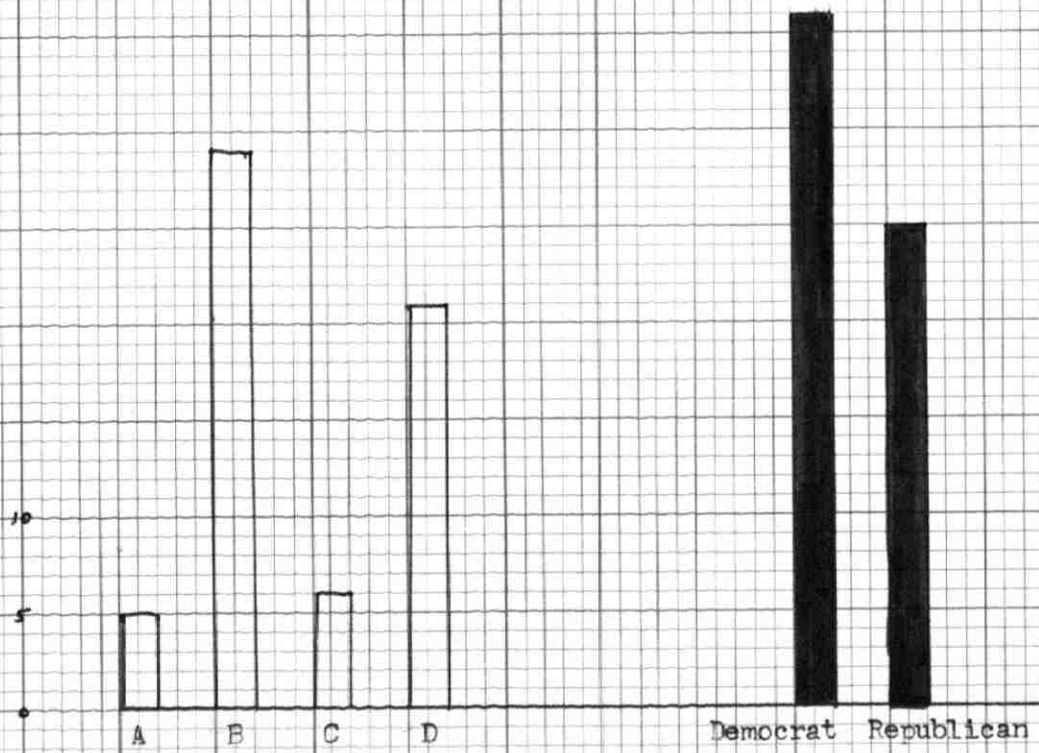
King Saud's Visit

During a state visit of King Saud to America Representative Boyle (D., Illinois) spoke against Saud's policy of not allowing American Jews to enter Saudi Arabia, and urged the President in his conversations with the King "to implement...the nobility of the American tradition and the American stand for fair treatment." (p. 929) He referred to the "anti-semitic sensibilitites of our Royal visitor" saying, "it would be a national disgrace if American honor was compromised in this instance." (p.929)

Saud's politics may not be pleasing or ethical, but on the other hand, his stand could not immediately be condemned as based on religious discrimination alone.

Further on, Congressman Multer made the statement that King Saud "is one of the greatest slave masters the world has ever seen". (p. 1313) "There is a difference in Saudi Arabia between slaves and people" he claimed. (p. 1313)

Those voting against Eisenhower Doctrine
in the House of Representatives.



- A - Northeast
- B - Mid-West
- C - West
- D - South

Eisenhower Doctrine

As for discussion of the proposed Eisenhower Doctrine per se it had vigorous opponents as well as supporters. Some voiced the fear that perhaps aid to Arabs meant danger for Israel.

"I wonder" said Representative Roosevelt (D., California) "whether the nations to whom we give such aid will be able to use it, and if they can, will they use it to repel communist aggression or to attempt to destroy Israel, the one democratic oasis in the entire area." (p. 870)

Senator Wayne Morse (D., Oregon) became a leader of the movement to oppose the resolution in the Senate.

"I shall never vote for a resolution which puts my government in a position where unilaterally the United States pledges boys to save the oil lines for Western Europe without a pledge at the same time by the nations of Western Europe to use their boys." He continued: "I would have the Arab dictators keep in mind the fact that the economic and military program envisioned by the resolution is one which protects their survival...I wonder whether it would not teach these Arab dictators something about the true meaning of human freedom and liberty if they had to spend a decade or two in the boiling oil of communism and totalitarianism." (p. 1003)

"There is nothing about the protection of human liberty and the dignity of the individual in the great majority of these Arab dictatorships that causes me...to bleed at the heart for their survival" he went on. (p. 1003) "The states we seek to protect are, for the most part, totalitarian. In fact, in some of them the institution of slavery still exists." (p. 1004)

Thus Mr. Morse showed his disrespect of the Arab governments and his unwillingness to send Americans to defend pipelines for European oil. But these countries consist of more than oil wells and pipelines. They also consist of people. Morse dealt with them strictly in terms of governments, as though the State Department were pouring money into the pockets of the heads of state for the perpetuation of their regimes instead of assisting those nations to achieve more stable economies upon which to build the future and resist communist aggression.

Most of these countries are poor, not rich. Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have oil deposits but the rest of the Arab states lack not only oil, but nearly all other resources as well. It is this which the Eisenhower Doctrine aimed to remedy - not to perpetuate a certain government, even if those regimes were as totalitarian as Morse would have us believe.

In the House, Mr. Porter Hardy, Jr. (D., Virginia) announced that he would vote for the resolution, but "with many misgivings" (p. 1028) "In voting for this resolution I shall do so with a profound conviction that although we have no choice but to give it our approval, its very necessity is an indictment of an inept foreign policy, an admission on the part of our Secretary of State of the bankrupt situation of his diplomacy...(it) is a most extraordinary admission of diplomatic failure." (p. 1028) "Is not the real intent to give the world another bit of evidence that our already slack pursestrings are to be loosened still further? ...It is a blank check we are signing." (p. 1030)

Mr Hardy here voiced two themes which recurred often in the discussion of the resolution. The first has to do with the "incompetence" of the Secretary of State and the second is that the resolution is simply a "blank check" for arms and money to the Middle East signed by Congress.

Again in the Senate, Mr. Humphry claimed on January 29: "I have lost confidence in the capacity and ability of the Secretary of State to administer and conduct policies which will bring us out of this sad impasse." (p. 1138)

Wayne Morse spoke again, directly after Humphrey, and further criticized the resolution: "I submit that this proposal of the President raises the great danger of speeding up the arms race in the Middle East and increasing the danger of military struggle in the Middle East rather than decreasing it." (p. 1139) He affirmed his opposition to sending Americans to protect Europe's oil and added: "Nor do I intend to vote for a resolution that, in effect, puts us at the dictates of the Arab dictators, who, by the way, are among the most totalitarian in the world, and as unreliable as any dictator." (p. 1139)

He finished by citing what he termed the underlying problems of the Middle East today. The first was Suez, which issue he said should be submitted to United Nations arbitration. The second was the Arab Refugee problem, which he called "no longer a problem of Israel and the Arab states alone". (p. 1140) Lastly, he mentioned "the territorial integrity of Israel". This "child of the United Nations" he said "is the only free nation - in our

sense of freedom - that exists in the Middle East today, surrounded for the most part by medieval feudalism." (p. 1140) "We have responsibilities in connection with Israel" he continued, and should protect her, but "there are powerful reactionary forces in this country which do not wish to do so." (p. 1140)

Again, Morse has made sweeping statements with little or no explanation. He would do well to define what he called a "free" nation, for all the nations of the Middle East were free from communist domination which is the usual connotation Americans associate with the word free in this sense. And he did not say what the "powerful reactionary forces" were or who they represented. Certainly, they did not seem to be very powerful in Congress.

Discussion in the House

From the Senate we progress to the House of Representatives, which was engaged in debate on the resolution in question, House Joint Resolution 117. The resolution had been presented and opened for discussion under a closed (or "gag") rule, which allowed for only one day of debate and also prevented amendments from being offered except by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. A great many spoke against the "gag" rule, in particular those who were usually anti-Arab. The reason for the application of this rule in the House was probably to avoid unnecessary discussion, to speed up its passage and to avoid the appendage of damaging or handicapping amendments to it.

One of the first speakers was William Colmer (D., Mississippi) who stated that "In my humble judgement it would be nothing short

of a monumental tragedy for the Congress to deny the Chief Executive a vote of confidence on this momentous question of foreign policy." (p. 1149)

Next, Mr. Leo Allen (R., Illinois) quoted Admiral Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as having said: "The free world, of which we are a part, should have three main objectives in the Middle East:

1. the nations of the Middle East must be kept independent of communist domination;
2. the strategic positions and transit rights in this area must be available to the free world;
3. the resources, strategic positions and transit rights must be kept from slipping behind the Iron Curtain" (p. 1150)

Said Allen: "I think (that) is the meat of this whole resolution." (p. 1150)

Others made brief statements, some saying it was a "blank check" again, other supporting its passage. "This resolution is a declaration of courage, not of fear" said Mr. Halleck (R.) of Indiana. (p. 1153)

Mr. Kenneth Gray (D., Illinois) however, stated that he thought communism could be "warded off" in the Middle East by military protection only, "without pouring millions of dollars down a rat-hole in economic aid." He said that 30,000 of his constituents were unemployed and should be taken care of before the Arabs. (p. 1154)

A more extreme statement was made by Mr. Lester Holtzman (D.,

New York) who declared: "Our State Department's constant appeasement of the tin-horn tyrants of the Middle East must be stopped immediately" and "the Arab states should forfeit all rights to aid, economic as well as military, if they do not agree to negotiate a real peace with Israel." (p. 1156)

Mr. Michael Feighan (D, Ohio) was also opposed to the resolution and warned: "I do not believe this administration will be able to fool the American people much longer into believing it opposes communism when at the same time it is taking the taxpayer's money to feather the nest of communist leaders." (p. 1185)

Mr. Winstead of Mississippi (D) voiced his opposition in less severe terms: "The Russians already know" he claimed "that any attempt directly to use their military power in the Middle East would be promptly met by our full military might". (p. 1190) He accused the administration of simply pushing Congress to appropriate the millions without having to justify their expenditure. (p.1190)

According to Mr. Chet Holifield (D., California), this resolution was "wafted into the Halls of Congress on the big wind of a phony crisis." (p. 1193) The Eisenhower Doctrine he said was "a power play - not a Middle East policy." (p.1194) "I am not willing to contribute tax dollars for the schemes of oil-rich potentates and reactionary rulers who live in vulgar display and splendor amidst the filth and disease and poverty of their down-trodden subjects." (p. 1194)

Another Californian, (D.) Mr. Saund, said he would vote for the resolution but that actually, he considered Israel "the only

oasis in that great desert of human corruption and governmental despotism." (p. 1195)

Mr. Hays (D., Ohio) spoke against the resolution saying, among other things, that the state of Jordan was "illegitimate", although he did not explain what he meant. "I have heard a lot of talk" he said, "about throwing money down rat-holes. This is a real one...I am not for bribing any Arab Dictator." (p. 1307)

These descriptions of the Arab lands referring to "rat-holes" and "deserts of human corruption" are harsh enough, but the most extreme remark was made by Congressman Multer (D., New York) who warned the Christian countries of the world that:

"If you removed Israel from that part of the world, if as we pray will not happen, by any chance every Israeli should either be annihilated or driven from that part of the world, this problem of keeping peace in the world would still be with us. These same Arab dictators and murderers would then turn their venom and their attacks on Christendom, aided and abetted by international communists." (p. 1199)

Such an exaggeration typifies the emotionalism of some of the more ardent Israeli supporters.

One fairly thoughtful comment was made by Mr Sidney Yates (D., Illinois) who, though opposed to the resolution, made some discerning remarks in relation to the "vacuum" which was constantly under discussion in reference to the Middle East.

"There is no vacuum other than a big-power vacuum" he claimed. "What we are really hiding is a nationalistic urge on the part of

the people of Asia and Africa to seek to make their own way in the world...Are we not will advised to sit on the sidelines rather than seek to fill a vacuum, and seek only to keep others from filling a vacuum?" (p. 1164)

Congressmen speaking in favor of the resolution included:

Representative Martin (R., Massachusetts) who said "Its importance easily outweighs our various domestic problems...Here we have a genuine, bold effort to see that communist aggression is checked," (p. 1154)

Mr Thomas Gordon (D., Illinois) explained that "all that Congress is doing in this resolution is joining with the President to speak with unity and firmness in cooperating with the peoples of the Middle East to maintain their national independence." (p. 1159)

Mr. Robert Byrd (D., West Virginia) rose to defend the resolution and to say that its "passage will mean that America speaks from strength, not weakness." (p. 1187) Commenting that in his district of West Virginia there were many unemployed, "nonetheless my people realize that the security of this nation comes first." (p. 1187)

Finally, Mr. Omar Burleson (D., Texas) had this to say:

"It seems to me that with all of the criticism and with all of the misgivings we have about this resolution...at the same time, in all reason, it seems to me that all the objections we have become academic when we stand here today and start to vote on this measure." (p. 1312)

Most of those who delivered their remarks on this occasion

commented that they considered the resolution lacking in many ways (it did not mention Suez, Israel or the Arab refugees) and the language vague. Many voiced objections to the "blank check" nature of the resolution and the power which it gave the President to send troops into the Middle East without consulting Congress. Much discussion of the constitutionality of the Doctrine was carried on. Quite a few felt the resolution was being railroaded through Congress to avoid thorough discussion and comment. Yet most men stated that they felt it necessary to vote affirmatively because the President would be placed in a very humiliating position were his plan to be refused, and they felt this outweighed whatever arguments they might put forth. But they were, for the most part, unhappy with the program. Congressman Roosevelt put it thusly: "It can be said that there will scarcely ever have been a resolution which has so few friends that will get so many votes in the House." (p. 1183)

When the votes were counted on January 30, 1957, there were 355 Yeas and 61 Nays and 14 not voting. The chart of those who voted against it follows, with their party and regional affiliations.

In this instance the supporters of Israel and those urban Representatives backed by large Jewish minorities did not vote against the resolution. The opposition came mainly from conservative Mid-Western Republicans and Southern Democrats. The Republicans were traditionally opposed to large foreign aid expenditures and the Southerners perhaps feared the aid money would go

into expansion of agriculture and cotton-growing in competition with their states. The South has also been traditionally wary of the expansion of Presidential power.

The reason why many - indeed most - of the pro-Israeli Representatives voted for this resolution is not entirely clear. But judging from the comments made, it seems that most of them felt the President had to be given Congressional support in this instance. The damage to American prestige that would be caused by an open split between Congress and the President might have been considered greater than the results of the passage of the resolution. Perhaps some were aware that most Arab nations were unimpressed with the Eisenhower Doctrine and would not adhere to it.

Attacks on Dulles

Thus the Eisenhower Doctrine made its precarious way through the House of Representatives. The resolution then passed to the floor of the Senate, where debate had been going on for some time and now picked up.

In the Senate more than one day of debate was allowed, and after the passage of the House Resolution on the last day of January, the discussion was continued in the Senate until the first week of March.

It is significant that on January 30, Senator Prescott Bush (R., Connecticut) announced to his colleagues that:

"During the period the Middle East resolution has been under consideration by the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Armed Services, the impression has been created that certain of our col-

leagues on the opposite side of the aisle are attempting, for political reasons, to force the resignation of the Secretary of State." (p. 1260)

"I regret that the actions and words of some of our Democratic friends have been susceptible of that implication." (p. 1260)

At this point there was an editorial inserted in the Record which was written in the Washington Evening Star of January 29, which accused certain Congressmen, notably Senator Humphrey (D., Minnesota) of trying to force Mr. Dulles to resign.

This placing of pressure on the Secretary is important to this work because it serves as an indication of how much strain might have been placed on Mr. Dulles during and after the Suez Crisis by various members and groups of Congress.

The Senate

Before the opening of discussion on Senate Joint Resolution 19 (Eisenhower Doctrine), some Senators spoke on the sanctions which were to be applied to Israel by the United Nations for having invaded Egypt, and expressed the fear that the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Sinai Peninsula would re-create the status quo ante bellum. Among those who spoke were Senator Humphrey, Senator Neuberger (D., Oregon), Senator Symington (D., Missouri) and Senators Ives and Javits (R.'s, New York) The latter two sent a letter to Secretary Dulles, saying:

"We believe it clear that impartial justice in the situation of Israel and Egypt dictates that our government should not back sanctions against Israel." (p. 1835)

Mr. Douglas (D., Illinois) said he did not want Israeli troops to withdraw. "With Syria in control of the transit of the three existing pipelines and with Egypt in military possession of the Suez Canal, power is given to the two most intransigent members of the Arab Bloc to shut off the supply of oil going to Western Europe." (p. 1842) He advocated a pipeline from Elath through Israel.

Mr. Humphrey was opposed to the sanctions because, he said, "I think it is certainly fair to say that the constitution, law and society of Israel are more representative of those we have here than are those of other nations in the area." (p. 1873)

In indicating that he thought it permissible for a nation which was a democracy to attack one which was not, without suffering any reprisals, Humphrey is definitely showing signs of discrimination.

Discussion of the Resolution

The Senate Joint Resolution as summarized in the Congressional Record read as follows:

"The President is authorized to employ the Armed Forces of the United States as he deems necessary to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of any such nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East requesting such aid against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism; and to use without regard to the provisions of any other law or regulation not to exceed

\$200 million. (sic.) The resolution shall expire as the President may determine." (p. 1855)

As debate on the resolution began, Mr. Fulbright (D., Arkansas) said it meant "abandoning our constitutional system of checks and balances". (p. 1857) The nations of the Middle East, he claimed, did not need help from the West because the area possessed "vast underdeveloped resources" which "could carry the major part of the cost of development." (p. 1857)

To be sure, great oil fields are concentrated in the Middle East area. But these are in three countries only, and highly developed. It is evident that if present rates of extraction continue these petroleum deposits will be pumped dry in the not too distant future.

There are no great "underdeveloped" resources in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria or Yemen - or anywhere else. Not only are there no underdeveloped resources, but scarcely any natural resources at all in these lands.

Senator Humphrey referred to the Eisenhower Doctrine as "a diplomatic barbituate" (p. 1877). Expressing concern, he stated: "It appears that the nations of the Middle East most likely to receive new financial benefits from the United States are those nations ruled by the most feudal and reactionary regimes." (p. 1877)

He later said: "I am of the opinion that inasmuch as Israel is the only democracy in the area, she is entitled to genuine consideration on the part of the government of the United States." (p. 2424) All the trouble started, he claimed, when the U.S.

did not react to the Egyptian boycott of Israeli ships. "All this reminds me of what Hitler used to do" he stated, referring to what he called Nasser's policy of "nibbling". (p. 2425) "I believe it is a great mistake to let the totalitarian Arab leaders dictate any phase of American foreign policy." (p. 2427)

Senator Talmadge (D., Georgia) felt that the resolution would "lavish American tax dollars, without stipulation as to manner of use, on despotic potentates who have utter contempt for human rights and freedom." (p. 2518) "It would underwrite grandiose projects for the economic development of the Middle East, while we are unable to afford similar undertakings at home." (p. 2518) This resolution, he declared, "amounts to an undated declaration of war." (p. 2518)

How must the Eisenhower Doctrine appear, asked he, "to the cynical Arab potentate who lolls in the luxurious splendor of his palaces while his down-trodden subjects starve in wretched poverty on the street outside?" (p. 2518)

Here again emerged the poor image which was associated with the Arab world. Mr. Talmadge, however, was being rather hypocritical, since he acknowledged the plight (whether existant or not) of these people but was opposed to sending them economic aid. It seemed he had the idea that the rulers would pocket all the money without having to account for it to the U.S. Government. But it is unlikely the administration would offer money without asking for evidence that the funds were being used on development projects.

Senators Morse (D., Oregon), Ervin (D., North Carolina), Humphrey (D., Minnesota), Symington (D., Missouri) and Mansfield

(D., Montana) agreed with Talmadge.

Senator Jenner (R., Indiana) agreed with him and added:
 "The Middle East nations have vast wealth from their oil supplies. The present rulers use much of this money as their private income. Are we to pay for the economic development of their countries while they waste their wealth as the spirit moves them?"
 (p. 2528)

"Are we to commit ourselves to helping governments already communist against their own people?" (p. 2529) Then he added that the Middle East includes countries such as "Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanganyika, India and Indonesia". (p. 2529)

There was no communist government in any Arab country in 1957, and Mr. Jenner did not even have a correct idea as to which countries constitute the Middle East.

"We are told that Syria is a communist-dominated country"(p. 2535) said Senator O'Mahoney (D., Wyoming) and "Israel ...is the only really democratic nation in the Middle East." (p. 2543) The administration "has no Middle East policy and is only playing for time."
 (p. 2540)

Senator Long (D., Louisiana) said flatly: "I have never seen a more ridiculous or downrightly foolish legislative proposal than this one concerning the Middle East." (p. 2533)

One other who was "bitterly opposed" to the resolution was Senator Johnston (D., South Carolina), who referred to "Nasser's piracy" and "Nasser's thievery" (p. 2609) and exclaimed: "Perish the resolution that will permit another American life to be lost

under the wishy-washy, inconsistent policies of the phrasemakers who deceive, beguile and mislead the American people." (p. 2610)

Then some supporters of the resolution were heard:

"It disturbs me" said Senator Neuberger (D., Oregon) "to feel that in the Senate of the United States there is a large group of members who are so disdainful or even contemptuous of a program which is fundamental to American policy." (p. 2534)

Senator Everett Dirksen (R., Illinois) said "I commit myself to the request of the President" (p. 2535). He was joined by Senator Bush (R.) of Connecticut, who assured that "no President in the history of the United States has had a deeper respect for the constitutional doctrine of separation of powers." (p. 2672) "The justification for the spending of public funds for mutual security lies in the hard fact that we are all defending our national interest by helping to keep other nations from falling under communist control." (p. 2673)

Others spoke in favor of the Doctrine, including Senators Green (D., Rhode Island), Javits (R., New York), Carlson (R., Kansas), Watkins (R., Utah) and Thye (R., Minnesota).

Mr. Allen Ellender (D., Louisiana) then commented that he thought the Eisenhower Doctrine was "unnecessary, super-superfluous, even impolitic, doubtless unwise and wholly unjustified." (p. 2689) He had visited the Middle East he said, and concluded that:

1. Israel should accept the 1947 U.N. Partition.
2. Arab refugees should be repatriated or compensated by

Israel

3. Water resources should be developed.

Then he made an interesting statement:

"In all sincerity, I say to the Jews of the world, 'If you desire to cooperate fully in the establishment and maintenance of world peace, you must forego for all time the idea of creating a Jewish state in the Middle East of such size as to care for and sustain all Jewish immigrants who might desire to live there... to do otherwise would mean that Israel would be forced to continue expanding its territory, to continue its encroachments upon the lands of its neighbors, to continue to give cause for unrest, dissatisfaction and the display of military might by the nations of that area.'" (p. 2693)

This statement serves as an illustration of the fact that if Congressmen took the time to visit the Middle East and examine the situation from both sides the Arabs might begin to seem a bit more human and Israel not quite as blameless as has been made to seem.

Further Remarks

Senator Harry Goldwater (R., Arizona) commented that he was opposed to foreign aid - but not to the entire resolution. "At the outset" he said, \$200 million could be used, since it had already been appropriated for that area. He favored a resolution proposing military assistance only. (p.2706-7) Senators Russel (D., Georgia), Byrd (D., Virginia) and Stennis (D., Mississippi) put forth such a resolution in the form of an amendment, known

as the Russell amendment.

Senator Dirksen (R., Illinois) at that point took the floor to challenge some remarks by Mr. Talmadge. Talmadge had commented previously that the money approved was going to be used for "restoring the Hanging Gardens and the Garden of Eden". (p. 2518) Said Dirksen, "all they would like...is a little irrigation water in order to sustain life, because life is a pretty difficult and neurotic thing in that area." (p. 2707) Here Goldwater broke in to say that Arizona needed water, too. Dirksen replied that the people in Arizona were not hardly as bad off as were some sections of the Arab populations. He then began to define the Middle East, whereupon Senator Jenner (R., Indiana) interrupted to ask if Indonesia and Uganda were included. Dirksen, somewhat exasperated, replied in the negative.

Then Jenner, who spoke after Dirksen, said: "is not the trouble communism in Russia? Why fool around the fringes?" (p. 2711), ignoring the basic fact of today's world that in the Middle East, as elsewhere, the communists are at work. America has taken the lead in the struggle to contain communism, and that entails keeping countries not presently under direct communist control as far away as possible from communism.

Senator Joseph MacCarthy (R., Wisconsin) called the Eisenhower Doctrine an "attempt by the executive branch...to usurp Congressional prerogatives." (p. 2867) "Egypt and Syria have already cast their lot irrevocably...with the Kremlin" he claimed, and called "Nasser...a tool of Soviet policy". (p. 2868)

Senator Estes Kefauver (D., Tennessee) called himself a "reluctant opponent" of the resolution. (p. 2889) He accused the administration of having created Nasser, and then claimed that Nasser, in return, "became something of a Frankenstein". (p. 2896)

There was further discussion of the resolution but the main ideas had already been expressed in regard to its direction and effectiveness, and as regarded the state of the Arab world. It might be appropriate to end with the following statement, made by young Senator John F. Kennedy, who reported that:

"The bulk of our aid to the Middle East with actual economic assistance expenditures of \$237 million has gone to Israel". (p. 2887) In the past five years, he pointed out, the Arab countries received only about \$73 million. He admitted that the resolution was unnecessary and badly presented, because Congress was being pressured to approve it. But, he continued, it should be passed to avoid embarrassing both the President and Mr. Dulles. "The evil of defeat" of this resolution, he said, was far greater than any other results which might otherwise ensue. (p. 2887)

Voting

When the vote was taken the measure passed by 72 to 19, with five not voting. Those who voted against it were:

- Byrd (D., Virginia)
- Chavez (D., New Mexico)
- Eastland (D., Mississippi)
- Ellender (D., Louisiana)

Ervin (D., North Carolina)
 Frear (D., Delaware)
 Jenner (R., Indiana)
 Johnston (D., South Carolina)
 Kefauver (D., Tennessee)
 Kerr (D., Oklahoma)
 Long (D., Louisiana)
 Malone (R., Nevada)
 McCarthy (R., Wisconsin)
 McClellan (D., Arkansas)
 Morse (D., Oregon)
 O'Mahoney (D., Wyoming)
 Russell (D., Georgia)
 Scott (D., North Carolina)
 Talmadge (D., Georgia)

Not voting, (i.e., absent) but against:

Fulbright (D., Arkansas)
 Langer (R., North Dakota)
 Neely (D., West Virginia)

Again, as happened in the House of Representatives, the main body of opposition stemmed from the Southern Democrats. The pro-Israel group again abstained from voting against the resolution for the reasons mentioned before, perhaps, and also because the resolution did not specifically exclude Israel itself, which might have meant it was protected against communist attack.

The Russell amendment was voted on just prior to the Eisenhower

resolution and was defeated 58 to 28. Those voting for it were five Republicans - two from the West and three from the Mid-West. Of the 23 Democrats who voted for it, 16 were Southerners and seven Westerners. (Notably cotton-growing, arid states.)

Summary

The Eisenhower Doctrine was not popular in Congress. Many felt it was a waste of men and money, but most also felt and realized the need for the President to receive a vote of confidence on this important issue, and the psychological effect of Congressional approval.

The Doctrine itself was perhaps misdirected. The Arabs were suspicious of it. Syrian Baathi leader Salah Bitar has been quoted as saying: "The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Baghdad Pact were one and the same thing."¹

Some Congressmen saw that the resolution presented no answers to the existing situation, but few really understood why. The main problem was that it was too much directed against communism and not enough toward the Arabs. Michael Adams put it very well when he said:

"The American policy-makers insisted on judging the Arabs on the basis of their attitude towards communism. They used hostility to communism as a sort of a yardstick to separate Arab sheep from Arab goats, and this forced unwelcome decisions on the Arab leaders, to whom communism, if it mattered at all, was not relevant to their own ambitions and preoccupations."²

1.

Fondot, op. cit., p. 166

2

Adams, op. cit., p. 195

Congress must share the blame for this misconception. Constant comparison of Israel to America and Egypt to the Soviet Union channelled Congressional thought in two lines: communist and democratic. Anything in between became vague and ill-defined. And there lies the trouble; for the Middle East is in between, and therefore, since it did not fall into an easily recognizable pattern, was misunderstood and criticized.

Arab leaders must be dealt with in terms of their particular identity. To constantly accuse them of being communistic will not win their friendship or lead to better understanding.

CONCLUSION

The Middle East of the past two decades has been the scene of unceasing turmoil, of tension and deep seated resentment which have grown out of an impossibly complex political and emotional problem. Two hostile camps face one another over barbed wire boundaries charged with bitterness and complicated by nationalistic emotions.

Whether or not the tense, hostile situation in which the Middle East finds itself today is unavoidable, or the Arabs perhaps, as in the opinion of some, too adamantly and hopelessly opposed to an already de facto state, is difficult to say.

Likewise, the American situation in this area is hard to define, for although claiming policy objectives in common with most Arab states (improvement of living standards and education, political independence and economic viability) our prestige and reputation are constantly in danger. We are continually suspect of imperialist designs due to our close alliance with the former overlords of the area, Britain and France. Our part in the creation, recognition and continual support of Israel has earned us no respect or appreciation from the Arabs, nor can we expect that it should.

"No U.S. official ever speaks out for support of the Arabs as the Russian and Red Chinese leaders now do. American aid, while considerable, goes to the Arabs in the 'interests of Middle

East stability' rather than in support of their cause. On the contrary, U.S. officials from the President down, find frequent occasions on which to pledge support to the state of Israel."¹

American interests in the area include transit rights for us and our allies, keeping communist influence from overwhelming the region, trying to avoid a major conflagration between the Israeli and Arab camps and also, the vital American investments and European need of Arab oil.

One rather surprising observation which emerged, however, from this over-all study was that little consideration was given by most Congressmen to the existence and/or strategic importance of the large Middle Eastern petroleum deposits. Many seemed willing to sacrifice the substantial American interests in Arab oil to back the more idealistic interests which the United States had in Israel. It also appeared that some had little reserve in expressing their contempt for the rulers of the oil-rich kingdoms, whom they considered ostentatious and oppressive.

Between Nasser's links with communism and Saudi's feudalistic regime in Arabia, it is not unreasonable that Congress was, in general, very unfavorably impressed and perhaps somewhat puzzled as to the problems of the Middle East.

Congress is certainly trying to do its best. But is it fair to today's Legislature, whose structure and functions were created nearly two centuries ago, to expect it to be able to understand

¹

Walz, Jay, The Middle East, (New York, 1965), p. 122

clearly the complex problems of every area of the world and to legislate the proper and most effective foreign policy guidelines? This is an important question. One cannot indiscriminately criticize the Congress, even if it seems to be an anachronistic and hopelessly intricate machine, for each man was elected by people who had faith in him and in the United States Government, and each man doubtless does his utmost to carry out his tremendous responsibilities.

It is quite evident that Congress needs to have more easily accessible information. The Library Reference Service should be expanded. In this dangerous situation, where a minority of U.S. voters can control or at least heavily influence foreign policy in the Middle East to comply with their own emotionalism and nationalistic feelings, precautions must of necessity be observed, and particularly careful consideration should be given to policy alternatives and the understanding of underlying problems. Emotionalism should be cut to a minimum. There is a need for tolerance and patience to achieve the long-term objectives of U.S. foreign policy without submitting to momentary anger at anti-Western demonstrations and a willingness to admit that perhaps we too make mistakes.

But probably the most urgent need is for Congressmen to develop an active interest in foreign affairs. Generally, if someone wants to find out about a certain situation, the information can be found. Otherwise, Congressmen tend to find it rather easy to rely on a fellow-legislator's advice or to heed

the vociferous few who do have definite opinions on the subject.

In this case one must add that it is not completely up to Congress. The Arab countries themselves and their representatives in the U.S. should put forth a greater effort towards the publicity of the plight of the refugees and try to justify their reasons for their policies of boycott and continual border warfare. Their "image" needs to be given a lift. They ought to realize that most Americans will not understand or respond favorably to insults, to strict neutralism, to socialistic leanings or to cynical, critical attitudes toward our foreign policy. Some constructive thinking and creative action on this might yield some promising results.

Congress Itself

The actual situation in Congress in 1955-57 did not appear promising. Many legislators were silent on the subject of the Middle East while a few took every opportunity to speak against the Arab governments.

A common method used to influence listeners was the constant association of Nasser with the communists. He was accused of working hand in hand with the Soviets; of aiding and abetting their plans for world domination. It could be pointed out that Nasser was against Israel, and Israel is a democracy. It was further insinuated that it was not Israel that Nasser feared, but the democratic institutions and form of government, which meant that he also must have been anti-American. American fear and distrust of communism was skillfully manipulated to be associated with the Arabs.

Starving masses of "down-trodden" (a favorite word) Arab peoples were portrayed living in near slavery to cruel overlords who exploited them unmercifully so that they could live in luxury.

Israeli spokesmen often used the persecution of the Jews in World War II as a factor in arousing sympathy for the race, and also in arousing guilt feelings among many conscientious Christians.

It would be difficult to say whether most Congressmen actually believed what they said or if they were knowingly re-arranging the facts to suit their own ends. Many undoubtedly really felt sympathetic towards the Jews and Israel, while others played on that sympathy.

If more Congressmen could visit the countries of the Middle East and speak with some educated Arabs and Arab leaders, it would not take long for the myth of the "shiftless Arab" to weaken and disappear. It might be to the advantage of some Arab governments to extend invitations to Congressmen and encourage their coming.

But many Congressmen from urban areas have also to decide whether they want to base their re-election on courting a so-called "Jewish vote" or if they would take the risk of standing for re-election with the possibility of alienating some of their Jewish supporters.

In reference to Aswan, wherein Congress figured prominently, most Congressmen were either silent or viraciously opposed to the proposal launched by the State Department in December of 1955. A coalition of Southern Democrats protecting their cotton far-

mers, of conservative Republicans who were suspicious of Nasser's communit dealings, of men of both parties whose constituencies influential Jewish minorities, and those advocating power and irrigation projects in their own areas joined together and actively agitated for the withdrawal of the Aswan offer, by letters to Dalles, by visiting him, by convincing the Senate Appropriations Committee not to approve money for the Dam and by speeches in Congress. They were a direct cause of the withdrawal of the Aswan offer, for besides being submitted to pressure on all sides, Dalles was suffering personal attacks directed at him by men speaking in Congress.

The seizure of the Suez Canal only confirmed what had been fermenting in the minds of many, i.e., that Nasser was working against the interest of the West. Again, they did not recognize his effort as one directed towards the benefit of Egypt's economy and Nasser's prestige. Rather they saw it as part of a plot planned in league with the communists to undermine Western influence all over the Middle East and prepare the way for Soviet infiltration.

When Congress re-convened in 1957, the opinions which had prevailed in 1956 were still dominant, and the Suez issue had done little but strengthen those opinions. Some insisted that Israel was justified in invading Egypt, although they could no longer brand Egypt as the aggressor. Now many felt freer to accuse Nasser of siding with the communists, since they had backed his stand, and some went as far as to classify him with Hitler.

The administration's answer to the worsening situation in

the Middle East, the Eisenhower Doctrine, found support, but reluctant support, in Congress. It was not regarded as a definitive step towards peace and the exclusion of communism, because it was vaguely worded and did not propose to deal with any of the area's problems in particular, i.e., Arab-Israeli tensions, settlement of Arab refugees, the clearance of the Suez Canal and permanent settlement with guarantees to all shippers. It was also accused of giving the President powers to declare war without the consent of Congress and to dispense certain funds without prior Congressional approval.

It dealt exclusively with combatting armed communist aggression, which was not the fear foremost in most minds. Many Congressmen could see no possibility of armed Soviet expansion in the near future, but did recognize the ever-present danger of economic penetration, subversion and infiltration, which were not mentioned in the Doctrine.

In other words, it was better than nothing, and for that reason alone deserved to be passed, to preserve the prestige of the President. But it was not felt that it was the exact remedy for the ills afflicting American policy in the Middle East.

In fact, in this writer's opinion, President Eisenhower, when he conceived this plan, may have had little intention of sending troops into the Middle East in the close future. But he might have realized that Congress would not provide funds for use in the Middle East unless some drastic and widely-publicized move were taken to put them in a position where they would be

unable to refuse. He may have thus created the Doctrine so that by refusing it, Congress would be repudiating his power as Commander-in-Chief, which they did not want to do, while what he needed most was Congressional approval of economic aid to the Middle East.

He staked his reputation and America's image on the Eisenhower Doctrine, and thought it was unpopular he was able to have it passed. It is interesting to note that the majority of the Democratic Congressmen who voted against it were from Southern cotton-growing states who worked actively against the Aswan project. They perhaps feared the President planned to use the allotted \$200 million to re-offer to begin the Aswan Dam. The fact that these same Senators and Representatives all voted for the Russell Amendment for military aid only, supports this hypothesis.

In conclusion, the Arab countries of the Middle East did not occupy a position of favor or respect in the eyes of most legislators. Nasser's constant provocations and his harsh criticism of U.S. policy only earned resentment for him, for Egypt and for the Arabs in general. Again, it should be remembered that neutralism was a fairly recent phenomenon in the 1950's and thus susceptible to misunderstanding.

Also, pro-Israeli forces were very strong and constantly militated against better relations between the United States and the Arab nations. Many Congressmen accepted Israeli arguments and reports without question or investigation.

It is difficult for Congressmen to legislate on world-wide policy and to be able to judge correctly on intricate problems

of international relations. It is also difficult for a legislator to develop an active interest in foreign affairs when he has full-time obligations concerning his own district.

The complications of politics in the Middle East are intricate and bewildering in their complexity even to seasoned observers of the Arab scene. Yet with less emotionalism, more tolerance and more reliance on factual information Congress can play a more constructive role in the amelioration of relationships between the nations of the Middle East and the United States of America.

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