

either by a resolution in the Chamber of Deputies, or by some other means. On the closure of the debate a motion signed by a number of Senators "to pass to the Order of the Day" was put to the vote, the ayes standing up, and the noes remaining seated. The President estimated that there was a majority for the motion, which precluded taking a vote on a second resolution tabled by Abdul Hamid Abdul Hakk, who had opened the debate. This read:—

"The Senate decide that Egypt and the Sudan are one and indivisible, and that the demand of the country is the complete evacuation of Egypt and the Sudan without an Anglo-Egyptian Military Alliance."

The vote on the first resolution was challenged and a number of Wafdist and other Opposition Senators walked out of the Senate in protest. Although Nokrashy Pasha has demanded evacuation free of any conditions laid down in a treaty, the resolution appears to have gone further than he and his Government probably desire, and was designed to embarrass them.

King Farouk, in an audience on the 18th March, had already told His Majesty's Ambassador that what Nokrashy meant was that a treaty should not be a *sine qua non* of evacuation, since he knew the people felt that His Majesty's Government had used the question of evacuation as a means of pressure to get a treaty and did not relish it. His Majesty added that there would be nothing to prevent a treaty of alliance once the evacuation question was out of the way—a remark which lends itself to the obvious interpretation that the present régime does not want to negotiate any treaty so long as there are any British troops in the country, but that they will be glad to enter into negotiations after they have all gone. The value, from a military point of view, of an alliance concluded in such circumstances (judging from the present state of opinion) may well be doubted.

The Qasr an Nil Barracks in Cairo are to be handed over to the Egyptian Government towards the end of this month without ceremony, and with as little publicity as possible.

Palestine

There have been no important developments in Palestine during the week. The Jewish Agency Executive have elected a committee to formulate Jewish demands to be raised before the United Nations "if

the Palestine problem is considered on an international basis" (Jewish Telegraphic Agency), and a memorandum is to be prepared for forwarding to the United Nations in June or July. As the meeting of the Zionist General Council, which was to have been held in Jerusalem within the next few days, has now been postponed until the end of April or the beginning of May, and will be held in New York, it may be presumed that this memorandum will figure on the Agenda.

The Jewish Agency Executive, regarding the immigration question as the most vital issue at the moment, have been considering what *legal* means they could take to secure an increase in the quota. This, they believe, may be feasible as a result of the increasing pressure of illegal immigrants in Cyprus and in Athlit camp in Palestine. Rumours which have been circulating in Jerusalem that authorisation for an increased immigration quota had been received from His Majesty's Government—the figure of 2,500 a month had been mentioned—have been officially denied. A statement was issued by the Jewish Agency Executive on the 24th March calling upon the Jewish community to "make a united effort to expand its economic position in town and country, to increase its help for immigration and the absorption of immigrants, and to provide, as hitherto, pioneer men and women for new settlement, security services, Zionist missions abroad, and any other tasks the emergency may demand." The executive says it will maintain uncompromising opposition to the "iniquitous, repressive White Paper régime." It notes with deep anxiety that the appeals made by the Zionist congress to the terrorists have fallen on deaf ears, and it emphasises the grave moral and political damage caused by their outrages, and calls upon them to accept national discipline.

At a press conference in Jerusalem on the 21st March a representative of the Palestine Communist party said that his party were in favour of the abrogation of the British Mandate and the evacuation of British troops, and favoured an independent Palestine under a democratic régime guaranteeing full equality to Jews and Arabs. They oppose partition and unrestricted immigration on the ground that "immigration solves no national problem." The speaker attacked Zionist leadership for its "imperialist policy." These sentiments were expressed also at the meeting of the recent Congress of Empire Communist Parties held in London, where Zionism was stigmatized as a device of

British and American imperialism in pursuit of their aims at economic penetration, and at the establishment of a strategic base against the Soviet Union.

Arab hopes of the support of the Soviet Union when the Palestine case comes before the United Nations seem to be reflected in the current issue of the *Arab News Bulletin*, which contains not only a lengthy account of the Congress of Empire Communist Parties, but a first instalment of extracts from Russian publications giving views on Zionism and a review of a book condemning Zionism by an Iraqi Jew, who is Chairman of the "Anti-Zionist League," which is strongly Leftist in politics. "Progressive" Arab youth will find it hard to resist the appeal afforded by a combination of anti-British and anti-Zionist prejudice with belief in Soviet omnipotence.

Iraq

His Royal Highness the Regent opened Iraq's Eleventh Parliament in extraordinary session on the 17th March. In the Speech from the Throne it was announced that, as the majority of the members were Independent, the new Cabinet would be chosen from them. Salih Jabr has been elected President of the Senate, but there is some expectation that he will occupy a Cabinet post. It has been stated in the press that the Democratic party has issued a manifesto saying that it has decided to withdraw all its deputies from the new Parliament.

Arab League

A communique issued by the Secretariat-General after the Second Meeting of the Council, held on the 19th March, stated that note had been taken of a communication from the "Freedom of Libya Organisation" which drew attention to the economic plight of Libya and begged the Council to help in famine relief. Examination of this matter was deferred to later in the session, when the question of Tripolitania comes under consideration.

After discussion on the Secretary-General's report the question of land purchase in Palestine and the gifts made by the Arab Governments for this purpose were considered. Jamil Mardam Bey, for Syria, presented a cheque for £1 million Syrian (about £112,000 sterling) to be put at the disposal of the Council, and Riad as Solh stated that the Lebanese Parliament had approved a credit, and that the Lebanese

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Government were willing to double the sum.

On the 23rd March an official communique was issued by the Arab League Council, which announced that the following decision had been taken unanimously:—

"Whereas the Arab Powers have repeatedly expressed their total support for Egypt as regards her cause and national claims, and whereas they confirmed that support at the meeting of the Heads of their States at Zahrat Inchass on 28/29th May, 1946, and affirmed it in the extraordinary session of the League Council which met at Bludan from 8th June to 12th, 1946, whereas the negotiations between Great Britain and Egypt have not realised an agreement, and whereas the Egyptian Government has proclaimed its decision to submit its cause to the United Nations Organisation, the League Council takes the opportunity of its present session to reiterate once again the absolute support of the Arab Powers for Egypt in her national claims, namely immediate and total evacuation and permanent unity of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian Crown."

Thus, once again, the members of the Arab League have shown their inability to oppose a resolution expressing opposition to Great Britain, in spite of their previous protestations that they were reluctant to do so and very doubtful of the wisdom of the course of action proposed by the Egyptian Government. The Egyptian Cabinet is reported to be delighted at the result; the reception of the news by Government circles in other Arab countries may be less enthusiastic, for there was everywhere evidence that Egyptian demands were not accepted without qualification, and, in particular, a feeling that the rights of the Sudanese to decide their own future must be recognised. Such, indeed, was the basis of the intervention of the Levant States and of Nuri Pasha's insistence that Iraq supported Egypt's *just* demands. Yusuf Yasin, who was in the chair at the League Council meetings, has been playing an ambiguous rôle which will surprise no one with a knowledge of his career; full of sweet reasonableness, goodwill and plausible explanations of his inconsistencies in conversation with British officials, he has been more Egyptian than the Egyptians in his statements to the Cairo press. It remains to be seen how ibn Sa'ud reacts to his behaviour.