

3. We tend too often to think of the problems of this area in terms solely of the Arab-Israeli quarrel, but the latter has simply exacerbated and complicated difficulties which would exist if the Jewish state had never been created. It remains, however, as both a real and psychological block, and it is doubtful if we will be able to get down seriously to tackling these other tasks if we are unable to diminish, if not solve, the proportions of the problem of Israeli-Arab relations.

4. Arab nationalism is a relatively recent growth, or rather re-growth, and we should not deceive ourselves about its strength because it has lain dormant for so many centuries. It combines a pride in Arab culture, history and military and political prowess, with a deep-seated feeling of inferiority because of the centuries of foreign — Turkish and European — subjection. It is also linked with pan-Islamism which extends beyond the boundaries of the Arab world.

5. Arab nationalism is now directed against the Jews and the West, and one of our problems is to prevent the engulfment of Israel without giving the impression that the West is pro-Israel and anti-Arab. But the purely anti-colonial feeling cannot help but be directed increasingly against France and Britain, against the latter because of its colonial history in the Middle East, the vestiges of which still remain in Jordan, Iraq and the Saudi peninsula, and against France because of its history in Syria and Lebanon, and the clash with the North Africans. The United States is associated with these two colonial powers by implication and because of its oil investments. In spite of the rapid evolution of the colonial policies of the United Kingdom and France, it seems improbable for some time to come that we can lessen the anti-Western, anti-colonial feeling in the Arab countries, particularly if it is fanned by the Communists, and accentuated by the quarrel with Israel, unless some concrete steps are taken to distract the attention of the Arabs from these two essentially sterile pursuits.

6. The political instability of the Arab countries, and the feudal nature of some of the régimes, makes it increasingly difficult to do business with them. There is a crying need for every kind of economic development, with the possible exception of the Lebanon. There is a not inconsiderable amount of natural resources, but they are badly distributed, and the huge revenues from oil are not being used for the purposes of economic advancement. They are indeed being exploited primarily to bolster up reactionary régimes and in the case of Saudi Arabia, for the subversion of other Arab countries.

7. So long as these conditions continue the area is ripe for Communist penetration. Up to now the West on the whole has followed the line that it was preferable to bolster up the régimes of the feudal land-owners as they alone could give stability to their countries and prevent Communist penetration. But the growth of Arab nationalism, the influx of new ideas, the contrasts of wealth and poverty, and the aid of Soviet ideas and agents, may soon make this theory untenable. Unless this is carefully guarded against, it is possible that economic and political discontent could also be directed against the West.

8. I think it is a mistake for the West to take a high moral stand about the entry of the U.S.S.R. into the Middle East. It is only surprising that this has been delayed so long. As a colonial, or a former colonial area, it fits in nicely with Marxist theory, and in addition, Russia has always looked longingly towards the Mediterranean and the Iranian Gulf. Certainly the Russians have given us sufficient warning that they were interested, and even how they would act. At any rate they are now prepared to use diplomatic, economic and other means to weaken Western influence in the area, to neutralise the Baghdad Pact, and if possible, to bring some of these countries into the Soviet orbit. Their plans are undoubtedly long-term, but I think it safe to assume that the days of exclusive Western big-power action