



PHEW!—Mrs. R. L. Jordan, of San Jose, Calif., prepares to bury her skunk daughter Carol, 6, (in tub), and bury her clothes after the child brought home a live skunk she found on way to school. The skunk didn't want to be a playmate and left an odoriferous notice of it all over Carol. At mother's insistence Carol let it go. (AP Wirephoto)

British-Iranian Oil Dispute Remains Grave Peace Threat

By DEWITT MACKENZIE
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The Anglo-Iranian oil dispute remains a dangerous threat to international peace though it still is possible to say guardedly that it is susceptible of compromise.

This controversy revolves about the Teheran government's sensational nationalization of the huge petroleum concern, over the protests of Britain which owns the majority of stock. Britain long has operated this oil field and is dependent on the oil to maintain her vital middle eastern position. America also is concerned and, to a less degree, so are other western powers.

Naturally Britain is fearful that this Iranian oil may slip away from her, especially since the Iranians themselves are incapable of working the field. This raises the danger of neighboring Russia stepping in, since she long has had a yearning eye on this wealth of oil, as well as on a warm water port on the Persian gulf. The current position on thumbnail is this:

1. The Teheran government May 24 fixed a seven-day deadline (in effect an ultimatum) for the petroleum concern to start conversations on ways and means of turning the company over to the Iranian government.

2. Friday Iran's aged premier, Mohammed Mossadegh, who frequently registers emotion with tears, declared that Iran "will fight to the end" to carry out the nationalization. And he wept as he said it.

Parachute Brigade Assigned
3. Britain announced she was sending her tough 10th parachute brigade to the island of Cyprus, which lies in the Mediterranean within easy striking distance of Iran.

4. Secretary of State Acheson has appealed to Britain and Iran to sit down at a conference table and work out a peaceful settlement.

5. Thusfar Iran has rejected all proposals for settlement by arbitration.

This brings us up to the question of what Britain is justified in doing to maintain her position. Would she, for example, be warranted in sending military forces into Iran to protect these great oil interests? The British do not question the right of any government to nationalize commercial concerns. In fact it would be odd for eh London Socialist regime to argue otherwise, since it is in the process

of nationalizing British industries.

However, London does maintain that under the contract the Persian government in effect agreed not to exercise any such nationalization rights.

Pushed Around Too Much
A widespread feeling in Britain seems to be summed up accurately by Anthony Eden, deputy leader of the great Conservative party, who declared that the country has been "pushed around a little too much of late." He declared that international obligations are being flouted in Iran, and added:

"Giving away just international rights doesn't win peace. It is appeasement at its worst. It is bad for us and bad for other countries and it is bad for peace."

Well, assuming that this is sound argument, what may we expect Britain to do? At this writing well informed sources lean to the belief that while Britain means business, she isn't likely to take military action unless the lives of British nationals or the oil properties are threatened.

That is to say, if the Iranian government is capable of maintaining order, Britain may be expected to hold her hand. However, there is danger of extremists—inflamed by Red agents—getting control and precipitating a revolt. That might bring British troops into action.

This is a moment of watchful waiting, but it is justifiable to repeat that Britain appears to mean business. And it is a grave crisis.

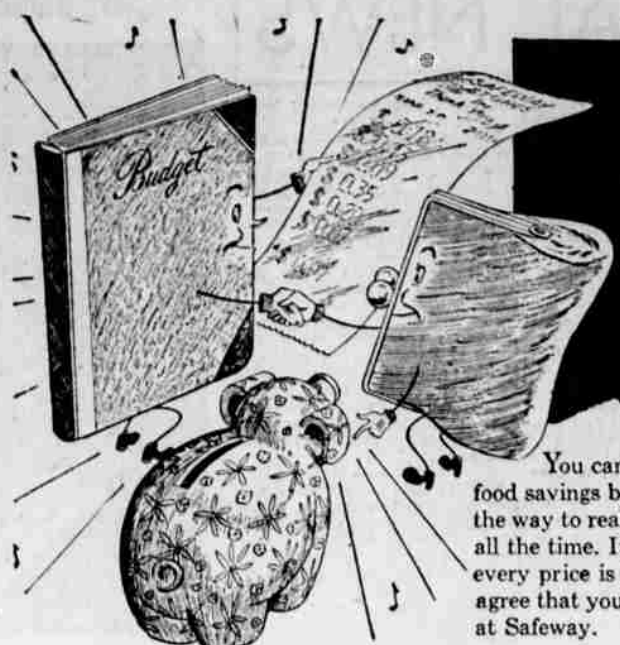
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