

Topic 4: Can the United States Help Peace in Middle East?

THE PROBLEM

The Middle East is the cross-road between Europe and Asia, battleground of Arab and Jew, custodian of 70 per cent of the world's oil.

This barren, sparsely populated area, torn by political and religious strife, is one of the hot spots in the 1956 cold war. In the past 12 months the Arab-Israeli conflict has become an issue between Russia and the West. Western efforts to strengthen defenses in the Middle East have run into stiff Arab opposition.

Western stakes in the Middle East are high... oil, military bases, the Suez Canal (lifeline of Britain's Commonwealth). In spite of Western diplomacy and strategy, Russia is a powerful and troublesome influence in the Middle East.

What are the real conflicts? What can the U.S. do about them? How important is the area to U.S. defenses? Does the West need Middle Eastern oil? What are the issues today in the Arab-Israeli conflict?

In this crucial year what can or should the U.S. do to protect our interests in this troubled area?

Here are some background facts on which to base your answers to these important questions.

THE BACKGROUND

Four main problems make the Middle East situation important and difficult, each bearing on the six-year-old "truce" between Israel and the Arab states and the prospects for peace or war.

No. 1. Oil The U.S. burns 8,256,000 barrels of oil every day... 2,500,000 barrels more than we produce in continental United States.

Our oil imports come largely from Latin America, some from the Middle East. But Western Europe and Britain get 74 per cent of all their oil from the Middle East.

The oil fields of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the British protectorates on the Arabian peninsula are the richest in the world. The U.S. and Britain control most of these, separately and jointly, in a complicated system of international stockholding.

Oil runs industries and armies. If the Middle East fell to the Communists, how would this affect the East-West oil balance?

World oil production in 1955 totaled 9,998,900 barrels from the U.S. and Western allies; 3,279,600 from the Middle East; 1,675,000 from Russia and satellites; and 384,100 from the rest of the world.

The U.S. and allies, plus Africa and the Far East, control 22.9 per cent of the oil reserves, and the Middle East 70 per cent.

No. 2. Strategy Britain and France are "old hands" in the Middle East. British colonies on the Arabian Peninsula date back to the early 1800s. Trade, defense of the Suez Canal and, more recently, oil, are British stakes.

Even Russia, under the czars and under communism, has a long time interest in the Middle East, especially in Turkey and Iran on the Russian borders. The U.S. is a newcomer.

What are the U.S. stakes... what do we have to gain or lose? American-owned (or partly owned) oilfields are one answer. U.S. global strategy... our worldwide chain of defenses against communism... is another.

The U.S. maintains strategic air bases in Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Britain, our NATO partner, maintains bases on the island of Cyprus and has the use of bases in Iraq, Jordan and the Suez Canal in Egypt.

The Middle East also has a place in the global system of Western alliances. In nine years of cold war the Western allies have slowly hammered together a system of alliances along the Communist borders from Europe to Asia. Two of the key ones

are the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe and the South East Asia Treaty organization. Turkey is the easternmost of the NATO countries; Pakistan the westernmost SEATO country. The Middle Eastern country of Iran lies between.

Western statesmen have frequently expressed the hope that NATO and SEATO could be "overlapped" by linking Turkey, Iran and Pakistan in a new Middle Eastern alliance.

During 1955 Britain set up this alliance, the Middle East Treaty organization, also called the Baghdad pact. Under the British plan METO would include Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and the Arab states like Iraq and Jordan. With British aid (it was hoped) U.S. aid, Iran and any Arab members of the pact would modernize and expand their armies. Only those of Turkey and Pakistan are fully equipped, modern armies now.

No. 3. Poverty The overwhelming majority of the people of the Middle East are underprivileged and neglected. Fifteen to 20 babies out of every 100 dies before they are a year old. The vitality of the adults (most of whom work meager farms) is sapped by diseases like trachoma, hookworm, typhoid, dysentery and malaria. The Arab-Israeli war has left hundreds of thousands homeless, dependent on relief.

Water is the biggest problem. Lack of proper irrigation keeps hundreds of thousands of acres barren and unproductive. Only 2 per cent of Egypt's land is cultivated... five per cent of Iraq and Jordan's. But dams and canals are expensive.

In a few countries oil royalties provide considerable local income. Not all of this, however, finds its way into productive channels. And the job to be done, to raise the people out of their misery, is enormous. The U.S., through its foreign aid program, is trying to help.

The U.S. has spent \$115,000,000 in military aid and defense support in Iran and Turkey; \$67,100,000 in technical cooperation throughout the Middle East; and \$65,000,000 in aid to Palestine refugees.

No. 4. Arab vs. Jews The Middle East is the home of three of the great religions of the world — Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Moslems constitute overwhelming majorities in all countries except Israel, which is predominantly Jewish, and Syria and Lebanon, which have large Christian populations.

At one time, all the Arab countries were part of the old Ottoman (Turkish) empire. Some of the countries, like Egypt, broke away from Turkey during the 19th century. Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and parts of what is now Saudi Arabia were separated from Turkey during World War I, with British and French help.

Israel is the only non-Moslem country in the Middle East. It is a new state, created in 1948 by the UN as an independent homeland for the Jews. The idea of a Jewish homeland, however, is just as old as the Arab political tradition.

The campaign to create a Jewish nation dates back to the 1880s when the Zionist movement was founded. A number of European Jews established colonies in Palestine, and by 1914 there were 80,000 Jews in this area. In 1917, during World War I, the British government declared itself in favor of a "National home for the Jewish people" — the famous Balfour declaration. The League of Nations right after the war made Palestine a British mandate.

The Arab states were unanimously opposed to a Jewish state and fought bitterly to prevent the immigration of more Jews to Palestine.

The persecution of Jews in Europe under Hitler intensified the problem. Thousands of refugees demanded a right to enter Palestine and to live in peace and security. The Arabs were just as insistent that no more Jews be brought to the Middle East. Britain, acting as protector to both, faced the same problem that the West faces today... how to give both Jews and

Arabs what they want and to keep peace.

In 1947 Britain turned the problem over to the United Nations. The UN, over Arab opposition, decided to partition Palestine into independent Jewish and Arab states. Britain set the end of the mandate — and the beginning of Israel's independence — for May 15, 1948.

On that date the armies of Egypt, Jordan and Iraq moved into Palestine and full-scale war began between Israel and her Arab neighbors. Bitter fighting continued until January, 1949, and in July of that year a temporary armistice was signed. The Israeli population, fighting for its existence, won a clear victory in the war. Although the Arab forces were larger than Israel's, they lacked a unified command or policy.

UN efforts to obtain a permanent peace have been fruitless. The temporary borders, set by the armistice agreement and watched over by a UN commission, are unsatisfactory to both sides. Nearly a million Arab refugees, scattered from territory now held by Israel, are another sore point in settling the dispute. The UN finally assumed responsibility for these refugees and the U.S. contributes to their support through the UN.

In 1950, the U.S. joined Britain and France in a declaration "unalterably opposed to the use of force" in changing any of the boundaries fixed by the armistice. But all efforts to get the Israelis and the Arabs to sit down around a peace table have failed so far.

Against this background the U.S. and her allies are trying to forge a policy of peace in 1956. What does the Middle East Mean to the U.S. in 1956?

What Russia is doing in the Middle East may have a bearing on the importance of this area to the U.S.

During 1955-56 Russia has offered aid — military and economic — to Middle Eastern countries (but not to Israel). They include arms to Egypt, exchanged through Czechoslovakia for surplus cotton; 50-year loan at 2 per cent interest for construction of the High Dam at Aswan; long term loans at low interest to finance economic development of Lebanon; military aid to Saudi Arabia; and economic aid to Syria.

What are our stakes in the Middle East? Are U.S. bases (and those of our allies) necessary to defend U.S. interests? Does the U.S. need Middle Eastern oil? Do our Allies?

Is METO an important part of U.S. global strategy? Does the U.S. have any stake in the economic and social progress of the area? Are we spending too much money on non-military aid? Not enough? What about Russian offers of assistance... how do these offers affect the U.S.? Does the U.S. have a bigger stake in Israel or in the Arab countries? Could the U.S. afford to pull out of the Middle East?

What effect would a full scale Arab-Israeli war have on U.S. interests in the Middle East? Would Russia gain or lose from such a war? How? Is friendship of Arab states with us important? What are the issues at stake between Arabs and Israelis? Can we afford to take sides?

Should the U.S. press for a compromise?... If so, how? Should we intervene vigorously... or should we take less part in the controversy? What pressures can the U.S. apply to bring about a peaceful solution? Should the U.S. (working with our allies) consider sending troops to keep the peace? If war breaks out, should the U.S. intervene with force to restore peace? Is an Arab-Israeli settlement possible?

YOUR OPINION COUNTS The Great Decisions program, in forming the basis for discussion groups on foreign affairs, offers a way in which the opinion of the individual can be heard and noted. The Great Decisions committee will receive letters (or the ballots included in the fact sheets) to be tabulated and the results forwarded to the Department of State and our congressional representatives. The material above is a digest and condensation of the fact sheets prepared for use in the Great Decisions program.

What can we do about Russia in the Middle East? What is be-

In The Day's News

President Eisenhower the other day signed the bill — already approved by both houses of the congress — that authorizes the much-discussed, in many ways highly controversial Upper Colorado River project.

The Upper Colorado River project calls for a system of power dams and irrigation projects in five states of the Far West. The bill merely AUTHORIZES the project. The money has yet to be appropriated by congress. If and when the money is appropriated, the project will cost some 760 MILLION DOLLARS.

As he signed it, President Eisenhower remarked that the bill recognizes that water is getting to be our most valuable resource. With that statement, I think, all of us in Southern Oregon and Far Northern California will agree.

THE U.S. News and World Report (one of the nation's leading business magazines) in a recent issue devoted several pages of text, pictures and maps to this huge project. Among other things, it said in its interesting article:

"America's last frontier, the arid Upper Colorado river basin, may become a mountain oasis for millions. After years of argument, congress has approved construction of dams and storage reservoirs to provide water and power for the upper basin of the Colorado. At least 760 million dollars will be spent on projects now approved. Eventually billions probably will be poured into the region (by private investors developing the resources made available by the project.)

The magazine adds that over the years a "new land of opportunity" is expected to open in the Colorado's upper basin. It adds: "Water — liquid gold to the West — is counted upon to provide the base for this new inland empire."

UNDER THE heading "What's Coming in the Upper Colorado Basin," the U.S. News says: "WATER. The yearly water supply of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming will RISE (because of storage that will save water that otherwise would run to waste) about one and a half million acre feet. "POWER: About 900,000 kilo-

watts will be added to the Upper Colorado Basin power capacity. "IRRIGATION: A total of 366,000 acres in the Upper Colorado Basin will get water from the first 11 projects. "INDUSTRY: With more water and power, Upper Colorado Basin states hope to attract big new industries (to develop their existing raw materials, chiefly minerals.)"

THIS WORD in conclusion: If water will do all that for the Upper Colorado Basin, it will do all that AND MORE for Southern Oregon — for here in Southern Oregon we have plenty of water, if we handle it right, and we have natural resources and native raw materials to equal those of the basin of the Upper Colorado.

Keep your eye on Southern Oregon. It's going places in the future. Tractors can operate at least 100 farm machines and their attachments.

Alumni Group Sets Medford Dinner Meet

Three members of the University of Oregon alumni tour, sponsored by the alumni association, will speak at a dinner meeting at the Medford hotel at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 19.

Those speaking here will be Dr. Arnold Shotwell, curator of the museum of natural history, who will talk on "Fossil Vagabonds;" Dr. Robert Gordon, assistant professor of English, "Literature Never Dies;" and Dr. Vergil Dykstra, associate professor of philosophy, "Philosophy in Thirty Years."

Bass Dyer is alumni director. Reservations for the dinner, which will follow a social hour at 6 p.m., may be made by contacting Barker's store, 2-6501. The group also will appear in Grants Pass and Eureka, Calif., while touring this area.

Sea pressure reaches seven tons per square inch at a depth of 6 1/2 miles.

Parsons Elected Head Of Dairy Association

J. E. Parsons was elected president of the Jackson County Dairy Herd Improvement association Thursday at a board of directors meeting in the county agent's office.

Other officers elected are Victor Birdseye, vice-president, and Earle Jossy, secretary. Directors of the group are Parsons, Birdseye, Lewis Clark, James A. Edge and Chester Jensen.

Burglary of Church Thwarted by Woman

An attempted burglary of the Four-Square Gospel church on DeBarr ave. was thwarted Friday when Mrs. Erma Cutter, 944 Murray st., accosted a man who was rifling the church pulpit, Medford police reported.

Mrs. Cutter called out at the man after she came downstairs to investigate a noise in the

Siskiyou Supervisors Plan Remodeling

Yreka — Siskiyou county supervisors have approved \$40,000 for additional construction and remodeling of the county jail after Sheriff A. B. Cottar pointed out a steady increase over the past five years in the number of prisoners.

A total of 695 prisoners in 1955 was the highest to date. Funds asked of the supervisors for the Siskiyou County hospital included an amount in excess of \$345,000 for salaries; \$18,000, medical supplies; \$61,800, construction.

A representative of the Shasta Cascade Wonderland association received assurance of \$1,000 contribution from the county for promotion of the area.

building, police were told. The man handed her a 50-cent piece as he ran from the church, she said.

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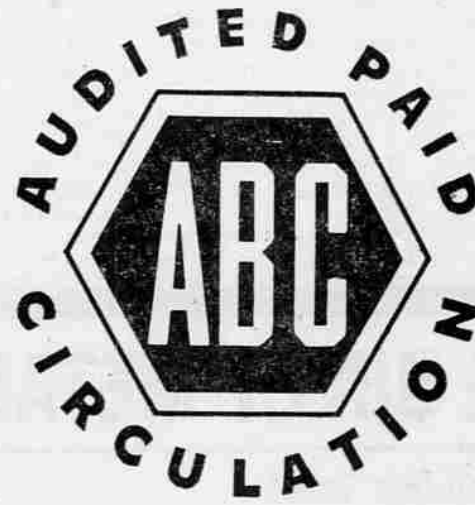
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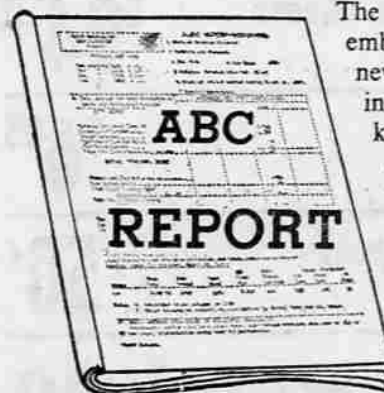
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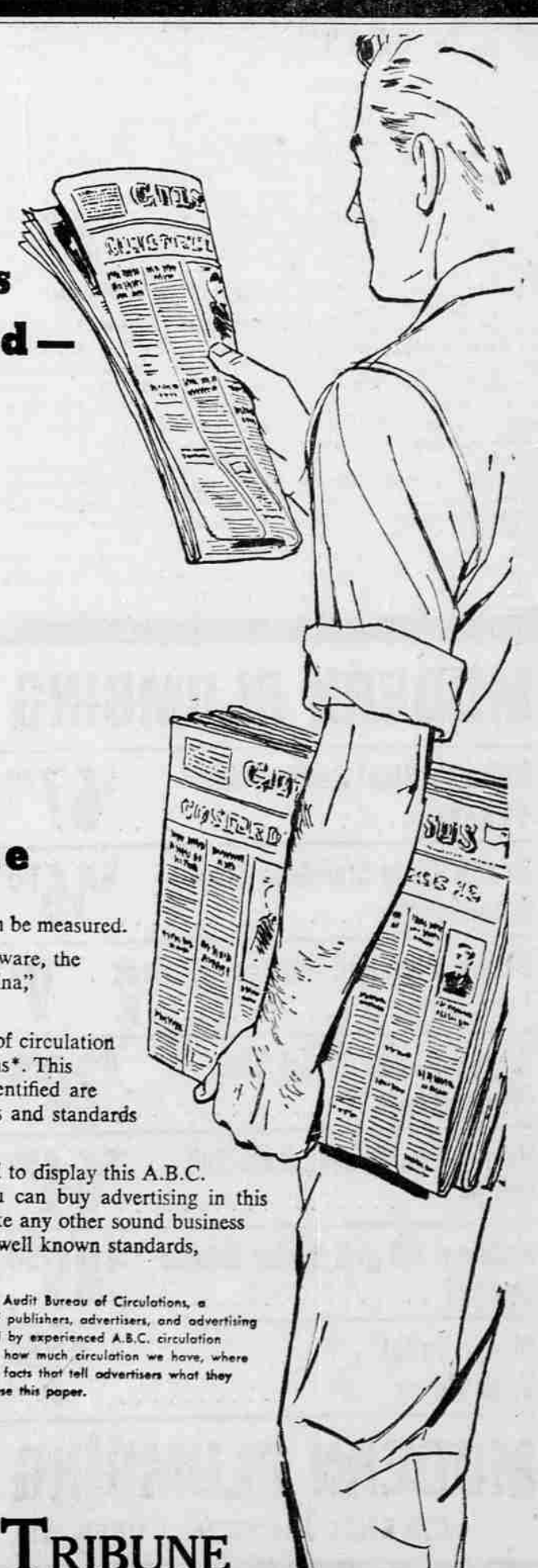
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