

United States Continues To Lose Friends In The Arab East, Says Analyst

Editor's Note: Censorship and a cloud of propaganda obscure much of what has been going on in the Middle East. To get down to basic facts, William L. Ryan spent nearly three months in the area on a survey trip — the sixth he has made to the Mideast. This is the first of four articles in which he analyzes the West's dilemma on the eve of a proposed summit meeting.

By WILLIAM L. RYAN
AP Foreign News Analyst

For years, the United States has been losing friends in the Arab East.

It still is. Strangely enough, the shock of recent events may have given Americans a chance to turn the tide. These events made Arabs see their area as the possible cockpit of World War III. The thought jolted them.

Thus, in the proposed summit meeting, and in its actions elsewhere, the United States may face at last a chance to salvage something from the wreckage of its prestige among the Arabs.

Oil and strategic position are two key points underlying any consideration of this area where Western civilization began.

Basically, the struggle hinges on what sprang from the ages-old compost of the Garden of Eden — vast riches in oil.

And this is the crossroads of the world. The question that must worry Western leaders is this: Is the Soviet Union going to be able some day to squeeze the West's influence out of this area, and make Moscow master of the great sea route that connects East and West?

Those are the stakes. One of the things that brought America to today's crisis was a persistent near-sightedness.

Americans failed to see, or at least to comprehend, the implications of the postwar movement toward independence and nationhood that swept across lands long under colonial rule.

This nationalism fever swept up the Arabs, too, but theirs is not a nationalism confined to the specific boundaries of one country. It is pan-Arabism, a feeling of oneness among people occupying a vast segment of the backward world, speaking Arabic, sharing the same racial memories, harboring bitterness against a history of exploitation.

The Russians did not really awaken to the possibilities of this movement until after Stalin's death. Then Soviet policy, however cynically, set out to capitalize on the tide, as if heeding the Biblical prophecy of Jeremiah:

"Egypt riseth up like a flood and the waves thereof shall be moved as river."

The waves now threatening to engulf all the Holy Land are those of a pan-Arab nationalism churmed by frustration into a thing called Nasserism. Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of the United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria, denies Nasserism exists. Whatever its name, the force came into being because of him — perhaps even in spite of him. He may be the captive of its momentum.

Events of the past three months plummeted Western prestige in the Arab East. In many Arab eyes the twin intervention — in Jordan by the British and in Lebanon by the Americans — set back the clock and revived the dreaded bogey of imperialism and colonialism.

Many Arabs still want desperately to remain the West's friends, though they have fallen silent before the swelling tide of emotional and often grotesquely distorted racial pride. Before this summer's events there had been developing a cautious attitude of reasonableness — reasonableness, at any rate, by Arab standards, which are far different from the West's.

Much of that climate is gone now. The United States, as leader of the West, can claim as friends

in the Arab East only those whose survival depends upon such friendship: Hussein, a lonely young monarch heavily guarded in Amman against his own people; Camille Chamoun, the tough, stubborn politician who has been occupying Lebanon's presidential palace; 750,000 frightened Christians in Lebanon; less than 500,000 scared Bedouins in Jordan.

Britain's Aneurin Bevan has called Hussein a kept king in a kept country. The description was cruel but accurate. And to some in Lebanon, was an ardent nationalist who attached himself to the United States only because he feared the loss of his own power. Many Arabs would be America's

friends if they could be — or if they dared. But the U.S. history of association with unpopular regimes and American insistence upon a b e l s such as pro-Western or pro-Communist — meaningless in the Arab East — make it difficult. Those who want to be America's friends are not standing up to be counted.

How did American fortunes sink so low?

Palestine always has been basic to the Middle East problem. Up to February 1953, there was reason to hope the Arabs might turn inward to their own vast economic woes. Then began a nightmare of Western policy. Nagged by hit-and-run comman-

do attacks, Israel mounted an attack on the Egyptian-occupied Gaza Strip. That humiliated Nasser and endangered his political position. He sought arms. He could not meet U.S. terms. The Communist bloc was eager to help.

Even with these arms Nasser was in no position to upset Middle East peace. He still might have concentrated on attempts to cure Egypt's backwardness. However, over-ambitious, Nasser's plan for a high Aswan Dam to increase Egypt's arable land might have kept him occupied at home.

But Washington pulled the rug from under Nasser, withdrawing an offer of help on the dam and handing him a gratuitous insult:

Egypt wasn't up to such a program. The result was nationalization of the Suez Canal and the 1956 crisis.

Nasser now is captive of all these events. Making himself into the image of liberator and encouraged by Moscow, he has burned more and more of his bridges westward. His Nasserism became something quite apart from Arab nationalist yearnings.

For years, the United States made no conspicuous effort to recognize there could be anything but evil in Arab nationalism.

There's still a chance to remedy that. Every Arab is a nationalist, whether he is friend or foe of

the West. His nationalism is not a force that will be stopped by diplomacy.

The West, depending heavily on Arab oil, must choose: It can try to oppose nationalism and drive the Arabs into desperate measures such as slain Nuri Said meant when he talked of "a compulsion to flirt with suicide." This can mean unending Arab turmoil and even eventual Soviet sway.

Or the United States can encourage a genuine nationalism and try to lead it into constructive channels. To those who have had long Middle East experience, this course offers a chance to avert disaster.



Let's see—I traded my green beans for your dessert, so how much is my part of the check?

Con Men Fleece Hundreds Of Victims Every Year

By JERRY BENNETT
NEA Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NEA) — Hundreds of gullible citizens are being fleeced each year by a vicious confidence game that enables crooks to drag their victims into court to make them pay off.

That's the startling report of congressional and Federal Trade Commission investigators who charge that about 75 firms are running a unique real estate racket which takes unsuspecting victims for 50 million dollars a year.

The details are to be aired this month at special Senate subcommittee hearings, under Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.). The average victim of the amazing swindle, investigators explain, is a small town resident who wants to sell his home or business. He's usually approached by a smiling, smooth-talking salesman, who confidently explains that he can help him make a fast sale. Often the salesman claims that he already has a buyer lined up.

If the victim looks slightly dubious, the salesman flashes some impressive looking catalogs, bonds and letters of endorsement to prove that his firm is as sound as a bank vault's steel door. Then he swings the knockout sales punch.

He tells the owner that the property is priced too low. In fact, the salesman explains that the buyer, whom he just mentioned, is ready to pay a lot more. This is the hooker.

The victim hurriedly signs a contract and agrees to pay the salesman a commission right away for his exceptional services. It's not until the salesman is spending the commission miles away that the unsuspecting property owner finally reads the small print in the contract. It guarantees only that the firm will advertise the property for sale.

The advertising usually turns out to be just classified blurbs in a couple of newspapers or a mere catalog. Investigators say that sales resulting from this advertising are less than one-half of one per cent.

But it's another block of small type that completely blasts the victim's hopes. This is known as a disclaimer clause. What its legal jargon boils down to is that the firm is not obligated to fulfill any of the salesman's verbal promises. The contract, however, is absolutely valid.

It's the disclaimer clause that enables the con men to successfully use the courts in carrying out their swindles. For example, swindlers often will not ask for an advance fee, investigators explain. Instead, they will send the signed contract to their home office.

Then the home office will start legal action in the state where it is located. The firm usually wins its case since the average victim can't afford to travel hundreds of miles to defend himself. The judgment is then taken to the victim's home state where it is enforced.

Racket investigators explain that the majority of victims are the people who can least afford a financial loss. For example, a fast-talking salesman swindled an elderly Washington state widow out of \$250 by convincing her that a worthless mining claim was worth a fortune. Her sole income is a social security allowance of \$39 a month.

A New York farmer, who is so feeble that he can't shave himself, was taken for \$150. And a Texan lost his entire business after a firm successfully sued on a contract. The businessman had to sell his property in order to raise the needed money.

Sen. Jackson's subcommittee will study a bill by Sens. Karl Mundt (R-S.D.) and John McClellan (D-Ark.) which would levy a \$5,000 fine on anyone found guilty of operating such a racket in interstate commerce. Convicted salesman also could receive a maximum of five years in jail.

The Federal Trade Commission, which is responsible for preventing false and misleading advertising, is limited in its power to cope with the real estate problem. The FTC can command firms to stop making false claims. But it can't take court action unless a company ignores the order.

FTC officials complain that ordering a shifty real estate firm to stop false advertising often results in the salesmen simply going to another location and forming one or more new companies.



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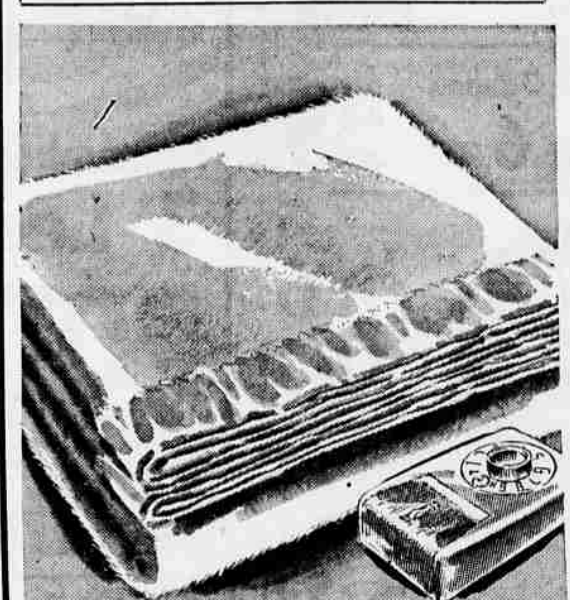
Assassin Slays Alabama Mayor
SARALAND, Ala. (AP)—Mayor O. L. Driver was fatally shot in ambush in the driveway of his home last night.
Officers said an assailant apparently waited in a clump of bushes until Driver, returning from work, pulled into his driveway. The 56-year-old mayor was shot with what officers believed to be buckshot from close range through the rear window of his car.

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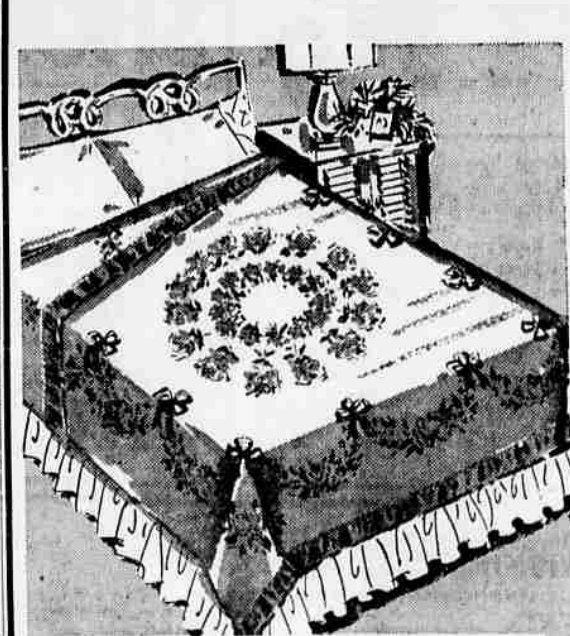
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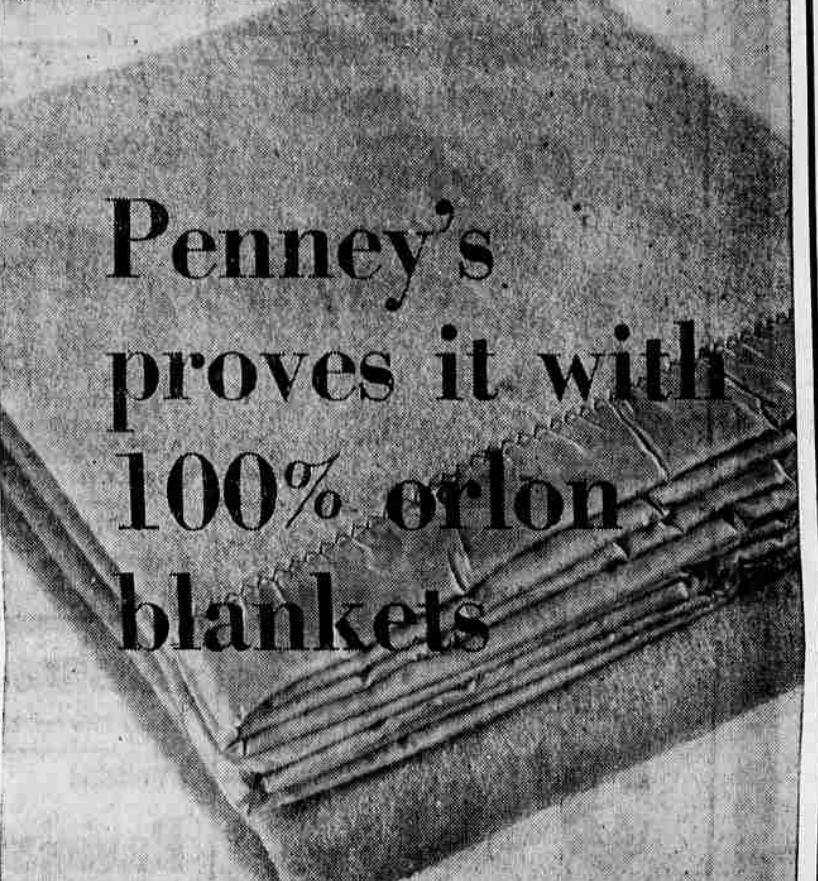


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