

WHO THREATENS ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE?

By Moshe Sneh

IN a recent note to the United States government, Israel protested against the rearming now going on in the Arab states. Egypt alone bought sufficient equipment for a fully armored division, 100 jet planes, 260 Sherman and ten Centurion tanks, quantities of heavy guns, pocket submarines and torpedo boats. And this rearming is going on in Iraq, Transjordan and other Arab countries as well.

The main supplier of arms is, of course, Great Britain, although small quantities are also sold by Belgium and Italy. But these countries are only the direct agents. The main source of these arms is the United States. The American secretary of state, Mr. Dean Acheson, said a number of times that in his opinion the continuation of these supplies to the Arab states is desirable and has his full support.

Moreover, Britain, which supplies arms to the Arab states, is herself at the receiving end from America. In the new agreement regarding arms supplies to the Atlantic Pact countries to the value of \$1,000,000, a special clause was inserted allowing Britain to supply arms to countries outside the Atlantic Pact in accordance with her previous treaty obligations. This same agreement forbade all other countries to send or sell arms to countries outside the Atlantic Pact. The interpretation of these clauses as far as the Middle East is concerned will certainly be that all Middle East countries, apart from Israel, will receive supplies.

Cairo radio has announced the Egyptian government's opposition to peace talks with Israel and the spokesman added in the name of "reliable Arab sources" that "the battles of the 'Second Round' with Israel will commence before the end of the year." Rearmament, accompanied by these threats, surely indicates a real danger. Yet we must not be satisfied by looking only at the surface, but should try to find out the sources of the danger.

Last week the United States government proposed to the Arab countries that they should conclude a Friendship Pact with her on the same terms as the recent agreement between the United States and the Lebanon. In his speech before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the American House of Representatives, Mr. McGhee, the assistant secretary of state, spoke with great frankness about his government's interest in the Middle East. He said: "The Middle East can be of vital importance to our national interest, both in peace and in war. In peacetime America is prepared to open commercial and cultural contacts in the area, but as far as the 'cold war' is concerned, the air lines passing through the area and the natural resources to be found there are of even greater importance."

These words of the State Department official directly

MOSHE SNEH is a former commander of the Haganah and at present a leader of the United Workers Party (Mapam).

responsible for Middle East affairs, show clearly what are the reasons for the proposed friendship treaties between America and the Arab countries, and what is the real background for the supply of arms to the Middle East. But in this area, an area which America wishes to transform into her strategic base, there exists the State of Israel. Washington would like to include Israel in this "sphere of interest" as well. This desire is the root of the Egyptian talk of the "Second Round." The arms arrive in the Middle East by way of Britain and the threats are conveyed to Israel through the medium of the Arab states—but the real source of both is in Washington.

Government circles in Israel have worked out a policy to break the encirclement of our state by means of a separate peace with Abdullah. The government has been making approaches in this direction for over a year now. The political commentator of *Haaretz* who, as a rule, is a reliable spokesman of the Kiryah, writes: "In political circles it is pointed out that Israel has failed in these negotiations. On the one hand, they spoiled her relations with the East, and on the other, nothing positive had been achieved, and relations with the United States, which desires the conclusion of a treaty, have also not improved."

The rearmament of the Middle East is directed against three factors: against the Soviet Union, against the progressive forces in the Arab countries and against Israel. Common sense requires that Israel, if she wishes to guard against the danger, should seek closer relations with the other two potentially attacked factors. Official Israel policy, however, is proceeding along diametrically opposed lines. It seeks security by making approaches to the source and the instrument of the danger, to Acheson and to Abdullah.

Program for Security

In the face of this threat we should seek our security by means of three fundamental principles. First, we must transform our whole people into a "fighting nation" and make the Israel Defense Army a real popular force, by organizing every settlement, suburb, factory and farm into defense units able to withstand the shock of attack.

Secondly, there must be a sharp turn in our foreign policy in order to lead us out of the one-way street leading only to London and Washington. We must seek to establish closer relations with the Soviet Union and the popular democracies and free ourselves from economic, political and military dependence on the United States. This is the way we succeeded during the Arab invasion, in spite of the

open enmity of Great Britain and the arms embargo of the United States. This is the only way we can withstand the pressure on our independence and remain faithful to our obligations in the cause of world peace.

Thirdly, we must find friends in the Arab states. These will not be found in the ranks of their ruling circles. A

progressive democratic regime in Israel, showing friendship and real equality to the Arabs and a preparedness to cooperate with the progressive democratic forces in the neighboring Arab states, will make a breach in the wall of enmity put up against us by the reactionary Arab governments; a breach destined to widen into the gates of peace.
