

From the London End**East of Eden**

IN a recent despatch, your Correspondent referred to the "lack of touch" of the Eden Government with the economic situation. This lack of touch has now come to embrace almost every field of Government activity. The perceptible slide which began about the middle of last year has now been followed by the arrest and deportation of Archbishop Makarios an act of supreme lunacy. Actions like this can only be sanctioned by a desperate Prime Minister - a Prime Minister in panic. For those who wished for a more visible? proof of the decline of Sir Anthony Eden, the Commons debate on the dismissal of General John Glubb was possibly most timely. As the Manchester Guardian remarked about the role of the Prime Minister in this debate. "... his lack of composure is no new symptom". The Commons found an overwrought Prime Minister arguing a case made more difficult by its lack of consistency or reason. Being unsure of himself, and thus of his case, he found compensation in vehemence of speech accompanied by gesticulations which are not at all characteristic of him. The gravity of the problems for Britain in the Middle East is such that it is no longer capable of competent handling from so desperate and panic-stricken a man. The earlier right-wing Tory reaction against the Prime Minister has now at least gained a justification which bodes ill for Sir Anthony's continued occupancy of No. 10 Downing Street.

The crisis in the Middle East has been a long-simmering one, but as reasonably thinking people have come to appreciate, it has only been brought to a head by the Baghdad Pact. The two reasons originally advanced for this urchin-alliance were the Soviet How of arms to Egypt and the need to divert the attention of the Arab nations away from Israel on to the strategy of the Dulles "northern tier" concept. Indeed, neither appeared at the time to hold any degree of urgency, or for that matter, to call for so far-reaching a military arrangement when the failure of the earlier mooted Middle East Defence Organisation was

still fresh in mind. There was thus some other reason or reasons for this act of folly as it is now recognized. And your Correspondent believes that Colonel Nasser was the first and the quickest to perceive the more fundamental calculations of the British regime in the Middle East. It was clear to him that, the Baghdad Pact was aimed at dislodging Egyptian supremacy and leadership in the Arab world and give Iraq that enviable position. And why? The Asian neutralist trend had already infected Egypt and this infection was rapidly overwhelming a number of Arab states, principally, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Prior to that, sharp conflicts between Britain and Egypt had appeared over the future of Sudan, and many commentators have accordingly interpreted the Sudanese Independence Act as British the marche to forestall the accession of Sudan into another Egyptian province--a fairly unusual and expensive de marche on the part of the British.

Behind these conflicting positions, one of the prime reasons for the Baghdad Pact is the end of British dominance over the Suez Canal zone. This fundamental fact has, of course, now led to the path of British folly in Cyprus. No longer was the British posture of military strength possible in Middle East politics when the Suez was lost and the attempt to give Cyprus the Suez character is proving to be as futile as it is dangerous (i.e. the weakening of Anglo-Greek relations and thus of Nato). There remained Glubb's hold over the Arab Legion and this had been some secret consolation to the Foreign (Mice now even that is gone. Continued division of the Arab States, transference of Arab leadership to Iraq and the desperate desire to make Cyprus take the military position of Suez these have been the policies of Britain. That such policies were based on assumptions not only outmoded but in conflict with American intentions is only now being recognized and hence the panic, the decline of Sir Anthony Eden,

The spoke in the wheel of British Policy of fostering disunity in the Arab world has been and remains the existence of Israel. If

anything unites the Arabs from Iraq to the little sheikdom in the Persian Gulf, it is the antagonism towards Israel and even when Britain makes such gestures as banning arms shipments to Israel or sharply reprimanding and condemning Israel for the recent Syrian border incident (before the U.N. Truce Commission has fixed the responsibility for it), the Arab nations find little to support Britain's presence in the Middle East. The latest act of British assurance, in spite of being profoundly illogical, has failed to impress the Arabs. In the Commons debate, the Minister of State, Mr. Anthony Nutting, declared against a new treaty guaranteeing Israel's frontiers, for the Tripartite Declaration against "incidents" on Israel's frontiers and finally for the 1948 Anglo-Jordanian Treaty guaranteeing the integrity of Jordan's frontiers with Israel. This fantastic for and against policy cannot but expose the bankruptcy of a panic-stricken Government.

Anglo-American discord is possibly more serious and illuminating. Americans originally sponsored the "northern tier" concept and yet in deference to their oil interests, they have remained outside the Baghdad Pact. This is possibly the clearest indication that the Baghdad Pact has little to do with "containing Communism". Since American oil interests happened to lie on the Saudi-Arabian side of the division line being fostered by Britain, the Americans "have for once kept their noses clean". At the recent Eden-Eisenhower meeting, Britain had once again attempted to obtain direct American acceptance of Iraq's leadership in the Arab world but had failed. Now with the Middle East crisis at its peak, the Eden attempt to obtain American support has met with some very qualified and irritating answers.

There are many problems each of which may spell death to the Eden Government; none however is more dangerous to the life of the present British regime than the Middle East crisis. The powerful right-wing Tory groups have for long been "gunning" at Sir Anthony Eden the Middle East has been providing ammunition.