The Arabs and the Jews

To the N.Y. Herald Tribune:
The Arab massacre of a busload of men, women and children in the Negev evokes forcibly the problem of the Administration policy toward the Arabs. We are arming them. I should like to know whether the submachine gun used in this exploit of murder was supplied by America.

In arming the Arabs we can appeal to good historical precedent. The arms used by the Indians in murdering our western colonial settlers were supplied by the French. The statesmen of France were determined to put the English out of the Mississippi Valley, as the Arabs are determined to put the Jews out of Palestine. Are we Americans also determined to put the Jews out of Palestine? Then by all means we should supply guns and knives to facilitate the murder of Jews.

We are blandly informed that we have to arm the Arabs to keep them from going over to Communism. Who in the Arab states wants to go over to Communism? The princelets and the feudal landowners, the rich merchants and the grafting politicians who keep up the propaganda against Israel and egg on their benighted and oppressed peasantry and proletariat to commit outrages? No indeed. Those classes sit uneasily on the necks of the most cruelly and needlessly oppressed lower classes in the world.

Certainly there is a Communist danger in the Near East. The masses may awaken. They are bound to awaken if the rotten political and economic system of the Arab lands is not reformed, and soon. Supplied with arms from America the feudal lords may keep down the masses a little longer. But soon, or late, the arms will go over to the masses.

A rational American policy would refuse any aid whatever to the Arab states until they make an honest peace with Israel and set about reforming their medieval economic system.

But feudal Arabia will never make terms with the Jews. Is it because that bit of formerly neglected land now held by Israel is vital to the Arabs? No; they have enormous resources of neglected lands. The Valley of the Euphrates and Tigris still lies under the jackals. It is the best opportunity for a gigantic reclamation project in the whole world. Every landless Arab could be settled there on land that would yield twentyfold on the seeding.

No; it isn't that the Arabs need Palestine. They need to get rid of an implantation of Western civilization, an area however small where a man is a man for a that, where the humblest has freedom and a standard of living. A horrible example for the serfs of the Effendi.

Ah yes, you say; but this mere liberal overlooks the real point—oil. If we don't play with the princelets and indulge them in their childish penchant for murder, they will cancel our oil leases. And then where will we be?

We will be in Texas, with the tidelands yielding more oil than we can ever use, down to the time when atomic power, already subjugated to the point of competing with oil, puts oil out of commission.

Forgive my concession to the argument, oil won't pay. If it did pay, I'm still liberal enough to say, "We can't sell out humanity and decency and our sacred honor for a cruse of oil."

ALVIN JOHNSON.

Civil Liberties

To the N.Y. Herald Tribune:
Your position against McCarthy is a big step forward toward better civil liberties. Keep it up.

IRV KASSOY.
Brooklyn, March 16, 1954.