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GRANT-IN-AID to the *Middle East*

by PAUL DOUGLAS

Formerly Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago and a Lt. Colonel in the U. S. Marines during World War II, Dr. Paul Douglas is United States Senator from the State of Illinois.

OUR preoccupation with Europe and the Far East may cause us to ignore the peril that now confronts Europe's soft underflank. Indeed, if we concentrate our assistance to the countries of Western Europe, we cause the Near East to grow relatively weaker and we virtually invite the Soviet Union to strike that area with its strategic oil supplies and geographic advantages. Here is a vacuum which appears to have been last on the agenda of our military strategists and planners, but which may actually be next on the program of Soviet expansion.

There are other reasons why this is a likely target for Soviet attack. The Arab Near East is internally weak. The great masses of Arabs live on the barest subsistence standards. They lack adequate health facilities, educational opportunities, and political institutions to give any reasonable expression to their legitimate aspirations. The governments in these countries change, not by elections but by assassinations. The political liberation they have achieved in the last score of years has not brought about economic emancipation. Thus the entire area is not only exposed to external military attack; it is vulnerable to subversion by Communists and others from within.

We have talked bravely and boldly about helping underdeveloped areas. This was projected in a program which proposed to lift the great masses of people from poverty and economic serfdom by technical assistance and foreign aid. But when it comes to implementing our declarations, we pour billions into the most highly developed countries of the world: England, France, Italy, and the rest of Europe. Yet for the Near East we have here, in comparison with the total program, an amount calculated to win, not appreciation and esteem, but skepticism and cynicism. We must not build high steel walls in Europe and little parapets of sand in the Near East. We must do all we can to help resettle Arab refugees and to enable the Arab countries to participate in the resettlement projects.

Israel's needs arise almost exclusively out of an immigration program never before paralleled in recorded history. In the first four years this state absorbed more than 700,000 immigrants—almost all of them completely destitute. The Jewish population was more than doubled. This was an average yearly increase of population through immigration of approximately 33 percent a year.

Consider that, in the period of our greatest influx, namely, 1900-1910, our rate of growth through immigration was only about 1⅓ percent a year. Then you can see how staggering has been the problem of absorbing this population. This, moreover, had to be done at the same time the Israelis were starting their government and warding off attacks from outside.

Under the circumstances, Israel is compelled to turn

(please turn to page 16)

Easter in ISRAEL

IN A traditional pilgrimage climaxing the activities of Holy Week this year, six hundred Christian pilgrims ascended Mount Zion in Jerusalem at Easter and crossed over into the Old City to welcome the Easter dawn.

Led by Lt. General William Riley, United Nations Chief of Staff, the Patriarchs of the Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, representatives of various religious groups, members of the Consular Corps, and Christian residents of Israel crossed the lines in a colorful pageant. Bells atop the famed YMCA tower in Jewish-held Jerusalem (the New City) pealed out joyous Easter hymns, proclaiming the advent of the observance.

Rites were held on Mount Zion, traditional site of the Last Supper, where Catholics welcomed Easter with a midnight vigil and High Mass. Following the Mass, a dawn service was held on the Hill of Evil Counsel, a bluff facing Mt. Zion.

For members of the Greek Orthodox Church, Holy Week was just beginning, and their main Easter services were held on April 20th.

Following an agreement concluded between the Israel and Jordan governments, Jaffa Gate, an entrance into the Old City, was opened to allow the pilgrims to enter. The same agreement also permitted access to hundreds of Christian residents of Israel who viewed the Garden of Gethsemane, Calvary and Via Dolorosa, places located in the Jordan-held section of Jerusalem (Old City).

Also participating in the traditional ascent was the group of seventeen members of the American Christian Palestine Committee Study Tour to the Middle East.

The Christian Community of Israel consists of four main groups. Largest of all is the Greek Orthodox community, numbering fifteen thousand. These are followed by the Roman Catholics, who number six thousand, consisting in the main of Christian Arabs. In addition there are several thousand Protestants, also largely Arab, and a smaller group of Orthodox Monophysites consisting of Armenians, Copts, Syrians and Abyssinians.