

TIME FOR DECISION

A Letter From the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

The Near East is at the brink of war. Yet the Administration has not formulated a policy that can restore that vital region to safety.

For long months the Arab-Israel crisis was downgraded by Secretary Dulles. President Eisenhower reflected the same optimism. Both, apparently, seemed of the opinion that Premier Nasser's deal with Czechoslovakia and his anti-West radio and press campaign throughout the Near East and North Africa held no threat for American and Free World interests. The assurances that Nasser or his representatives whispered in private to our diplomats were considered more significant than the popular resentments they fanned in their public utterances. The British, with the banishment of General Glubb from Jordan providing intimate experience of the duality in the Nasser approach, have in recent days strongly opposed the Dulles-Eisenhower view.

On Tuesday, April 10th, President Eisenhower, however, suddenly announced that the Arab-Israel crisis was real and dangerous and proceeded to state that:

"The United States, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations, will observe its commitments within constitutional means to oppose any aggression in the Middle East area.

"The United States is likewise determined to support and assist any nation which might be subjected to such aggression. The United States is confident that other nations will act similarly in the cause of peace."

A Host of ... Questions

But this announcement has since raised a host of additional questions. It still surrounds American policy in a cloud of ambiguity. The Daily Telegram of London, reiterating the demand for a new U.S. policy in the Near East, declared editorially on April 11th: "Mr. Eisenhower has not offered one; what he said was better than nothing - but very little better."

Mr. James Reston in a New York Times story on the same day pointed to some of the problems arising from the President's statement:

