

not expelled from the conference.

At luncheon and dinner tables, during coffee breaks, and in chats at odd moments, one heard more than an occasional anti-Jewish remark, sometimes given in a would-be humorous vein, sometimes with no mitigating disguise at all. At the Friday luncheon I had introduced myself to my table companions as a pro-Zionist gentile but this did not prevent some of the guests from speaking openly against Jews. One man said: "The thing is that Hitler didn't go far enough."

During the adjournment period Friday afternoon a group of about ten people gathered around Mr. Virgil Hall, the Public Relations Officer of AFME. I heard him denouncing the UJA and the Israel Bonds, claiming that they abused their tax-exemption status with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. He told his listeners that the Zionists were violating the sanctity of the synagogues by launching their drives and appeals in these houses of worship. One woman in this group said that she wished there were more Jews like James Warburg. She also said that it was a terrible thing to pick up the Sunday Times and find all "those Jewish ads of Gimbels and Lord & Taylor."

(Lest I be misunderstood, anti-Semitism is a phenomenon of our society, not of the Middle East Institute. What is tragic is that Arab hostility to Israel, which is primarily political and cultural in form, should stir up a quite different social and racial pathology among some Americans. I feel sure that the best of the Arabs -- like the Institute itself and the great majority of those attending the conference -- must deeply regret the ugly coincidence. The fact is, however, that anti-Semitism has become an element -- if still a minor one -- in the tangled controversy on Palestine issues fought in this country. Therefore, to expose its every appearance seems -- to me at least -- a plain duty.)

A Soldier in Search of a Battleground

The Saturday morning (May 7th) speakers were: Dr. Fayez Sayegh (subject: "The Encounter of Two Ideologies: Zionism and Arab Nationalism") and Professor Ragaei el Mallakh, University of Colorado (subject: "Trends Toward Economic Unity in the Arab East"). On a mimeographed outline sent out before the conference, the first topic had been announced as "A Movement in Search of an Ideology." Presumably, the latter did not allow sufficient scope for the attack on Zionism that Dr. Sayegh worked himself into in the course of writing his speech.

Dr. Sayegh is no longer Acting Director of the Arab States' Delegation Office in New York. Since the official grounds for his appearance at the Institute conference no longer obtain, I am curious to know what justification there could be for the choice of a professional propagandist as conference participant. After all, his career has not been remarkable, I would judge, for its determination "that Americans in general should have access to up-to-date, complete and objective research ... on the Middle East", in the words of the Institute's founders. He is, it is true, an excellent speaker -- I later heard several persons remark how objective and restrained Dr. Sayegh had been. The speech itself was too intricately argued to summarize properly. I shall only reproduce a few of the major points.

With considerable perceptiveness, Dr. Sayegh began by describing certain aspects common to Zionist and Arab nationalisms. Both movements were inspired by European concepts; their date of departure was about the same; they had their sponsors in the West, one of which (Britain) they shared at