

THE ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT

THE general press has deliberately played down the activities of the progressive movement among the Arabs. In fact, most people are quite unaware of its existence. Yet this movement could play a vital role in securing the independence of Israel through helping form an independent, democratic Arab state in conformity with the UN decision of November 29, 1947. Weak though this movement is, primarily because of ruthless repression, by both the imperialists and the Arab feudal lords, a lasting and peaceful solution of the Palestine problem depends in part on the maturing of this movement. In Palestine the progressive Arabs are organized in the League of National Liberation, led by Arab communists. Before the proclamation of the Jewish state the British suppressed the League's paper, *Il Ittihad*. Since May 14, the feudal Arab leaders have ruthlessly launched a terror against the League.

But the League nevertheless returned to its heroic, dangerous work of rousing the Arab masses against Anglo-American imperialists and their stooges among the Arab lords. The League issued a leaflet calling upon Arab soldiers to go home and turn their guns against their Arab oppressors (see JEWISH LIFE, September, 1948). Other leaflets appealed to the Arabs for unity with the Jews against the Anglo-American imperialists. "The League calls upon the masses of the Arab nation of Palestine," said one leaflet issued in July, "to set up a People's Front that will terminate the horror of racial butchery, a People's Front that will concern itself with the poverty of the masses. . . . The League calls upon the Arab people to set up a Popular Front that will wage mass struggle on behalf of the independence of Palestine as decided upon by the United Nations, for frustrating the imperialist plot and preventing the intervention of the Anglo-Americans in the country's affairs and its future." Despite the suppression, the League is growing in strength.

The Israeli government has unfortunately not cooperated with the League, which is the only Arab political party in Palestine that is fighting for the UN decision. In fact, that government has not yet lifted the ban on *Il Ittihad*. A short period of cooperation of the Israelis with the League following the conquest of Nazareth, Arab city, ceased after the Palestine Labor Party yielded to the demand of a committee of Arab business men and a priest to drop the one Arab communist from the liaison committee with the Israeli government.

An Israeli response to the Arab League's appeal for cooperation and anti-imperialist unity would do much to help break the present impasse, which has been carefully nurtured by the Anglo-American imperialists as a condition for retention of control over Palestine. Unity with Arabs, whose aim is to set up an independent Arab state in accordance with the UN decision, would bring a democratic solution closer. Israeli independence would gain added strength from the presence of a democratic, independent and friendly Arab neighbor state.