

ACTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

From the barb-wired airfields of Cyprus, 2,000 British paratroops fly to the aid of Jordan's King and Government - among them a company of Guards who form part of the 16th Independent Parachute Brigade. Once again, the Red Devils are on their way to the focal point of worlds troubles. Irak is in the hands of a pro-Nasser revolt; neighbouring Jordan fears the same fate, and its young King Hussein - cousin of the murdered Feisal of Irak - has called on Britain for aid. Britain decides she cannot refuse.

Cyprus, Britain's vital base in the Eastern Mediterranean, still has troubles of its own. British troops do their best to keep Greeks and Turks from fighting each other, but this funeral of three Greek Cypriots - a man, a man, and an 11-year-old boy - remind us that inter-communal murder is still a daily menace in this unhappy island.

The Lebanon is another middle East Country to have appealed for Western help. Over 5,000 American marines land in the Lebanon at President Chamoun's request. Their aim - to put a stop to the revolt that has for weeks been trying to dislodge the Chamoun government.

America's action in the Lebanon is defended in the United Nations by Ambassador Cabot Lodge.

From Irak itself, where (reports Cairo Radio) King Feisal was killed at the outbreak of the revolt, comes news that the new government will honour oil agreements with the western powers. If so the flow from Kirkuk, 500 miles to the Mediterranean, will continue. Irak, the third biggest producer in the Middle East, must sell its oil, no matter who governs the country.

What of Israel? Her Government, headed by the courageous, astute Ben Gurion, knows what peril it would face if Jordan went the way of Irak. Egyptian arms lay strewn over Gaza Strip. After Israel overwhelmed Nasser's troops in the Suez campaign. And today, the Israeli army, proud of its victory, splendidly equipped, is even better prepared than it was then. The whole population, women no less than men, would fight to the death to keep invaders out of the hard-won Promised Land.

In Amman, King Hussein told the Press how he forestalled the plot on his life, planned to coincide with Feisal's murder, before asking outside help. Jordan's Arab Legion, created by Glubb Pasha, is still the most efficient Army of any Arab country. May Hussein's courage, and prompt appeal for aid, turn out to have stopped the rot in the Middle East.