

Washington's 2 Faces

Scorpion Pass Vs. Kibya

By AL FINDLEY

Last week Jordanian armed men ambushed a bus at Scorpion Pass in the Negev area of Israel and barbarically massacred eleven men, women and children. This attack is the most atrocious Arab act in the long series of border clashes between Israelis and Arabs.

Next to the Kibya scandal—in which an armed group of Israelis attacked Jordanian villages and in Kibya killed 46 people, including women and children—it is the most reprehensible event in the story.

As could be expected, Israel demanded an immediate condemnation of Jordan in the Mixed Armistice Committee and expected great-power denunciation of the dastardly act. Neither of these was forthcoming. Instead the U. S. State Department "regretted" the incident and said it would await "investigation."

The investigation took place and the U. S. representative voted that the case had not been proved. From a strict juridical point of view there can be no doubt that a court of law would not convict a person on the available evidence. To take such a legalistic point of view in political matters means in effect to make the work of the Mixed Armistice Commission impossible.

CONTRAST

The Israelis therefore walked out of the MAC. In these matters there is rarely sufficient evidence to convict if one goes by the rules of evidence followed in an Anglo-Saxon courtroom. There was no such evidence even in the Kibya case.

The contrast between American official reaction in the Scorpion Pass case and in the Kibya affair will be drawn both in the Near East and all over the world. Some Arab extremists may use the failure of the UN to assess the blame promptly to encourage new killings and new attacks. Some Israeli extremists may use it to urge repetitions of the Kibya retaliatory attacks. Some Jews all over the world may fall for the explanation offered by Ben-Gurion that "Jewish blood is cheaper than Arab blood."

Menachem Beigin, leader of the Heirut party in Israel and former commander of the terrorist Irgun, found it necessary

(Continued on page 7)

Scorpion Pass — —

(Continued from page 1)

to come out against another Kibya but urged an attack against the Arab Legion, the army of Jordan—an act that would virtually mean full-scale war.

While even the Israelis, let alone world public opinion, have a right to express indignation and disappointment at the one-sided attitude of the great powers (including Russia) and of the U. S. in particular, they would do well to remember that answering one barbaric deed by another will only drag down the level of conflict and make it more horrible and gruesome.

Israeli statements themselves have described the Scorpion Pass massacre as the worst committed. Until now the Arabs have contented themselves with individual murders and robberies. The Kibya affair gave them the excuse they had been waiting for, to resort to mass slaughter at Scorpion Pass.

U. S. MANEUVER

The real explanation for the difference in attitude by the U. S. with regard to the barbaric killings at Kibya and at Scorpion Pass is that while the U. S. desires stability in the area, it does not give a tinker's damn for either Jewish or Arab blood. The Kibya events took place at the same time that the U. S. had ordered the Israeli government to stop work on a canal. The condemnation of Israel for the attack was only a punishment for refusal to obey U. S. orders, as we explained at the time in an article in these columns.

From a long-term point of view, it is, however, less important to establish responsibility for specific acts than to come to grips with the dangerous state of belligerency that exists in the Near East. The plain facts are that the Arab states have refused to concede that Israel is here to stay as a nation in the world. Other nations do not have the will—and even with the best will, could not do it alone—to convince them of the desirability of accepting this fact. **That is a job for the Arab labor movement, the Israeli labor movement and the government it controls.** The first steps have to be taken to create *popular* demand for peace before diplomatic activity can be expected to have any results.