

# ISRAEL GIRDS FOR LONG-RANGE STRUGGLE TO COME

TELAVIV (WNS) Amid the jubilation over Israel's fantastic military exploits on three fronts, this nation's leaders are girding for a long-range political struggle that may prove as challenging as the war itself.

Informed observers here believe that possible big-power discomfort with Israel's new dominance in the Middle East, and their desire to placate Arab resentment in view of their reliance on Mid-East oil, may lead to some painful trials for the Jewish state.

Israel, these sources point out, will insist on recognition of her existence and sovereignty by the Arab states and the conclusion of genuine peace treaties, instead of settling for ineffective armistice pact like those which permitted the Arabs to maintain their continuing posture of a "state of war" with Israel. Israel will demand guarantees of freedom for shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba and, most likely, in the Suez Canal as well. In all likelihood she will refuse to surrender the old sector of Jerusalem--site of the Hebrew University complex and the Wailing Wall--and perhaps also the Gaza Strip, which over the years has been a source of irritation to the security of the country.

### Role of U.N.

The role of the United Nations in the fulfillment of these aims has been widely questioned here in view of its ineffectiveness in halting Arab aggression and its capitulation to Nasser by withdrawing the U.N. Emergency Force from Egypt. There were also doubts about the willingness of the major powers to accede to all of Israel's demands, particularly in view of their hiterto reliance on a supposed balance of Arab-Israel military strength. Both the West and the pro-Arab Communist nations, it is held, may have to consider drastic reorientation of their policies in this area.

Yet Israel could count on these cards of a winning hand: she had emerged from the military campaign as the strongest power in the Middle East, and had virtually broken Arab air power; she had broken the back of the Egyptian army, lifted the blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba by capturing Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt's artillery position overlooking the Strait of Tiran; she had gained the Old City of Jerusalem, eliminating of Jordanese pontard in the heart of the Holy City; she had nipped off the Gaza Strip, an enclave inhabited by war-mongering Arab refugees, and she had beaten back Syrian and Iraqi invaders.

### New Vistas

As the military drama began yielding to the diplomatic anti-climax, Israel's leaders began pondering both the assets and the debits of the country's present position.

Soviet Russia has sustained a political defeat in overestimating the effectiveness of Arab military power, on which at least some of her recent policies were premised. Her apparent unwillingness to become involved in all-out war precluded military action of her own in the area, thus evoking Arab disappointment and anger. America too, according to political observers here, has suffered loss of prestige because of the State Department's declaration of "neutrality" at the onset of war in the face of many past guarantees of Israel's territorial integrity.

Another political oser was France, once Israel's most ardent friend and ally, President Charles de Gaulle's impartial protestations of friendship for all the billigerents, and his embargo on arms shipments to the Middle East, actually deprived the French leader of the possibility that

he might play a conciliatory role.

Another source of bitterness was the realization that a prolonged war might have disabled Israel's air force, because it would have been unable to secure parts for her French-built aircraft.

Also, all of the major powers were faulted here for cautioning Israel to withhold reaction to the withdrawal of the UN forces from Sinai and to President Nasser's proclamation of a blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba. The delay, in the opinion of many Israelis, created a dangerous situation for Israel that was eased only when she chalked up her military victory. Conference Table

Thus, the central factor in appraising Israel's political strength at a conference table, it is held here, is that this nation has won the war by itself. Despite Arab accusations that the United States and Great Britain had bombed Arab areas -- a claim that has been vehemently denied by those countries and by Israel -- Israel, unlike in the Sinai campaign of ten years ago, lacked the advantage of big-power collaboration in a second front.

Normally, this would be considered an overriding advantage, particularly in view of the political disarray that is bound to develop in the Arab countries. Jordan quickly accepted a cease-five order and other Arab states were expected to follow despite their resistance to the

meaning of the Security Council resolution in the United Nations. Nasser is still maintaining his posture as an Arab leader by spreading misleading reports to his people about the military realities, but disillusionment with his failures is said to be intensifying inter-Arab social and political conflict. His Pan-Arabism, the concept that the Moslem countries could unite around Nasser on the single issue of antagonism toward Israel, seems badly pictured if not laid to rest.

Summing up the Israeli situation as the war rushed toward its dramatic finale, one shrewd political leader told an American newsmen: "We have won great victories and we will be dealing from strength at the negotiating table.

Ostensibly we are in a position to achieve definite guarantees of permanent peace. But the negotiations will be long and hard, because there is one thing we do not have. We do not have any oil resources to bargain with. An oil-rich nation, even in defeat, still has plenty of leverage in dealing with the major powers which will be involved in the negotiations. We will have to face some tough sessions...."

Meanwhile there are the dead still to be counted and the wounded and the dislocated. The war came to Israel at a time of economic dislocations, and the effects of the most recent crisis are still to be estimated.

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