

CORRESPONDENCE

THE ARABS

Sir,—Millions of Jews despatched from their homes to the shame of the incinerators: millions of Germans sent miserably trekking from their birthplace: and now the Arabs. What are we going to do to save the shreds of our honour as human beings?

People try to excuse themselves by arguing about responsibility: by attacking Zionist nationalism, Arab irresponsibility, British intransigence, American opportunism. But the real responsibility lies with the wickedness we all share, and the history in which, as human beings, we are all involved. Cannot we leave it at that, and turn to succour? I would only, as a Jew, add this: I pray that the Israelis will show clearly, by such practical measures as are open to them, that they regard the shouldering of responsibility as more honourable than polemics about their precise share of it.

When we are in pain—and how many are there who have never suffered?—drugs relieve us. In one area, says U.N.O., 123 Arabs are dying nightly; but many go untended, for there is neither transport to bring doctors nor drugs for them to give. Government money paid up amounts to a pound or so per head of refugees, who must be fed, clothed, housed, cured. Drugs and transport have to go by the board because food is the priority. By giving money we, who are at ease, can provide what is lacking: is it decent to refuse?

The Jewish Society for Human Service has made some trifling contribution. It has collected clothing: contributed to the care of Arab children in Jerusalem and to the maintenance of Arab students, relatives of refugees, in London: helped to provide transport for a relief team in an Arab country: and sent its own small unit to relieve Arabs in Israel. It wants a few hundred pounds more to maintain this unit, and very many thousands to assist relief work in Arab territory. Contributions should be sent to the Jewish Society for Human Service, 14, Henrietta Street, W.C.2; or, by those who prefer, to any other bodies working to the same end, for instance the British Red Cross Society, 14, Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1, or to the Catholic Committee for Relief Abroad.

Cost of living and taxation are admittedly high. But can nothing be spared to save others from immediate agony, even at some cost to our present comfort or future security? It seems incredible that Christians should refuse: did not Christ say 'Take no heed for the morrow'? If I were writing to a Jewish paper I should add that it seems still more incredible that Jews should refuse. For they bear in their souls, if not in their bodies, the stigmata of innumerable expulsions: and like a deep pedal note runs the phrase through their scriptures 'For ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt'.—Yours, etc.

14, Henrietta Street, W.C.2.

VICTOR GOLLANCZ