

ISRAEL

INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONTROVERSY OVER THE FUTURE STATUS OF PALESTINE; THE ISSUE AT THE UNITED NATIONS;¹ CREATION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL; ENTRY OF ARAB FORCES INTO PALESTINE

867N.01/1-548

The British Embassy to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

G2/-/47

MEMORANDUM

During a conversation between Mr. Bevin² and Mr. Marshall in London on the 17th December,³ Mr. Bevin said that the reactions of the Arab Governments to the recommendations of the United Nations on Palestine⁴ had been worse than he had expected, in spite of the efforts which were being made by British representatives in the Arab states to bring the Governments concerned to a more reasonable frame of mind. Mr. Bevin added that he was proposing to see Arab representatives in London, one by one, in order to steady them. The British Government feared that the situation in the Middle East might get out of control and seriously endanger the U.S. and British position there, which could only benefit the Soviet Union.

2. In amplification of Mr. Bevin's remarks, and in the spirit of the recent conversations on the Middle East between United States and United Kingdom representatives,⁵ the following summary is provided, for the strictly confidential information of the State Department, of

¹ Continued from *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, pp. 999-1328.

² Ernest Bevin, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

³ For British memorandum of this conversation, see *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1312.

⁴ On November 29, 1947 the General Assembly had adopted Resolution 181 (II) recommending the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states; for the text of the Resolution, see the appendix, p. 1709.

Two maps illustrating the boundaries proposed in Resolution 181 (II) are reproduced facing p. 1730. They are respectively entitled "Palestine—Plan of Partition with Economic Union" (United Nations Map No. 103 (b), November 1947); and "City of Jerusalem—Boundaries Proposed" (United Nations Map No. 104, November 1947).

⁵ For documentation on Anglo-American talks in October 1947 concerning the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean, see *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, pp. 485 ff.

the views on Palestine which have in the last few weeks been expressed to British officials by Arab representatives in the countries concerned. These views were mostly elicited in conversations at which British representatives informed the Arab Governments in general terms of British plans for withdrawal from Palestine and urged that Arab leaders should take no action which might render the British task more difficult. The following were the main points which emerged.

(a) All the Arab representatives were willing to give an assurance that they would avoid action of any kind likely to bring them into conflict with the British Government during the period of withdrawal; but it is clear that it would be dangerous to make any assumption that Arab opposition to partition is mainly wild talk.

(b) The Arab Governments do not believe that they can restrain their nationals from volunteering for service in Palestine. This was mentioned, for example, by the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, by the Acting Prime Minister of Iraq, by Riad Sulh (Lebanon), by Jamil Mardam (Syria), and by Samir Pasha (Transjordan).⁶

(c) There is much concern whether restraint is also being urged upon the Jews. This was mentioned, for example, by the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs and by Yusef Yasin⁷ (Saudi Arabia). This concern is likely to be increased as a result of the recent disturbances in Palestine in which Arab casualties have been somewhat larger than Jewish casualties.

(d) Considerable bitterness was expressed against the British Government for having adopted a neutral attitude in New York,⁸ and more especially against the United States Government for their more positive stand in favour of partition. Such criticism of the American attitude, which was sometimes stated in terms of general references to "dollar diplomacy" and of the consequent need for friendship specifically with Britain, may in part have been actuated by a desire to play off Britain against the United States.

(e) It is clear that any attempt to provide for mutual defence arrangements in the Middle East is likely to meet with great difficulties. Riad Sulh, for example, urged that the whole Middle East was changing and that the time had surely come for the British Government to consolidate their friendship with the Arabs. The British Government's treaties with Iraq and Egypt⁹ were under consideration for revision, and what use could that with Transjordan be, if Palestine were lost? He considered that the British Government should come to some agreement with the Arabs as a whole and, as it were, capitalise their good will. He deplored any idea that Anglo-Arab relations should be exposed to too great a strain, through what would seem to the Arabs to be British support for partition, and he asserted that his sentiments were shared by all other Arabs.

⁶ The three persons mentioned were Prime Ministers of their respective countries.

⁷ Acting Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia.

⁸ At the United Nations.

⁹ See Part 1 of this volume, pp. 202 ff. and editorial note, p. 85.

3. There are other indications, such as that mentioned in the following paragraph, that there is a general desire for some kind of formal understanding with Great Britain, without which Arab leaders fear that the situation may get out of hand. No Arab representative has yet stated in concrete terms what kind of a lead was required; their plea was in the form of: "Cannot you do something to help us?"

4. That this situation may have a bearing on one concrete and very important interest of the British Government (and of the United States Government)—namely a revised Anglo-Iraqi treaty—is indicated by the remarks of Tahsin Qadri, Master of Ceremonies at the Palace in Baghdad, which reflected the deep feeling shown in earlier conversations by Saleh Jabr¹⁰ and Nuri.¹¹ He said that for the past thirty years the British had been able to give a line which the Iraqi Government had been able to follow with advantage to both countries, and he could not understand why they should now give the Iraqis no guidance at all except to keep calm. If the British would only give a line, moderate men would support the Regent and the Government in guiding the policy of Iraq. But without any word from the British the situation would go from bad to worse. The enemies of the Regent and of Great Britain would be able to say that the only result of a thirty years' alliance was that, if only passively, the British were foisting Jews on the Arab world. The pressure on any Iraqi Government would be so great that the most desperate and dangerous steps would be taken, with disastrous effects on Anglo-Iraqi relations. The situation could not be held, Qadri concluded, unless the British came forward with concrete suggestions which showed that they really were prepared to help the Arabs. The danger to our treaty negotiations, which this situation represents, needs no emphasis and it is evident that this depth of feeling is shared by other Arab leaders.

5. There are a few other items of information which have a bearing on this question. The Transjordan Government is still interested in securing for itself the Arab portion of Palestine and appears to have some hope of doing a deal with the Jews. It does not want troops from other Arab States to pass through its territory, but it may cooperate to some extent with the other members of the Arab League as a result of their recent meeting. At this meeting, according to confidential information received by the British Government, it appears that quotas were agreed upon for the proportion of arms to be supplied by each member. But no decision was reached on the quota of volunteers, the actual number of which it was not felt possible to determine. The activities of the volunteers are to be controlled by Ismail Sawfat, who would be released from the Iraqi Army for this purpose, and there

¹⁰ Iraqi Prime Minister.

¹¹ Nuri as-Said, Iraqi political leader and many times Prime Minister.

are to be local commanders in Palestine. But it was generally agreed that the open use of Arab armies against the Jews, even after the termination of the Mandate, was not practicable at present.

6. The remarks of Riad Sulh, as well as those of Tahsin Qadri, clearly indicate the effect which the Palestine problem may have upon future plans in the Middle East, even though the British Government continue to follow the course already marked out in the statements made by British representatives at Lake Success. They also clearly reveal the great obstacles which will for some time be set in the way of concerted Anglo-American action in the Middle East. It was agreed in the recent talks that Palestine presented special problems. But these Arab reactions again demonstrate that this issue will not only cause a further deterioration in the British position, but may well frustrate all plans for Anglo-American support throughout the area.

7. In the view of the British Government, the situation which is now developing over Palestine thus represents a grave threat to the position of both countries in the Middle East. While the British Government will in no way obstruct the execution of the decisions taken by the United Nations, they intend to do their utmost to preserve their position and influence in that area. In so doing they are working for ends which both Governments have decided, at the highest level, to be in their respective interests. They have already asked the Arab Governments to avoid precipitate action and to restrain their nationals. But counsels of patience should be offered, not to one side, but to both.

8. The British Government are sure that the United States Government realise the dangers to which attention has been drawn. They are sure, too, that the United States Government realise the need for the most careful handling of this most difficult problem and the need for viewing it against the wider international background, if all the efforts which have just been made are not to be in vain. They would therefore be grateful to learn whether the United States Government would be prepared to speak to the Jewish Agency in terms parallel to those of the British representations to the Arabs.¹²

9. It is the hope of the British Government that, as a result of this information, given frankly and in the spirit of the recent talks, the United States Government will share their view that it would be dangerous to underrate Arab resentment. The British Government believe it to be most urgent that, in the common interest of both countries, all possible steps should be taken by the United States Government, not only to reassure the Arabs, but also to persuade the Jews, even though it means the exercise by the latter of considerable restraint, to make good in deeds their words of friendship to the Arabs.

WASHINGTON, 5th January, 1948.

¹² Marginal notation by Loy W. Henderson, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs: "We are doing so on every appropriate occasion."

501.BB Palestine/1-648

*Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Fraser Wilkins of the Division
of Near Eastern Affairs*

RESTRICTED

[WASHINGTON,] January 6, 1948.

Participants: Mr. Epstein, Jewish Agency ¹
Mr. Eban, Jewish Agency
Mr. Henderson, NEA
Mr. Rusk, SPA ²
Mr. Merriam, NE ³
Mr. Wilkins, NE

Mr. Epstein and Mr. Eban called on Mr. Henderson, Mr. Rusk and Mr. Merriam separately today for the purpose of reporting current developments with regard to Palestine and eliciting the further support of the United States Government in implementation of the recent UN recommendation to partition Palestine.

Mr. Eban said that he had accompanied UNSCOP during its investigation last summer and that more recently had been acting as a liaison officer for the Jewish Agency with the UN in New York. Mr. Eban pointed out that the Jewish Agency was particularly concerned with two aspects of the UN recommendation at the present time: (1) immigration; (2) security. Mr. Eban said that the Jewish Agency hoped that the British authorities would be able to provide a seaport by February 1 ⁴ in order that immigration might commence at once but that unless the UN Commission was able successfully to negotiate with British authorities, it did not appear that immigration would take place as soon as hoped.

With regard to security, Mr. Eban expressed the view that two matters might be considered under this heading: (1) action by the Security Council; (2) action by the militia authorized in the UN recommendation. With regard to the first, Mr. Eban recalled that the American representatives at the UN had remarked during recent UN consideration of the Palestine problem that the U.S. would play its part. For this reason, Major Eban hoped that the United States would support such action relating to security as the Security Council might deem it appropriate to take. Mr. Eban said that he understood the

¹ Eliahu Epstein, Director of the Washington Office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

² Dean Rusk, Director of the Office of Special Political Affairs.

³ Gordon P. Merriam, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs.

⁴ The partition resolution of the General Assembly had provided that "The mandatory Power shall use its best endeavours to ensure that an area situated in the territory of the Jewish State, including a seaport and hinterland adequate to provide facilities for a substantial immigration, shall be evacuated at the earliest possible date and in any event not later than 1 February 1948." (Appendix, p. 1711.)

Syrian representative and the Polish representative on the Security Council might raise the Palestine question as a threat to international peace and security and observed that this might be appropriate time for the U.S. Government to make known its views. With regard to militia forces in each of the proposed states in Palestine, Mr. Eban said that he hoped that the members of the UN including the United States would be in a position to arm and equip these forces. Major Eban said that at the present time, the Haganah, which would be the armed militia in the proposed Jewish State, was adequately manned but poorly equipped and that it was essential that supplies be obtained.

Mr. Eban expressed the view that current newspaper reports and information being received from Palestine indicated that the Arabs hoped the UN recommendation to partition Palestine would not be implemented and that the Jews feared no action would be taken to put it into effect. Mr. Eban thought that this basic approach to the problem on the part of the Arabs and Jews was one of the major factors in the present situation and expressed the belief that strong support by the U.S. for partition in the Security Council and the provision of equipment for the Jewish militia would indicate American determination and would thus have a stabilizing effect on the situation in Palestine.

Mr. Henderson said that he had been following recent developments in Palestine closely and was very much concerned with the type of incidents which were now taking place in Palestine. Mr. Henderson recalled the recent attack at the Consolidated Refinery in Haifa in which Jews bombed Arabs and Arabs in reprisal killed some 30 to 40 Jews in spite of the fact that both Jews and Arabs had worked in harmony previously. Mr. Henderson pointed out that a continuation of terroristic activities which resulted in the killing of innocent people would have a brutalizing effect and would cause many to have serious doubts as to whether either the Arabs or the Jews were sufficiently mature to govern themselves. Mr. Henderson asked Mr. Epstein and Mr. Eban whether they thought the issuance of a statement by the UN or possibly by the US deploring such activities and pointing out the inevitable consequences would have a salutary effect. Both Mr. Epstein and Mr. Eban were of the opinion that the issuance of a statement of this type would be helpful and said that, as far as the Jews were concerned, they were making every effort to conduct themselves with restraint. Mr. Epstein stressed the fact that the Jews were desirous of acting in accordance with the UN recommendation and hoped that the UN would support their activities.

Mr. Rusk remarked in reply to Mr. Eban's statements regarding immigration and security that he believed the establishment of a *modus vivendi* between the Jews and the Arabs was the most important question for consideration at this time since all other matters

were of necessity corollary to it. Mr. Eban said that he agreed but that it was essential that actual steps be taken regarding the commencement of immigration and the establishment of security forces in advance of the departure of the British from Palestine. Mr. Rusk said he understood the members of the UN Commission had now been appointed and that it would meet on January 9 or 10, and that he hoped that the Jews would shortly initiate conversation with the Commission, the British authorities and the Arabs. Mr. Rusk said the successful implementation of the UN recommendation hinged on the working out of details with these three groups. Mr. Rusk said that he stressed this aspect of the situation because he believed that Mr. Epstein and Mr. Eban were well aware of the many legal difficulties attendant on further consideration of the Palestine problem in the Security Council. Mr. Rusk said that, for this reason, it was extremely important that both the Jews and the Arabs should attempt to settle the problems with regard to Palestine as well as they could by themselves and should only fall back on UN action as a last resort.

Mr. Epstein and Mr. Eban expressed their appreciation for the various views expressed and said that Mr. Shertok⁵ was returning to the US from Palestine via London toward the end of this week and that he would undoubtedly call at the Department for the purpose of presenting further information with regard to current developments in Palestine.

⁵ Moshe Shertok, Head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency.

867N.01/1-748: Telegram

The Ambassador in Egypt (Tuck) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

CAIRO, January 7, 1948—1 p. m.

21. Was received in audience by King¹ yesterday afternoon and with help of carefully prepared notes conveyed to him informally and orally purport your confidential verbatim telegram 1695 of December 26, 5 p. m.²

Farouk listened attentively to points as I developed them and then, with reference to expressed hope that Egypt would set example in restraint, stated there was nothing that he could do, even if he wanted to, to prevail upon other Arab states to curb their proposed action or to influence their attitude. Arab countries, he said, had made firm decision and they intended to carry it out. He added that tenor of my remarks reminded him strangely [*strongly?*] of what late President Roosevelt had said to him on same subject at time of their meeting on

¹ King Farouk of Egypt.

² *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, p. 1319.

canal in 1945.³ He qualified my remarks as "very optimistic" as to the future particularly in connection with the expressed belief that acquiescence on part of Arab states in UNGA decision on Palestine would remove that area as disturbing influence in international affairs.

He showed interest in the reasons given for US Government support of partition and in assurance that no undue pressure was brought upon other countries by US governmental officials responsible to executive. This latter assurance, he added, was contrary to reliable information which he had previously obtained.

I am forced to the conclusion that our arguments failed to convince him and have in no way changed his views.⁴

TUCK

³ For documentation on the conversations between President Roosevelt and the monarchs of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Saudi Arabia at Great Bitter Lake, Egypt, in February 1945, see *Foreign Relations*, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1 ff.

⁴ On January 12, Prince Faisal, the Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs, handed to Minister Childs a message to the United States Government from King Abdūl Aziz ibn Saud. He then stated that "His Majesty believes US policy prejudicial both Arabs and US and against their mutual interests. His Majesty sincerely desires maintain existing friendly relations between Saudi Arabian Government and US Government and this motive had inspired His Majesty to communicate once again with his friends and endeavor further to persuade the US Government to reconsider its position in this question, in hope US Government would attentively listen to its sincere friend." (Telegram 14, January 13, noon, from Jidda, 501.BB Palestine/1-1348)

The King's message, in the form of an undated memorandum, was transmitted by Jidda in telegram 15, January 13, 3 p. m., not printed.

Editorial Note

The United Nations Palestine Commission, established under the General Assembly resolution of November 29, 1947, consisted of representatives of Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Panama, and the Philippines, with Karel Lisicky of Czechoslovakia serving as Chairman and Ralph J. Bunche of the United States as Secretary. The Commission held its first meeting on January 9, 1948, and unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the Secretary-General of the United Nations to invite the Mandatory Power, the Arab Higher Committee, and the Jewish Agency to designate representatives who would provide the Commission with authoritative information and other assistance.

The Secretary-General, the same day, transmitted such invitations. They were promptly accepted by the United Kingdom and the Jewish Agency, which designated Sir Alexander Cadogan, British Representative at the United Nations, and Moshe Shertok, respectively, as their representatives. The Arab Higher Committee, on January 19, telegraphically rejected the invitation, stating that it was "determined persist in rejection partition and in refusal recognize UNO resolution this respect and anything deriving therefrom." (United Nations,

Official Records of the Security Council, Third Year, Special Supplement No. 2, hereinafter cited as SC, 3rd yr., Special Suppl. No. 2, pages 1, 2)

501.BB Palestine/1-1448

Memorandum by Mr. Robert M. McClintock¹ to the Director of the Office of Special Political Affairs (Rusk)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 14, 1948.

Subject: The Problem of Enforcing Partition in Palestine.

The United States will presently be faced with a choice between two courses of policy consequent upon its decision to favor the partition of Palestine. One course is to support enforcement measures by the Security Council of the United Nations; the other is to support exclusive reliance on the Jewish and Arab militia which are to be established under the terms of the Assembly's resolution on Palestine adopted November 29, 1947.

The adoption of either of these alternative policies will involve injury to the interests of the United States in greater or lesser degree and to the United Nations in greater or lesser degree. It is a question then of sober judgment on balance which policy will most greatly injure the interests of the United States. In an endeavor to analyze this problem I have worked out the following rough outline and have come forth with a suggested line of policy which falls far short of being satisfactory by any other standard than the fact that no line of policy applied to the present Palestine problem can prove satisfactory.

TWO COURSES

[Here follows outline of two courses.]

III—Possible US policy.

1. Refusal to agree to SC enforcement measures.
2. Stress GA recommendation that Jewish and Arab militia provide security forces in Palestine.
3. Inform Arabs that unless they cease hostilities we shall end arms embargo and permit recruitment, by Jewish militia only.
4. Inform Arabs that if they keep the peace we shall not, as a Government, provide Jewish State with more than strictly limited financial assistance.
5. Inform Jews that unless they keep the peace we shall deny them all hope of relaxing arms embargo and of economic or financial aid.
6. Seek creation by foregoing measures of an uneasy but actual local balance of power which will give the Palestine partition experiment a fair chance of being tried.

¹ Special Assistant to Mr. Rusk.

Editorial Note

According to Dan Kurzman's *Genesis 1948: The First Arab-Israeli War* (New York, World Publishing Company, 1970), page 84, a "legal conference" was held early in January 1948 in Mr. Dean Rusk's office to consider whether the United Nations was empowered to enforce the partition resolution of November 29, 1947. The conference was said to have been attended by Department of State officers and a panel comprising Messrs. Alger Hiss, Joseph Johnson, and Leo Pasvolsky, all of whom had previously filled positions of responsibility in the Department. Mr. Kurzman asserts that the unanimous opinion of the panel was that the United Nations could not legally enforce the partition resolution as such but that it could use force against the Arabs should they sabotage partition by committing a breach of the peace.

Mr. Kurzman states that, as an aftermath of the meeting, Mr. McClintock sent a telegram to Ambassador Warren R. Austin, United States Representative at the United Nations, instructing him to call for a special session of the General Assembly to deal with the Palestine problem on the grounds that partition could not be legally enforced. The Editors have been unable to find in the files of the Department of State any documentary record to substantiate this account of events.

*News Conference of President Truman on January 15, 1948*¹

[Extracts]

Q. Mr. President, do you think, in view of the Palestine situation, that American troops might be sent to Palestine?

The President. I do not. I have no further comment to make on that. Probably in the long run we will have an international police force with the United Nations plan, to which all of us are working.

Q. Mr. President, could we go back to the question of Palestine? Do you mean in the long run there would be an international police force in Palestine?

The President. Not necessarily. Wherever it is necessary for the United Nations to use it and enforce its mandates.

¹ Reprinted from *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1948* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 101.

Editorial Note

The Legal Adviser (Gross), in a memorandum of January 15, to Mr. Rusk, commented on a recommendation drafted by Mr. Rusk for the Under Secretary. The editors are unable to find Mr. Rusk's recommendation in the Department of State files. Mr. Gross' memorandum, however, summarized the recommendation as follows: "In your draft memorandum the problem was considered of what position the United States should take in the Security Council of the United Nations in the event that a member of the Council should move 'to request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of the action recently recommended by the General Assembly with respect to Palestine. The memorandum recommended that the United States should support such a motion.'"

After analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the recommendation, the Legal Adviser concluded:

"(a) The United States should not *support* a motion in Security Council to refer any question on Palestine to the International Court;

"(b) The United States should oppose reference to the Court of *any* question on Palestine as a pre-condition to action by the Security Council in carrying out its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security; the United States should be prepared to vote against a reference under such circumstances, after consultation with other Security Council members to ascertain that such negative vote would not constitute a unilateral United States veto;

"(c) The United States should oppose reference to the Court, by the Security Council, of any question not pertinent to a matter before the Council (e.g., the general question whether the General Assembly had power to recommend a Palestine solution that did not have the consent of the inhabitants of Palestine); again, the United States should be prepared to vote against such a reference provided the negative vote did not result in a unilateral United States veto;

"(d) In other cases of a motion in the Security Council to refer questions on Palestine to the Court the United States should not support a reference and should abstain from voting." (501.BB Palestine/1-1548)

867N.01/1-1648: Telegram

The Consul General at Jerusalem (Macatee) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

JERUSALEM, January 16, 1948—6 p. m.

62. Emile Ghory of AHE, just returned from Cairo meeting with Mufti, informed official ConGen following:

1. General national administration for whole Palestine will be established by Arabs on day British terminate mandate. Administration now being organized on basis Cairo press communique 5 January.

2. Believes Abdullah¹ regardless private thoughts must accept Palestine Arab administration although admits possibility various parts Palestine may be annexed to bordering states. The line is that unimportant who takes over Palestine provided Palestine remains Arab. Preference is for unified Palestine state.

[Here follow Mr. Ghory's further thoughts, including the observations that Arab attacks on Jewish settlements were "for demonstration, training and probing purposes" and that "Arms arriving increasing rate and young Arabs undergoing rigid training."]

MACATEE

¹ King of Transjordan.

501.BB Palestine/1-1948: Telegram

The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

NEW YORK, January 19, 1948—1 p. m.

67. Palestine Commission report to SC on February 1 will probably charge UK with failure to observe provisions of GA resolution for progressive withdrawal, and assert that under the conditions laid down by the British the Commission cannot proceed to Palestine, Bunche, Secretary of Commission, said in conversation with member of USUN.

Cadogan's recent statement to the Commission set forth an exact time table for British withdrawal. Informed Commission it could arrive in Palestine only two weeks before the British departure with all British Civil Service personnel. No British subjects would be seconded to the Arab or Jewish Governments and any British member of the Palestine Administrative Service accepting employment with new states would forfeit all pension rights. UK held that to allow British nationals to serve with new states would violate neutrality. Commission was bluntly warned that it must plan to recruit a civil administration ready to take over when British left. Asked how that could be done in two weeks. Cadogan said he did not know. (mytel 59, January 17¹). Bunche observed that "sheepishness" of Cadogan was greatest in answering that question.

Bunche believes that it will be impossible to govern Palestine unless some experienced top-level British administrators can continue with both new states. Utilities, railroads and other essential services have mixed Arab and Jewish staffs, and few executives and supervisory personnel are available to replace top British civil servants.

The Secretariat is preparing questions for Cadogan to answer at a later session. Bunche says questions will be very sharp and designed to smoke out British implication that they will not cooperate with the

¹ Not printed.

Commission in any way. Answers to questions will determine tone and content of February 1 report to SC.

[Here follow six paragraphs dealing with such matters as the relations among the Commission, top Secretariat officers and British specialists on Palestine, and compensation to be paid to Commission members.]

Bunche is a close friend of long standing of USUN officer to whom foregoing told. He has never appeared more upset or more concerned about a problem. He will draft the Commission's February 1 report to SC. He considers the British position indefensible, that Commission cannot operate under present British plans and would be better advised to refuse to leave New York now than to attempt to implement GA decision under impossible conditions. He has every intention of urging Commission to expose British position in SC and demand that showdown take place in New York before departure. He believes that Commission shares his view. He wryly remarked that he hoped that Department was actively formulating position for first week in February discussion in SC although he had gained impression US had false sense of security as regards its responsibilities in Palestine.²

AUSTIN

² Ambassador Austin, on January 27, reported information from Mr. Bunche that the Palestine Commission report would not draw conclusions or make charges. The Ambassador advised that "Despite previous indications that the report would severely criticize the British attitude, the commission feels that the British should have an opportunity to answer the questions recently put to Cadogan before any judgment is passed. Cadogan has said that some of the answers had to be cleared at Cabinet level, and certain material gathered in Palestine. Following receipt of these answers, the commission will send a special, confidential report to the SC on the Palestine security problem.

"However, the February 1 report will point out that it is impossible to meet the April 1 deadline for the establishment of provisional governments because the UK will not allow the commission to arrive in Palestine until two weeks before the British leave." (Telegram 97 from New York, 501.BB Palestine/1-2748)

PPS Files, Lot 64 D 563, Near and Middle East, 1947-1948

*Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan)
to the Secretary of State*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 20, 1948.

PPS/19

On November 25, 1947 the National Security Council received a report from the Secretary of the Army on the problem of Palestine with the request that it be considered by the National Security Council.²

At the meeting of the Consultants of the National Security Council on December 12, 1947,² it was agreed that the State Department should

¹ Addressed also to Under Secretary of State Lovett.

² See editorial note, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1283.

prepare, on a priority basis, the initial draft of a National Security Council report on the position of the United States with respect to Palestine, taking into consideration U.S. security interests in the Mediterranean and Near East areas and the recommendation of the UN General Assembly on the partition of Palestine.

I attach a paper ³ prepared in the Policy Planning Staff in response to the above request.

This paper has been prepared in close collaboration with Mr. Henderson, and has his general approval. The tenor of the recommendations has also been discussed at length with Mr. Rusk, who has voiced no objection to their presentation by the Staff but has not seen the final draft or committed himself to it.

We have not thought it wise to attempt to draw outside consultants into the preparation of this paper; but it has been seen by Ambassador Grady ⁴ and has his general approval. You may recall that Ambassador Grady was alternate to Secretary of State Byrnes on the President's Cabinet Committee on Palestine.

I recommend that the paper be approved as the Department's initial position for further discussion in the National Security Council.

GEORGE F. KENNAN

[Annex]

*Report by the Policy Planning Staff on Position of the United States
With Respect to Palestine* ⁵

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 19, 1948.

PPS/19

The Problem: 1. To assess and appraise the position of the U.S. with respect to Palestine, taking into consideration the security interests of the U.S. in the Mediterranean and Near East areas, and in the light of the recommendation of the General Assembly of the United Nations regarding the partition of Palestine.

Analysis

2. Palestine occupies a geographic position of great strategic significance to the U.S. It is important for the control of the eastern end of the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal. It is an outlet for the

³ *Infra.*

⁴ Henry F. Grady, Ambassador to India. In June 1946, he had been appointed alternate for the Secretary of State on the Cabinet Committee on Palestine and Related Problems; see footnote 78, *Foreign Relations*, 1946, vol. VII, p. 631.

⁵ A marginal notation of February 19, 1948, indicates that this paper was returned to the Policy Planning Staff with a note from Secretary Marshall that he had "personally outlined my position on this Palestine matter to Mr. Lovett. He can therefore act for me." The editors have found no record of the Secretary's position as outlined to Mr. Lovett.

oil of the Middle East; which, in turn, is important to U.S. security. Finally, it is the center of a number of major political cross-currents; and events in Palestine cannot help being reflected in a number of directions. For these reasons, and particularly in view of the Soviet pressure against the periphery of that area, and Soviet infiltration into the area, it is important that political, economic, and social stability be maintained there.

Because of the present irreconcilable differences between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, great danger exists that the area may become the source of serious unrest and instability which could be readily exploited by the USSR unless a workable solution can be developed.

3. The UN General Assembly on November 29, 1947, recommended the partition of Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish sovereign states, substantially as proposed by the majority report of the UN Special Committee on Palestine. The partition plan provides for an economic union of the two states, administered by a Joint Economic Board, and for the city of Jerusalem to be placed under international trusteeship. The mandate for Palestine would be terminated by August 1, 1948 and the newly created states and special regime for Jerusalem would come into existence by October 1, 1948. Provision was made for a five-member UN Commission to take over progressively the administration of Palestine and to establish Provisional Councils in each new state.

4. The boundaries of the proposed new Arab and Jewish states do not satisfy Zionist aspirations from either the political or the economic viewpoint, and the whole plan of partition with economic union is totally unacceptable to the Arabs. Although frequent reference has been made to "sacrifices" accepted in the interest of compromise, the partition plan was strongly supported by the Jewish Agency for Palestine and by various Zionist organizations favoring the establishment of a sovereign Jewish political state in Palestine. It did not, however, have the support of the Irgun, the Revisionists or the Stern gang (the so-called leftist groups), whose influence among the Jews of Palestine appears to be increasing.

5. The Arabs of Palestine and the Arab states have uniformly and consistently maintained their unequivocal opposition to any form of partition. The Arabs of Palestine have indicated their determination not to establish a separate government in the Arab area of Palestine designated by the UN, and to boycott all activities of the UN Commission charged with the transfer of authority from the British to the new Arab and Jewish states. Even if partition were economically feasible, the Arab attitude alone renders it improbable that any economic union could be effected between the two new states.

The General Assembly, in adopting the recommendation for partition, left unanswered certain questions regarding the legality of the plan as well as the means for its implementation. Nor did the General Assembly, in the circumstances prevailing at the time, have an opportunity to explore the last minute announcement by the Arab States on November 29 of their willingness to accept the principle of a Federal State in Palestine⁶ which they had previously opposed. There was no indication of any real effort by the UN toward conciliation between the Jews and the Arabs.

6. The U.S. and USSR played leading roles in bringing about a vote favorable to partition. Without U.S. leadership and the pressures which developed during UN consideration of the question, the necessary two-thirds majority in the General Assembly could not have been obtained. From this there has grown a belief that the United States has a heavy responsibility for seeing that partition works. It has been shown that various unauthorized U.S. nationals and organizations, including members of Congress, notably in the closing days of the Assembly, brought pressure to bear on various foreign delegates and their respective home governments to induce them to support the U.S. attitude on the Palestine question. Evidence to this effect is attached under Tab A.⁷

7. The decision of the U.S. Government to support the UN Special Committee's majority plan was based primarily on the view, expressed to the GA by Secretary Marshall on September 18 [17], 1947, that "great weight" should be accorded the majority opinion of a UN Committee.⁸

8. Strong nationalistic and religious feelings were aroused throughout the Arab world as a result of the UN recommendation on Palestine. Widespread rioting has followed. In Palestine, the outbreaks have consisted of armed clashes between Arabs and Jews; in certain of the Arab states, there have been attacks on Jewish quarters and demonstrations directed primarily against the U.S. These manifestations of popular feeling have not so far represented organized Arab resistance to partition, although a "jihad" (holy war) against the Jews of Palestine has been proclaimed by Moslem leaders in most of the Arab states and has been joined by Christian leaders in Syria.

9. As British forces are progressively withdrawn from Palestine and as steps are taken with a view to implementing the UN decision, organized large scale opposition by the Arabs is to be expected. Irregular military units are now being organized in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia to fight in Palestine. There are strong

⁶ See telegram 1274, December 1, 1947, from New York, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1293.

⁷ Not printed; for documentation on the subject of these pressures, see *ibid.*, pp. 999 ff.

⁸ See statement by the Secretary of State, *ibid.*, p. 1151.

indications that at an appropriate moment at least some of these units will move into the Arab portion of Palestine as defined by the UN. That these forces will come into violent conflict with the Haganah or other Jewish military bodies operating from the Jewish state is probable.

10. In order to protect themselves and to secure the establishment of a Jewish state, Zionist representatives will seek armed support from the U.S., for without substantial external assistance the proposed Jewish state cannot be established or exist. This may take the form of an attempt (a) to obtain money, arms and volunteers in the U.S. and/or (b) to induce the U.S. Government to assist in organizing an international armed force under the UN to enforce partition.

11. The UN decision did not provide for outside armed forces to impose the partition scheme, either in maintaining law and order in the two new states or in affording protection to the five-member UN Commission which is to implement the decision. The UN Commission is almost certain to meet with armed Arab opposition in seeking to discharge its functions. Palestine police authorities have declined to assume responsibility for its safety outside of Tel-Aviv. There can be no assurance that in the present and foreseeable circumstances, local security forces will be able to maintain law and order; rather may their failure to do so be confidently predicted.

12. The U.S. has suspended authorization for the export of arms, ammunition and other war material intended for use in Palestine or in neighboring countries.⁹ If we resist pressure by the Zionists to alter this position, the question then arises whether we should send troops to Palestine as part of an international force under the UN. It may be assumed that the Soviet Union would, in certain circumstances, be prepared to contribute troops to such an international force. If the USSR should do so, it would be awkward for the U.S. to decline to take similar action. If Soviet troops are sent to Palestine, further opportunities would be provided for the exercise of Russian influence in the whole Near Eastern area.

13. U.S. support of partition has already brought about loss of U.S. prestige and disillusionment among the Arabs and other neighboring peoples as to U.S. objectives and ideals. U.S. support of the principles of self-determination was a basic factor in the creation of the Arab states out of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. U.S. officials, missionaries, and educational institutions in the Near East have built successfully on this foundation, and U.S. businessmen have reaped the benefit of the widespread belief that the U.S. had no political motives in the area inimical to Arab welfare.

⁹ See telegram Telmar 42, December 6, 1947, to London, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1300.

14. The position of Saudi Arabia in the Palestine question is of particular importance. King Ibn Saud values the friendship between his country and the U.S. and recognizes the significant financial aid to Saudi Arabia derived from oil royalties. He is reluctant to sever political and economic ties with the U.S. Nevertheless, he is under strong pressure from other Arab states to break with the U.S. Prince Faisal, his son and Foreign Minister, departed for Saudi Arabia from the UN General Assembly in a bitterly anti-American mood and may give strength to a faction of less moderate elements which will force the King's hand. Important U.S. oil concessions and air base rights will be at stake in the event that an actively hostile Government should come into power in Saudi Arabia.

15. In view of the evident determination of the Arabs to resist partition with all the means at their disposal, it may be anticipated that, if an attempt is made to carry out the UN decision (with or without U.S. assistance), the more moderate and intellectual leaders of the Arab states, most of whom have ties with the west, will be swept out of power by irresponsible elements. Leaders such as Azzam Pasha, Secretary General of the Arab League, would be displaced by extremists such as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. Hatred of the Zionists or of those identified with Zionism might be extended to include all westerners in direct proportion to the latter's support of Zionist armies in general and of partition in particular.

16. Any assistance the U.S. might give to the enforcement of partition would result in deep-seated antagonism for the U.S. in many sections of the Moslem world over a period of many years and would lay us open to one or more of the following consequences:

(a) Suspension or cancellation of valuable U.S. air base rights and commercial concessions, cessation of U.S. oil pipeline construction, and drastic curtailment of U.S. trade with that area.

(b) Loss of our present access to the air, military and naval facilities enjoyed by the British in the area, with attendant repercussions on our overall strategic position in the Middle East and Mediterranean.

(c) Closing or boycotting of U.S. educational, religious and philanthropic institutions in the Near East, such as the American University at Beirut established in 1866 and the American University at Cairo.

(d) Possible deaths, injuries and damages arising from acts of violence against individual U.S. citizens and interests established in the area. Official assurances of the Arab Governments to afford protection to U.S. interests could not be relied on because of the intensity of popular feeling.

(e) A serious threat to the success of the Marshall Plan. The present oil production of the Middle East fields is approximately 800,000 barrels a day. To meet Marshall Plan requirements, production must be raised to about 2,000,000 barrels a day, since no oil for Europe for this purpose could be provided from the U.S., from Venezuela, or

from the Far East. Before the current disturbances, U.S. oil companies had made plans for the required development in the Middle East, with which it will be impossible to proceed if the present situation continues.

17. The USSR stands to gain by the partition plan if it should be implemented by force because of the opportunity thus afforded to the Russians to assist in "maintaining order" in Palestine. If Soviet forces should be introduced into Palestine for the purpose of implementing partition, Communist agents would have an excellent base from which to extend their subversive activities, to disseminate propaganda, and to attempt to replace the present Arab governments by "democratic peoples' governments". The presence of Soviet forces in Palestine would constitute an outflanking of our positions in Greece, Turkey and Iran, and a potential threat to the stability of the entire Eastern Mediterranean area.

18. It is not certain, however, that the USSR would choose to send its forces into Palestine. To do so would be to place those forces in an exposed position, far from a base of supply, and without suitable lines of communication. Rather than risk the enmity of the Arab world by such action, the Soviet Union might prefer to have U.S. forces bear the brunt of enforcement and incur the odium of the local population and Moslems everywhere as a result.

19. Other choices are open to the USSR besides the furnishing of troops. Evidence is accumulating that the USSR may be covertly or indirectly supplying arms not only to the Jews but to the Arabs, thus aggravating the friction in the Near East. From the Soviet viewpoint, it might be preferable to exploit in this manner the explosive character of the situation created by partition rather than to enter the area in a military sense.

Whether or not Soviet forces should assist in implementing partition, the UN decision is favorable to Soviet objectives of sowing dissonance and discord in non-communist countries. The partition of Palestine might afford the USSR a pretext on the basis of "self-determination of minorities" to encourage the partition of areas in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Greece, with a view to setting up separate [Kurdish?] Azerbaijani, Armenian and Macedonian states enjoying the support of the USSR.

All in all, there is no way of telling in exactly what manner the USSR will attempt to turn partition to its advantage. It must be assumed, however, that Moscow will actively endeavor to find some means of exploiting the opportunity.

20. Various other factors would enter into the situation if an attempt is made to enforce the UN recommendation. The foregoing is intended merely to suggest the principal elements in the problem. So numerous would be the ramifications of mounting Arab ill will, of

opening the door to Soviet political or military penetration, and of generally chaotic conditions in Palestine and neighboring countries that the whole structure of peace and security in the Near East and Mediterranean would be directly or indirectly affected with results impossible to predict at this stage in detail but certainly injurious to U.S. interests.

Conclusions

21. As a result of U.S. sponsorship of UN action leading to the recommendation to partition Palestine, U.S. prestige in the Moslem world has suffered a severe blow and U.S. strategic interests in the Mediterranean and Near East have been seriously prejudiced. Our vital interests in those areas will continue to be adversely affected to the extent that we continue to support partition.

22. The original U.S. premise in supporting the partition of Palestine was founded on the belief that, with certain modifications in the majority proposals of the UN Special Committee on Palestine, a just and workable plan could be devised immediately which would receive broad international support, provided always that there was cooperation between the parties concerned. A study of the present plan raises serious doubts as to its workability because of the artificial and arbitrary political subdivision of a complicated economic area. Events have demonstrated that the Arab inhabitants of Palestine will not cooperate even to endeavor to make the partition plan work. Therefore, one of the major premises on which we originally supported partition has proved invalid.

23. The United States should not send armed forces to Palestine, either on a volunteer or contingent basis, for the following reasons: (a) This would represent a political or military commitment of which the dimensions, both in time and space, cannot be calculated or foreseen and which might carry us into actions of a major character, out of all proportion to the foreign policy objectives involved; and (b) to do so would invite the possibility of the movement of Soviet armed forces to the strategic Near Eastern and Mediterranean area. For similar reasons, the U.S. should oppose the sending of armed forces of any nationality to Palestine.

24. While the governments in Arab countries have partially succeeded in restraining demonstrations against the Jews within their borders, in the case of open conflict major massacres of Jews in Moslem countries would seem to be inevitable, despite efforts of the governments of those countries to control popular feeling. Moreover, a basis would be provided for anti-Jewish agitation in other parts of the world. The process of assimilation or integration of the individual Jew in the life of the country of which he is a citizen, which has been strongly advocated by World Jewry in the past, would be made more

difficult and he would be singled out for attack as an alien political factor. In the U.S., the position of Jews would be gravely undermined as it becomes evident to the public that in supporting a Jewish state in Palestine we were in fact supporting the extreme objectives of political Zionism, to the detriment of overall U.S. security interests.

25. Unless an effort is made to retrieve the situation, the prestige of the UN itself will be at stake because of the notoriety and resentment attendant upon the activities of U.S. pressure groups, including members of Congress, who sought to impose U.S. views as to partition on foreign delegations. Furthermore, the probable abstention by the Arab states from active participation in many UN activities may further weaken the effectiveness of the UN and the U.S. position within the UN, as has Soviet abstention in certain other activities.

26. The U.S. Government should face the fact that the partition of Palestine cannot be implemented without the use of force, and that the U.S. would inevitably be called upon to supply a substantial portion of the money, troops and arms for this purpose. The British have made it clear that they would not accept any role in the enforcement of partition. No other nation except Russia could be expected to participate in such implementation to any appreciable extent.

26a. It must be concluded that the partition of Palestine will not be possible of attainment without outside assistance on a substantial scale. If the U.S. is determined to see the successful establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine (either as proposed or as may be geographically modified because of Arab noncooperation in the proposed economic union), the U.S. must be prepared to grant economic assistance, together with aid to the Jewish authorities through the supply of arms, ammunition and implements of war. Ultimately the U.S. might have to support the Jewish authorities by the use of naval units and military forces. It should be clearly recognized that such assistance given to the Jewish state, but withheld from the Arabs and the Arab States, would in Arab eyes be a virtual declaration of war by the U.S. against the Arab world. It is improbable that the Jewish state could survive over any considerable period of time in the face of the combined assistance which would be forthcoming for the Arabs in Palestine from the Arab States, and in lesser measure from their Moslem neighbors. The preparations now being made for intensive guerrilla warfare by the approximately 400,000 Arabs resident in the proposed new Jewish state are alone giving rise to serious doubt as to whether the Jewish people in Palestine could themselves control the situation.

Recommendations

27. We should take no further initiative in implementing or aiding partition.

28. We should oppose sending armed forces into Palestine by the UN or any member thereof for the purpose of implementing partition. We should also oppose the recruitment of volunteers for this purpose.

29. We should maintain and enforce our embargo on arms to Palestine and neighboring countries.

30. We should endeavor as far as possible to spread responsibility for the future handling of this question, and to divest ourselves of the imputation of international leadership in the search for a solution to this problem.

31. When and if the march of events has conclusively demonstrated that the effort to carry out the partition plan as prescribed by the UN General Assembly offers no reasonable prospect for success without the use of outside armed force, we should then take the position that we have been obliged to conclude that it is impracticable and undesirable for the international community to attempt to enforce any form of partition in the absence of agreement between the parties, and that the matter should go back to the UN General Assembly.

32. Thereafter, our position in the UN should be that we would cooperate loyally in working out and implementing any proposals designed (a) to encourage pacific settlement between the Palestine Arabs and Palestine Jews or (b) to investigate the possibilities of any other suggested solution such as a federal state or trusteeship, which would not require outside armed force for implementation.

33. We should oppose referring to the International Court the question of the UN recommendation on Palestine on the grounds that the fundamental issue, i.e. whether the two communities involved will cooperate to make the partition plan effective, is not a proper question for the Court.¹⁰

¹⁰ According to *The Forrestal Diaries*, edited by Walter Millis (New York, The Viking Press, 1951), p. 360. Mr. Lovett showed PPS/19 to Secretary of Defense Forrestal on January 21. The latter was said to have expressed the view that the United States was not committed to support the partition plan which was unworkable without the use of force; that it was against American interest to supply arms to the Jews while embargoing arms to the Arabs or to accept unilateral responsibility for carrying out the partition plan; and that the United States should attempt to have the plan withdrawn as soon as possible.

501.BB Palestine/1-1948 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)

TOP SECRET
US URGENT

WASHINGTON, January 23, 1948—7 p. m.

27. For Austin from Lovett. We are concerned at probable attitude of SC toward UK when Palestine Commission reports on Feb. 1, in light of your 67 Jan. 19.

On Dec. 3 Ambassador Johnson¹ paraphrased text of Dept.'s 586, Dec. 3, 1 p. m.,² in a telephone conversation with Cadogan and stressed final paragraph this telegram. Please call immediately upon Cadogan recalling this telephone conversation and say that we would feel reassured in the attitude expressed in that telegram if more complete information were available indicating how UK has "furnished utmost facilities by way of advice and continuing cooperation to the Commission from the moment of its creation."

You should frankly ask Cadogan what he has told the Commission and what plans in detail UK has suggested to the Commission. You should recall to Cadogan that in his telephone conversation with Johnson he said that the idea of the Commission going to London was excellent. You may conclude the interview by saying that we are sincerely desirous that the Commission have every opportunity of successfully fulfilling its most arduous task.

LOVETT

¹ Herschel V. Johnson, Acting United States Representative at the United Nations.

² *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v. p. 1297.

890D.00/1-1548

Memorandum Prepared in the Department of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON, undated.¹]

Summary: Reports from the U.S. Mission at Damascus indicate that Syria is the center of recruitment and training of the so-called "irregulars", which are intended for infiltration over the Palestine border and subsequent guerilla work in Palestine. There is evidence that such forces have already proceeded across the border to a considerable extent. National forces do not appear to be directly involved.

(1) *Recruitment.* Active recruiting of "irregulars" under Fawzi Qawuqji has been carried on in Syria. The total recruited by January 1, 1948 was estimated at approximately 16,000, although only a small number actually were receiving instructions and uniforms. (Damascus 436 of Dec. 20, 1947; Damascus 438 of Dec. 21, 1947; Damascus 2 of Jan. 1, 1948.²)

(2) *Training.* Syria appears to be the training center for recruits from Palestine, Egypt and Iraq. The Liberation Army Chief of Staff is reported to be Taha Hashimi and the Field Commander to be Qawuqji. (Damascus 415 of Dec. 11, 1947.³) Two contingents of Iraqi volunteers arrived in Syria for training, totalling 800, and indications

¹ Prepared, presumably, between January 24 and January 26, 1948.

² None printed.

³ Not printed.

are that more will follow. Syria presumably arms them. Supply arrangements were embarrassed by the unexpectedly large number of such volunteers. (Damascus 24 of Jan. 12, 1948; Damascus 39 of Jan. 19, 1948.⁴)

(3) *Infiltration into Palestine.* Sizeable bands of the volunteer "irregulars" have crossed the border from Syria into Palestine. (Damascus 436 of Dec. 20, 1947; Damascus 439 of Dec. 22, 1947; Damascus 453 of Dec. 28, 1947.⁵) It was reported that a prominent Hama deputy, Akram Haurani, led a force into north Palestine in the last week of December. (Damascus 7 of Jan. 3, 1948.⁶) Arabs reportedly dressed in Syrian Army uniforms fell back into Syria following night action about January 9, 1948. (Jerusalem 43 of January 12, 1948—Eight[h] report for Army.) Emir Faour is reported to have stated that an attack of Fadl tribesmen across the Palestine frontier in the second week of January was made "under orders", and [Syrian] Defense Minister Sharabati in a flat statement to American newsmen described the attack as a "screen", under cover of which there is good reason to believe that approximately 600 Syrian-trained, equipped and transported "regular irregulars" moved across the border into Palestine. (Damascus 31 of January 15, 1948.⁶)

(4) Memminger⁷ has suggested that the Department "might consider cautioning the Syrian Government that its participation in recruiting, arming, training, financing and transporting the 'irregulars' to the frontier in Syrian army trucks is contrary to the word and spirit of the U.N. charter and the G.A. U.N. resolution on partition." (Damascus 31 of January 15, 1948.⁶)

⁴ Neither printed.

⁵ None printed.

⁶ Not printed.

⁷ Robert B. Memminger, the Chargé in Syria.

867N.01/2-648

*Memorandum by Mr. Dean Rusk¹ to the Under Secretary of State
(Lovett)*

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 26, 1948.

1. The attached Policy Planning Staff Paper² recommends a reversal of the Palestine policy supported by the United States in the recent General Assembly. A few minor suggestions of detail are contained in Annex A³ which might round out the paper on points of

¹ The name of the Office of Special Political Affairs was changed to the Office of United Nations Affairs on January 21, 1948 (Departmental Announcement 943). Mr. Rusk, however, was not formally designated Director of the new office until January 28.

² PPS/19, January 19, p. 545.

³ Printed on p. 561.

fact, although in general the paper appears to be accurate from the factual point of view.

2. Obviously a major change in our Palestine policy would require the approval of the President as well as of leading Members of Congress. The Planning Staff Paper does not appear to be complete enough to serve as the basis for such reconsideration. Specifically, it would need to deal with the following questions which would inevitably arise at an early stage of any reconsideration:

(a) What events have occurred which create a "new situation" with respect to the action taken by the General Assembly on Palestine? Were not the considerations discussed in the attached paper known at the time of the decision to support the plan of the UNSCOP majority? At what point or points can it be reasonably concluded that the situation in Palestine will render impossible the implementation of the General Assembly resolution?

(b) What has been done thus far by the Department of State, either within or outside the United Nations, to increase the chances of success for the solution approved by us and by the General Assembly?

(c) What steps could now be taken by the Department of State, either within or outside the United Nations, to ensure maximum opportunity for the successful execution of the General Assembly recommendation on Palestine? Are such steps of such a serious character as to require us to reconsider our Palestine policy as being prohibitively costly?

(d) If it is concluded that the recommendations of the General Assembly resolution are unworkable, what alternative solution or solutions should the United States support and what procedures must be followed to bring about a change in our present commitments on Palestine?

3. A "New Situation"? Neither the United States nor the United Nations should consider political recommendations as sacrosanct, to be pursued at all costs despite new or unforeseen conditions or the disappointment of hopes and expectations upon which the initial recommendations were based. On the other hand, the mere revival of earlier objections does not state a "new situation". It is suggested that a reconsideration of the Palestine problem would be justified by a turn of events which either (a) clearly demonstrated the impossibility of continuing further with the present solution, or (b) clearly demonstrated that the costs of proceeding further with present policy are prohibitive and cut across more fundamental policies.

The following are samples of what might be considered a "new situation" with respect to the General Assembly resolution on Palestine:

(a) A refusal by the Mandatory Power to offer the degree of cooperation essential to the success of the plan;

(b) A refusal by the Security Council to accept the responsibilities toward Palestine envisaged for it by the General Assembly resolution

(it is very doubtful that there is a working majority of seven votes in the Council favoring partition);

(c) An advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice that an important part of the Assembly resolution is illegal under the Charter;

(d) A refusal of Member Governments to provide the necessary support for the international regime planned for the City of Jerusalem;

(e) A scale of civil war inside the proposed Jewish state of Palestine which would be clearly beyond the capabilities of the new Jewish Government to handle (there is serious doubt that there is legal authority for the United Nations to impose a recommendation of the General Assembly by force upon the Arab inhabitants of the proposed Jewish state);

(f) A refusal by Member Governments to meet their obligations to prevent aggressive acts by neighboring Arab States designed to frustrate the recommendations of the General Assembly (armed intervention by the Arab States would clearly be aggression).

It is doubtful that events have indicated as yet any "new situation" of the character which would itself justify a basic reconsideration of the Assembly resolution. The most significant approaching date in this regard is April 1, 1948. If by that date there shall not have been established in the proposed Jewish and Arab states the Provisional Councils of Government which, under the resolution, would take over authority from the United Nations Commission, the Security Council is called upon to consider the situation thus created. The importance of this date has been underlined by the British plan to terminate the mandate shortly thereafter, on May 15. It is entirely likely, therefore, that by mid-April the possibilities of proceeding with the execution of the Assembly resolution will be greatly clarified.

4. *Armed Interference with the General Assembly Resolution.* The question of "enforcing" the General Assembly resolution on Palestine must be broken into component parts if the situation is to be accurately assessed. Armed interference in Palestine by the Arab States to prevent the implementation of the Assembly's resolution would clearly be aggression contrary to the obligations of those states under the Charter. If such interference takes the form of furnishing arms and assistance for guerrilla action in Palestine, the character of the aggression is similar to that now going on in Greece. The United States cannot avoid its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council to act within the limits of the Charter to prevent this type of aggression from outside Palestine. There is already considerable evidence that the Arab States are as directly involved in Palestine as are Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria in Greece. The question may shortly be raised in the Security Council whether there does not now exist a threat to the peace or breach of the peace with respect to Palestine.

The "enforcement" of the General Assembly resolution within Palestine itself presents a different problem. Specifically, there is a serious question as to whether the United Nations (or its Members) are entitled to use armed force to carry out a *recommendation* of the General Assembly against the resistance of the people directly concerned (where aggression is not involved). If the resistance of the Arabs of the proposed Jewish state is greater than can be handled by the Jewish state, the Security Council might have to intervene to maintain the peace of the Middle East, but in doing so it would not be bound to carry out the resolution of the General Assembly. It might arrange a truce, pending reconsideration of the matter by the General Assembly.

5. *The Role of the Mandatory Power (United Kingdom)*. The Policy Planning Staff Paper does not go into the present irresponsible attitude of the United Kingdom toward the Palestine question, nor the extent to which United States embarrassment is directly due to the British desire to shift the Palestine problem to the United States and to replace [herself with?] the United States as the leading influence in the Middle East. The United Kingdom placed the question of Palestine before the General Assembly for recommendations but during the course of United Nations consideration it offered no suggestions whatever about the character of an appropriate solution. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom Delegation discouraged the adoption and the implementation of the UNSCOP majority plan by every means not involving acceptance of public responsibility therefor. Although it can be understood that this course of action may have stemmed from the great personal irritation of Mr. Bevin, the result has been to multiply the difficulties for the United States and the United Nations. British noncooperation amounts to a rejection of the Assembly resolution and there should be no hesitation on our part in stating that this is the case. If a reconsideration of the Palestine question is taken up by the United Nations, one of our objectives might well be to turn back to the United Kingdom the responsibility which they have sought to saddle upon the United States.

6. *Measures Designed to Increase the Chances for Success of the Partition Plan*. In assessing our present Palestine policy, it would appear to be obligatory upon the Department of State to determine what steps could be taken to support the General Assembly resolution, if for no other reason than to understand its cost and the procedural problems involved. These comments do not purport to deal adequately with measures of support, since intensive study by all interested elements of the Department would be required. However, it is believed

that some or all of the following measures would be normal action to support an important United States policy:

(a) *Bilateral Talks with the United Kingdom.* Such talks should attempt to uncover the elements of the Assembly resolution to which the British object, their purpose in placing the matter before the United Nations, their idea of a solution with which they would be willing to cooperate, and their attitude toward joint diplomatic action to obtain the cooperation of the Arab States.

(b) *Multilateral Diplomatic Talks.* As the threat of violence in Palestine persists, consideration might be given to consultations with the permanent members of the Security Council, with other Members who voted for the Assembly resolution, and with more moderate Moslem governments such as Turkey and Pakistan directed toward diplomatic pressures upon the Arab States to persuade the Arabs not to use their influence to frustrate the Assembly resolution.

(c) *Action by the Security Council.* If evidence continues to build up and Arab officials are assisting in armed resistance to the Assembly resolution, the Security Council may be required to use such powers as it has under the Charter to bring such aggression to a close.

(d) *Active United States Participation in the Establishment of the International Territory of Jerusalem.* It will be difficult for the United States to avoid a substantial share of responsibility for the international territory of Jerusalem. The idea that the "United Nations" might undertake such a responsibility, separate and apart from its Members, is quite unrealistic. Under the Assembly resolution, it will be necessary for the United States to assist in providing necessary security in Jerusalem, whether by United States units within an international force or by United States volunteers in the constabulary employed by the Government of Jerusalem.

(e) *Exploitation of Differences of View Among the Arabs.* There is considerable evidence that the Arabs are not of a single mind about the right line of action on Palestine. Important differences are known to exist among the several Arab Governments. Greater attention might be given to the possibilities of turning Arab differences into a "hands-off" attitude on their part toward Palestine.

7. *Alternative Lines of Action.* In considering lines of action alternative to the present partition scheme, it must be realized that partition will be strongly opposed by the Arabs, that the conversion of Palestine into an Arab-dominated state would be violently opposed by the Jews, and that if no solution is reached the British would withdraw and large-scale fighting would likely occur in Palestine. In light of the above, consideration should be given to the following alternative lines of action if the matter is opened again in the United Nations:

(a) General Assembly to call upon the United Kingdom to consult with the Arabs and the Jews in the light of the unanimous recommendations of UNSCOP and to seek a solution agreeable to both parties.

(b) Establishment of a United Nations trusteeship for the whole of Palestine, with the United States taking its fair share of the fiscal and security responsibility for the trust territory.

8. *United States Responsibility.* The United States will not be able to avoid responsibility for a Palestine solution. A completely hands-off policy (even if politically possible from the domestic point of view), coupled with British determination to withdraw from Palestine, would leave Palestine in a state of violence which would inevitably come before the Security Council. If we shirk our responsibility as a member of the Council, having declined to take an active part in the settlement of the Palestine question, we would be subject to a loss of prestige from which we could not readily recover. Unless the present partition plan is reconsidered, the United States already has substantial obligations under it. If an alternative plan is considered, it would be frivolous not to suppose that the United States must play a leading role in the execution of such alternative.

Annex A

NOTES ON PPS/19

*Page 3, paragraph 1.*⁴ A reference to the last-minute move by the Arab States to propose a federal state should take into account the boycott of UNSCOP by the Arab Higher Committee, the boycott of the partition subcommittee of the General Assembly by the Arabs, and the fact that the proposal on November 29 was considered by most Delegations as more favorable to the Arab point of view than even the minority report of UNSCOP. The proposal of November 29 was made by the Representative of Lebanon but was not based upon consultations with the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency, which would have been prerequisite to a genuine conciliatory move.

Page 3, last half of paragraph 5; page 4, paragraph 9. The problem of aggression by the Arab States needs further consideration at this point.

Page 10, paragraph 22. It is doubtful that the basis for American support of the majority plan can be reduced to the point developed in this paragraph. Many other factors were also involved. Further, American support for the majority report was not made contingent upon the cooperation of the parties concerned.

Page 13, paragraph 30. The only practicable way by which we can "divest ourselves" of leadership in the Palestine problem is to place responsibility fully and squarely upon the British. This does not arise out of our membership in the United Nations but from the policies pursued by the United States toward Palestine since World War I.

⁴ The latter half of paragraph 5 of PPS/19, p. 548.

Page 14, paragraph 32(b). The reconsideration of the Palestine question in the United Nations will require an alternative plan which is workable and which will be supported by the Members. Although it would be desirable to reach a plan which would not require outside armed force for implementation, it may not be possible to find such a solution. The alternative to armed force might be large-scale civil war in Palestine in which the United States would inevitably become seriously involved.

Page 14, paragraph 33. It is too early to say how the question of a possible reference to the International Court will arise, but it may come up in such a form as to be difficult to oppose or prevent it. It is suggested that a decision on this point be held in abeyance.

867N.01/1-2648 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom

TOP SECRET
US URGENT

WASHINGTON, January 26, 1948—7 p. m.

256. For your info UndSecy sent for Brit Amb this morning to discuss US arms embargo for Middle East. He informed Inverchapel informally and confidentially of conversations he had had yesterday with two key Senators asking whether it were true that Brit continue supply arms to Arab states. They indicated that unless some statement could be made to effect such arms were not in fact being supplied Arabs by Brit it would be difficult withstand great pressure campaign being brought on Congress by organized groups in US to force lifting of embargo.

UndSecy read Amb portions urtel 271 Jan 23¹ and of Brit Emb memo of about Nov 15 1947² setting forth Brit policy on matter of supplying military equipment to Arab states and referred last two sentences urtel 6523 Dec. 17. He also showed Amb samples of full-page ads being published in various newspapers throughout US advocating among other things repeal of arms embargo.

Lovett also referred to President's statement of June 5 last³ appealing to Americans to do nothing to make more difficult UN handling of Palestine problem. Mentioning emotional aspects of case in US

¹ Not printed; it reported information from Harold Beeley, the official in the Eastern Department of the British Foreign Office immediately responsible for Palestine affairs, that "British arms embargo regarding Palestine is still operating under principles Foreign Office memo transmitted Embtel 6523, December 17. HMG is 'stalling' regarding all new arms orders for area. Regarding old contracts with Arab states . . . HMG is bound to assume these deliveries will not be used contrary UN charter. Evidence misuse will result reconsideration entire question." (501.BB Palestine/1-2348) For telegram 6523, see *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1315.

² The editors were unable to identify this paper.

³ See bracketed note, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1101.

he said it would be almost impossible to withstand pressure to retain arms embargo if groups advocating supplying of arms to Jews had any vestige of justice in their demands. This he felt they would have as long as Brit continued to supply any arms to Arab states.

UndSecy requested Amb to present in most urgent terms seriousness with which Dept views this situation and to suggest to his Govt how helpful it would be if it could take following two steps:

1. Make flat statement that Brit as mandatory power will continue embargo shipment of arms to Palestine except for maintenance of internal security.
2. Suspend all shipments of arms to Arab states pending clarification in UN of present confused situation.

UndSecy also requested him inform his Govt that unless some way could be found of taking this latter measure there was at least fifty-fifty chance Congress would move in and force us to remove arms embargo.

Amb said he understood importance and urgency of matter and would immediately transmit this request to his Govt. It would be helpful if you would also inform FonOff of great importance we attach to this request.⁴

MARSHALL

⁴ Chargé Gallman discussed the contents of telegram 256 on January 27 with Sir Orme G. Sargent, British Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The latter stated that while consideration had to be given to existing arms contracts with Arab states, the "policy of stalling on deliveries would for present be continued but at same time Foreign Office would thoroughly review situation in hope of finding some formula to meet our suggestions." (Telegram 315, January 27, 6 p. m., from London, 867N.01/1-2748)

501.BB Palestine/1-2748

Memorandum by Mr. Samuel K. C. Kopper of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 27, 1948.

THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE AND UNITED STATES SECURITY

[Here follows Section I on the aftermath of the General Assembly's resolution of November 29, 1947. Mr. Kopper outlined five "significant matters not taken into consideration by the General Assembly in adopting the resolution," namely the inadequacy of provisions for implementing the plan; various questions regarding the legality of the plan; the shift in the basic position of the Arab States on November 29, 1947, from one opposing the establishment of a Federal State in Palestine to an expressed willingness to accept that principle; "the failure of the United Nations to make any real effort to conciliate the two

opposing groups." (In this connection Mr. Kopper gave his view that "The abortive and utterly weak efforts of Dr. Evatt to bring conciliation to bear during the General Assembly session can hardly be classed as United Nations conciliation."); and the growing realization that features of the plan relating to the Palestine Commission were partially or totally unworkable.

Mr. Kopper then noted ominous signs in the present situation which portended the total unworkability of the plan unless it were implemented by force, namely the Arab League decision at Cairo on December 17, 1947, to "support the Palestine Arabs in the form of arms, ammunition, funds and volunteers, i.e., everything short of actual participation by the states themselves"; the discontinuation of work on the western half of the Trans-Arabian pipeline; the attempts by the Arabs to obtain arms from any source; and the start of a tremendous Zionist drive for funds, arms and ammunition, and other assistance.

Mr. Kopper, in Section II, analyzed possible courses of action by the United States, namely to support fully the partition plan without regard for the ultimate cost; to assume a passive role; and to alter the policy of the United States away from support of partition. He rejected the first two courses and made it "an essential prerequisite that a determination be made as to the best method by which the United States could obtain renewed consideration of the Palestine matter by the U.N."]

III—CONCLUSIONS

It is evident from the foregoing that there is no clear cut solution to the Palestine problem which would be completely acceptable to all parties. This has been pointed out in the UNSCOP report and is the unanimous view of all observers of the situation. However, it is also evident that certain solutions may be less costly than others. The growing tendency to refer to the recommendation of the General Assembly as a decision which must be carried out must not be allowed to divert our attention from the fact that the action of the General Assembly was only a recommendation. The United Nations has above all an obligation to preserve peace by peaceful methods so long as this is possible. The United Nations should retain a degree of flexibility and be able to alter its suggested solution of a matter when such is necessary in the light of changing conditions. There are serious doubts as to whether the Arabs of Palestine are under any obligations whatsoever, legal or moral, to be bound by the General Assembly recommendation. The situation is an anomalous one. The method of improving it is not to be found in forcing something on the peoples which is based on dubious grounds. Instead the United Nations should consider other possibilities which might be more acceptable. Accordingly, it is recom-

mended that the United States should follow the following line of action.

(a) When the Palestine case comes up in the Security Council we should seek to have the Council explore other avenues of a peaceful settlement of the problem.¹ Specifically we should endeavor to bring about conciliation or arbitration of the matter.

(b) Because of the vital interests of the United States in the Near East we should not permit ourselves to be drawn into any attack against British position on this matter.

(c) We should now consider abandoning support of partition as being unworkable.

(d) As a longer range objective we should seek a new solution in the form of (1) a transitional trusteeship or (2) a Federal State with liberal immigration provisions.²

(e) We should not lift the arms embargo.

(f) We should not participate in or advocate the sending of armed forces to Palestine (it would be impossible for the United States to advocate sending armed forces to Palestine without being itself willing to participate in such a venture).

(g) Responsible leaders in Congress and in the Government should be thoroughly apprised of the whole situation well in advance of the announcement of such a fundamental change in United States position.

(h) The United States Government should also make quite clear to leaders of the Jewish Agency, the Arab Higher Committee and to the Arab States themselves the reasons for the change in our basic position. Those American nationals associated with the Jewish Agency's activities must be given complete and frank information on how our vital interests are being and will be adversely affected by support of partition. They should be informed that the administration will make renewed efforts to have the displaced persons problem handled more realistically but that the United States cannot afford at this juncture in history to let chaos develop in the Near East or to have a hostile Moslem World confronting us. Accordingly, major concessions must be made by the Jewish Agency.

If a determination is made that it is impossible to alter our policy now, then the next most preferable general line of action to follow would be to assume a passive role until our policy can be altered or until the situation makes or breaks partition as a solution. Active support of partition is the least preferable course of action and should be rejected outright at any time that it appears that:

(a) The United States is unwilling to pursue it to its logical and ultimate extent.

¹ As an alternate suggestion, Mr. Kopper, on p. 22 of his memorandum, suggested that the United States "request the Secretary General to call a special session of the General Assembly to review the Palestine situation in the light of developments since November 29, 1947."

² Mr. Kopper, on p. 29, suggested that up to 125,000 additional Jewish persons be accepted in the proposed federal state in Palestine over the next two or three years.

- (b) The USSR, for one reason or another, appears to be willing to send forces (volunteer or otherwise) into the Palestine area, or [if ³]
- (c) Communism appears to be gaining eve[n the ³] slightest foothold in the proposed new Jewish State.
- (d) Hostilities on a major scale are imminent.⁴

³ Bracketed portions supplied by the editors because the pertinent piece of the record copy has been torn away.

⁴ Secretary of Defense Forrestal described in his diary a discussion of the Palestine problem by Defense Department officials and Messrs. Rusk and Henderson on the evening of January 29, 1948. According to Forrestal,

"Henderson brought out the fact that:

"1. The partition vote in the General Assembly took the form merely of a recommendation to the Security Council. In other words, that it is not a decision of the United Nations.

"2. That the American support of this recommendation was predicated upon the assumption that it would be 'just and workable'.

"I asked whether there was sufficient evidence in the record to support a statement that unworkability of the proposed solution would justify a reexamination. Henderson replied in the affirmative." (Diary entry for January 29, 1948, Forrestal Papers)

IO Files, US/A/AC.21/13

*Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. John C. Ross*¹.

CONFIDENTIAL

[NEW YORK,] January 28, 1948.

Participants: Mr. Moshe Shertok, Jewish Agency for Palestine
 Mr. Lourie, Jewish Agency for Palestine
 Mr. David Horowitz, Jewish Agency for Palestine
 Major Aubrey Eban, Jewish Agency for Palestine
 Mr. John Ross, United States Mission

Mr. Shertok had wanted to see Ambassador Austin whose schedule did not permit and I therefore saw him for the Ambassador. We had a quarter of an hour conversation this morning at which time Mr. Lourie accompanied Mr. Shertok, and continued for three-quarters of an hour this afternoon at Lake Success when Mr. Shertok was accompanied by Mr. Horowitz and Major Eban.

Mr. Shertok outlined as follows his presentation of the Jewish Agency's views to the Palestine Commission over the past few days.

1. The most urgent need was to find a means of supplying the Jews in Palestine with arms so that they could defend themselves and prepare for the defense of the Jewish State.

2. Mr. Shertok realized the problems for national governments which this objective raises. It would be desirable, therefore, for the Security Council representing the United Nations to take action in this matter. Such action might be along the lines of the Security Council approving the export of arms to those who were supporting

¹ Deputy to Ambassador Austin.

the decision of the Assembly and disapproving the export of arms to those who were defying the decision of the United Nations.

3. The Jews wanted to organize a militia. This would consist of a headquarters organization and five "brigade groups". Each brigade group would be a self-contained unit possessing the various arms and services and would amount to five or six thousand men. (The total force envisaged was about thirty thousand.) Four of these brigade groups would be established in the four principal Jewish areas; a fifth would be held in reserve. The British apparently opposed the formation of such a militia and the Jewish Agency was willing to compromise on a minimum of the headquarters organization and one brigade group which, I gathered, would form a cadre for future expansion. The Haganah would eventually be absorbed into this militia.

4. In his presentation to the Palestine Commission Mr. Shertok had exposed "aggression" by the Arab States. I asked him about the probative value of his evidence. He felt that it would stand up without question. This factor of Arab aggression involving defiance of the United Nations was, of course, fundamental in the whole situation.

5. Mr. Shertok had then dealt extensively with the question of providing international forces for Palestine. He made the following points:

(a) an international force was needed as a deterrent to further aggression and disorder. The Jewish Agency did not intend that this force would be a cloak for the Jewish militia. The Jews were more than willing to fight for themselves.

(b) Such an international force would not have to be large (he mentioned the figure ten thousand men) but it would have to be a self-contained, effective force including air squadrons, artillery, and the rest.

(c) Such a force was necessary to fulfill the international responsibility of the United Nations to repel aggression should this transpire. The Jewish forces would deal for the most part with local attacks. It might be necessary to call upon the international force for assistance in any large scale local attacks. Finally, the Jews would assist but would expect the international force to deal primarily with any incursions from outside Palestine. Mr. Shertok and his associates seemed to feel very confident that the political and psychological effect of a force of this size and character would be effective against any threat of major incursion from outside Palestine.

After reviewing as outlined above the position of the Jewish Agency Mr. Shertok moved on to his main purpose in our conversation. He expressed the hope that the United States would support the Jewish Agency position with regard to a finding of Arab aggression, with regard to an arms policy which would make it possible to provide arms to the Jews but not to the Arabs, and with regard to the establishment of international forces, when these various matters are brought before the Security Council.

He went on to say that when the Commission report comes to the Security Council there will be an initial issue of procedure on which the Jewish Agency hoped it would have United States support, namely, whether the Jewish Agency would be admitted to the Security Council table as an interested party. The interests of the Arab States are represented by Syria's membership on the Council. Egypt and the Lebanon had filed formal requests to participate in the Council deliberations and possibly other Arab States would make similar requests. The Jewish Agency, of course, feels that it is as much an interested party as any of these. It feels further that its position has been established in view of the fact that the Special Session last spring admitted the Agency as an interested party and that this has been continued through UNSCOP, the *ad hoc* committee during the last Assembly and the Palestine Commission.²

In conclusion Mr. Shertok said that the element of time was all important. The situation in Palestine was deteriorating every day. It had taken more time than anticipated to organize the Palestine Commission. The Commission had been working thus far for three weeks without any very tangible results. If he were to say that the British were not being helpful it would be the grossest understatement. On the 19th of January the Commission had asked the British a series of thirty odd questions. They had received answers, and negative answers at that, to only four or five of these questions. When this matter reached the Security Council it would be subject unquestionably to various filibusters. In addition there would, of course, be the necessity of the various representatives consulting their governments.

The most important consideration was to avoid a vacuum. If through lack of leadership and decisiveness the United Nations failed to meet its responsibilities this would mean a vacuum in Palestine when the British withdraw. This would have a catastrophic effect on the peace of the entire Middle East.

At the beginning of our conversation I made clear to Mr. Shertok that the United States Government was of course following this matter with close attention but that I was not in a position at this time to express any views to him. I would be very glad, on the other hand, to have him tell me as much as he cared to about the views of the Jewish Agency. In concluding our conversation I thanked Mr. Shertok for his very clear and complete account of the views of the Agency and invited him to communicate to me at any time any further views

² The Department, on January 30, suggested to Ambassador Austin that "US should support request of Jewish Agency to be admitted and heard pursuant to Rule 39 of SC Rules of Procedure in SC discussions Palestine question. Arab Higher Committee should likewise be heard on same basis if request made to SC." (Telegram 37 to New York, 501.BC/1-3048)

he might have. He said that he would do so and that meanwhile he would send me copies of the various memoranda on the subjects referred to above which he had presented to the Palestine Commission.

JOHN ROSS

501.BB Palestine/12-947: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Pakistan

SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 28, 1948—5 p. m.

31. In response to Mr. Jinnah's¹ message to President Truman of Dec. 8 (re Embtel no. 198 of Dec. 9)² you may deliver the following written reply to Mr. Jinnah.

"I appreciated greatly your message of Dec. 8, 1947, and welcome the spirit in which it was sent. Such exchanges of views are always helpful in the development of mutual understanding. I am sure that we have a common purpose in the maintenance of world peace on the basis of the principles incorporated in the Charter of the United Nations.

"Even with these common objectives it is only natural that differences in views will from time to time arise and it is only by frank and open discussion that these differences may be resolved. I have therefore instructed our Chargé to discuss with you at some length the bases of United States policy on Palestine. I hope that this discussion will help to make the United States position clear and will serve to promote better understanding between our two countries."

During your oral discussion with Mr. Jinnah you should adopt following lines:

1. US Govt decided after anxious and sober consideration to support partition in the UNGA despite realization of how strongly opposed Arab States were to establishment of Jewish state in Palestine. In its support of partition the US Govt was motivated by the following considerations:

(a) After reviewing statements and expressions of policy by responsible American officials, resolutions of Congress, and Party platforms of last thirty years it came to conclusion that unless there was some unanticipated factor in situation the trend of public opinion and policy based thereon practically forced it to support partition.

(b) Majority Report of UNSCOP recommending partition did represent new factor but one supporting Jewish state.

(c) Public opinion in US stirred by mistreatment of Jews in Europe and by intense desire of surviving Jews to go to Palestine strongly supported establishment of Jewish state.

¹ Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Governor General of Pakistan.

² *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1305 and footnote 1 to Mr. Jinnah's message.

(d) Troubled situation in Palestine accompanied by British decision to withdraw made it evident that solution of this difficult problem could not be postponed.

2. US Govt concerned re Palestine problem and sincerely desired fair solution. It therefore welcomed presentation to UN and earnestly and sincerely worked for impartial UNGA Committee with broad terms of reference to examine problem. At no time did Amer Govt directly or indirectly endeavor to influence recommendations of UN SCOP. It desired UNSCOP to approach matter in impartial way and work out solution of Palestine problem which would have overwhelming support of world opinion as one which was fair and workable.

3. US Govt in deciding to support Majority Report of UNSCOP at UNGA took position that it should not use United States power and influence in prevailing upon other countries against their will to support Majority Report. US delegation was instructed that it should explain US reasons for supporting Majority Report but should not exert pressure on other delegations. So far as US Govt can determine no undue pressure was brought upon other countries by US governmental officials responsible to Executive. Statements have been made that pressure was brought by Amer private citizens and by Americans holding official positions over whom Exec Branch of Govt had no control. It is impossible to determine definitely whether such pressure if it was applied changed any appreciable number of votes. In any event it is considered that the vote of the UNGA reflected the belief that partition was best of the solutions of the Palestine problem which were advanced.

4. It is understood that one of the reasons for Arab resentment at the UNGA decision is concern lest the Zionist intend eventually to use their state as a base for territorial expansion in the Middle East at the expense of the Arabs. It is the conviction of the United States Government, based on conversations with responsible Zionist leaders, that they have no expansionist designs and that they are most anxious to live with the Arabs in the future on cordial terms and to establish with them relations of a mutually advantageous character. If at a later time persons or groups should obtain control of the Jewish State who have aggressive designs against their neighbors, the United States would be prepared firmly to oppose such aggressiveness in the United Nations and before world opinion.

5. The United States Government, prompted by the friendliest feelings for the Moslem peoples, expresses the most sincere hope that in their disappointment and resentment at the decision of UNGA, the Governments of the Arab countries will not attempt by armed force. or

will not encourage the use of armed force, to prevent the carrying out of that decision. It is hoped that Pakistan, as a newly admitted member of the United Nations, will use its great influence with the Arab States to assist in persuading them not to resort to actions of a character which may undermine the present order of the whole Middle East and eventually lead to a world conflict in which the peoples of the Middle East may be the most tragic sufferers.

6. It seems hardly necessary to point out that there are in the world today powerful aggressive forces which create hatreds, promote violence, and result in chaos. It would be tragic if the forces striving for an orderly, peaceful and prosperous world should at this juncture allow themselves to be disrupted over the question of Palestine.

7. There is a mutual need for friendly political and economic cooperation between the United States and the countries of the Middle East. If there is to be a real sense of security as well as a developing prosperity in that area, the countries of the Middle East and those non-Middle Eastern powers who sincerely desire the principles of the Charter of the United Nations to be applied to that area in the interest both of the Middle Eastern people and of world security must work with cordiality and mutual trust. It is the conviction of the United States Government that if the problem of Palestine, which has long been a source of suspicion and uneasiness, could once and for all be eliminated by acquiescence on the part of the Arab States in the UNGA decision on Palestine, difficult though such acquiescence might be, a disturbing influence in international affairs would be removed, and the security of the Middle East measurably strengthened.

In view of the circumstances and method of delivery of this reply, please inform Mr. Jinnah that it is our belief that the common purposes of our governments would best be served if these messages were not made public.³

LOVETT

³ In telegram 29, February 3, 4 p. m., to Jidda, the Department referred to Jidda's telegram 14, January 13 (see footnote 4, p. 540), and directed Minister Childs to seek immediate audience with the King or other official of the Saudi Arabian Government. The Minister was to make known President Truman's instruction to discuss the Palestine question informally. Telegram 29 then repeated verbatim the seven numbered paragraphs in telegram 31 to Karachi, except that the first 14 words in the second sentence of paragraph numbered five were replaced by "It is my own hope that Saudi Arabia" (50L BB Palestine/1-1348) Telegram 29 bears the President's "OK" in a marginal notation.

President Truman, on February 3, made a reply of general character to the telegram sent to him by the Imam of Yeman on December 2, 1947, regarding the partition of Palestine. The reply is not printed (890J.001/2-348); regarding the telegram of December 2, see footnote 1, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1291.

*First Monthly Progress Report of the United Nations Palestine Commission to the Security Council*¹

[Extract]

14. CONCLUSION

(a) This first monthly report to the Security Council covers what is in effect the preliminary and exploratory stage of the Commission's work. In this stage the Commission has gained a working knowledge of the problem and a clear conception of the nature of the difficult tasks confronting it. The second stage of the Commission's work will be devoted to negotiations with the Mandatory Power, and with representatives of the Jewish, and if at all possible, the Arab communities in Palestine over the detailed matters involved in the implementation of the Assembly's recommendations.

(b) In view of the time-limits fixed in the resolution, and the nature of the tasks to be performed, the time available to the Commission, even under the most favourable circumstances, is extremely short. There is much preparatory work which the Commission may undertake at the headquarters, but the full implementation of the Assembly's recommendations requires the presence of the Commission in Palestine considerably in advance of the transfer of authority from the Mandatory Power to the Commission. The delimitation of boundaries, to undertake which the Commission envisages the establishment of an expert boundaries commission; preparations to ensure continuity in the maintenance of essential public services; the selection of Provisional Councils of Government and their activation; the creation of armed militia; and negotiations with regard to Economic Union, can be effectively undertaken only when the Commission is present in Palestine. In view of the complicated and often highly technical nature of the problems incident to the implementation of the resolution, and the limited time at the disposal of the Commission before the termination of the mandate, the Commission attaches the greatest importance to the progress of its negotiations with the Mandatory Power.²

¹ Reprinted from SC, 3rd yr., *Special Suppl. No. 2*, pp. 1, 9. The report, dated January 29, 1948, was transmitted by Chairman Lisicky to Secretary-General Lie on January 31.

² Gen. Andrew G. L. McNaughton of Canada, President of the Security Council, noted receipt of the first report of the Palestine Commission at the Council's meeting of February 10. He announced his assumption that the Council would wish to await receipt of the Commission's special report before entering into discussion of the Palestine question. The Representative of Syria, Faris el-Khoury, however, questioned the legality of the procedure used in creating the Commission. He stated also that the resolution of November 29, 1947, had been a recommendation and he now questioned whether the Member Nations had adopted the partition plan. For these reasons, he concluded, the proceedings were premature (United Nations, *Official Records of the Security Council, Third Year, Nos. 16-35*, pp. 56-58).

PPS Files, Lot 64 D 563

*Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan)
to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 29, 1948.

PPS 19/1

MR. LOVETT: I have studied carefully Rusk's memorandum of January 26 (attached as Annex A) concerning the Policy Planning Staff paper on Palestine. I enclose a memorandum answering in detail the points he has raised. I hope this may be considered as a supplement to the earlier Staff paper.

As far as any technical inadequacy of the Planning Staff paper is concerned, I will of course bear in mind the suggestions you made, and see that they are taken into account in any future Staff papers. In the present instance we did not make the paper longer and more detailed because it was presented for approval as an initial Department position in the National Security Council, and we thought it would be most useful to stick to the main considerations of national interest involved.

But there is another aspect of this matter which causes me concern, and that is the question of basic policy. Everything in Rusk's memorandum seems to me to point toward a line of policy designed to gain for us some relief from the difficulties of our present position, but to do this at the expense of our relations with the British and Arabs and at the cost of further involvement in commitments leading toward international enforcement of the Palestine decision.

I have deep misgivings about such a policy. Even if our relations with the British and the Arabs were expendable for such a purpose (which I would not concede), the respite we would gain would be of brief duration. The pressure we are under in this matter is such that, if we continued to temporize with it, it would not stop short of a point where we would finally hold major military and economic responsibility for the indefinite maintenance by armed force of a *status quo* in Palestine fiercely resented by the bulk of the Arab world. I do not believe that the U.S. public would ever tolerate such a situation. If I am correct in this analysis, that means that we will be obliged to draw the line, sooner or later, somewhere short of that point, against further commitments in this direction. I believe that the sooner and the more sharply that line is drawn, the less trouble it will mean for this Government, for the United Nations, and probably for the people of Palestine.

I think, therefore, that we have here a clear-cut issue of policy, which will have to be resolved promptly.

GEORGE F. KENNAN

[Annex]

*Personal Comments by Mr. Kennan on Mr. Rusk's Memorandum of
January 26, 1948*

TOP SECRET
PPS 19/1

[WASHINGTON,] January 29, 1948.

My comments on Mr. Rusk's memorandum of January 26, following the order of his numbered paragraphs, are as follows:

1. No comment.

2. This paper¹ was intended, as stated in the covering memorandum, to constitute the Department's initial position for further discussion in the National Security Council. The Staff endeavored, accordingly, to set forth in its paper only those basic principles, the minimum dictates of national interest, which it felt should be observed in our policy on Palestine from here on out. It was assumed that the detailed implementation of these principles should remain an operational matter within this Department, on which the National Security Council would not wish to pass.

The following may be said on the specific questions which Mr. Rusk feels would have to be met before the Staff paper could form the basis of a reconsideration of our policy:

(a) Question: What events have occurred which create a "new situation" with respect to the action taken by the General Assembly on Palestine?

Answer: The two months which have elapsed since the Assembly made its recommendation have been marked by violent resistance of the Arab elements in Palestine to the proposed partition. It is becoming increasingly evident that the partition scheme cannot even be initially implemented, much less permanently maintained, without the use of outside armed force. Thus, what was once prediction has now become demonstrable fact.

Q: Were not the considerations discussed in the attached paper known at the time the decision to support the plan of the UNSCOP majority?

A: The Planning Staff was not concerned with the decision to support the plan of the UNSCOP majority, and did not attempt to assess the background of fact or the considerations which underlay that decision. I do not find this question pertinent to the subject of the Planning Staff paper.

Q: At what point or points can it be reasonably concluded that the situation in Palestine will render impossible the implementation of the General Assembly resolution?

A: The Staff paper did not speak of the situation in Palestine "rendering impossible" the implementation of the General Assembly resolution. It did speak of a point at which it will have been "conclusively demonstrated that the effort to carry out the partition plan as

¹ PPS/19, p. 545.

prescribed by the UN General Assembly offers no reasonable prospect of success without the use of outside armed forces." The determination of the stage at which this point may be considered as reached was regarded by the Staff as necessarily a matter for current operational consideration.

(b) Question: What has been done thus far by the Department of State, either within or outside the United Nations, to increase the chances of success for the solution approved by us and by the General Assembly?

Answer: I know of nothing in the Assembly resolution which placed any individual responsibility on this Government for increasing the chances of success of the solution recommended. This responsibility is clearly apportioned, by the terms of the resolution, among the mandatory power, the Commission, and the inhabitants of Palestine. This Government is appealed to, in the Preamble, to refrain from taking any action which might hamper or delay the carrying out of the recommendations; but that is not the same as being called upon to increase the chances for their success.

It is true that this Government has further responsibilities, under the UN recommendation, as a member of the Security Council. These it will of course have to face up to when the proper moment comes; and it has recognized this fact in its actions to date in the Security Council.

In this connection, the Planning Staff was perhaps remiss in not including in its paper a reference to one of the requests along these lines made by the General Assembly to the Security Council. This request, contained in paragraph (c) of the Preamble, is that the Security Council should "determine as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution". To me, this request, which undertakes to prejudge a question obviously reserved by the UN Charter to the final competence of the Security Council, looks like an improper and unsound action of the Assembly, to which this Government should probably not have assented and to which the Security Council should not be held. I assume, however, that it is considered to apply only to the period when the settlement in question has become an accomplished fact. If so, we would presumably still have time to recommend in the next Assembly meeting the deletion of this passage. This is a question which I think should be given serious study in Mr. Rusk's office and by Le.

(c) Question: What steps could now be taken by the Department of State, either within or outside the United Nations, to ensure maximum opportunity for the successful execution of the General Assembly recommendation on Palestine?

Answer: Mr. Rusk has himself outlined on pages 4 and 5 of his memorandum² the steps which he would suggest in answering this question. These will be dealt with in detail below.

The Staff paper was based on the belief that partition would not be possible of attainment without outside assistance on a substantial scale and that no execution of the General Assembly recommendation which involved the use of force from outside could be considered as

² This refers to paragraph numbered 6 of Mr. Rusk's memorandum, p. 559.

"successful". The Staff considered that any steps taken by this Government, acting individually, to promote the successful execution of the Assembly recommendation at this stage could only commit us still more deeply to a final implementation and enforcement of that recommendation by the international community. Therefore, it had no such steps to suggest.

Q: Are such steps of such a serious character as to reconsider our Palestine policy as being prohibitively costly?

A: I take this question to mean: "Are such steps of so serious a character as to warrant reconsideration of our Palestine policy on the grounds of its being prohibitively costly?" As stated, the Staff had no suggestions for such steps. With respect to the steps suggested by Mr. Rusk, the answer is: "Yes, prohibitively costly or dangerous to national security—or both."

(d) Question: If it is concluded that the recommendations of the General Assembly are unworkable, what alternative solution or solutions should the United States support and what procedures must be followed to bring about a change in our present commitments on Palestine?

Answer: The only alternatives which the Staff felt we should support were set forth in paragraph 32 of the Planning Staff paper.

I have seen no evidence that there is any possible "solution" of this problem involving the use of outside force which could be considered a "satisfactory" solution and which it would be in the interests of this country to support. Admittedly, we must do what we can not to put ourselves in the position of blocking efforts of others to find a solution to this problem. This is why it was recommended in paragraph 32 of the Staff paper that we should "cooperate loyally in working out and implementing any proposals designed (a) to encourage pacific settlement between the Palestine Arabs and Palestine Jews or (b) to investigate the possibilities of any other suggested solution such as a federal state or trusteeship, which would not require outside armed force for implementation."

3. A "New Situation"? I agree with Mr. Rusk's definition of the turn of events which might justify a reconsideration of the Palestine problem. I have no objection to the samples he cites of what might be considered a "new situation", although it seems to me that point (e), which refers to civil war within Palestine, considerably overshadows the others in importance and probability. The Staff paper did not state that the contingency calling for reconsideration of the Assembly resolution had yet arisen. But it took account of the fact that this contingency is rapidly arising in the form of the trend of events within Palestine itself. I personally consider it likely that the contingency will be definitely established, in the sense of Mr. Rusk's point (e), before the April 1 deadline which he mentions.

4. *Armed Interference with the General Assembly Resolution.* I am concerned at Mr. Rusk's suggestion that armed interference in Palestine by the Arab States to prevent the implementation of the Assembly resolution, even in the form of furnishing arms and assist-

ance for guerilla action, would constitute aggression, and that the United States has a responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council to act within the limits of the Charter to prevent this. (The Preamble to the Assembly resolution spoke not of "preventing the implementation" but of attempting "to alter by force the settlement envisaged.") If it were true that we had the responsibility Mr. Rusk imputes to us, it would constitute an existing commitment which would cut at right angles across our entire policy with regard to the Middle East, and our world-wide military-political strategy as well. Fortunately, I do not think that this commitment can be said to exist at this time, or that there would be any question of its existing until the Jewish and Arab states have been duly established, the new governments organized, their authority clearly recognized by the mass of the Palestine inhabitants of both camps, and the admission of the new states to UN membership made an accomplished fact.

As to enforcement within Palestine, I have nothing to add to the recommendations of the Staff paper, which stated that we should oppose sending armed forces into Palestine by the UN or any member thereof for the purpose of implementing partition and that we should also oppose the recruitment of volunteers for this purpose.

5. *The Role of the Mandatory Power (United Kingdom)*. I am also deeply concerned over Mr. Rusk's attitude toward the position of the United Kingdom in the Palestine question.

The Planning Staff, in drafting its paper, saw no need for making moral judgments on the policies of other nations in the Palestine question or for dealing with the British position otherwise than as a given fact.

The effort to shift responsibility back to the United Kingdom, as Mr. Rusk suggests, would not promote a solution of the real difficulties in Palestine. It would be firmly and promptly rejected by the British. It would increase anti-British feeling in this country and exacerbate Anglo-American relations. It might serve to relieve the immediate pressure on this Government and to divert some of it to the British Government. But it would do this, inevitably, at the expense of Anglo-American collaboration in the Middle Eastern area in general and therefore at the expense of the strategic interests of this country.

This Government is not prepared to replace the British Government in the military positions it has occupied, and is occupying, in the Middle Eastern area. In the opinion of the working levels in this Department and in the Armed Services Departments, it is undesirable that we should attempt to do this. On the other hand, Britain plainly has neither the resources nor the will to shoulder once more the political burden of enforcing a Palestine solution which fails to satisfy both Jews and Arabs. The necessity for the observance of parallel

policies in that area was specifically embodied in the results of the working level discussions with the British last fall, which were approved by the National Security Council.³

In my opinion, there is no positive consideration involved in the Palestine question which could justify the disturbance of the understanding and cooperation between ourselves and the British, at which we have only recently succeeded in arriving; in Middle Eastern matters. I cannot state too emphatically my belief that any attempt on our part to ease for ourselves the ugly realities of the Palestine problem by creating further embarrassment for the British there would be gravely prejudicial to our national interest.

For these reasons, I do not feel that we should put further pressure on the British, with respect to arms shipments to Arab countries. The importation of arms into Palestine is still clearly a question for the mandatory power, which bears responsibility for internal law and order there. As for British relations with the Arabs, the remaining British strategic positions in the Middle East are among the few real assets which we still have in that area. The British position there is in large part our position, and must be protected as such. It is in the interests of this country that *both* the U.S. and U.K. should not find themselves simultaneously in that position of extreme unpopularity with the Arab world which we occupy today.

6. *Measures Designed to Increase the Chances for Success of the Partition Plan.* I reiterate: I do not know of any specific obligation resting on the Department of State or on this Government individually to take measures to increase the chances for successful implementation of the General Assembly resolution at this juncture. I further feel that any active efforts on our part in this direction would only involve us more deeply in the moral obligation to see this solution through, even to the bitter end of international enforcement.

Such possibilities were therefore not specifically explored in the Planning Staff paper.

I think the force of this position can be seen from an examination of Mr. Rusk's suggestions:

(a) *Bilateral Talks with the United Kingdom.* Mr. Rusk suggests that such talks "attempt to uncover the elements of the Assembly resolution to which the British object, their purpose in placing the matter before the United Nations, their idea of a solution with which they would be willing to cooperate, and their attitude toward joint diplomatic action to obtain the cooperation of the Arab States."

There is no unclarity as to the reasons why the British placed this matter before the UN, as to the elements in the Assembly resolution to which they object, or as to their idea of a solution with which they

³ On November 21, 1947; see letter of November 24, 1947, from Acting Secretary of State Lovett to President Truman, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 623, and footnote 3.

would be willing to cooperate. British policy in these matters has been set forth with enviable clarity and emphasis on a number of occasions; and I would refer Mr. Rusk particularly to Mr. Bevin's statement in the House of Commons on February 25, 1947. We need have no doubt that their attitude toward joint diplomatic action to attain the co-operation of the Arab States would be inflexibly negative.

(b) *Multilateral Diplomatic Talks.* The events of the past months in the Palestine question have already been little short of disastrous for our relations with the Arab world. We cannot strain those relations any further without envisaging the complete disruption of many of our existing ties with the Middle East area and serious injury to our economic and strategic interests. The Turks, furthermore, have already expressed their dismay at what they regard as the inconsistency of our Palestine policy with our other policies in that area, and they would hardly be amenable to such an approach.

(c) *Action by the Security Council.* Any action by the Security Council to enforce the Palestine resolution will bring us closer to the point at which we will be asked to put up armed forces or to permit the recruitment of international volunteers for operations in Palestine. The Policy Planning Staff is firmly opposed to both of these solutions, considering them seriously detrimental to national security.

(d) *Active United States Participation in the Establishment of the International Territory of Jerusalem.* Any United States initiative to hasten the implementation of Part III of the Assembly resolution, concerning the city of Jerusalem, would be vulnerable to the same objections as were outlined above with respect to the Security Council action. I would raise the question whether the responsibilities devolving upon the United Nations from these provisions can properly be expected to become operative in the absence of the implementation of the remainder of the partition scheme.

(e) *Exploitation of Differences of View Among the Arabs.* This is again a course which would sacrifice our over-all relations with the Arab world to the requirements of the Palestine situation. It might achieve a cheap and momentary success. For the long run, I doubt that the mass of the Arabs would ever forgive us for resorting to it. It seems to me that such a course is neither in keeping with the general character of our diplomatic practice nor consistent with the integrity of our policy in the Middle East.

7. *Alternative Lines of Action.*

(a) The first suggestion is that the General Assembly call upon the United Kingdom to consult with the Arabs and the Jews in the light of the unanimous recommendations of UNSCOP and to seek a solution agreeable to both parties. This would appear to me to place the British in the precise position they were in in the middle of 1946 when they called the Palestine Conference in London. You will recall that the Jews refused to participate in that Conference, despite the expressed hope of President Truman that they might do so, and that the Conference came to no positive result. I am not aware of any possible agreed solution which the British failed to explore during the period when they were endeavoring to find some satisfactory way of relieving them-

selves of this responsibility. I am sure that the United Kingdom will not again accept any responsibility of this nature.

(b) It is suggested here that a United Nations trusteeship be established for the whole of Palestine, in which the U.S. would take "its fair share" of the physical and security responsibility.

We may have to come to this, and the Staff paper recommended that we cooperate loyally in the working out and implementing of any proposals in the United Nations for exploring the possibility of such a solution, provided it would not require outside armed forces for implementation. The Staff did not recommend, however, that this Government take any responsibility for the initiation of such a proposal, since it failed to see how even a United Nations trusteeship could fail to become a constant headache to the trustee power, a source of further controversy in the United Nations, and a cause of reproach to the authors of the suggestion.

8. *United States Responsibility.* Mr. Rusk is correct that a hands-off policy will leave Palestine in a state of violence. For that, all of us will share some measure of blame who have been concerned with the Palestine question in these past 30 years; but the main responsibility will have to continue to rest with the Jewish leaders and organizations who have pushed so persistently for the pursuit of objectives which could scarcely fail to lead to violent results.

It is my opinion that the commitments we have already undertaken in this matter are of such a nature that if an attempt were made to carry them out in the literal sense it would soon prove intolerable to national opinion, would lead to violent dissatisfaction with the leadership of our foreign policy, and would have other internal repercussions of an extremely undesirable nature.

In these circumstances, I think we have no choice but to try to extricate ourselves from the existing commitments as rapidly as possible and to see to it that we do nothing which would add any new ones to the present list. I believe that we, and the international community in general, will have to recognize that we have in Palestine a situation with which neither the United Nations nor any outside power is really able to deal successfully at this juncture. We may hope that the absence of international interference will eventually lead the parties themselves to a greater appreciation of their own interest and responsibility. We should scrupulously refrain from adding by anything we may do or say to the prospects for violence between them. At the same time, we should not attempt to be our brother's keeper or to offer moral advice to other powers when we are unable to bear our own full share of the responsibility for the consequences.

This may indeed involve a loss of prestige both for us and the United Nations. But I think it will be worth it if we can thereby

regain the full independence and dignity of our position in this confused and tragic question.

867N.01/1-2648

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Satterthwaite)

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 29, 1948.

Participants: Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador
Mr. Lovett, Under Secretary
Mr. Satterthwaite, NEA

Lord Inverchapel called at 3:00 p. m. today with the reply which he had received from his Government to Mr. Lovett's suggestion, made to the Ambassador on January 26, that the British should if possible, in view of the pressure being brought in Congress to have the U.S. embargo on arms to the Middle East raised, issue a statement to the effect that they have suspended all shipments of arms to the Arab states. (Reported in full in Deptel 256, January 26, 7 p. m. to London.) As he was instructed to deliver the reply orally, the Ambassador did so by reading aloud his original telegraphic instruction, of which the following is a full summary:

HMG are responsible for Palestine until the mandate terminates on May 15 next. British troops may not be out until August 1. If the U.S. Government were to modify its position with reference to its embargo on arms to the Middle East two results would follow: (1) These arms would be used against the British, and (2) the British Navy would have to consider whether to allow ships carrying such arms to land in Palestinian ports.

HMG are bound by treaties of alliance with Iraq, Transjordan and Egypt. In respect of Egypt and Iraq they have entered into agreements for the supply of arms. They consider the fulfillment of these agreements necessary to prevent internal disorder and Communist penetration. To desist without the agreement of these two countries would be a violation of treaty obligations, the observance of which it should be to the advantage of our two countries to encourage, and would strike at the root of the friendly relations which the British maintain with them.

HMG have adopted the following attitude with reference to the supply of arms:

- (a) No arms destined for Palestine should be authorized, and
- (b) The only supplies being sent at present are in respect of long-standing orders on certain items to bring the local requirements up to the scale necessary for internal purposes and which arise out of treaty and contractual obligations.

The Ambassador is therefore to urge on the Under Secretary the dangers of our altering our position. If the U.S. have any doubts on

this subject these issues should be considered by the British and U.S. Services, the Embassy and the State Department in order to arrive at a joint assessment of the strategic and political stakes involved.

In any case HMG could not depart from existing treaty and contractual obligations without the consent of the other states concerned. Without violating any of Mr. Lovett's confidences, HMG are therefore informing these other Governments of the U.S. position, saying that it looks as if the pressure being brought on the U.S. Government to lift the arms embargo could be avoided only if HMG were to suspend delivery of materials for say six months with a view to reviewing the situation at the end of that period. They are being informed that only with the consent of those countries with which HMG have contractual obligations would such action be taken. They are being asked what their decision would be if the matter came to the point where a decision was inevitable.

You are to say to Mr. Lovett that these Middle Eastern countries will inevitably ask whether, if they are to agree to the abandonment of the supply of arms by the British, the U.S. will continue to enforce its embargo. It is clear that only the U.S. Government can answer this question. If in spite of the considerations hitherto advanced the U.S. decides it cannot maintain the embargo unless HMG withhold all deliveries, it is suggested that U.S. Government at once explore with the Middle Eastern countries concerned their willingness to forego the receipt of arms provided the present U.S. ban is maintained. You should leave Mr. Lovett under no illusion as to the gravity of the issue he has raised, both in respect of the relations of our two countries with the Middle Eastern countries and as between ourselves. It is therefore urged that all concerned will reflect most earnestly on the wide considerations of strategic and political policy involved.

After the Ambassador had read the foregoing message, the Under Secretary summarized his understanding of it and commented that he had then been given nothing to tell Congress except that the British felt that they must continue to deliver arms for internal security purposes if assured such arms would not be used in Palestine. The Under Secretary felt it would be of no avail to make any such statement to Congress. This was a matter for the British Government to decide but in his view a statement in such limited terms might do more harm than good, since it would serve only to emphasize the fact that the British are in fact furnishing arms to certain Arab states. About the only thing we can do therefore is to let the matter ride as it is and hope that the U.S. can nevertheless succeed in maintaining the arms embargo.

If these are the facts we must face them. Mr. Lovett had hoped that the British Government would be able to take prompt action along the lines he had suggested. Perhaps at some future date the British will be able to say that they did endeavor to persuade those countries with which they have treaty and contractual obligations to release them from these obligations.

The Under Secretary asked the Ambassador to thank the Foreign Office for the kind and prompt consideration it had given his request and to say that we will consider the information they have given us and hope that we may nevertheless be successful in holding the line as at present.

Lord Inverchapel enquired whether the British suggestion that the U.S. and British Services, the State Department and the British Embassy should assess the strategic stakes involved was not worthy of adoption. Mr. Lovett replied that he thought it would be impossible to hold such meetings without someone in the Foreign Office giving it out to the press. He therefore doubted the wisdom of holding such meetings. The Ambassador remarked that his Government had often felt in the past that more leaks had come out of Washington than out of London but that at the moment he had to confess that the British were several points up on us. Mr. Lovett retorted that he couldn't guarantee that we wouldn't catch up with them later.

In reply to the Ambassador's question as to whether we might wish to follow the British suggestion that we explore the arms embargo problem with the Middle Eastern countries, the Under Secretary indicated that we would only reach a decision on this matter after careful consideration, but that he very much doubted whether any good result could be obtained by our taking the matter up with those countries.¹

Lord Inverchapel asked Mr. Lovett to let him know when a decision had been reached on this phase of the matter and Mr. Lovett said he would be glad to do so.²

The Ambassador enquired whether the American public were generally aware of the fact that the British are at present refusing to ship any arms to Palestine and wondered whether it might be of some help if the British Government were to make a statement along these lines. Mr. Lovett thought that perhaps there wasn't a full understanding of this point in the U.S. and that a statement along these lines might be of some help, although the Zionists would of course at once point

¹ Mr. Henderson, in a memorandum of February 11 to Mr. Lovett and Assistant Secretary of State for Political Affairs Norman Armour, opposed making such an approach to the Arab Governments because "It would not be likely to lead to helpful results for the United States Government at this time to intervene in a matter which pertains primarily to relations between Great Britain and the Arab states" and because "The United States should not restrict its freedom of action by promising the Arab Governments to continue the present embargo. It is possible that recommendations of appropriate organs of the United Nations may cause the United States to alter its policies in this respect." (867N.01/2-1148)

² Mr. Henderson's memorandum recommended that the British Ambassador be informed orally of the Department's decision, but the editors were unable to find any record that this was actually done.

out that their real concern was with the shipment of arms to neighboring states. The Ambassador remarked that he might suggest to his Government the desirability of making the British position on this point clear through the device of raising a question in Parliament.

867N.01/1-3048

The Chief of the Division of Dependent Area Affairs (Gerig) to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)

WASHINGTON, January 30, 1948.

DEAR MR. AUSTIN: I received your letter of January 27, 1948¹ concerning the draft Statute for the City of Jerusalem² prepared by the Working Committee set up by the Trusteeship Council. I greatly appreciate the careful manner in which you have read this document and the specific comments which you have made regarding it.

With respect to the question raised by you concerning the legal nature of the Statute, I should like to say generally that the provisions of Chapters XII and XIII of the Charter are not regarded by the Committee to be specifically applicable since the City of Jerusalem, on the decision of the General Assembly, is not to be a trust territory, but is to be administered as a special international regime by the Trusteeship Council. Thus, the Trusteeship Council, in drawing up the Statute and in carrying out its administrative responsibilities, considers that it is discharging a mandate conferred upon it by the

¹ Not printed.

² Not printed; this undated 28-page paper was prepared as the Joint Report of the two drafting groups of the Working Committee on Jerusalem (867N.01/1-1348).

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly on November 29, 1947, provided for the establishment of the City of Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum* from the proposed Jewish and Arab States, to be administered by the United Nations, and designated the Trusteeship Council to discharge the responsibilities of the administering authority.

The Trusteeship Council, on December 1, 1947, established a working group to draft a Statute for the City of Jerusalem and the following day designated Australia, China, France, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and the United States as members. Mr. Gerig was elected Chairman of the working group on December 3 (United Nations press releases TR/107, 108, and 109, dated December 1, 2, and 3, respectively).

The Working Committee, on January 8, 1948, began consideration of the Joint Report and on February 16, unanimously approved an amended draft statute TR/132 and 146, dated January 8 and February 16, respectively. The text of the amended draft statute, dated January 26, is printed in United Nations, *Official Records of the Trusteeship Council, Second Session, Second Part, Annex*, p. 1; the accompanying report of the Working Committee, dated February 16, is printed *ibid.*, p. 19.

General Assembly. The Trusteeship Council has not considered it to be its duty to question the authority of the General Assembly in referring this matter to it. It assumes that the plan envisaged by the General Assembly affords a proper basis on which to proceed. United States representatives on the Trusteeship Council have not questioned this position since they assumed that the United States Delegation in the General Assembly regarded the plan for the future government of Palestine as falling within the framework of the Charter and the powers of the organs and agencies thereunder.

The proviso of paragraph 4, Article VI, to which you call attention, derives directly from a stipulation in Part III, paragraph 3(c) of the General Assembly's resolution, which states that the members of the special police force "shall be recruited outside of Palestine". Since Palestine, as a geographical unit, will no longer exist after partition the Working Committee felt it advisable to avoid use of the term "Palestine" and to refer instead to the Arab State, the Jewish State, and the City of Jerusalem.

Your view with respect to the condition in Article XIII of the draft Statute that the Governor should never be eligible for citizenship of the City was shared by the Working Committee. That paragraph follows very closely the General Assembly's Plan and provides that the Governor shall not be a citizen of the City, the Arab State, or the Jewish State. Such limitations, of course, are designed to ensure impartiality and do not now bar the Governor from citizenship for his entire lifetime.

The word "substantively" in Article XIX of the draft was used in the sense of "in his own right". Its necessity was questioned in the discussions of the Working Committee. It was not, however, eliminated, because several members felt it to be useful. Personally, I agree with you that it could well be omitted.

Your suggestion with respect to paragraph 8 on page 24 was not discussed by the Working Committee. It is a point, however, which might well be taken up during the Trusteeship Council discussion.

It is certainly true that the Statute does contain novelties. They are for the most part, I think, a reflection on the uniqueness of the entire Plan. The Working Committee found in its discussions that on many points there were no precedents upon which it could draw for judgments. Similarly, there were many points passed on to the Working Committee by the General Assembly and the Committee felt that it was not in a position to digress from the substance of such points.

Sincerely yours,

[O.] B[ENJAMIN] G[ERIG]

501.BB Palestine/2-248

*Memorandum by Mr. M. Gordon Knox¹ to the United States
Representative at the United Nations (Austin)²*

[NEW YORK,] February 2, 1948.

Examination of the statements concerning Palestine made by United States representatives in the General Assembly (*Ad-Hoc* and plenary sessions) indicate that:

1. The United States is in no way committed to the use of force to implement the General Assembly recommendation regarding Palestine aside from the United States obligations assumed under the Charter.

2. On the contrary, the United States Delegation was careful not to take a position regarding this matter.

The following official and public statements concerning the use of force regarding Palestine were made by United States representatives: (see attached papers³).

No complete record has been kept of private or secret conversations but in the opinion of members of the United States Delegation, who were closely connected with the Palestine question such talks corresponded exactly with the official statements on this subject.

Aside from its duty as a member of the United Nations and as a

¹ Adviser on Security Council and General Affairs to the United States Mission at the United Nations.

² Addressed also to Mr. Rusk and to Mr. Ross and other members of the United States Mission.

³ The attached papers include excerpts from the following documents:

Statement by Ambassador Herschel V. Johnson delivered in the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Palestinian Question, October 11, 1947 (Press Release 260 of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, October 10. The text is also in Department of State *Bulletin*, October 19, 1947, pp. 761 ff. The summary record of the statement is printed in United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question*, hereinafter cited as GA (II), *Ad Hoc Committee*, pp. 62 ff.);

Statement by Ambassador Johnson as U.S. Representative in Sub-Committee 1 of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, November 4, 1947 (U.S. Mission document US/A/AC.14/SC.1/8, printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1237);

Statements by Ambassador Johnson to the afternoon and evening sessions of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, November 22, 1947 (U.S. Mission Press Releases 339 and 340; see also *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, pp. 1278 ff.);

Revised Amendment to the Draft Resolution proposed by Sub-Committee 1 (A/AC.14/34) submitted by the Delegation of Denmark (U.N. document A/AC.14/43/Rev. 1, November 25, 1947; see text in GA (II), *Ad Hoc Committee*, pp. 266 ff.);

Statement by Ambassador Johnson in the *Ad Hoc* Committee on November 25, 1947 (U.S. Mission Press Release 346, December 9, 1947);

Statement by Ambassador Johnson at the 124th Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, November 26, 1947 (U.N. document A/PV. 124; see United Nations, *Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly, Plenary Meetings*, vol. II, pp. 1325-1326).

permanent member of the Security Council, the United States is not bound in fact or by implication to use or contribute to the use of force.⁴

⁴ Ambassador Austin, on February 3, reported the following: "Explaining he had heard rumors the US was not prepared to maintain its support of the GA partition decision, Muniz (Brazil) was alarmed at the possible effect of such a shift on the strength and validity of the UN, particularly the GA. He was advised that the US maintained its support, but did not contemplate the use of US troops to implement the decision". (Telegram 137 from New York, 501.A Summaries/2-348)

501.BB Palestine/2-348

*Memorandum by the Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs (Rusk) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 3, 1948.

The resolution of the General Assembly recommending the partition of Palestine, which was adopted on November 29, 1947, has placed the problem of implementation on the doorstep of the Security Council. The Council yesterday was given the first monthly report of the Palestine Commission, the accumulative effect of which is to highlight the almost insurmountable difficulties of carry[ing] out partition without the use of force and the very pointed lack of cooperation shown the Commission by the Mandatory Power in Palestine, the United Kingdom. In particular, the refusal of the British Government to permit the Commission to proceed to Palestine before May 1 and the intention of the British authorities to pull out of Palestine two weeks after the arrival of the Commission served to make the task of fulfilling the Assembly's resolution almost insuperable. The United States is directly involved in this problem since on November 30 it agreed to the proposal of Foreign Secretary Bevin to support the British timetable of withdrawal whereby the Commission would not arrive in Palestine before May 1.²

While the problems of the Palestine Commission are but one facet of the broader issue of Palestine partition, the Commission's report will certainly bring to a head and promptly the main issue before the Security Council: whether force should be employed by the United Nations or condoned by the United Nations to carry out the partition of Palestine against the will of a majority of its inhabitants and the pronounced policy of six members of the United Nations, comprising the members of the Arab League.

¹ Mr. Rusk did not initial this memorandum and there is no evidence that it was actually sent to Mr. Lovett.

² For the British timetable of withdrawal, see telegram Martel 12, November 28, 1947, from London, *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, p. 1289. Mr. Lovett, on November 29, authorized New York to inform the British of Departmental agreement concerning the timetable; see first footnote 1, *ibid.*, p. 1290.

[The Office of] United Nations Affairs *recommends*:

1. That the United States do everything possible to see that the resolution of November 29, 1947 be placed into effect by any measures falling short of the use of armed force.

2. That the United States make immediate representations to the United Kingdom pointing out that the indifference of the United Kingdom to its responsibility as Mandatory Power and as a member of the United Nations morally bound by the resolution of November 29 will cause us to revise our position regarding support of the timetable of withdrawal unless the United Kingdom manifests a more conciliatory attitude. Since our position is stated in (1) above the United Kingdom should have no illusions as to the determination of this Government to make the partition plan succeed if it is possible to do so without the use of force.

3. Should the constitutionality of the resolution of November 29, 1947, be challenged and an attempt be made to refer Charter interpretation of the resolution to the International Court of Justice, this Government should not oppose such reference, provided that meanwhile the carrying out of the provisions of the resolution were not placed in abeyance while the Court was deliberating on its advisory opinion.

4. Should, as seems almost inevitable, it prove impossible to carry out the resolution of November 29 by peaceful measures, the Security Council will be faced with decisions regarding the use of force

(a) Within Palestine itself,

(b) A force external to Palestine directed against the Jewish State,

the United States should take the position that it is not incumbent on the Security Council to apply force within Palestine to carry out partition by armed strength. As for the threat of external aggression against Palestine which would come from the Arab States contiguous to that territory, the United States should support any measures falling short of the use of armed force by the Security Council to restrain such aggression. It should not, however, support the sending by the Council of an international armed force to give battle to the Arab States in an attempt to quash such aggression.

5. When all measures falling short of the use of force to carry out the partition of Palestine have proved fruitless the United States should support the calling of a Special Session of the General Assembly to reconsider the entire problem, with the probable outcome that a special United Nations trusteeship for Palestine would be proposed and terminable at such future date when the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Palestine were able to agree on a *modus vivendi* either for a unitary federated state or for partition.

Technical papers have been prepared in UNA on the possible measures which might be taken by the United States to implement the Palestine partition plan by measures falling short of the use of force

and also by forceful measures adopted by the Security Council. Studies have been made of the possibility of arming the militias of the Jewish and Arab States; of the recruiting of the international police for the trusteeship of Jerusalem; of the problem of Arab aggression; of conciliatory measures which might be adopted seeking to bring the Arab and Jewish parties to an agreement; and of the question of submitting the legality of the Palestine decision to the International Court of Justice. It is proposed to retain these studies for reference at your call, depending of course upon developments in the Security Council and elsewhere.

501.BB Palestine/2-348

The Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs (Rusk) to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, February 3, 1948.

MY DEAR SENATOR AUSTIN: The attached memorandum contains a draft telegram on the question of the acceptance by the Security Council of its responsibilities under the General Assembly Resolution on Palestine. In order to avoid sending broadly phrased instructions without direct reference to the problem presented to the Security Council, it was decided that I should furnish you the attached draft for your information. The Department may convert this draft into an instruction or it may separate out certain points raised therein for more precise instructions in the light of the questions presented to the Security Council.

I appreciate that this is a somewhat unusual procedure but I am confident that you will understand the difficulty in general instructions at this point.

Sincerely yours,

DEAN RUSK

[Enclosure]

Draft Telegram to USUN

In light of probability that Palestine Commission will submit report to SC early in Feb, following are Dept views on question of SC acceptance of its responsibilities under GA resolution Nov 29, 1947 on "Future Government of Palestine":

CONCLUSIONS

1. Resolution of GA is request to SC which the SC can accept in whole or in part.

2. GA request to SC has two principal aspects:
- (a) Request that SC take measures provided for in plan necessary for its implementation. These include:
- (1) Guidance to commission in administration of plan (IB2);
 - (2) Action if Provisional Council of government cannot be selected by April 1, 1948 by either state (IB4);
 - (3) Instructions to Commission (IB14);
 - (4) Receipt of reports from Commission (IB14-15). SC under its general powers set forth in Art 24 of Charter has full present authority to assume responsibilities devolving upon it under plan without specific determination of threat to peace or other jurisdictional prerequisite to SC action.

(b) Second aspect of GA request relates to SC action in event Council finds situation in Palestine constitutes threat to peace and request that SC should regard any attempt to alter by force settlement envisaged in plan as threat to peace, breach of peace or act of aggression. As to these requests, SC should take no action until occasion arises, nor should it determine in advance that a given act constitutes a threat to peace without examination of all surrounding circumstances at the time.

3. Accordingly SC should by appropriate resolution accept para (a) of GA request and assume responsibilities devolving upon it under plan and take note of paras (b) and (c) of GA request with understanding that these requests should be given due consideration in any determination by SC of whether situation in Palestine constitutes a threat to peace or whether a breach of peace or act of aggression has occurred, and in action to be taken by SC on basis of such determination.

DISCUSSION

I. IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN OF PARTITION

1. Resolution of GA has established a GA commission to assume transitional responsibility for implementation of plan of partition. Measures of commission to implement plan are to "become immediately effective unless commission has previously received contrary instructions from SC."

2. GA recognized that implementation of plan might involve problem affecting international peace and security. To give effect to SC's primary responsibility in field of international peace and security GA addressed a series of requests to SC envisaging its cooperation in implementation of plan by commission.

II. PRESENT STATUS OF GA RESOLUTION IN SC

In its 22nd meeting on Dec 9, 1947 SC approved following position enunciated by President: "The SC having received the letter from the Secretary General enclosing the resolution of the GA concerning Palestine, and being seized of the question, decided to postpone discussion." Accordingly Palestine question is now on list of matters of which SC is seized in accordance with Rule 11 of its Rules of Procedure.

III. BASIS OF SC JURISDICTION IN RESPECT OF GA RESOLUTION

Basis of activities envisaged by GA resolution for SC in taking measures necessary for implementation of plan is Art 24 of Charter under which Members of UN confer on SC primary responsibility for maintenance of international peace and security. Same article of Charter was invoked and accepted by SC (with Australia abstaining) in connection with assumption of responsibilities under annexes to Italian Peace Treaty relating to creation and government of Free Territory of Trieste. In that case SC adopted resolution recording its approval of instruments relating to Trieste and "its acceptance of responsibilities devolving upon it under the same." See SC meeting Jan 10, 1947.

In respect of paras (b) and (c) of GA request, SC should, of course, take note of Assembly's resolution; but its responsibilities under those parts of resolution stem from its responsibilities under Chapters VI and VII of Charter rather than from GA.

SC has under Charter a duty to consider whether any situation involving maintenance of international peace and security constitutes threat to peace or breach of peace and if such a determination is made has duty to take such action or make such recommendations as are necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Request of GA contained in para (b) of resolution does not enlarge or restrict responsibilities or authority of Council in this regard. If SC does determine that situation in Palestine constitutes a threat to peace, it may take such further action under any of Articles in Chapter VII as it deems necessary. Para (b) of GA resolution expressly mentions only Arts 39 and 41 of Charter under these circumstances. This cannot be regarded as limitation on SC's power to take measures under any Articles in Chapter VII.

Moreover, it would be inappropriate for SC to decide in advance that any attempt to alter by force settlement envisaged by plan should be regarded as threat to peace, breach of peace or act of aggression.

Such determination by Council should be made after examination of acts themselves and in light of surrounding circumstances prevailing at the time.

711.90G/2-448

Memorandum by the Ambassador to Iraq (Wadsworth) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson)

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 4, 1948.

Subject: Conversation with the President

As you know, I had prepared a paper outlining remarks I proposed to make to the President when received by him today. A copy of that paper is attached.¹ It is in essence a report on American-Iraqi relations written within the framework of a brief exposition of the situation in the Near East as shaped primarily by Soviet pressures and by United Nations action in the Palestine problem.

I had, too, arranged with Admiral Souers² that my paper be put by him in the President's hands yesterday. This was done primarily in the thought that, in any discussion we might have, both the President and I might dispense with preliminaries and get down to what I hoped might be the nature of any representations he might wish me to make on my return to Baghdad.

Admiral Souers telephoned me this morning that he had discussed my paper briefly with the President who had said that it would be helpful and that he would be glad to discuss it with me. The Admiral commented that the President was under much pressure to support the United Nations in carrying out the partition plan but was not disposed to use American troops to that end.

The Admiral then asked that either you or I keep him informed of developments. He is in touch with George Kennan on the subject of the paper now under preparation in the Department for consideration by the National Security Council.³ Consequently, his request to you is primarily in respect to what might be the upshot of my talk with the President. He was, too, interested in any current information you might be able to give him on British attitudes and actions.

I was received promptly at noon by the President and stayed with him the better part of 15 minutes.

¹ Printed on p. 596. Ambassador Wadsworth had also conversed with President Truman on January 16, 1947, when he was the Appointed Ambassador to Iraq. His memorandum to Mr. Henderson and the "Outline of Proposed Remarks to the President", both dated January 16, 1947, have not been printed. They may be found in the files of the Department of State under 123 Wadsworth, George.

² Sidney W. Souers, Executive Secretary of the National Security Council.

³ Presumably the report of February 11 by the Policy Planning Staff, p. 619.

After salutation, I said I was particularly grateful to Admiral Souers for bringing my paper to his attention. I had wanted to do more than report perfunctorily regarding American-Iraqi relations.

The President answered that he had read my paper and was glad to have it. The situation was certainly one for concern. He had kept in close touch. Lovett knew the situation well; so did General Marshall. He himself saw alike with the State Department.

I said I knew that the National Security Council was to consider the whole matter, from all its various angles. In my paper I had wanted to present one of them, i.e. that of his representatives in the field. We were up against a pretty tough proposition. Consequently, I hoped that, after the National Security Council had thought the question through, it would go a step further and suggest something positive which we in the field might say, something constructive which we could use to build better and mutually beneficial relations.

The President replied that the whole problem was being worked on actively and constructively. The basic trouble was and had been that bullheadedness and fanaticism constantly interfered. Two years ago he had found a sound approach. The British had gone along with his proposals for an Anglo-American commission.⁴ Attlee⁵ and Bevin had agreed that, if its report was unanimous, its recommendations would be applied. There had been a unanimous report. Grady had gone to London to get it implemented but had failed because of British bullheadedness and the fanaticism of our New York Jews. The British were still being bullheaded and American Jews were still being fanatic about it. One thing he could tell me though was that we would not send arms to the Near East and that we would only act through the United Nations.

I said that that assurance would be a great help to our representatives in the Near East; and I hoped that, after the National Security Council's consideration, we could be authorized to go further and say that no American troops would be sent to Palestine to impose partition.

The President interrupted with a categorical ejaculation of concurrence and let me continue.

I continued: "Because, to us who are working on the problem in the field, partition seems, in the present situation, unworkable. It seems to us that a way must be found for United Nations reconsideration of the General Assembly's recommendations of last November, primarily on the ground that they presumed Jewish-Arab cooperation which is now seen to be nonexistent.

⁴ For documentation on the activities of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, see *Foreign Relations*, 1946, vol. VII, pp. 576 ff.

⁵ Clement R. Attlee, British Prime Minister.

The President answered in substance that that was for the United Nations to decide, in the light of experience. The situation was bad; and there was, as he had said, too much fanaticism. [Here follow personal observations by President Truman and Ambassador Wadsworth.] And I added that, until we could get both sides to rid themselves of extremist groups and thinking, I could not see the possibility of getting far with any sensible workable compromise. Without that, I could not see how we could turn successfully to constructive projects. As he knew, there were many such projects, from oil development to the Tigris-Euphrates Valley scheme,⁶ which were of mutual benefit and which we just could not get on with effectively in the present situation.

The President picked up my reference to Iraq. Development of the Tigris-Euphrates plan, he commented, would support 15,000,000 people. There was one point in that connection he wanted to make. Tamerlane had destroyed that great ancient civilization. In the past, destruction had always been the aftermath of war. Today, for the first time in history, the conqueror was putting everything he had into reconstruction of the conquered. We were trying to get the world back on its feet. We would work, as he had said, through the United Nations; but reconstruction was the active policy of the United States. He wanted other countries to know this and to understand that we wanted to work with them in realizing that policy. As for the Near East, he could not say more than he had said to Amir Faisal⁷ and the Prince of Yemen⁸ who had come to see him last fall; and he had said much the same to the Prince Regent of Iraq who had stayed with him two years before.⁹

I answered that I could testify to his having made of the latter a very good friend and admirer. I was much struck, I said, by his comment that "For the first time in history, the conqueror's policy was to reconstruct the conquered." Might I not, I asked, repeat that phrase to the Prince Regent on my return to Baghdad? It made exactly the sort of point Near Eastern leaders would appreciate, for the record of their past was an almost continuous passage of conquerors and destructive conquests.

The President replied in the affirmative.

⁶ Regarding the economic development of Iraq, see instruction 17, March 29, to Baghdad, Part 1 of this volume, p. 77.

⁷ For the memorandum of conversation between President Truman and Amir Faisal on December 13, 1946, see *Foreign Relations*, 1946, vol. VII, p. 729.

⁸ For information on the visit of Prince Abdullah to the United States in July 1947, see editorial note, *ibid.*, 1947, vol. V, p. 1344.

⁹ For information on the visit of Abdul Ilah, Regent of Iraq, to the United States in May 1945, see *ibid.*, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 586.

I added: "And might I also, when next I see the Regent, tell him you again expressed to me, as you did last year, keen interest in facilitating realization of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley scheme?" The President answered "By all means" but added that Iraqi, like other Arab leaders, should realize that they have to play their parts to make this possible. There was nothing much constructive anyone could do if they (the Arab leaders) started sending their armies into Palestine. There was only one force which should go there if any should be needed and that was an international police force under the United Nations.

I answered that that too was along the lines of the reassurance I hoped I would be authorized to take back with me after the matter had been gone into by the National Security Council. The Arabs' keenest fear today was that we, under Zionist pressures, would act unilaterally and send troops independently of the United Nations.

The President answered in substance: "We won't, but they (the Arabs) must first assure me, before I can give them any categorical promises, that they won't either."

I answered that I could well understand that and that it was in just that field that I believed I and our other Chiefs of Missions in the Near East could be helpful.

There was, I continued, one other field of discussion in which I felt we could be helpful, if so authorized. The Arabs enjoy nothing more than a legal argument. They had questioned at Lake Success the constitutional authority of the General Assembly, basically limited as it is to discussion and recommendation, to divide a country against the wishes of the majority of its population. They had asked that this legal issue be submitted to the World Court for advisory opinion. They would probably raise this point again when the matter comes this month before the United Nations Security Council.

The President interrupted, as I was about to add that I hoped I might be authorized to say that we would not oppose any such proposal if made to the Security Council. He said in substance that, while this might be helpful, there was little he could say on the subject at this time. It would all have to be worked out here and at Lake Success; and he repeated that, having kept in close touch with Mr. Lovett and General Marshall and seeing the picture as they do, he felt he could go along with what the Department might recommend.

Then, taking my leave, I thanked the President again for seeing me and for talking so frankly. Whatever the Department might authorize me to say on my return to Baghdad, our talk would have been immensely helpful to me. The situation gave us all much concern but there was nothing more reassuring than to know it was in good hands.

G[EORGE] W[ADSWORTH]

[Annex]

*The Ambassador to Iraq (Wadsworth) to President Truman*¹⁰

[WASHINGTON, undated.]

MR. PRESIDENT: I have sought this opportunity to see and pay my respects to you before returning to my post at Baghdad. I should welcome particularly any general directives you may feel it desirable to give me.

The Regent, Prince Abdul Illah, has charged me with presenting his compliments and kindest regards to you personally. He recalls with warmest appreciation that when visiting this country in 1945, he was your first official foreign guest in the White House. He and his ministers have anxiously sought American understanding and friendship.

The situation in Iraq, as throughout the Arab World, is gravely troubled. Strong new social and political ferments are at work. When I left Baghdad last September for temporary detail here the Prime Minister charged me with an important message.

Its essence was that, in a world of increasing political tension between the Western Powers and Russia, Iraq believed the time had come for it to take positive action to identify itself forthrightly with the major policies and regional strategic program of Great Britain and the United States.

Iraq, he said, in such a relationship, envisaged for itself a position closely resembling that of its neighbor and friend, Turkey. It could, too, helpfully play a role as "pivot" between the Saadabad group of countries* and those of the Arab League in the evolution of a common policy of defense against Soviet aggression and communist infiltration.

Further, he said, Iraq would need British-American assistance (and support when applying to the World Bank for credits) to realize its great Tigris-Euphrates Valley development project. He had particularly appreciated the expression of keen interest in this project which you authorized me last year to convey to the Regent.

However, the Prime Minister concluded, none of this could be brought within the field of practical politics unless a mutually acceptable settlement of the Palestine problem be found, with our help, by the United Nations.

Such a settlement, Mr. President, has not been found. Rather are we, today, in Arab eyes, chiefly and almost solely responsible for the United Nations recommendation for Palestine "Partition with Economic Union." Arab leaders are convinced that in spearheading that

¹⁰ The source text is a carbon copy undated and unsigned.

*These are the Moslem countries—Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan—which signed in 1937 at Saadabad (near Teheran) a pact of mutual assistance. Pakistan is a possible applicant to membership. [Footnote in the source text.]

action the United States was, under Zionist pressures, unfaithful to its own principles, notably those of self-determination and majority rule.

The United States is, and can hardly be otherwise, the main driving force in the United Nations. The Arab World does not object to this so long as it is convinced that our objectives are those of peace, security and fair dealing.

We are now, to put it bluntly, highly suspect in their eyes—to such a degree even that they fear these same Zionist pressures will impel you to order American troops to Palestine to implement by force that single portion of the General Assembly's recommendations which envisaged a sovereign Jewish state.

More than forty percent of the population of such a state would be Arabs whose ancestors had owned the land for many centuries; a hostile state, they say, lying athwart the world's most strategically important landbridge, which, running from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, separates some 20,000,000 Arabs in southwest Asia from a like number in northeast Africa.

Mr. President, until this Arab fear is removed, there will be little if any constructive work in the field of Arab-American relations which can be accomplished. Four points are outstanding:

- 1) The great Tigris-Euphrates Valley development project, which might in five years meet half the world's wheat shortage, cannot progress;
- 2) Our Middle East oil development schemes, on which success of your great European Recovery Plan may well depend, will be curtailed;
- 3) British-American strategic interest must continue to suffer, as in the case of the recently-signed Anglo-Iraqi Treaty¹¹ which led last week to fall of the Iraqi government amid popular repudiation of an alliance which would have assured us as well as Britain the use, in an emergency, of the greatest military air base in the Middle East;
- 4) Our moral influence, built in large measure by private American institutions and enterprise, through a century of Arab renaissance, must increasingly suffer from the stultifying effect of a new and growing Arab scepticism as to our political *bona fides*.

May I not, therefore, take back with me your personal assurance that the American Government will not support or participate in any project to impose partition by force? May I not say that no American troops will be so employed, either directly as an American force or disguised under the banner of the United Nations?

With such an assurance, I believe your representatives to the Arab countries, can effectively prevent direct action seriously harmful to vital American interests pending appropriate action by the United

¹¹ For documentation on this subject, see Part 1 of this volume, pp. 202 ff.

Nations to reconsider the Palestine Problem in the light of current developments.

It would, too, I believe, be immediately helpful were you to authorize your representatives at the Arab capitals to add that the American Government would not oppose, in any proper organ of the United Nations, any proposal to the effect that, before decision be taken to implement any of the present recommendations, except it be in general agreement with the wishes of the population, the competency of such organ so to decide be submitted to the World Court for advisory opinion.

I make this latter suggestion because an Arab resolution to seek such opinion on basic legal issues of the problem was defeated at Lake Success by but a single vote; and there is ground to believe that in a less emotional atmosphere it would have received a substantial majority.

A gesture of this nature now, if supplementing the suggested assurance as to the non-use of force, might well temporarily ease our strained relations with the Arab governments and enable your representatives near those Governments to exercise a beneficial moderating effect against the adoption of extremist policies (including direct armed aggression against Palestine) now under consideration in Arab capitals.

The essential objectives and major purpose of our regional policies in the Near East have long been effectively summarized by the phrase: "Peace, progress and stability." Today, I feel, time is of the essence. By now supporting Partition and the establishment of a Jewish state, we are supporting a policy most calculated to defeat our major purpose and which has already begun to produce the opposite, namely war, stagnation and chaos.

And, if we fail to achieve our major purpose, the probable end-results will be irreparable damage to our vital national interest. I conceive it probable even that such end results may well include eventual subjection of much if not all of the Arab World, and of Iran as well, to Soviet domination.

It is these conclusions which, as your Ambassador, I have felt it my duty to report.

In so reporting, I have not endeavored to suggest a solution of the Palestine problem. On that immensely troubling subject my own views, which I submit with all deference, may be outlined as follows:

- 1) No solution can be found unless the present recommendations of the General Assembly be changed;
- 2) Until they are changed, conditions in Palestine and the Arab World will become increasingly chaotic;
- 3) A workable solution can best be found within the framework of eventual compromise agreement between Arabs and Jews;

4) Such agreement can best be found after a period of direct United Nations trusteeship over the whole of Palestine, similar to that now envisaged for the Jerusalem area;

5) Earliest possible establishment of such a trusteeship seems vital to prevent the present situation from further, perhaps irreparably, degenerating towards chaos.

501.BB Palestine/2-448 : Telegram

The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State

NEW YORK, February 4, 1948—1:17 p. m.

TOP SECRET

138. Following meeting in my office this morning on Kashmir case, Sir Alexander Cadogan stayed behind and we discussed Palestine in light your 27, January 23. I asked Sir Alexander to inform me just what situation is in his relationships with Palestine Commission, informing him that Department is concerned at possible attitude of SC towards UK when commission's report is discussed.

In response to my specific question whether UK is furnishing utmost facilities by way of advice and continuing SC cooperation to commission from outset, Cadogan replied that to best of his ability he has been giving commission just that. He has been meeting with commission or having discussions with members of commission virtually every day. His experts have been in close touch with commission experts. He said two principal points concerning commission were, first, brief overlap from May 1, when according to present schedule commission would arrive, to May 15 when British would withdraw. On this point he said Lisicky had told him privately it was humanly impossible for commission to organize its job in this two-weeks interval but there was chance it could do so in month. Second point worrying commission was provision of some neutral force which would guarantee law and order and thereby permit commission to perform its function. He thought commission was critical of UK with regard to first point but not critical with regard to second.¹

Cadogan said information and advice which he had tried to give commission with full candor and frankness was not always palatable

¹ New York informed the Department, on February 2, that at a closed meeting of the Palestine Commission on January 30, Sir Alexander advised the Commission that the United Kingdom would defend the whole of Palestine until May 15 and thereafter only those areas occupied by British troops. He underscored British insistence that the Commission not arrive in Palestine more than two weeks prior to May 15, but conceded that one or two members of the Commission's Secretariat would be allowed to enter Palestine in April to make preliminary arrangements (telegram 126, from New York, 501.BB Palestine/2-248). The Palestine Commission advised Sir Alexander on February 3 that the British position concerning the time of the Commission's arrival in Palestine was not satisfactory (telegram 135, February 3, 10:15 p. m., from New York, footnote 1, p. 572).

to them because it is very difficult situation and facts speak for themselves.

Commission is considering possibility of sending members of its staff to Palestine before May 1, including one or two military men who could work on problem of a police organization. Cadogan has referred these questions to London for advice.

I asked him about possibility of commission going to London. He replied he thought this might be feasible and commission would, of course, in London get much wider range of technical advice.

[Here follows one paragraph giving Ambassador Cadogan's evaluation of the members of the Palestine Commission.]

In concluding our conversation Cadogan offered to put his experts and any information he has at our disposal.

AUSTIN

867N.01/2-648

Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson) to the Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs (Rusk)

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 6, 1948.

Subject: UNA Comments of January 26th on the Policy Planning Staff Paper on Palestine.

I have read with interest your comments of January 26th on the Policy Planning Staff paper on Palestine. While I believe that certain of the suggestions which you have made to Mr. Lovett are most valuable and should add materially to the value of the paper if the Policy Planning Staff decides to incorporate them, nevertheless, there are certain points concerning which I should like to make several informal observations to you.

Paragraph 2 of your memorandum poses certain questions which you believe should be answered in the Policy Planning Staff paper. In general I believe that it would be helpful to have these questions considered in the paper although I think certain factors should be taken into consideration which do not seem to be covered in the succeeding paragraphs of your paper. To begin with I think it is self-evident that a "new situation" has existed since the 29th of November when it became no longer a matter of hypothetical speculation but actuality that the Arabs of Palestine would not cooperate in the establishment of the plan recommended by the General Assembly. While there were many who predicted that the Arabs would not cooperate in such a venture, nevertheless, the efforts of the United States were directed toward securing the adoption of a plan which would not require implementation by force and would, therefore, necessitate the

cooperation of the parties most immediately concerned i.e. the Arabs and Jews of Palestine. The considerations discussed in the Policy Planning Staff paper were known by many at the time the decision to support the UNSCOP majority plan was taken but that decision rested on the hope that by some chance it would be possible to obtain the cooperation of the Arabs in the plan. In addition it was premised on what was generally considered to be the policy of the United States vis-à-vis the Jewish aspirations in Palestine.

With respect to paragraph 2 (b) of your memorandum it might be said that this raises the whole question of whether the plan for Palestine is to be a United States or a United Nations plan. The extent to which the United States should go in ensuring the success of the Partition Plan is one which must be related to our consistent view that the plan should be a United Nations plan and not a United States plan and one which in the final analysis would be acceptable to the peoples of Palestine themselves. This observation might be made with respect to paragraph 2 (c) also.

I think it would be helpful if the Policy Planning paper could incorporate a consideration of the question raised in paragraph 2 (d) of your memorandum. I do not know how detailed Mr. Kennan wishes to be on this subject. It might be possible to indicate in general terms the alternative courses available.

In paragraph 3 of your memorandum I wonder upon what basis you reached the conclusion "that armed intervention by the Arab States would clearly be aggression". Would this be aggression against the mandatory power and if so, would not we be in an anomalous position if the mandatory power denied that there was aggression? Supposing after the termination of the mandate of May 15th the Arab population of Palestine invited the Arab States into Palestine, would this be aggression?

I cannot agree that it is doubtful whether events have as yet indicated any new situation. It seems to me that the report received by the Security Council from the five nation Commission on February 1st¹ and the situation in Palestine itself clearly demonstrates that a new situation exists which did not exist on November 29th. The Palestine Partition Plan is manifestly unworkable. I think that with each passing day our task will be rendered more difficult and that by mid April general chaos will reign in Palestine. The new situation exists today and the only difference between now and April 1st is that at that time it will be far more acute.

Paragraph 4 of your memorandum draws an analogy between the action of the Arab States vis-à-vis Palestine and those of Albania,

¹ See the First Monthly Progress Report of the Palestine Commission and footnote 1, p. 572.

Bulgaria and Yugoslavia toward Greece. I think it is quite clear that there is a fundamental difference in the actions and attitude of the Arab States with regard to Palestine from the actions of Greece's three northern neighbors toward Greece. The Arab States believe that there is a definite inconsistency in the United Nations action on these two questions. They believe, with some justification that the United Nations is endeavoring to protect Greece from being partitioned and the legitimate government from being overthrown whereas in Palestine the United Nations is seeking to invoke partition against the wishes of the great majority of the inhabitants, contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter as set forth in Article 1 (2) providing for the self determination of peoples. In addition the efforts of the three northern neighbors of Greece, of course, have the political objective of establishing a Communist form of Government in Greece under the domination of the U.S.S.R. whereas the objective of the Arab States is the establishment of an independent Palestine. Were the situation in Palestine stabilized, Arab objections would cease.

I do not entirely agree with your conclusions set forth in paragraph 5 with respect to the role of the mandatory power. I think the fundamental objective of the United Kingdom with regard to the Palestine question is to be rid of the responsibility. I have not seen any evidence of a British desire to shift the Palestine problem to the United States. As you know there is general accord between the two governments with regard to the Middle East. There is the most frequent consultation and interchange of information on the courses of action which the two governments are pursuing. The difficulties presently inherent in the Palestine problem do not stem from the British position but rather from the questionable plan recommended by the United Nations, the adoption of which the United States was most instrumental in obtaining. Whether the British have been noncooperative since November 29th is a matter of considerable speculation. There is considerable evidence to the contrary. In any event it is not in the interest of the United States to commence arguing with the United Kingdom about who should bear the responsibility. It is in the interest of both countries that a plan acceptable to the Arabs and Jews in Palestine be worked out. I believe this is possible of obtaining.

With regard to paragraph 6 (a) I think we are aware of the elements of the General Assembly resolution to which the British object. I believe we should maintain the closest contact with the United Kingdom on this subject with the objective of finding a solution which would be acceptable. I doubt whether at this time the British would join us in diplomatic action to obtain the cooperation of the Arab States, or, if by any chance the British would join us, such action would have any good effect.

Whether the course of action suggested in paragraph 6 (b) of your memorandum is feasible is questionable. The more unilateral activity the United States engages in, the more the Palestine Partition Plan becomes identified as the United States plan for which we assume more and more responsibility.

The course of action alluded to in paragraph 6 (c) would be against the interest of the United States and the United Nations at this time.

With regard to paragraph 6 (e) I believe that such a course of action is politically most undesirable. If the United States is concerned about establishing a solution based on principle, nothing could be more far removed. To exploit the differences of one segment of the Arab world against the other is not a course of action which would serve the best interests of the United States, or the cause of peace and progress in the Near East. Likewise, I think it would vitiate a solution of the Palestine problem. A stable political situation in the Near East depends on cooperation among the Arab States. Palestine at this point is the most critical problem confronting those states. Should the United States undertake to exploit differences among the Arab States with regard to this question we would be doing incalculable harm to our policy in that area and to the general stability of the Near Eastern situation and finally to the prestige of the United Nations.

I agree with your comments on paragraph 8, however, I think that the course of action which we should follow is now clearly apparent i.e. there should be a reconsideration of the entire question.

Editorial Note

On February 7 the Legation at Jidda reported that Minister Childs on the previous day had presented an *aide-mémoire* to Amir Faisal along the lines of telegram 29 (telegram 50, 501.BB Palestine/2-748; regarding telegram 29 to Jidda, see footnote 3, page 571). Jidda stated on February 11 that the Acting Head of the Saudi Arabian Foreign Office had left a reply in the form of an *aide-mémoire* dated February 9. The reply stated that King Ibn Saud had seen the American communication and that he understood the circumstances that had compelled the friendly American Government to heed the opinion of its citizens. The King indicated his fears, however, that unless the American Government would guide public opinion to a safety zone, its interests in the Middle East might be threatened. He stated that the American communication had wrongly interpreted Arab opposition to partition as motivated largely by apprehension over Jewish strength. Rather the Arab position was based on adherence to Arab rights and defense of their countries. The very establishment of a Jewish State, he said, was a very aggressive and despotic idea, and

the partition of Palestine contradicted all constitutional principles and international practice. The King pointed out that the Governments of the Arab States, like that of the United States, must follow a policy in consonance with prevailing public opinion in their countries. He expressed his regret that it was impossible for him to comply with the American desire that he accept the partition resolution; indeed, he said, he must censure, in a friendly way, the United States for its suggestion that he use his influence to persuade the Arab States to accept partition. He concluded his views with a reiteration of his hope that American leaders would find a way of coming out of the dangerous position of insisting on the aggressive and erroneous policy of supporting partition (telegram 58, 501.BB Palestine/2-1148).

Minister Childs discussed the problem of Palestine with the Saudi Arabian monarch on February 21. The latter proposed that the "Question of Palestine partition be set aside as entirely incompatible with rights, interests Arabs" and that "Palestine should be closed to immigration and mandate continued until Palestine question could be re-examined more objectively by UN." (Telegram 78, February 21, from Jidda, 890F.001 Abdul Aziz/2-2148)

501.BB Palestine/2-248 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)

SECRET

WASHINGTON, February 9, 1948—8 p. m.

50. Your tel 121, Feb. 2¹. Careful study of first report submitted by Palestine Commission does not indicate that action by SC is necessary or desirable at this time. In fact Commission's report points to need for continuing negotiations with the Mandatory Power and to Commission's second special report on security and enforcement aspects of Palestine partition problem. This study by the Commission will be forthcoming by Feb. 15.

Accordingly in SC session Feb. 10 we feel that you should not participate in debate except, if discussion should wax acrimonious and emotional, to counsel patience and make a plea for objective thinking on the problem. You should state that you are much impressed by diligence and objectivity evidenced in Commission's first report and thank Commissioners for their effective contribution. You should then add that your Govt. believes Council should not undertake a full-dress debate or seek to reach definite decisions at this stage in light of Commission's first report which lays emphasis on need for further negoti-

¹ Not printed.

ations with the Mandatory Power, for negotiations with the Representatives of the Jewish and, if at all possible, the Arab communities in Palestine, and the fact that the Commission will next week introduce its special report on security and enforcement. These reasons impel your Govt. to feel that the Council's decisions can only be taken after thorough study of the Commission's next report, particularly since it is due within so brief a space of time.

For similar reasons should JA seek admission before Council to present its views you may make it clear that while we shall support right of JA and AHC to be heard (as authorized in Deptel 37, Jan. 30²), we question whether Council should now hear JA Representatives before having had opportunity to study Security Report of Palestine Commission.

Should question of Council's authority to assume jurisdiction in Palestine matter arise please be guided by terms of memorandum sent you under cover of Rusk's letter of Feb. 3 but in no circumstances indicate at this time whether this Govt. favors action being taken by SC. Jurisdictional question should be dealt with as technical matter only. Should question of submitting any aspect of Palestine problem to ICJ be broached please state that you must consult your Govt. We agree with your recommendation that communication of AHC set forth in your tel. 46 [146], Feb. 6,³ should best be met by dignified silence.

LOVETT

² Not printed.

³ Not printed; it gave the text of a statement of February 6 communicated to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by Isa Nakhleh, Representative of the Arab Higher Committee. The statement maintained that the partition resolution did not represent the sentiments of the United Nations and denounced the pressure allegedly put by the United States Delegation and Government on certain nations as "nothing short of political blackmail." (501.BB Palestine/2-648) The text of the statement is printed in United Nations document A/AC.21/10.

867N.01/2-948: Airgram

The Consul General at Jerusalem (Macatee) to the Secretary of State

JERUSALEM, February 9, 1948.

SECRET

A-34. In continuation of our A-274 of December 31, 1947,¹ which summarized developments in Palestine since the United Nations voted to recommend the partitioning of this country into Jewish and Arab states, we believe it appropriate to present in this and four following airgrams (Nos. A-35, A-36, A-37 and A-38²) further facts and estimates concerning the situation in this country.

¹ *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, p. 1322.

² No. A-38, February 9, not printed; for the remainder, see *infra* and pp. 609 and 611.

I. General.

Any hopes we may have held that the disturbances immediately following the UN decision represented a passing phase, and that more tranquil times would soon return, have now been dispelled. Violence waxes and wanes from one day to another, but an analysis of the frequency of incidents, and of other factors, will show it to be definitely on the increase.

The salient fact of life here is that in two brief months since the decision, more than one thousand persons are reported to have lost their lives, and more than two thousand have been wounded. This is a large number, but in considering it one should remember that these casualties have occurred with the British still doing a considerable amount of interfering in Arab-Jewish melees. Whatever the Jews and Arabs may believe or say regarding British favoritism toward each other, practically all independent observers in the country will agree that if the British had not been here the casualty roll would have been much longer.

The Government of Palestine is admittedly in a state of disintegration. Vital government services have been interrupted for long periods of time due to disturbances in the neighborhoods of government offices, and due to the unwillingness of local Jews and Arabs to work together. A day without shooting or an incident or two in Jerusalem, for example, is now unknown. Rifle and machine gun fire and heavy explosions in the center of Jerusalem are commonplace, even in the daytime.

Yet, neither the Jewish nor Arab community shows any desire whatever to compromise. The Jews say they are upholding a United Nations decision. The Arabs scorn that decision, which their press insists was arrived at by the use of shady methods, principally by the United States.

The Arabs have publicly threatened that UN Commission members who venture out of Jewish areas will be shot. The Jews, on the other hand, are reported to be urging the Commission to come to Palestine as quickly as possible in the hope that it will prove their contention that the mandatory is showing partiality to the Arabs; the Jews also say the presence of the Commission would have a good effect on the Arabs by showing them the UN means business. We do not agree that it would have that kind of effect.

Talks with the authorities indicate a possible switch of opinion as regards the advisability of the Commission coming to Jerusalem. Formerly, Palestine Government officials insisted that it must come to Jerusalem, even if it had to remain locked up in a building here. Now, the same officials doubt whether it should come at all, though they believe it might possibly set up in the Jewish area, near an army camp, and not far from the proposed Jewish-Arab frontier.

In private talks, Jewish officials say they have no doubts about their ability to set up their state and to give adequate defense to the Haifa-Tel Aviv coastal strip; they also say that defense arrangements in Eastern Galilee and the Negeb will be difficult; and they claim to be extremely anxious about the future of the 100,000 Jews in Jerusalem whose fate they see as dependent upon the efficacy of the International Police Force envisaged for the Jerusalem Zone by the United Nations. (Section II, "The Jewish Situation", contained in A-35.³)

MACATEE

³ *Infra.*

867NO.1/2-948 : Airgram

The Consul General at Jerusalem (Macatee) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

JERUSALEM, February 9, 1948.

A-35. Continuation of A-34.

II. *The Jewish Situation.*

Jewish efforts at the moment are primarily concentrated on maintaining their communications. Buses and trucks are being armored as rapidly as possible, convoys are organized regularly between important points, and armed men travel with each group of vehicles for the purpose of warding off attacks. The Jews are also concerned with the protection of their suburbs in the large, mixed cities of Haifa and Jerusalem. These sections are now largely behind barbed wire and roads leading into them are barricaded. A barbed wire barricade has also been erected by Haganah in the no-man's-land between Jaffa and Tel Aviv.

Thus far, the Jews have been successful in maintaining communications. It may not be a pleasure to ride in the semi-dark interior of an armored bus, with daylight seeping in only through rifle slits, but the fact remains that those Jews who must travel can generally do so.

Another of the Jewish defensive arrangements which has apparently caused the Arabs considerable trouble is the construction of the kibbutzim, or settlements. The Arabs have launched attacks on several of these, that on the Kfar Etzion group near Hebron reportedly involving two to three thousand men. Yet none of the settlement defenses have been pierced. It should be said in this connection that only once have the Arabs apparently attempted to storm a kibbutz, which was in the Kfar Etzion affray. The report on that action indicates that the Jews allowed the Arabs to press the attack and then drove them into minefields with automatic fire, causing them heavy losses. A member of the Arab Higher Committee later told an officer of the Consulate General that the Kfar Etzion attack had to be called off as it was "badly organized."

In the field of offense, which the Jewish Agency prefers to term "preventive defense", we have seen all three Jewish armed groups in action, Haganah, Irgun and the Stern Gang. Their offensives generally consist of demolitions of Arab strong points, and forays into Arab villages which they believe to have been used as bases for Arab guerrillas. The blowing-up of the Old Serail in Jaffa (by the Stern Gang), the same type of action against the Semiramis Hotel in Jerusalem (by the Haganah), and the shooting of Arabs in Tireh Village (by the Irgun) are all examples of Jewish offensives. Such activities are designed, according to the Jews, to force the Arabs into a passive state.

In the field of propaganda, only the Haganah has attempted to influence the Arabs. In posters at first, and more recently in Arabic-language broadcasts, Haganah has taken the line that the Jews desire no quarrel with Arabs, but will give blow for blow.

Irgun's propaganda has been directed only toward warning the Yishuv¹ of worse times to come, because of British intrigue. They point to British disarming of Jews, to the refusal to grant a port and hinterland by February 1 in line with the U.N. recommendations, as indications of the British desire to weaken the Jews as much as possible by evacuation date, May 15. To these indications, Irgun propagandists will undoubtedly add the refusal of the British, as expressed by their U.N. Representative on January 30, to permit the organization of a Jewish militia prior to May 15. The point of Irgun's propaganda is that the Yishuv must prepare for a death struggle with "vast swarms of Arabs" from neighboring countries after May 15.

With respect to the above-mentioned militia, a certain amount of surprise was caused locally by the announcement that the Jewish Agency was asking for only 25,000 men. This surprise arose from previous claims that Haganah could muster 80,000, a figure which had been accepted in many quarters as a real indication of Haganah strength. It is pointed out in connection with the latter figure that some observers, while admitting it as overall Haganah strength, had said that mobilization of that number of men and women would probably cause Jewish economy to founder.

Finally, with respect to the Jews, a certain amount of uneasiness is apparent, not only among ordinary people, but among the leadership of the Jewish Agency. This uneasiness must be directly connected to press reports that the United Nations' Commission is by no means eager to come to this country and is, in fact, insisting on a force for its own protection and to aid it in implementing the recommendations of the Assembly. Well over half of the top-ranking Agency personnel are in the United States, including Shertok and Myerson, as are practically all of their technical experts. Some talk was caused locally

¹The Jewish Community in Palestine.

by the sudden termination of Rabbi Silver's² visit to Palestine, which he had intended should last for two or three months, and his hasty return to the United States.

The Yishuv and others are inclined to couple all these absences with the consistent attacks on the Near Eastern Division of the State Department now appearing in the news and editorial columns of the *Palestine Post* and other Jewish newspapers here. In addition, publicity given by Arabic newspapers to alleged anti-partition feeling among members of the American Cabinet has not gone unnoticed by the Jews.

These factors have not affected Jewish determination to establish their State. Hesitancy in UN circles, alleged second thoughts on the subject in Washington, local economic difficulties, Arab attacks, and what they believe to be the anti-Jewish bias of the Mandatory, have left the Jews unshaken. They have few illusions as to the immediate future, but they feel that if their cause should go under, the U.N.O. will go under with it, and they believe that is one thing the world will not permit.

(Section III, "The Arab Situation", contained in A-36.³)

MACATEE

² Abba Hillel Silver, prominent American Zionist leader.

³ *Infra.*

867N.01/2-948: Airgram

The Consul General at Jerusalem (Macatee) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

JERUSALEM, February 9, 1948.

A-36. Continuation of A-35.

III. *The Arab Situation.*

Since the report under reference, the principal development has been the influx of uniformed and trained Arabs, principally from Iraq and Syria. These men are said to head for the Tubas area, where they are immediately assigned to various groups already operating in the country. These groups have been identified in the Western Galilee, Ramleh-Lydda-Tulkarm, Jerusalem and Hebron districts. They have carried out several fairly large attacks on Jewish settlements, and have made persistent raids on trains in the Tulkarm area.

It is generally believed that the Arabs have gone so far as to set up areas of command, with Fawzi Kawukji in charge of operations north of a line from the Jordan to Nablus to the sea, and Abdul Kader Husseini in control of Arab units to the south of that line. These men are both experienced guerilla fighters. Coordination of the two is said to be in the hands of Ismal Safwat of Iraq.

With respect to the train raids, official figures indicate that the following amounts of foodstuffs were captured in this manner by Arabs between December 1 and 28:

120 tons wheat and barley
30 tons rice
190 tons flour
15 tons sugar
20 tons oranges
43 cows

In addition to the foregoing, the official list also adds the following items acquired by Arabs in the same manner:

100 tons of wood
190 tons cement
220 bags of mail
100 tons miscellaneous goods.

Official figures for January have not been published, but it is expected that they will at least equal those above. In fact, on January 30 the Food Controller of the Palestine Government found it necessary to issue a warning of serious suffering from food shortage if these raids continue.

Arab markets are glutted with food supplies. Ordinarily, a large part of Arab produce found its way to Jewish markets. Poultry, fresh vegetables and fruit are particularly abundant, though it is generally difficult to approach Arab markets in Jerusalem. The Consulate General has commenced obtaining food supplies from the Bethlehem market, which the French Consulate General has been doing for some time.

Manufactured products generally, and pharmaceuticals in particular, are not in plentiful supply in the Arab areas.

In Jerusalem, the Arab grip on the Old City remains firm. They hold all gates leading in, and only armored British convoys get through with food for the 1500 Jews who have been cut off practically since the U.N. decision. The Arabs must also be considered in control of all roads leading from Jerusalem. The Nablus and Hebron roads are not, of course, used by Jews, though the British occasionally take a convoy along the latter route. The offensive nature of the Arab position on the vital Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway can easily be seen by the conditions besetting the Jews who wish to travel on it: they must be in armored buses, which must travel in groups escorted either by British or Jewish armored cars.

A good deal of information is received on the alleged Arab intention to stay clear of the British, and to date it must be said that the Arabs have avoided giving battle to British units when the latter have intervened in settlement raids or highway ambushes. With armed bands

coming into the country at a steady pace, however, it remains to be seen whether Arab leaders can direct and control the energies of their followers to the extent they might desire. Even as it is, British troops are frequently held up by Arabs and their arms removed, and with the increase of Arab manpower, large-scale clashes with the British may become unavoidable.

While rumors of internal Arab dissension are, as usual, to be heard, we agree with the view Messrs. Clayton ¹ and Beeley recently expressed to an officer of the Embassy at London, that no Arab approaches the Mufti's stature in the eyes of Palestinian Arabs. He is the central figure on the Arab stage, and, as in other days, his organization shows itself to be ruthless in the pursuit of its aims. However, it is obvious that a great deal of Arab internal dissension exists, which may possibly weaken Arab action.

Insistent demands for more men and money often appear in the Palestine Arabic press, these demands frequently being coupled with the rhetorical question as to whether the Arabs of surrounding countries wish to see their Palestinian brethren go under in the face of the combined assault of Jewish men and money—aided by alleged British favoritism.

But whatever their dissatisfaction, Arab attention is mainly riveted on the activities of their guerrillas. They see and hear of the arrival of units from the surrounding states. They have food in their markets and their young men, if unemployed, may join the "National Guard". The clamor in the Jewish press concerning alleged "sabotage" of the U.N. decision by influential American and British officials encourages them. The prospect of U.N. intervention seems remote. They know of, and count on, U.S.-U.S.S.R. dissensions to block such intervention and thereby enable them to come to grips with the Jews.

(Section IV, "The British Situation", contained in A-37.²)

MACATEE.

¹ Possibly Brig. I. N. Clayton, of the British Embassy in Egypt.

² *Infra*.

867N.01/2-948: Airgram

The Consul General at Jerusalem (Macatee) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

JERUSALEM, February 9, 1948.

A-37. Continuation of A-36.

IV. *The British Situation.*

The British continue to be adamant in their refusal to assist in any shape or fashion the implementation of the partition recommendation.

Their officials, generally speaking, cannot get out of Palestine too soon. The Police have no sympathy for the Jews, and state freely their opinion that the latter will "collect a packet" from the Arabs once the British relinquish the mandate. Many Police add that in their opinion the Jews have "asked for it." However, high ranking British officials have expressed the belief that Jews and Arabs will eventually fight to a standstill and then come to an agreement which will not be based on partition. The British Army generally seems occupied with minimizing any casualties it might receive from strong intervention between Jews and Arabs. Aside from patrolling certain key areas, it employs decisive force only when disturbances seem likely to become widespread.

The British have refused to grant the Jews the port and hinterland which the U.N. recommended be handed over by February 1, 1948 for the purpose of enabling increased Jewish immigration to take place; they have, according to other reports, refused to permit the Jews to establish their capital at Haifa until after the British military have completely evacuated; and they have refused to countenance the establishment of a Jewish militia while Britain holds the mandate.

With respect to the ability of the U.N. Commission to control matters, the attitude of the local British may best be summed up in the words of one of their highest ranking officials: when the Commission arrives, Palestine "will go up in smoke". They want as little as possible to do with it, and feel that providing security for it, even for a short period of two weeks, will be a terrible task.

British women and children are expected to leave in the course of the next month or six weeks. A few British Police have signified their intention of remaining in a U.N. Police Force for Jerusalem, if one is established. But for the most part, Britishers look at Palestine and say they've "had it". Though they say little, one occasionally hears the brief comment from them that after the U.N. has guided Palestinian affairs for a while, it might come to the conclusion that the British haven't done so badly.

(Section V, "The Position of the Consulate General", contained in A-38.¹)

MACATEE

¹ Dated February 9, not printed.

501.BB Palestine/2-1048

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson)*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 10, 1948.

Participants: Mr. Isa Nakhleh, Representative of the Arab Higher Committee for Palestine
Mr. Henderson—NEA
Mr. Wilkins—NE

Mr. Nakhleh called on me this afternoon for the purpose of presenting a copy of the Arab Higher Committee's letter of February 6² to the Secretary General of the United Nations and for the purpose of ascertaining the attitude of the United States Government with regard to United Nations handling of the Palestine question.

Mr. Nakhleh said that he had two principal questions:

1) Did the United States Government intend to bring pressure on the members of the Security Council to cause them to vote for the sending of forces to Palestine to implement the General Assembly resolution of November 29, 1947?

2) Will the United States Government oppose a resolution of the Security Council calling for some form of reconsideration of the Palestine question?

In reply I told Mr. Nakhleh that:

1) The United States Government had no intention of bringing undue pressure on the members of the Security Council with regard to the dispatch of international forces to Palestine in order to implement the General Assembly resolution of November 29, 1947, and in fact I did not consider that the United States Government had brought undue pressure in the past on members of the United Nations. I said that, so far as I was aware, no decision had been reached by the United States Government with regard to the question of the necessity for any type of force to carry out the General Assembly's resolution of November 29, 1947.

2) I could not answer this question since I did not know precisely what the United States Government would do. So far as I knew this question had not been considered and, therefore, it was probable that no decision had been made with regard to it.

I told Mr. Nakhleh I had read the Arab Higher Committee's letter of February 6 to the Secretary General of the United Nations and

¹ Drafted by Fraser Wilkins of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs.

² See footnote 3, p. 605.

that I considered it most unfortunate for the Arab Higher Committee to make such statements as the following:

"It is an established fact that strong pressure was put on the Philippine Government by the United States Government ..."

I said that the Arab Higher Committee in making loose and unsupported charges was weakening its position in the eyes of world opinion. I pointed out that, so far as I was aware, no member of the executive branch of the United States Government had brought improper pressure to bear on the Philippine Government. Mr. Nakhleh pointed out in reply, that the Philippine delegation had switched its position, as had several other delegations, but conceded that he had no evidence of pressure by the United States Government itself.

L[OX] W. H[ENDERSON]

501.BB Palestine/2-1048: Telegram

The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State

SECRET URGENT NEW YORK, February 10, 1948—1:27 p. m.

155. The Palestine Commission's special report to the SC will not be ready until the end of the week because of a disagreement in the Commission as to whether it should state that there already exists in Palestine a threat to, or breach of the peace within the meaning of paragraph (c) of the GA Palestine resolution, or whether it should merely record the facts. Led by Medina, Lorgan and Francisco wish to pass judgment on the situation in the report, while Federspiel and Lisicky contend only the SC should make such a determination; Bunche informed USUN on February 9. He personally feels very strongly that the Commission should not officially make such a judgment, and believes that the views of Lisicky and Federspiel, with the aid of the secretariat, will prevail.

The special report draft states that some sort of international force (the exact terminology not having been agreed upon) will be necessary in Palestine as soon as the British leave in order to preserve law and order and defend Jewish state.

The Commission will make no recommendations as to the type or size of force, its method of recruitment or similar questions. The Commission has a further reason for insisting on some type of international force, Bunche pointed out, because, if it must entirely depend on Haganah for its strength, the Commission would lose its freedom of action.

In discussing the size of the international force, Bunche was of the personal opinion that not more than one highly mechanized division,

with the aid of Haganah, would be necessary to protect the Jewish state from Arab guerrillas. He pointed out that the British needed 80,000 troops in Palestine because they had to guard every post office and other civil installation as well as communications and the military installations. He pointed out that a large part of the British force was engaged in fighting Irgun and the Stern Gang, which would no longer be necessary. He believed there would be small need for force in the Arab state because either the Transjordan army will have occupied it or the Arab leaders will be keeping order.

The Commission, on February 9 received a letter from Cadogan stating that it would be welcome to visit London at any time, and informing them confidentially that in London they might discuss the question of arrival in Palestine earlier than May 1. The letter added that various political questions might be discussed with Creech Jones¹ who is arriving in New York February 15 to head the UK delegation for the SC Palestine discussion.

In discussing [*Discussions?*] with the UK are going forward actively regarding the advance secretariat party which will go to Palestine. The British, who originally suggested one or two staff members should go, now suggest four officers and two secretaries. Bunche said that the British are now pressing him daily to send some staff to Palestine at the earliest possible date. Bunche terms this a British maneuver to enable them to say to the SC that, although the Commission itself has not gone to Palestine, as a substitute there is a secretariat advance party. Bunche is derisive as to how much four men could do in the present situation. He is drafting a letter from the Commission which will specify the tasks which the secretariat party would undertake and demand from the British prior guarantees that the party could operate effectively, have access to officials, files, and to Jewish and Arab leaders. He also is going to demand that a substantial secretariat staff be allowed to enter. Lisicky has flatly refused to permit Bunche to head this advance party. Probably Renborg, a Swedish national, will head it.

Bunche states that SYG Lie feels strongly that the Palestine issue is a basic one for UN. On Lie's first day back from Europe, he sent for Bunche to give him a status report at Lie's home. He indicated that he probably would make a strong statement on the need for effectively carrying out the GA Palestine resolution when the SC takes up the matter. Lie reported that he had been unsuccessful in his attempts to secure UK promises of greater cooperation with the Commission while in London. However, he found Eden and other Conservative leaders critical of the Bevin policy of leaving Palestine precipitously.

¹ Arthur Creech Jones, British Colonial Secretary.

Bunche expressed grave fears that if a special GA session were called regarding the Korean or Greek situation, that the Palestine question might be reopened. He believes this would inevitably result in revoking the partition plan because it is his opinion, generally shared by the top secretariat officers, that the US has substantially weakened in its stand in favor of partition. Without US support, Bunche believes that partition would be abandoned. Thus UN would have surrendered to the Arab threats of force. Bunche points out that the Arab threats go far beyond the lack of cooperation with UN displayed by the USSR and its satellites in Korea and Greece. He believes that abandonment of the Palestine plan under these conditions would be a death blow to UN prestige. Bunche says that he and Sobolev² have discussed the situation in these terms and Sobolev stated that if partition were reconsidered and abandoned, he would feel that the UN was such a failure that he would quit. Sobolev has not given Bunche any indication of what the USSR position on Palestine might be when it comes to the SC.

The Commission headquarters must be in Jerusalem, in Bunche's opinion, both for psychological and practical reasons. He does not believe that the Commission should locate in a Jewish State city because that would make cooperation with the Arabs impossible from the beginning.

Aqir airport should not be Commission headquarters although the UK has been informed that the Commission might like to have the use of the installations there. Bunche thinks that the Commission should fly to Lydda airport and move into Jerusalem, ignoring the Arab threats.

A second special report to the SC on the problems of Palestine civil administration will be submitted in about two weeks.

AUSTIN

² Arkady Alexandrovitch Sobolev, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations.

867N.01/2-1048: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Syria

SECRET

WASHINGTON, February 10, 1948—6 p. m.

20. During conversation in Dept today with Syrian Minister and Lebanese and Iraqi Chargés Henderson asked that they convey to their Govts immediately the serious concern aroused over reports that they were actively encouraging recruitment and training of armed bands on their territory for purpose of fighting in Palestine, and that such armed bands had actually entered Palestine and were participating in the disorders.

Henderson urged in interests of Arab States and peoples themselves and of security in Middle East and of world peace that their Govts not permit further contingents to enter Palestine from their territories and that contingents which might possibly be in Palestine be withdrawn. He pointed out that the three countries were laying themselves open to most serious charges of aggression before United Nations and that if they persisted in this course processes might well be set in motion which would render it extremely difficult to find peaceable and constructive way out of difficult situation now existing in Middle East.

He asked that they urge upon their Govts desirability taking measures to insure that neither arms nor armed men be permitted to cross their frontiers into or en route to Palestine, and that they permit no other acts which might be considered as constituting armed attacks, aggression or threats of aggression.

Above is for your own background and not to be divulged to anyone. You may however, your discretion, take similar line in discussions relating Palestine which may take place between you and responsible local officials.

Sent Damascus, repeated Baghdad, Beirut, Jerusalem, Cairo, Jidda.

MARSHALL

501BB. Palestine/2-1148

*Draft Memorandum by the Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs (Rusk) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 11, 1948.

Subject: Shift to New Position on Palestine

The following represents an attempt in the confines of two pages to suggest the logic by which this Government or other Governments might contrive a "New Look" at the Palestine problem:

1. The reports of the Palestine Commission indicate that the Assembly's resolution of November 29, 1947, recommending the partition of Palestine, is unworkable without resort to war.

- a. War by the Arab States against the Jewish State (and United Nations Representatives in Palestine).
- b. War by the United Nations against:

- (1) Arabs in Palestine.
- (2) The Arab States.

2. The United Nations Charter clearly empowers the Security Council to use force to resist aggression and keep international peace.

¹ Drafted by Mr. McClintock.

The Charter does not authorize force to be applied within a State to compel a political settlement. The purpose of the United Nations is to keep peace, not to make war.

3. To relax arms embargoes in order to arm the Jewish and Arab State militias will merely give official UN approval and aid to inter-racial and inter-religious war in Palestine. Such wars in the light of history have always been the most fanatic and destructive of human and moral values.

4. The United States Representative in the Security Council or the representative of some other government (the Chinese have already offered their services in this respect) could point to the absence of Security Council forces under Article 43, ask the members if the Security Council is prepared to go to war in Palestine or to approve war in Palestine, and suggest that before so perilous a step is taken the whole problem be reviewed by a special session of the General Assembly to be held, pursuant to the spirit of the resolution of November 15, 1947, in Europe. Meanwhile the Security Council would call on the Jewish Agency, the Arab Higher Committee, the Mandatory Power, and the Arab Governments, to give immediate pledges to keep the peace in Palestine. The Security Council would further call on the Mandatory Power to continue its administration in Palestine and its responsibility for the maintenance of law and order pending further recommendations to the Mandatory Power from the special session of the General Assembly.

The foregoing analysis is couched in terms of United Nations interest and does not take into account such obvious items of United States interest as:

- (1) the inevitability of Soviet participation in any United Nations international force sent to Palestine,
- (2) the strategic loss to the United States of Arabian oil supplies,
- (3) the loss to the United States of Arab friendship, which is an essential prerequisite to utilizing the Middle East as a strategic lodgement for eventual United States security forces.

4 [5]. At the special session of the Assembly the United States would be prepared to support a trusteeship for Palestine to replace the present mandate until such time as the Jews and Arabs could work out a *modus vivendi*. Such a trusteeship could either be administered by the United Nations as is contemplated for the proposed trusteeship of Jerusalem or it could be administered by the remaining three of the Allied and associated Powers of World War I—the United States, the United Kingdom, and France.

PPS Files, Lot 64 D 563

*Memorandum by Mr. George H. Butler of the Policy Planning Staff
to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 11, 1948.

PPS/21

MR. LOVETT: Attached herewith is a paper prepared at your request by the Policy Planning Staff on "The Problem of Palestine." In accordance with your suggestion, it consists of two parts:

1. A statement of the present position of this government with respect to the problem, and
2. A summary of the alternative courses of action now open to us, including an estimate of the consequences in each case.

The Staff realizes that the Palestine case may shortly be brought up for consideration in the U.N. Security Council and that this document may not be in time to affect the decisions which must be made as to the position which our representative should take on the subject. Consequently, the contents of the paper should not in any way relieve the operational officers in the Department of their responsibility in this connection.

If you approve, it is suggested that the document be made available to the Staff of the National Security Council¹ for its study of the Palestine problem. No conclusions or recommendations are included in the paper. That phase of the matter could be worked out by the NSC Staff.

GEORGE H. BUTLER

[Annex]

Memorandum by the Policy Planning Staff

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 11, 1948.

PPS/21

THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE

A. PRESENT POSITION OF THE U.S. WITH RESPECT TO PALESTINE

1. The UN General Assembly on November 29, 1947, by a vote of 33 to 13 with 10 abstentions and one member absent, adopted a resolution recommending the partition of Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish sovereign states, substantially as proposed by the majority report of the UN Special Committee on Palestine. The U.S. Govern-

¹The Department, by memorandum of February 12, submitted the document as a working paper to the National Security Council, with the understanding that it did not necessarily represent its final views (501.BB Palestine/2-1248).

ment after very careful consideration voted in support of the resolution despite the realization that the Arabs of Palestine and the Arab States were strongly opposed to the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. In its support of partition the U.S. Government was motivated by the following considerations:

(a) A review of the statements and expressions of policy by responsible American officials, resolutions of Congress, and political party platforms of the last 30 years indicated that unless there were some unanticipated factor in the situation the trend of U.S. public opinion and U.S. policy based thereon practically forced official U.S. support of partition.

(b) The majority report of the UN Special Committee on Palestine recommending partition actually did represent a new factor in the situation but one which supported the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine.

(c) Public opinion in the United States was stirred by mistreatment of Jews in Europe and by the intense desire of surviving Jews to go to Palestine.

(d) The troubled situation in Palestine accompanied by the decision of Great Britain to withdraw as the mandatory power made it evident that a solution of the Palestine problem could no longer be postponed.

2. Owing to its long concern with the Palestine problem and in a desire to achieve a fair solution, the U.S. Government welcomed presentation of the problem to the United Nations and made every effort to see that an impartial committee of the UN General Assembly was set up with broad terms of reference to examine the problem. We consistently adhered to the position that nothing should be done to hinder the Special Committee while it conducted its investigations, and at no time did we directly or indirectly endeavor to influence the committee's recommendations. The decision of the U.S. Government to support the committee's majority plan was based primarily on the view, expressed to the General Assembly by Secretary Marshall on September 18, 1947, that "great weight" should be accorded the majority opinion of a UN Committee.

3. During the UN discussions on the question of partition the U.S. took into account the statements of Jewish leaders that they would be able to handle the situation in Palestine if partition took place. Thus, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Chairman of the American Section of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, declared before the UN *Ad Hoc* Committee on Palestine on October 2, 1947:

"The Jewish people in Palestine, I repeat, will be prepared to defend itself. It will welcome, of course, whatever support can properly be given to it by the UN or its members, pursuant to the decisions of the UN";

and, after noting the UK announcement that British forces might be subject to early withdrawal from Palestine,

"In that event, in order to avoid the creation of a dangerous vacuum which might affect public security, the Jewish people of Palestine will provide without delay the necessary effectives to maintain public security within their country."

4. In deciding to support the majority report, the U.S. Delegation to the General Assembly took the position that this Government should not use U.S. power and influence in prevailing upon other countries against their will to support partition. The U.S. Delegation was instructed that it should explain our reasons for supporting partition but should not exert pressure on other delegations. While it has been shown that unauthorized U.S. pressure groups, including members of Congress, sought to impose U.S. views on foreign delegations, so far as can be determined no undue pressure was brought to bear upon other countries by U.S. Government officials responsible to the Executive. In any event, this Government considered the vote of the General Assembly as reflecting a belief that partition was the best of the solutions of the Palestine problem which had been advanced.

5. The U.S. Government has adopted the point of view that if the problem of Palestine, long a source of suspicion and uneasiness, could once and for all be eliminated by acquiescence on the part of the Arab States in the UN General Assembly decision on Palestine, difficult as such acquiescence might be, a disturbing influence in international affairs would be removed and the security of the Middle East measurably strengthened. We have expressed the conviction that if there is to be a sense of security as well as a developing prosperity in that area, the countries of the Middle East and those non-Middle Eastern powers who sincerely desire the principles of the UN Charter to be applied to the area in the interest both of the Middle Eastern people and of world security must work with cordiality and mutual trust. This viewpoint has been urged orally and confidentially in the name of President Truman upon King Farouk of Egypt,² King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia,³ and Governor General Jinnah of Pakistan.⁴

6. Likewise King Farouk, King Ibn Saud and Governor General Jinnah have been informed of the President's hope (a) that in their disappointment and resentment at the recommendation of the General Assembly, the Governments of the Arab States will not attempt by armed force, or will not encourage the use of armed force, to prevent the carrying out of that recommendation; and (b) that Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan will use their influence with the Arab States to persuade them not to resort to actions which might undermine the present order in the Middle East and eventually lead to a world con-

² See telegram 1695, December 26, 1947, *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, p. 1319.

³ Telegram 29, February 3, to Jidda, not printed; but see footnote 3, p. 571.

⁴ See telegram 31, January 28, to Karachi, p. 569.

flict in which the peoples of the Middle East might be the most tragic sufferers.

7. This matter being in the hands of the UN, we have not felt it incumbent upon us to take any additional action in regard to the Palestine situation except to suspend authorization for the export of arms, ammunition and other war material intended for use in Palestine or neighboring countries.

B. ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION

Generally speaking, there are three possible courses which the U.S. might now pursue with respect to the problem of Palestine:

(a) Fully support the partition plan with all the means at our disposal, including the use of armed forces under the UN.

(b) Adopt a passive or "neutral" role, taking no further steps to aid or implement partition.

(c) Alter our previous policy of support for partition and, through a special session of the General Assembly, seek another solution to the problem.

1. *Full Support of the UN recommendation for partition, based on a determination to see the successful establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine*

Under this course of action, we would take steps to grant substantial economic assistance to the Jewish authorities and to afford them support through the supply of arms, ammunition and implements of war. In order to enable the Jewish state to survive in the face of wide scale resistance from the Arabs in Palestine, from the neighboring Arab States, and possibly from other Moslem countries, we would be prepared ultimately to utilize our naval units and military forces for this purpose.

In the Security Council, we would seek to give effect to the UN recommendation that "any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged" by the resolution should be regarded as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter. Thereafter we would assist in implementing the recommendation by sending armed forces to Palestine either as part of an international force under Article 43 or on a volunteer contingent basis to enforce partition. Since it is clear that no other nation except Russia could be expected to participate in such implementation to any appreciable extent, we would supply a substantial portion of the money, troops and arms for this purpose. If Russia participated, we would at least have to match the Russian effort in this respect.

Any aid to the establishment of a Jewish state such as described above, and withheld from the Arabs, would be construed by the Arabs as a virtual declaration of war against the Arab world. U.S. assistance in any form to the enforcement of partition, particularly by the use

of armed forces, would result in further deterioration of our position in the Middle East and in deep-seated antagonism for the U.S. in many sections of the Moslem world over a period of many years. We would be threatened with

(a) Suspension or cancellation of air base rights, commercial concessions, and oil pipeline construction, and drastic curtailment of U.S. trade in the area;

(b) Loss of access to British air, military and naval facilities in the area, affecting our strategic position in the Middle East and Mediterranean;

(c) Closing of our Near East educational, religious and philanthropic institutions;

(d) Possible deaths, injuries and damages arising from acts of violence against individual U.S. citizens and interests in the area; and

(e) A serious impediment to the success of the European Recovery Program, which is dependent on increased production of Middle Eastern oil.

2. *Adoption of a passive or "neutral" role, taking no further steps to aid or implement partition*

The adoption of this course of action would involve the maintenance and enforcement of our embargo on arms to Palestine and the neighboring countries. We would give no unilateral assistance to either the Jewish or Arab Palestine States financially, militarily or otherwise. In so far as possible, we would require an attitude of neutrality to be observed by all persons or organizations under U.S. jurisdiction. We would oppose sending armed forces into Palestine by the UN or any member thereof for the purpose of implementing partition, and we would oppose the recruitment of volunteers for this purpose.

Such a course of action would rest on the assumption that implementation of the General Assembly resolution was a collective responsibility of the UN and that no leadership in the matter devolved upon the United States. We would take the position that the UN machinery created by the partition plan should handle the question of implementation, and that the five-man Palestine Commission should proceed with the task entrusted to it of taking over control from the British. We would leave it to the peoples in Palestine to give effect to the General Assembly resolution.

This course would have the advantage that it would not be necessary for us to become embroiled in the Middle East through active support of the partition plan. At the same time we would not have to alter our original basic policy of support for partition.

The consequences of such a policy, while not further embittering our relations with the Arab world, would not however prevent the situation in Palestine from deteriorating even further. It would not be possible

to prevent the arming of Jews and Arabs by ardent sympathizers on the one hand and profit-seeking arms smugglers on the other, or Communist assistance to both sides. Disorder and bloodshed on a large scale would take place when the British withdrew from Palestine. The strongest kind of pressure would be brought on the U.S. to act in the chaotic situation which would ensue. Even if we should oppose any move in the Security Council to send armed forces there would remain the possibility that the USSR might intervene actively in behalf of the Zionists.

Politically, this passive attitude would be extremely difficult to maintain in the United States. It would, moreover, make impossible any possible future intervention on legal or moral grounds in Greece or Italy for example. The confusion and chaos which would result in the Middle East in the light of a passive attitude by the United States would be exploited by the Communists and might develop into a serious threat to our national security.

3. Altering our previous Policy of Support for Partition and seeking another Solution to the Problem

The special report of the UN Palestine Commission on security phases of the problem will emphasize the need for an international armed force if the partition plan is to be carried out or even if a complete state of chaos in Palestine is to be avoided at the termination of the British Mandate on May 15. If we should determine that it would be inadvisable to join in the carrying out of the UN resolution on this basis, our course of action would call for a special session of the General Assembly to consider the situation anew. Abandoning our support of partition as impracticable and unworkable in view of the demonstrated inability of the people of Palestine to assume the responsibilities of self-government, we would under this course of action attempt to seek a constructive solution of the problem.

As a first step in this direction we would seek to have the Security Council explore other avenues of a peaceful settlement when the Palestine case comes up for its consideration. Specifically we would endeavor to bring about conciliation or arbitration of the problem. We would propose that while working for such conciliation or arbitration, a special session of the General Assembly be called to consider a new solution in the form of

- 1) An international trusteeship or
- 2) A federal state,

with provision for Jewish immigration provisions in either case.

A trusteeship could take one of several forms: a three-power trusteeship of the U.S., UK and France, a joint U.S.-UK trusteeship either

with or without some of the smaller states, or a general UN trusteeship with the Trusteeship Council as administering authority. Alternatively, a federal state with cantonization, a plan which the British originally favored as having the greatest chance of success, could be discussed. We would make it clear that we did not favor the introduction of an international armed force for the implementation of any such solution.

This course of action would encounter strong opposition from the Zionists. It would, however, probably have the support of the Arab States and of world opinion in general. Our prestige in the Middle East would immediately rise and we would regain in large measure our strategically important position in the area. Our national interests would thus be served and our national security strengthened, notwithstanding the disfavor with which such a procedure would be viewed by Zionists elements.⁵

⁵ The Minutes of the Policy Planning Staff meeting of February 12 state: "Mr. Butler reported his discussion with the Secretary and Mr. Rusk on the Palestine problem. The Secretary plans to present yesterday's Planning Staff paper on Palestine to the [National] Security Council meeting today with the understanding that it will be considered by the NSC Staff as a working paper but not as representing State's position." (PPS Files, Lot 64-D563)

The editors have been unable to find in the files of the Department of State an account of the meeting of the National Security Council on February 12. Forrestal described the meeting in his diary, noting that Secretary Marshall outlined to the Council the three alternative courses of action concerning the Palestine problem as set forth in PPS/21 and observed that none of them carried his approval as yet. (Diary entry for February 12, 1948, Forrestal Papers; also *The Forrestal Diaries*, edited by Walter Millis, pp. 371-372.)

News Division Files

Memorandum of the Press and Radio News Conference of the Secretary of State, Wednesday, February 11, 1948, at Washington

[Extract]

No. 6

A correspondent, referring to the fact that Mr. Marshall had presented the American position on the Palestine issue at United Nations and had suggested the possibility of a volunteer police force, asked if this was still our position. Secretary Marshall replied that the American Government had not changed its position at all in regard to Palestine. He said we had indorsed the procedure which led up to the position of the United Nations and we were supporting the procedure consequent to that procedure [*position?*]. Secretary Marshall, when asked if the United States representative at the United Nations

had been or would be given instructions to reiterate the American position in Palestine, answered in the negative.¹

M[ICHAEL] J. McDERMOTT²

¹ President Truman, queried at his press conference of February 12 concerning the Palestine partition plan, replied that he had no comment. Asked whether there was any disposition to soften the plan, he stated that "The United States Government is supporting the United Nations. That is as far as I can go." (*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1948*, pp. 137-138.)

² Special Assistant for Press Relations to the Secretary of State.

Editorial Note

The Secretary of State, on February 12, 1948, sent a letter to Congressman Jacob K. Javits, with copies to twenty-nine Members of the House of Representatives, in reply to their jointly-signed letter of February 10. The reply dealt with questions raised by the Congressmen concerning British arms shipments to Arab nations, the activities of Arab nations as possibly endangering the maintenance of international peace and security, the means for making effective the General Assembly's decision to partition Palestine, and the measures the United States was prepared to undertake to assist in implementing that decision; for text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, February 29, 1948, page 281.

USUN Files

*Memorandum by Mr. John C. Ross to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)*¹

SECRET

[NEW YORK,] February 12, 1948.

In the light of the rapidly developing situation with regard to Palestine and in particular in the light of the attitude of the press (referred to more fully below), I telephoned Mr. Rusk this afternoon and had a talk with him about the status of our preparation for handling the Palestine case when it comes up in the Security Council.

I told him that I realized he is in a very difficult position. We here in the Mission wanted to be just as helpful as we possibly could be to him and to the State Department; on the other hand, we also were in a somewhat difficult position.

I said that there was an obvious desire on the part of other delegations to discuss the Palestine case with us. Porter McKeever,² I under-

¹ This memorandum was "For Ambassador Austin—no other distribution".

² Chief of the Office of Public Information, United States Mission at the United Nations.

stood, had reported to him when he was in New York the day before something about the attitude of the press, namely, that the press was taking a very critical view of the State Department and of the Mission and was very much concerned about the relationship of the Mission and the State Department in the development of our policy in this matter.

[Here follow details of press criticism.]

I told Dean further that if I followed my natural inclination I would be talking to a great many people on the other delegations, not necessarily at this time to tell them our views if we were not ready to do this, but at least to give them an opportunity to talk and find out their views. [Here follow examples.]

Dean said he thought he appreciated our difficulties. He said he had been in a most difficult position himself. This matter was being dealt with at the highest levels in Washington. They had strict orders to "clamp down". He wanted to help us, of course, as much as he could and he wanted our help so far as we could give it.

He hoped that it would be possible for him to come to New York on this matter no later than next Tuesday night. Meanwhile, he thought all we could say in response to inquiries was that we had not yet had any instructions from the Department. He realized that this was not altogether satisfactory but he was afraid it was the best that could be done in the circumstances.

He thought we should be responsive to those who sought us out and wanted to express their views; in other words, we should not avoid them. On the other hand, we should not ourselves for the time being seek others out for the purpose of discussing Palestine with them.

[Here follows the remainder of conversation, dealing primarily with the timing of future discussion in the Security Council on the Palestine problem.]

501.BB Palestine/2-1348

*Handwritten Notes by Mr. Robert M. McClintock*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON, undated.]

Drastic Step

1. At this juncture it would be a drastic step to admit that our advocacy on Palestine for years past and our recent championing of partition, was a mistake.

¹ Prepared for "Meeting with National Security Council Friday, February 13, 1948".

Need for New Situation

2. Therefore, any change in policy should be based on a new situation: clear evidence that refusal of Arab population, or of Arab Govts, or U.K., to cooperate makes plan unworkable. Or, failure of UN members to join in carrying out resolution. For example, SC may not have 7 votes in favor. Basically, we must be convinced that state of affairs *in Palestine* creates a new situation which forces us for a review of the position.

No Change in Present Policy

3. Meanwhile U.S. Palestine policy is as set forth in terms of GA resolution. We should try to carry out terms as well as possible.

Arab Aggression

4. Arab Aggression—let there be no mistake that we shall back down under it. If Arab States aggress we shall treat them as we have aggressors against Greece.

Arms Embargo

5. Arms embargo—have obligation under Charter to do nothing which would threaten peace, and under international law not to get into gun-running business. However, will cooperate if Commission and Mandatory agree to arm militias.

Alternate Plan

6. Alternate plan imperative if new situation arises, *including readiness use U.S. forces*. Trusteeship ²

² Mr. McClintock prepared additional handwritten notes, also undated, but presumably after those printed here, which read as follows: "*National Security Council*

"1 Difficult to change course

"2 Can't send troops

"3 Politically difficult

"4 Don't want Russians to send troop[s]."

The two sets of handwritten notes have been filed together.

Editorial Note

The Minutes of the Policy Planning Staff meeting on Saturday, February 14, state in part that "There was a discussion of the position to be taken by Mr. Villard at the National Security Council Staff meeting to be held later this morning on the subject of Palestine. The attached paper was agreed as the position Mr. Villard should take on the point mentioned."

The attached paper, dated the same day, reads in full as follows: "The State Department member proposed that, when the United

Nations Security Council considers the report of the UN Palestine Commission, the policy of the U.S. should be to adhere to its position of support of the General Assembly resolution on Palestine. The State Department believes that in the absence of pressure from the U.S. Government, there would not be sufficient affirmative votes in the Security Council for its implementation. The U.S. Delegation would be instructed not to exert any such pressure." (PPS Files, Lot 64 D 543) Henry S. Villard was a Member of the Policy Planning Staff.

867N.01/1-2848

The Secretary of State to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, at Hyde Park

WASHINGTON, February 16, 1948.

DEAR MRS. ROOSEVELT: I have your two letters¹ giving me a frank expression of your views on Palestine.

We are trying hard to formulate and follow policies with regard to Palestine which would seem most likely to promote peace and maintain the prestige and effectiveness of the United Nations. At the same time we must not ignore the humanitarian aspects of the problem.

It is very unfortunate that the delicate situation in Palestine should be made so explosive by the acts of terror and violence committed by both Jewish and Arab elements. Their lack of restraint is not only increasing human misery and suffering but also makes the implementation of the General Assembly's recommendations all the more difficult. The political situation in this country does not help matters.

Since the appropriate organs of the United Nations are now dealing with the Palestine question, we feel that so far as possible we should approach the problem through the United Nations rather than unilaterally.

A decision by the United States, for instance, to permit American arms to go to Palestine and neighboring states would facilitate acts of violence and the further shedding of blood and thus render still more difficult the task of maintaining law and order. We are continuing, therefore, to refuse to license the shipment of arms to that area.

I am told that the United Nations Commission provided for in the November 29 resolution of the General Assembly will shortly make

¹ Dated January 28, neither printed. One cited Mrs. Roosevelt's concern about an article by James Reston in the *New York Times* of the day before, calling attention to the development in the State Department and the Cabinet of sentiment to extend bipartisan or non-partisan foreign policy to all questions relating to Palestine. She gave her opinion that the United States decision to support the majority report on Palestine and United States leadership in the United Nations placed a responsibility on the U.S. to see the UN through in implementing its policies. She suggested that "the quicker we remove the embargo and see that the Jews and any UN police force are equipped with modern armaments . . . the better it will be for the whole situation." (867N.01/1-2848)

a supplementary report on the question of security in Palestine. It is to be hoped that the report will be of genuine aid to the members of the United Nations in deciding upon a practical course of action which gives some hope for a tranquil solution.

Faithfully yours,

G. C. MARSHALL

*First Special Report of the United Nations Palestine Commission to the Security Council: The Problem of Security in Palestine*¹

[Extracts]

[II] 9. The main facts controlling the security situation in Palestine today are the following:

(a) Organized efforts are being made by strong Arab elements inside and outside Palestine to prevent the implementation of the Assembly's plan of partition and to thwart its objectives by threats and acts of violence, including armed incursions into Palestinian territory.

(b) Certain elements of the Jewish community in Palestine continue to commit irresponsible acts of violence which worsen the security situation, although that community is generally in support of the recommendations of the Assembly.

(c) An added complication is created by the fact that the Mandate Power, which remains responsible for law and order in Palestine until the termination of the Mandate, is engaged in the liquidation of its administration and is preparing for the evacuation of its troops.

VIII. CONCLUSION

1. The pertinent facts in support of the Commission's unavoidable decision to call upon the Security Council for assistance in the discharge of its duty to the General Assembly are evident. The United Nations has taken a firm decision regarding the future government of Palestine. Following that decision the General Assembly created this Commission as its agent in the matter and charged it with responsibility, under the guidance of the Security Council, for implementing the Assembly's recommendations. This Commission now finds itself confronted with an attempt to defeat its purposes, and to nullify the resolution of the General Assembly.

2. For the above reasons the Commission has decided to refer to the Security Council the problem of providing that armed assistance which alone would enable the Commission to discharge its responsibilities on the termination of the Mandate, because it is convinced that there is no step which it can take under the resolution of the Assembly to improve the security situation in Palestine between now and the termination of the Mandate.

¹ Reprinted from SC, 3rd yr., *Special Suppl. No. 2*, pp. 10, 14, 18. The report dated February 16, was transmitted to Secretary-General Lie the same day.

3. The Commission realizes that time is a factor of utmost importance in its endeavor to fulfil the mandate given to it by the General Assembly. The Commission, therefore must emphasize the compelling need for prompt action, in order to avert great bloodshed and human suffering in Palestine, and to assist the implementation of the resolution which the Commission, notwithstanding all difficulties, is exerting every effort to carry out.

4. In the view of the Commission, a basic issue of international order is involved. A dangerous and tragic precedent will have been established if force, or the threat of the use of force, is to prove an effective deterrent to the will of the United Nations.

5. It is the considered view of the Commission that the security forces of the Mandatory Power, which at the present time prevent the situation from deteriorating completely into open warfare on an organized basis, must be replaced by an adequate non-Palestinian force which will assist law-abiding elements in both the Arab and Jewish communities, organized under the general direction of the Commission, in maintaining order and security in Palestine, thereby enabling the Commission to carry out the recommendations of the General Assembly. Otherwise, the period immediately following the termination of the Mandate will be a period of uncontrolled, widespread strife and bloodshed in Palestine, including the City of Jerusalem. This would be a catastrophic conclusion to an era of international concern for that territory.

PPS Files, Lot 64F563, Near and Middle East, 1947-1948

*Draft Report Prepared by the Staff of the National Security Council*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 17, 1948.

THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES WITH RESPECT TO PALESTINE

[Here follow thirteen numbered paragraphs presenting the problem and an analysis.]

¹ Circulated to the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force for comment on the consultant ("Kennan-Sherman-Wedemeyer-Weyland") level (attached memorandum of February 18 by Mr. Kennan to Under Secretary Lovett).

In a second attached memorandum, this one sent on February 19 by George H. Butler of the Policy Planning Staff to Carlton Savage, Executive Secretary of the Staff, appears the following: "As I told you and Mr. Kennan, Mr. Humelsine handed this [the draft paper] to me this morning. He told me that Mr. Lovett had said that S/P should keep the NSC paper for the present, that he did not want it circulated in the Department, and that the Palestine problem is being worked on by high Department officers.

"At his staff meeting this morning, Mr. Lovett cautioned all not to express any views to anyone about Palestine. He said that the problem was not one for unilateral decision by State; and that he does not know what the Department's policy is." Carlisle H. Humelsine was Director of the Executive Secretariat.

CONCLUSIONS

14. Any solution of the Palestine problem which invites direct Soviet participation in administration, policing, or military operations in Palestine is a danger to the security of the United States.

15. Any solution of the Palestine problem which results in the continued hostility of the Arab world toward the United States will bring about conditions which endanger the security of the United States.

16. The US should continue support for the Partition Plan in the UN by all measures short of the use of outside armed force to impose the Plan upon the people of Palestine.

(The military members of the Staff do not concur in the above conclusion and offer the following as a substitute)

The United States should alter its previous policy of support for partition and seek another solution to the problem. In so doing, United States should propose that, in view of the changed conditions as set forth in the Analysis, the UN Security Council request that a special session of the General Assembly be convoked to reconsider the Palestine problem.

17. The United States should urge the Government of the United Kingdom to continue to exercise its mandate over Palestine in the event of reconsideration of the Palestine problem by the General Assembly. The United States should also support a resolution by the UN Security Council requesting the UK to take this action.

18. In the event of reconsideration of the Palestine problem by the General Assembly, the United States should propose the creation of a trusteeship in Palestine with the UN Trusteeship Council as the administering authority. If necessary, this proposal should include provision for an international force to maintain internal order during a transitional period.

19. The United States should oppose dispatch of armed forces to Palestine for the purpose of enforcing the Partition Plan of November 29, 1947, against the objections of the inhabitants of Palestine.

20. The United States should immediately urge all Arab states to refrain from any act of aggression against Palestine.

Editorial Note

Secretary Forrestal noted in a diary entry for February 18 that Major General Alfred M. Gruenther of the Joint Chiefs of Staff reported to a meeting of State and Defense officials with President

Truman at the White House that day on the serious limitations of American military manpower. He estimated that forcible application of the partition resolution would entail a minimum of 80,000 and a maximum of 160,000 troops.

Secretary Forrestal had discussed the Palestine problem with General Gruenther on January 24. The entry in Forrestal's diary reads as follows:

"General Gruenther said that the strategic planning of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been substantially altered by the Palestine decision. That it had pretty well 'spiked' any consideration of any military operations in the Middle East and had pretty well disposed of the idea that the United States would continue to have access to the Middle East Oil." (Forrestal Papers)

501.BB Palestine/2-1948

Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] February 19, 1948.

In my conversation with the President today I followed the understanding you and I had this morning.¹

The President assured me whatever course we considered the right one we could disregard all political factors. I told him that Sunday night,² but more probably sometime Monday morning, we would send to his ship the proposed statement for Austin. He said he would be in St. Croix³ getting there about 5 in the morning, but not going ashore until 9 or 10; that he would give instructions that whenever a message came in it be delivered to him immediately wherever he was; that the arrangement I suggested was most satisfactory. I gave him no idea of what our solution might be but I did tell him of the careful approach you were making toward the reaching of a conclusion, particularly as to the San Francisco and Senate discussions and also the consultations with men of some international legal understanding.⁴

G. C. MARSHALL

¹ The editors have found no record of the nature of this understanding in the Department of State files.

² February 22.

³ President Truman departed from Washington on February 20 for a trip to the Caribbean and vacation in Florida. The Presidential yacht *Williamsburg* was waiting for the President in San Juan, Puerto Rico when he arrived there by air on February 21. He visited St. Thomas on February 22 and St. Croix on February 23.

⁴ These allusions were not identifiable by the editors.

867N.01/2-1948: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq

WASHINGTON, February 19, 1948.

56. Text statement issued Feb 16 by White House Press Secretary Charles Ross follows:

"In an effort to prevent the spread of disorder in the Middle East this Government has, during recent months, addressed appeals to certain interested governments stressing the importance, in the interest of Middle East security and world peace, of the exercise of restraint in dealing with the Palestine situation. Some of these appeals were made directly by the President."¹

MARSHALL

¹ This message was repeated to Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, and Jerusalem; a separate telegram, No. 46, was sent to Jidda the same day (867N.01/2-1848).

For the message sent on behalf of President Truman to the King of Egypt, on December 26, 1947, see *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1319; the message to the Governor General of Pakistan on January 28, 1948, is printed in telegram 31 to Karachi, p. 569; and the nature of the message to the King of Saudi Arabia is indicated in footnote 3 to telegram 31 to Karachi.

President Truman, in his *Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 159, writes that "On February 13 it was reported to me from our diplomatic missions in the area that the Arabs were expected to start full-scale military operations in late March.

"I published an appeal to the Arab leaders to preserve the peace and practice moderation. They rejected it flatly, charging that the United States had contributed to the unrest by supporting the Zionist cause. That was on February 17, 1948."

The editors have not been able to find a report to the President on February 13 or a reply from the Arab leaders dated February 17.

867N.51/2-2048

Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Financial and Development Policy (Ness) to the Director of the Executive Secretariat (Humelsine)

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 20, 1948.

Subject: British note on the Palestine Sterling Balances¹

Our comments on the above subject follow, for transmission to the Secretary for such other use as may be necessary prior to his weekly press conference.

I. BACKGROUND

On the 20th of February Ambassador handed the Secretary a note regarding the sterling balances of Palestine and Palestine's position in the sterling area. This note stated that on Sunday, February 22, the UK Government would block Palestine's sterling balances, amounting to about £100 million, except for £7 million which would be available

¹ Note No. G4/-/48 from the British Ambassador to the Secretary of State, dated February 20, not printed (867N.5151/2-2048).

for working balances and for current needs until the middle of May. The disposition of sterling balances after the middle of May will be the subject of consultation between Sir Alexander Cadogan and the UN Commission for Palestine and later will be the subject of negotiations with the joint economic board which is to be established under the terms of the U.N. resolution.

The note further stated that as of February 22 Palestine will no longer be a member of the sterling area. However, should the successor governments desire it, the British will be ready to discuss with them the question of readmission to the sterling area.

II. PROBLEMS RAISED BY THIS ACTION

(a) *Effect on U.S. interests.*

There appears to be no immediate or serious effect on U.S. economic interests. In the long run, the possible decreased availability of sterling for current purposes might increase both Palestine's need for financial assistance and pressure on the U.S. to provide it.

(b) *Relation to the Anglo-American Financial Agreement.*

Section 10 of the Anglo-American Financial Agreement calls for free convertibility of all sterling balances released after July 15, 1947. Since the balances to be released to Palestine will not be convertible, there is a technical violation of the agreement. However, this same problem has existed generally since the suspension of convertibility on August 20, 1947 and no new problem is raised in connection with the financial agreement.

(c) *Effect on Palestine of blocking balances.*

1. The superficial effect of this action is to limit the availability of sterling to Palestine. However, in the past there has been an effective limitation in the use of sterling balances through the British operation of the import control mechanism of Palestine.

2. The provision of £7 million between now and May 15 should be (according to oral statements of British Treasury representatives) more than adequate to take care of Palestine's needs of sterling during this period when export earnings are seasonally high because of heavy citrus exports. We are not prepared at present to endorse or to criticize this figure.

3. The availability of sterling after May 15 will be the subject for future negotiation. If there are to be any adverse effects on Palestine, they are likely to follow from the later negotiations rather than from this action. Although the note does not say so, the negotiations will probably cover the question of scaling down balances as well as the question of periodic releases.

4. There is a strong possibility that the results will be beneficial after May 15 when the present important mechanism is replaced by an administration of unknown competence. The blocking of balances will prevent the frittering away of reserves.

5. This action was not altogether unexpected. In a letter to the Export-Import Bank on January 23,² the Economic Advisor to the Jewish Agency stated that he would normally expect that drawings against sterling balances in 1948 would be limited to a rate lower than his estimate of £12.5 million for the present fiscal year.

(d) Effect on Palestine of removal from sterling area.

1. While all the technical details are not clear to us, we believe that there would be more difficulty in effectively preventing capital movements, even of blocked sterling, if Palestine remained in the sterling area. Logically, it should be possible to block sterling accounts in sterling area countries for either current or capital transactions, but the British evidently feel that this would not be consistent with the conception of the sterling area. Consequently, in order to have effective blocking for capital transactions Palestine may not remain in the sterling area. We have been informed by the British that capital movement from Palestine to South Africa have recently been on a fairly large scale.

2. By leaving the sterling area, Palestine will no longer be able to draw on Britain for her dollar needs against sterling, nor will she have the obligation of turning her dollars over to the UK for sterling area use. In the past, Palestine has been a heavy net earner of dollars for the sterling area, but we are informed that in the last two or three months dollar remittances from the U.S. for the use of the Jewish Agency have been held in New York and, therefore, have not been turned into the dollar pool.

III. RECOMMENDED ACTION

(a) That no reply be made to the British note at this time.

(b) If you are questioned regarding the British action on the Palestine sterling balances it is recommended that you say that this Government was informed by the British Government of its intention to make this announcement, that we recognize the desirability of taking any necessary steps at the present time to insure the maintenance of Palestine's reserves, and that we will follow developments with interest. Specific comments cannot be made until the results of future negotiations are known.

² Not printed.

501.BB Palestine/2-2148

*The Department of State to President Truman*¹

TOP SECRET

MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT

We give below working draft of basic position paper for Security Council discussion Tuesday. This has not yet been approved by Secretary Marshall or discussed with Forrestal. Its general line has been discussed with Austin who will come to Washington Monday for final discussions and briefing.

This draft is sent in order give opportunity for consideration fundamentals. We expect transmit draft Austin's remarks Sunday night or Monday morning after clearance Marshall and Austin and talks with military. Would greatly appreciate general indication president's views on following position paper very soonest possible. Note particularly last part of paragraph eight.

Working draft follows:

1. The problem of Palestine has been before the United Nations as a matter of special concern since the United Kingdom placed it before the General Assembly on April 2, 1947. The United States as a Member of the United Nations, has supported since that date those United Nations procedures which we considered best adapted to obtaining a broad and impartial expression of world opinion on the problem which would result in a just and workable solution and which would therefore commend itself to the Mandatory Power and to the people of Palestine.

¹The source text is dated February 23; yet the message was actually transmitted to President Truman two days earlier, at 9:30 p. m., Greenwich Mean Time. The latter point is definitely established by the copy of the message, identified as White 4 and marked "urgent and top secret" in the George M. Elsey Papers in the Harry S. Truman Library at Independence, Missouri. Mr. Elsey was Assistant to Clark M. Clifford; Mr. Clifford was Special Counsel to President Truman.

Mr. Rusk transmitted a copy of the message to Brig. Gen. Marshall S. Carter, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, with a memorandum dated February 22, which read: "Attached is a top secret message to the President which was received on board ship at 7:00 p. m. on Saturday [February 21]."

"The Secretary will wish to read the attached message tonight. Senator Austin is coming to Washington on a midnight train for conferences in the Department early Monday morning. The principal task now remaining (assuming Presidential approval of the policy line) is the completion and clearance of Senator Austin's speech in the Security Council for transmission to the President by not later than noon on Monday."

The editors speculate that an undated copy of the message of February 21 was retyped two days later, and dated February 23, for possible use at the conference on Palestine held at 9:30 a. m. that morning. A marginal notation on Mr. Rusk's memorandum of February 22 states that Messrs. Lovett, Austin, Armour, Rusk, Henderson, Ernest A. Gross, the Legal Adviser, and George H. Butler, a member of the Policy Planning Staff, attended the meeting.

The source text of the message to the President has filed with it various earlier drafts.

2. As a result of the recommendations of the General Assembly of November 29, 1947 on Palestine, that problem is now before several of the principal bodies of the United Nations for various types of action under the Charter. The United States, as a Member of the United Nations and of these bodies, will continue to deal with the question of Palestine as a Member of the United Nations and in conjunction with other Members. United States policy will not be unilateral. It will conform to and be in support of United Nations action on Palestine.

3. In view of the complexity and importance of the Palestine problem, every possible effort must be directed toward calmness and the avoidance of bitterness. The task will require the attention of the United Nations for some time. In dealing with the various aspects of this problem the United States Government will decide what is right for it to advocate as a Member of the United Nations and will pursue this course regardless of improper pressures or threats of any kind from any source, whether from within the United States, within Palestine, or from Arab groups outside Palestine.

4. During the consideration of this question in the United Nations, the delegations of the other Members should understand that United States Delegation alone is authorized to present the attitude of the United States Government.

5. The recommendations of the General Assembly have great moral force which applies to all Members regardless of the way in which they might have voted on any given recommendation.

6. Similarly, the Security Council, although not bound under the Charter to accept and carry out General Assembly recommendations, is nevertheless expected to give great weight to them.

7. The Security Council now has before it the recommendation of the General Assembly on Palestine of November 29, 1947 which was received by the Security Council on December 9, 1947 but which has not yet been acted upon by the Council. In addition, the Council has before it two reports of the Palestine Commission, the first Monthly Report of February 2, 1948² and a Special Report on the Problem of Security in Palestine of February 16, 1948.³ In determining what action it should take with respect to these three documents, the Security Council must consider the moral responsibilities which derive from the recommendation of the General Assembly as well as the obligations and the powers of the Security Council under the Charter.

8. The Security Council is required by the Charter to take the necessary action to maintain international peace if it finds that a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression exists with respect to Palestine. This might arise either in connection with incursions into Palestine from the outside or from such internal disorder as would

² The report was actually dated January 29; see the extract printed on p. 572.

³ See the extracts printed on p. 630.

itself constitute a threat to international peace. Although the Security Council is empowered to use, and would normally attempt to use, measures short of armed force to maintain the peace, it is authorized under the Charter to use armed forces if necessary for that purpose. A finding by the Security Council that a danger to peace exists places all Members of the United Nations, regardless of their attitudes on specific political questions, under obligation to assist the Council in maintaining peace. If the Security Council should decide that it is necessary to use armed forces to maintain international peace in connection with Palestine, the United States will be ready to consult under Article 106 of the Charter with a view to such joint action on behalf of the Organization as may be necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security. Such consultation would be required in view of the fact that armed forces have not as yet been made available to the Security Council under Article 43.

9. The Security Council, under the Charter, is empowered to take action to prevent aggression against Palestine from outside. The Council is also empowered to take action to prevent a threat to international peace and security from inside Palestine. This enforcement action must be directed solely to the maintenance or restoration of international peace. The Council is not authorized by the Charter, however, to employ enforcement measures to give effect to recommendations either of the General Assembly or of the Security Council itself. This applies to the General Assembly's resolution on Palestine. The Council's enforcement action, in other words, would be directed to keeping the peace and not to enforcing partition.

10. The Security Council can and should, however, endeavor to reach a settlement of the Palestine question along the lines of the General Assembly recommendation. It should accept the tasks which the General Assembly requested it to accept in the resolution of November 29, 1947 and should use its broad powers to find a peaceful settlement of the problem through agreement between the Jews and Arabs of Palestine.

11. In summary, the Security Council takes action on the one hand to maintain international peace, calling upon its full authority under the Charter if necessary to use enforcement measures to that end; on the other hand, it should attempt to carry out the requests of the General Assembly with respect to the partition plan, short of the use of its enforcement powers to impose the plan upon the Mandatory Power and the people of Palestine. In any event, it should make every effort to use its authority and experience in the field of peaceful settlement to obtain a result which is acceptable to the Jews and Arabs of Palestine.

The substance of the following three numbered paragraphs will not be discussed in Ambassador Austin's proposed speech but is submitted

for the President's consideration and approval in relation to the further development of the problem.

12. If the Security Council and the other organs of the United Nations are unable to give effect to the General Assembly resolution on Palestine for lack of sufficient acquiescence on the part of the people of Palestine to permit its implementation without enforcement measures, and if the Security Council is unable to develop an alternative solution acceptable to the Jews and Arabs of Palestine, the matter should be referred back to a special session of the General Assembly. The Department of State considers that it would then be clear that Palestine is not yet ready for self-government and that some form of United Nations trusteeship for an additional period of time will be necessary.

13. Since the proposed effort to reach a peaceful solution under Security Council auspices may take additional time, it may be necessary for the Security Council to consult with the United Kingdom and to ask it as Mandatory Power to retain the mandate pending further United Nations consideration and action on the matter.

14. In connection with above, the Department of State plans to take vigorous diplomatic action with the Mandatory Power, the Arab Governments and the representatives of the Jews and Arabs of Palestine to bring about an immediate cessation of violence and illegal acts of all kinds which are contributing to the present disorders in that country. End of working draft.

In view extraordinary efforts pressure groups and press learn our position in advance we request every precaution against possibility leaks.

501.BB Palestine/2-2148

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Lovett)*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 21, 1948.

Participants: Moshe Shertok, Jewish Agency for Palestine
Eliahu Epstein, Jewish Agency for Palestine
Mr. Lovett—U
Mr. Wilkins—NE

Mr. Shertok and Mr. Epstein called this morning for the purpose of expressing the views of the Jewish Agency with regard to British activities in Palestine since the adoption of the GA Resolution of November 29 and for the purpose of ascertaining what action the UN might take during the forthcoming SC discussions.

¹ Drafted by Mr. Wilkins.

Mr. Shertok said that in the opinion of the Jewish Agency the Palestine Government had adopted a negative attitude toward the implementation of the GA Resolution on Palestine since November 29, 1947. Mr. Shertok cited the refusal of the British Government to make a seaport and hinterland adequate for Jewish immigration available by February 1,² and British reluctance to permit the UN Palestine Commission to arrive in Palestine more than two weeks prior to the termination of the British Mandate on May 15.

Mr. Shertok said that the Palestine Government had not impartially maintained law and order in Palestine, and that the Jewish Agency had, on February 20, submitted to the members of the SC a long memorandum outlining instances of the manner in which the British authorities in Palestine had acquiesced in, if not encouraged, Arab opposition.

For example, when armed bands had invaded Palestine from Syria recently, the British forces had only arrived after the Jewish settlers had repulsed the attack. The Palestine Government had subsequently communicated with the Syrian Government but instead of protesting in strong terms, its approach had been one of inquiry only. In another instance, the Jewish Agency gave the Palestine Government 48 hours advance notice that a band of 700 or 800 Arabs would attempt to leave Irbid in Transjordan to attack Palestine via one of two bridges over the Jordan River. The Palestine Government had not, however, taken any precautions and the attack had taken place as the Jewish Agency had predicted.

Mr. Shertok cited additional evidence of British partiality in the following: 1) The Mayor of the Arab town of Jaffa had recently undertaken truce negotiations through British channels with the Mayor of the nearby Jewish town of Tel Aviv. These negotiations were making progress until the arrival of an Iraqi Army Officer to take command of the situation in Jaffa. This Iraqi Army Officer immediately suspended the negotiations; 2) In certain areas of Palestine, the local British commanding officers were on friendly terms with the Arab leaders of the local Arab irregular military groups; 3) The British had recently turned over a number of rifles to the Arabs in Hebron; 4) The British authorities had not armed any of the Jewish metropolitan and civilian groups in self-defense as they had the Arabs.

Mr. Shertok said that he did not think British policy in Palestine flowed from a policy decision of the British Cabinet. Mr. Shertok

² London had advised the Department of this development on January 23, giving the British Foreign Office view that "until mandate is entirely surrendered HMG considers it is not legally entitled to withdraw its authority from part Palestine only. Such action would constitute change Palestine Government immigration policy with disastrous effect on security." (Telegram 274, 867N.01/1-2348)

added that he wished to be most cautious in this respect as he did not wish to impugn the British Government. Mr. Shertok believed, however, that if the activities of British representatives in the Near East were successful no questions would be raised; if they were not successful, the activities could be disavowed. The British Government was now miscalculating the situation in the Near East as it had miscalculated it before. The British Government, for example, had not expected that the American and British members of the Anglo-American Committee would reach a unanimous conclusion with regard to Palestine in 1946, nor had it expected UNSCOP to recommend partition. The British had never realized that the Jews were determined on establishing a state and would defend themselves to the last.

Mr. Shertok stated that last fall he had informed the working group of Sub-Committee 1 at the UN that if a Jewish State were established, the Jews would defend themselves but that if the Arab States attacked, the Jews would have to have funds and arms, and that if the situation deteriorated, the Jews might need an international force to back them up.

Mr. Shertok said that, in his opinion, the establishment of a Jewish State was the best means of maintaining political and social peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Shertok wanted to know whether the UN would permit the Jews to arm themselves with funds and military equipment from abroad, and whether the UN would send an international force to Palestine to back up the GA recommendation of November 29.

I asked Mr. Shertok if he could enlighten me on the following points:

1. Whom did the Jewish Agency represent and under what authority?
2. Whom did the Arab Higher Committee represent and under what authority?

Mr. Shertok replied that the Jewish Agency was the quasi-official body, established under the League of Nations Mandate, representing the peoples of Jewish faith in Palestine and throughout the World, organized under a system of democratic election; the Arab Higher Committee was the representative of the Arabs of Palestine, under the presidency of the Mufti in Jerusalem.

I ask Mr. Shertok whether the Jewish Agency had approached the Arab Higher Committee since the adoption of the GA Resolution on November 29, 1947 in an endeavor to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Palestine question on the basis of the resolution itself. Mr. Shertok said that no move of this character had been made, and that, it was impossible under existing circumstances.

I asked Mr. Shertok whether the authority of the Jewish Agency was sufficiently wide for it to prevent the illegal shipment of arms and

ammunition and the departure of ships from the U.S. Mr. Shertok replied that the authority of the Jewish Agency was very great but that it was not equivalent to that of a sovereign state at the present time.

I also asked whether the Jewish Agency had discussed the various questions arising under the GA Resolution with the British Government in London. Mr. Shertok said that the British Government was aware of the various problems; that the Jewish Agency had not specifically raised these questions with it but that the Jewish Agency had been discussing the GA Resolution with the Palestine Government in Jerusalem, and with the UK Delegation in New York.

Mr. Shertok pressed me for a reply with regard to funds and arms for the Jews in Palestine, and the question of a UN international force. I told Mr. Shertok that I could not answer these questions at the present time; that the US considered the Palestine problem as a matter which was being handled by the UN, and that the SC of the UN, which planned to discuss the matter on February 24, was the proper arena for a statement by the U.S. Government. I stressed the fact that the U.S. was one of the members of the UN and would not take unilateral action with regard to Palestine.

L[OVETT]

501.BB Palestine/2-2148

Memorandum by Mr. Samuel K. C. Kopper¹ to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)²

SECRET

[NEW YORK,] February 21, 1948.

Since I arrived in New York on Monday, I have had conversations with several of the principal Arab delegates to the UN. These delegates include Faris Bey el Khouri (Syria), Camille Chamoun (Lebanon), Charles Malik (Lebanon), Fawzi Bey (Egypt), and Jamal el-Kourdagy (Syria). The following points are of interest particularly since they seem to appear in the observations expressed by most of these delegates on the Palestine question.

1. The Arab States believe that the United Nations has by no means exhausted the processes of conciliation. Indeed they feel strongly that conciliation has hardly been touched. Concurrently with this view they believe that reconsideration of the Palestine question is necessary in order to bring to bear methods of conciliation.

2. There are definite indications that the Arab States still believe that proposals (such as the plan placed before the General Assembly

¹ On detail to the United States Mission at the United Nations.

² Copies forwarded to Messrs. Henderson, Rusk, and McClintock and other officers of the Department.

by Camille Chamoun on November 29)³ offer real hope and constitute substantial suggestions as to the manner in which the Palestine question might be equitably solved. Suggestions of this character are classified by Fawzi Bey as "middle courses" looking toward a settlement of the Palestine question.

3. While the Arab States could not publicly espouse such a course, I am convinced that they would be willing to accept the establishment of a trusteeship over all Palestine provided that the terms of such a trusteeship could be most explicit and clear, and also that substantial authority could remain in the hands of the peoples of Palestine themselves in order that they might become experienced in the art of self-government. They would probably accept the trusteeship only if it appeared that conciliation and middle courses would not be successful.

4. In so far as the question of immigration is concerned, I think there has been a substantial revision of the attitude of the Arab delegates on this question. During the General Assembly this was a stumbling block of a most serious nature. While the Arab States could not at this juncture come out for liberal provisions on immigration in an independent state or a trusteeship, it seems quite clear to me from statements made by representatives of Syria, Lebanon and Egypt that the Arab States would be willing in the process of the UN's seeking a revised solution to accept important compromises on this problem. In other words, the Arab States secretly seem willing to go much further on the question of immigration if the terms regarding future immigration could be explicit and if it appeared that there was no possibility of the establishment of an independent Jewish state.

5. The Arab States will regard the shipment of arms to the Jewish militia alone as an attack against the Arabs in Palestine and not as a constructive step toward the solution of the Palestine question.

6. The Arab States staunchly maintain that the United Nations does not possess the power to enforce simple recommendations of the General Assembly. In this connection they repeatedly refer to the position of the USSR vis-à-vis Korea, Northern Greece, the Interim Committee and other matters. The Arabs inquire why the UN has not sought to enforce its recommendations on these cases. More recently they have pointed out that the Security Council has ignored the recommendations of the General Assembly with regard to membership.

7. The Arab States more than ever feel that the United States was primarily responsible for the adoption by the General Assembly of the partition plan. As a corollary to this, they feel that any further United Nations action will depend entirely upon the US position. The role of the Soviet Union is discounted since they think it is quite clear

³ See telegram 1274, December 1, 1947, from New York, *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, p. 1293.

that in general the Soviet Union is not able to muster any support outside of its satellite states.

There are a number of other points of less importance which have been brought up during my discussions with the representatives of the Arab States. However, in the interest of brevity I have omitted them.

SAMUEL K. C. KOPPER

Elsey Papers

President Truman to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET [ST. THOMAS,] February 22, 1948—4: 55 p. m. EST.
URGENT

Blue 4. Your working draft of recommended basic position¹ for Security Council discussion Tuesday received. I approve in principle this basic position. I want to make it clear, however, that nothing should be presented to Security Council that could be interpreted as a recession on our part from the position we took in the General Assembly.² Send final draft of Austin's remarks for my consideration.

¹ See p. 637.

² On November 29, 1947, i.e., in support of the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states.

867N.01/2-2248

Mr. Moshe Shertok to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)

WASHINGTON, February 22, 1948.

MY DEAR MR. LOVETT: In connection with our conversation yesterday, I think it important to offer a few additional explanations on two points raised by you at the end of our talk and clear up their possible implications.

1. You asked me whether there have been peace moves on our part vis-à-vis the Arab Higher Committee since November 29, 1947. I replied in the negative. I explained that there had been innumerable attempts made by us in the past to explore possibilities of a peaceful settlement, including an approach to the Secretary General of the Arab League immediately after the publication of the UNSCOP Report, which had revealed an unbridgeable gulf; but that after the General Assembly had adopted its Resolution on Palestine, we felt convinced that any further such overture from us towards those pledged to oppose it by force would be not merely futile, but definitely harmful, in that it would signify that we, ourselves, did not regard the Assembly's Resolution as final, but as a basis for further compromise.

As I indicated, to the Jews of Palestine, and to the Zionist movement throughout the world, the Partition scheme adopted by the Assembly represents the limit of the concessions which they were prepared to make. After the cutting away of Transjordan from the area of the Jewish National Home in 1922, the present scheme has reduced the remainder of that area by nearly one-half. Moreover, in the land which the Jewish people through the ages has regarded as its historical heritage and as the country of its future, a second independent Arab state is now to be set up. The Jews have accepted these painful and far-reaching sacrifices on condition that in the reduced area, their political independence would be recognized, and that they would be able in that territory to work out their salvation as a free nation. It is to them the last and final compromise beyond which they will not go.

Actually, we have made efforts even after November 29th, 1947, to explore prospects of Jewish-Arab understanding and collaboration *on the basis of full implementation of the United Nations plan*. We have made and will continue to make these approaches to those Arab personalities and circles whom there is any hope of inducing to accept the internationally decreed settlement. Self-evidently, the Arab Higher Committee does not come into that category. It is not merely that the hands of its President are drenched in the blood of millions of Jews. We are convinced that nothing will ever satisfy that Committee short of the complete acceptance of its program, namely, the conversion of the whole of Palestine into an independent Arab state, with the Jews as a crystalized minority at its mercy; and that any impression of readiness to offer concessions to the Committee is bound to strengthen its belief that it can achieve this object.

Incidentally, a letter addressed by one of our representatives to the Secretary General of the Arab League *after* the session of the General Assembly, has remained unanswered.

It is for these reasons that we view with the greatest alarm the rumors now afloat that a move is about to be made calling for the "freezing" of the Palestinian situation so that a new effort of conciliation might be undertaken. Such a move would mean, in the first instance, that the United Nations Resolution does not necessarily stand. It would, moreover, come as a reward for the campaign of violence now being conducted against that Resolution and encourage the forces of defiance to redouble their efforts once the peace move had failed, as it must fail. It would completely shatter Jewish confidence in the United Nations authority and fortify extreme councils among Jews. It would discredit the United Nations in the eyes of the Arabs and deal a serious blow to its prestige generally. In short, far from serving the interests of peace, it would only prolong and intensify the present strife.

It was the spokesman of the United States delegation who pointed out to the Assembly at its last session, just before the vote was taken, that the compromise based on Partition was the only way out after all past efforts at conciliation had failed; that it was therefore useless to re-open the question of conciliation and that the time for action had now arrived.

2. Another question which you put to me was whether we had tried by direct contact with the British Government to clear up those aspects of their policy which were so distressing to us. I replied that we had, but to no avail. I should explain that soon after the decision at Lake Success my friends in London approached the Colonial Secretary and expressed their readiness to discuss with him questions of policy relating to the interim period, with a view to a possible agreement. His reply was that the British Government would negotiate on these points with the UN Commission and preferred our desiderata also to be communicated to the Commission and not to them direct. A similar approach on my part to Sir Alexander Cadogan in New York elicited a similar reply.

In the course of time, we repeatedly discussed with the representatives of the British Government in London questions arising from the course of events in Palestine. We called their attention to current reports about the designs they had in mind, aiming at or liable to lead to the frustration of the solution adopted by the United Nations. They have categorically denied the allegations and rejected the charges, but facts have continued to tell a different story—a story which I presented to you in the first part of our interview.

So long as the British Government are in control of Palestine, we shall, quite naturally, continue to address ourselves to them in an attempt to remove, or at least mitigate the evils arising from their present policy, however futile the attempt may be. Be we cannot hope to change that policy, which appears to be inveterate.

I should like to add, again in connection with rumors that are current, that we would view with the greatest anxiety any attempt to prevail upon the British Government to prolong their Mandate over Palestine beyond the date of May fifteenth, which they, themselves, have fixed for its termination. We would, in fact, most strenuously oppose any such prolongation. The progressive disintegration of the British governmental machine in Palestine, its failure to maintain law and order, the distrust and suspicion which its every action and inaction evokes, make the continuation of the present regime daily more intolerable. The new ghastly outrage in Jerusalem, which has given rise to the worst possible fears as to its authorship, renders the position unprecedentedly critical. In these circumstances, any deliberate attempt to give a further lease of life to British rule in Palestine is tantamount to courting disaster. If any change is indi-

cated it is to shorten, rather than lengthen, this critical period. We can only hope that either the report to which I have referred is completely untrue, or, if it is true, the attempt will not be countenanced by the United States Government.

In our submission, concern for a just solution of the problem and for eventual peace in Palestine, should lead to the concentration of all efforts on the speediest possible establishment of a Provisional Council of Government for the Jewish State, the immediate preparation of a properly armed Jewish State-militia, and if at all possible, the setting up of an international force adequate in composition and size.

We fully accept the position that the United States can act in this matter only as a member and within the framework of the United Nations. But it seems to us axiomatic that action by the United Nations depends on the initiative and readiness to assume responsibilities of its leading members.

I must apologize for the length of this letter, particularly since you were kind enough to give me so much of your time. But I hope you will agree that the seriousness of the subject warrants making every effort to clarify it fully.

With renewed thanks for your courtesy and attention, I remain ¹
Yours sincerely, MOSHE SHERTOK

¹ Acknowledged by Mr. Henderson on February 27.

501.BB Palestine/2-2348

Paper Prepared in the Department of State for the White House ¹

TOP SECRET

MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT

There follows draft statement which Ambassador Austin proposes to make before Security Council Tuesday morning about 10:30 a. m.

¹ This top secret message is undated. In an attached memorandum, also undated, Secretary Marshall stated: "This is final on Palestine—The President has approved Austin's statement. Original is in New York." The latest available draft prior to the final message is dated February 23.

In a memorandum to Mr. Lovett on February 19, Mr. McClintock noted that he had prepared, at Mr. Rusk's request, the first draft of Ambassador Austin's proposed statement, also dated the 19th, and that it had "been gone over by representatives of NEA and Le." The memorandum stated that "The watershed of the speech is reached on Page 8. If the sentence in brackets in the second paragraph on that page is omitted the speech in effect knocks the plan for the partition of Palestine in the head. If that sentence is retained, however, the speech comes out in favor of UN enforcement measures to partition Palestine." The paragraph containing the bracketed sentence, as originally drafted, stated: "What this means is this: The Council under the Charter powers I have just mentioned can take action to prevent aggression against Palestine from outside. The Council by these same powers can take action to prevent a threat to

This statement accurately reflects the policy which you have approved in principle in working paper submitted earlier.² Austin's speech does not represent recession in any way from position taken by us in General Assembly. In fact, it is stronger with regard to threats to the peace which have developed since Assembly discussion. Those who may construe this as recession hold the incorrect view that Charter authorizes Security Council to impose recommendations by force.

If you wish to comment publicly on Ambassador Austin's statement, it would be helpful if your comments could be along the following line:

"I entirely approve the position taken by Ambassador Austin in the Security Council regarding Palestine; it is the position of the United States Government and follows the attitude we took in the General Assembly."

[Here follows the proposed statement, which, except for inconsequential changes in wording, was the same as that delivered by Ambassador Austin before the Security Council on February 24. Extracts from his statement of that date are printed on page 651.]

international peace and security from inside Palestine. This action is directed solely to the maintenance of peace. It has no concern with implementing per se the Assembly's resolution on Palestine. The Council's action, in other words, is directed to keeping the peace and not to enforcing partition. [It is undeniable, however, that the establishment of internal order in Palestine by the Security Council in pursuance of its duty to maintain international peace might establish conditions under which the Palestine Commission could succeed in carrying out its mandate according to the terms of the resolution of November 29, 1947.]"

In a memorandum of February 24 to Mr. McDermott, Mr. McClintock observed that Secretary Marshall had participated in the final drafting of the speech. He also expressed his belief that "it is of the utmost importance that an off-the-record background briefing of American correspondents be given promptly, either by Mr. Lovett or Mr. Bohlen. Mr. Lovett would seem to be the logical candidate since he has been handling the Palestine question at the top level. There is wide public misconception as to the enforcement powers of the United Nations and the kernel of our constitutional position requires considerable educative effort if it is to be got across to the people in plain English."

The memorandum of February 24, as well as various drafts of Ambassador Austin's statement, are filed with the record copy of the paper sent to the President.

The Elsey Papers contain an abbreviated version of the Secretary's top secret message, as transmitted to President Truman in telegram White 7 at 12: 50 p. m. EST, February 23.

² See p. 637.

501.BB Palestine/2-2348: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Syria

SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, February 23, 1948—6 p. m.
 NIACT

34. 1. It is planned that Sen Austin will make important statement tomorrow morning before SC with respect to Palestine. Full text will

be telegraphed Jerusalem and all Arab capitals¹ in clear as soon as he starts to speak. There will probably be many sensational and distorted rumors in Middle East re substance his statement. It is suggested in your discretion that you endeavor to prevail upon local govt officials and other leaders to refrain from making public statements re Austin's speech until they have had opportunity to examine carefully complete text. Public statements made by Arab leaders re speech before they have full understanding its significance may not only work against a peaceful and satisfactory solution of problems facing UN re Palestine but also against Arab interests.

2. In discussing text of statement with officials of govt to which you are accredited please emphasize how important it is in interests of Arab countries themselves as well as in interests of UN and world peace that Arab govts take at once all possible steps to prevent infiltration of fighting men and arms into Palestine and that they also desist immediately from training and equipping armed forces for Palestine and making statements which can be construed as threats to interfere in Palestinian affairs. Arab countries should understand that if SC finds that Arab countries through force or threats of force are creating in Palestine threat to international peace it has no choice other than to take steps in strict accord with Charter. Otherwise UN may be bankrupt.²

3. In talking with local govt officials please make clear that govt of US is adopting present position in interests of justice, of world peace, and of UN; that it cannot be swayed from course which it is following by US internal political pressures or by external threats of any kind. US Govt is convinced that maintenance of close friendly relations and understanding between Arab countries and US is in their common interests. It believes that position which it has assumed is consistent with maintenance of such relations.

4. Please do not discuss contents of para 2 and 3 above with anyone until you have received and studied Austin's statement.

Sent Damascus as Depts 34 rptd Cairo as Depts 211 Beirut as Depts 83 Baghdad as Depts 60 and Jidda as Depts 55 for action; to Jerusalem³ as Depts 130 for info. Repeated USUN as Depts 81.

MARSHALL

¹ In telegram 35 to Damascus, February 24, repeated to Arab capitals and Jerusalem, not printed.

² The Department, in an unnumbered service telegram to Damascus, February 23, 12 midnight, directed deletion of the last sentence of this paragraph. This message is attached to the record copy of telegram 34.

³ The Department, on February 25, directed Jerusalem to take similar action with the Government of Transjordan on an informal basis (telegram 136, 501.BB Palestine/2-2548).

501.BB Palestine/2-2348: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)*¹

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, February 23, 1948—11 p. m.
 NIACT

80. Inform Austin and Rusk immediately. Latter at Hotel Vanderbilt. Following message received from President Truman:

"Your draft statement which it is proposed Senator Austin make before Security Council Tuesday 24 February is approved. In regard to public statement by me I intend to release the following:

"The Palestine problem has been, and is the deep concern of this Government. It has been given the most careful consideration by me, the Cabinet, and other responsible Government officials. The US position has been developed through long and exhaustive study and many consultations.

This position has been accurately presented by Ambassador Austin in his speech before the Security Council of the United Nations today.²

Please notify me as soon as Senator Austin has made his presentation to the Security Council."²

MARSHALL

¹ The President's top secret and urgent message was transmitted to Secretary Marshall in telegram Blue 8, at 7:29 p. m. EST February 23 (copy in Elsemy Papers).

² President Truman released his public statement later on February 24, while still aboard the *Williamsburg*. See *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1948*, p. 39.

*Statement Made by the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) Before the Security Council on February 24, 1948*¹

[Extracts]

The Security Council is now confronted with the complex problem of Palestine as presented to us in General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and the two reports from the Palestine Commission. The Security Council now has before it a number of important questions concerning Palestine for which it must endeavour to find an answer. The situation does not permit any further delay.

¹ Reprinted from SC, *3rd yr., Nos. 16-35*, pp. 264-269. The Security Council began consideration of the two reports of the Palestine Commission on February 24, inviting Chairman Lisicky and representatives of Egypt, Lebanon, and the Jewish Agency to participate. The President of the Council suggested that if an application to participate were received from the Arab Higher Committee, it should be given the same consideration (*ibid.*, pp. 257, 258).

The problem has been before the United Nations as a matter of special concern since 2 April 1947. The United States, as a Member of the United Nations, has supported since that date those United Nations procedures which we considered best adapted to obtaining a broad and impartial expression of world opinion on the problem, which would result in a just and workable solution commending itself to the Mandatory Power and to the people of Palestine.

As a result of the recommendations of the General Assembly of 29 November 1947, Palestine is now before several of the principal bodies of the United Nations for various types of action under the Charter. The United States, as a Member of the United Nations and of those bodies, will continue to deal with the question of Palestine as a Member of the United Nations in conjunction with other Members. The United States policy will not be unilateral. It will conform to, and be in support of, United Nations action on Palestine.

The resolution of the General Assembly makes three separate requests of the Security Council. The first is that the Security Council "take the necessary measures as provided for in the plan for its implementation". To determine what these measures are, it is necessary to turn to the plan itself. It will be seen that these are: To give guidance to the Palestine Commission; to take such action as the Security Council may deem proper with respect to either the Jewish or the Arab State if by 1 April 1948 a provisional council of government cannot be selected for that State, or, if selected, cannot carry out its functions; to issue such instructions to the Commission as the Security Council may consider necessary; to receive and consider periodic progress reports, special reports and the final report of the Palestine Commission; to give sympathetic consideration to the application for membership in the United Nations made by either the Arab or the Jewish State when a certain stage in the plan has been achieved.

We believe it is clear that the Security Council can undertake the above-mentioned measures. It is further clear from the terms of the resolution of 29 November 1947 that the Palestine Commission is bound by whatever instructions the Security Council gives to it pursuant to the General Assembly's requests.

We come now to the two following requests of the General Assembly as set forth in the resolution of 29 November. These invoke the wide peace-keeping powers of the Security Council under the Charter. The second request in the resolution asks the Security Council to consider whether ". . . during the transitional period . . . the situation in Palestine constitutes a threat to the peace".

The third request of the General Assembly asks that the Security Council "determine as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act

of aggression, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution”.

Although the Security Council is empowered to use, and would normally attempt to use measures short of armed force to maintain the peace, it is authorized under the Charter to use armed force if it considers other measures inadequate. A finding by the Security Council that a danger to peace exists places all Members of the United Nations, regardless of their views, under obligation to assist the Security Council in maintaining peace. If the Security Council should decide that it is necessary to use armed force to maintain international peace in connexion with Palestine, the United States would be ready to consult under the Charter with a view to such action as may be necessary to maintain international peace. Such consultation would be required in view of the fact that agreement has not yet been reached making armed forces available to the Security Council under the terms of Article 43 of the Charter.

The Security Council is authorized to take forceful measures with respect to Palestine to remove a threat to international peace. The Charter of the United Nations does not empower the Security Council to enforce a political settlement whether it is pursuant to a recommendation of the General Assembly or of the Security Council itself.

What this means is this: The Security Council, under the Charter, can take action to prevent aggression against Palestine from outside. The Security Council, by these same powers, can take action to prevent a threat to international peace and security from inside Palestine. But this action must be directed solely to the maintenance of international peace. The Security Council's action, in other words, is directed to keeping the peace and not to enforcing partition.

The United States Government believes that the first of the three requests made by the General Assembly to the Security Council under its resolution of 29 November 1947 can properly be complied with by the Security Council. With respect to the second and third requests of the General Assembly's resolution, the Security Council must act, if necessary, to preserve international peace and security or to curb and repel aggression as provided in the Charter.

Although we do not wish to place specific resolutions before the Security Council at this early stage of the discussion, my Government believes we should have in mind the desirability of the following specific steps which the Security Council might take at once: (1) to accept the tasks which the General Assembly asked the Security Council to accept in its resolution of 29 November 1947 on Palestine, subject to the authority of the Security Council under the Charter; (2) to

establish a committee of the Security Council, comprising the five permanent Members, to look at once into the question of the possible threats to international peace arising in connexion with the Palestine situation and to consult with the Palestine Commission, the Mandatory Power and representatives of the principal communities of Palestine concerning the implementation of the General Assembly resolution; (3) to call upon all Governments and peoples, particularly in and around Palestine, to take all possible action to prevent or reduce the disorders now occurring in Palestine.

Editorial Note

Arthur Creech Jones then presented the British point of view in the Security Council of the United Nations. He noted that the general security situation in Palestine had degenerated very seriously since the resolution of November 29, 1947. He said further that "It is essentially because of the difficulties of security and the dangers of divided responsibility in Palestine in present conditions that the Mandatory Power, faced with specific threats by the Arabs, could not agree to open a port to Jewish immigration, to the progressive transfer of areas to the Commission's administration, or to the formation of a militia under the control of the Provisional Government of the future Jewish State. Nor could my Government safely extend the period of overlap during which the United Nations Commission would be present in Palestine while the responsibility for security and administration still rested with the Mandatory Power."

Mr. Creech Jones reiterated British policy of not opposing the United Nations decision but of not undertaking, alone or in association with others, to impose that decision by force. (SC, *3rd yr.*, Nos. 16-35, pages 269, 270)

Alfonso López, the Colombian Representative at the United Nations, introduced a resolution into the Security Council on February 24, which invited the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, China, and France "to consult with one another with a view to such joint action on behalf of this Organization as may be necessary to prevent or remove any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression arising from the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution of 29 November 1947". The measure also resolved "pending the result of such consultations, to appoint a committee composed of the representatives of two permanent members and three non-permanent members of the Security Council whose task will be:

"(a) To ascertain if it is not possible to bring about an agreement between the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee which

will enable the United Nations Palestine Commission to discharge its functions and responsibilities in due course, without the use of force;

“(b) To examine the advisability of requesting the Secretary-General to call an extraordinary session of the General Assembly for the purpose of reconsidering its resolution of 29 November 1947, as a whole or in part, and discussing such other matters relating thereto as the committee may find necessary for the pacific settlement of the situation in Palestine.”

Finally, the resolution requested the United Kingdom “to postpone the date fixed for the termination of its Mandate until 15 July 1948, and, accordingly, its arrangements for the evacuation of its troops from Palestine.” (SC, *3rd yr.*, Nos. 16-35, pages 292, 293.)

The proposal was withdrawn by the Colombian Representative at the Security Council meeting of February 27 (*ibid.*, page 365).

PPS Files, Lot 64D563

*Report by the Policy Planning Staff*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 24, 1948.

PPS/23

[Extracts]

REVIEW OF CURRENT TRENDS
U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

V. PALESTINE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The Staff views on Palestine have been made known in a separate paper. I do not intend to recapitulate them here. But there are two background considerations of determining importance, both for the Palestine question and for our whole position in the Middle East, which I should like to emphasize at this time.

1. *The British Strategic Position in the Middle East*

We have decided in this Government that the security of the Middle East is vital to our own security. We have also decided that it would not be desirable or advantageous for us to attempt to duplicate or to take over the strategic facilities now held by the British in that area. We have recognized that these facilities would be at our effective disposal anyway, in the event of war, and that to attempt to get them transferred, in the formal sense, from the British to ourselves would

¹This report was an annex to a memorandum of February 24 by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan), addressed to the Secretary and Under Secretary of State. For the full text of both documents, see vol. I, Part 2, pp. 509 and 510.