

ISRAEL

INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONTROVERSY OVER THE FUTURE STATUS OF PALESTINE;¹ ARMISTICE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS; UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO ATTAIN A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE AREA

501.BB Palestine/1-149 : Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET US URGENT TEL AVIV, January 1, 1949—9 a. m.

NIACT

1. For attention President and Acting Secretary.² ReDeptel 281, December 30 and Mistel's 350, 351, December 31.³ Returned from Tiberias 3:15 a. m. Had two hours with Ben Gurion.⁴ Knox⁵ present. I read Ben Gurion the same paraphrase I read Shertok.⁶ After considerable deliberation he replied as follows: (paragraph references are to Department's 281).

1. "We have not invaded Egyptian territory nor do we have any intention of doing so. It is true some Israel Forces had to cross frontier into Egypt in course of tactical operations but they have already received orders to return to the Negev frontier."

2. As regards British notification to US Government he said, "in note Great Britain threatens to take action against us under 1936 Treaty with Egypt and unless we obey the decisions of the SC. In this latter connection I am confused and surprised. Great Britain is a member of the SC with which we are dealing directly and cordially. Does Great Britain plan to take independent action to enforce decisions of SC?"

3. "We are very grateful for the friendship of the US and value it. I note the italics on the phrase 'peace-loving' and am distressed. We are indeed peace-loving and have consistently shown it. We are last people in the world to want to break the peace in Middle East or else-

¹ Continued from *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, pp. 533 ff.

² Robert A. Lovett.

³ For Nos. 281 and 350, see *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, pp. 1704 and 1705; No. 351 is not printed, but see footnote 1, *ibid.*, p. 1706.

⁴ David Ben-Gurion, Israeli Prime Minister.

⁵ Charles F. Knox, Jr., Counselor of Mission at Tel Aviv.

⁶ Moshe Shertok, Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs.

where. We are a very small people and we can survive only in peace. What we are doing is in self-defense. We have been attacked. We must reserve our right to defend ourselves even if we go down fighting. I believe the American Government and people will recognize this right. We accepted the UN request for an armistice and peace. Egypt rejected it."

4. Orders for the withdrawal of the Israel units have already been given.

5. "The reports communicated to your government about our negotiations with Transjordan are untrue and astonishing. Israel is now in the act of negotiating an armistice with Transjordan and is on the best terms with that government. There have been no threats on either side. We have met on very friendly terms and our next meeting is set for January 5."

Prime Minister then commented "I am pained by the severe tone of this communication which might have been written by Bevin⁷ himself". He then stated that a formal written reply would be prepared immediately after Cabinet meeting on Sunday.

He concluded by speaking of peace negotiations with Lebanon which he said were also progressing encouragingly.

McDONALD

⁷ Ernest Bevin, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

501BB Palestine/1-149 : Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET

IMMEDIATE

TEL AVIV, January 1, 1949—11 a. m.

NIACT

2.¹ Attention President and Acting Secretary. At approximately 2:30 a. m. January 1, two Egyptian vessels approached off coast to attack Tel Aviv. Air alert sounded and Israel coastal batteries replied to attack fire. No hits, no casualties. Israel military spokesmen issued following warning: "up to now the various arms of the defense army of Israel have refrained from taking any action outside the immediate battle areas in the south. If the Egyptians should repeat their last night's attempt and direct attacks in whatever form against the civilian population of Israel, we shall take whatever action we deem appropriate against Egypt, and, in particular, against the Egyptian capital, Cairo."

At New Year's Day reception in our residence, President Weizmann² stated to mission staff that the representations I made yester-

¹ This telegram was originally received as an unnumbered message.

² Chaim Weizmann, President of the Provisional Government of Israel.

day and last night (reDeptel 281, Dec. 30^s) had had profound effect on PGI. Apparently attitude Washington, which I faithfully presented in accordance text telegram under reference, is interpreted here as indicating reversal of attitude of Washington to old British line. In this small country, despite every attempt keep secrecy, my representations apparently already widely known in governmental circles and there is much resentment. For example, Attorney General asked what is legal difference between Israel attack on El Arish and repeated bombings in Tel Aviv and elsewhere in Israel by Egyptians. Weizmann stated: "Why this terrific pressure against Israel over attack El Arish when fact is Egyptian armies attacked Israel with purpose destroy Israel." El Arish is Egyptian forward base for air attacks on Israel and latest Israel objectives were to neutralize but not to hold that base.

Weizmann stated he is writing President Truman directly as to facts in situation and sending letter by Eban⁴ who is leaving for states on Tuesday.

In obedience pressure USA so threatening[ly] expressed in Deptel 281, PGI has ordered withdrawal all forces Egyptian territory. Mission uncertain as to military effect this withdrawal but USA has now most certainly incurred serious responsibility if such withdrawal again jeopardizes Israel Forces in Negev and encourages Egypt continue attacks on Israel territory.

McDONALD

³ *Foreign Relations, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.*

⁴ Aubrey S. Eban, Israeli Representative at the United Nations.

867N.2383/1-249 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the
United Kingdom¹*

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 2, 1949—2 p. m.
NIACT

7. Dept this morning requested Brit Emb inform FonOff that in view PGI order withdraw all Israeli forces from Egyptian territory as result our representations and in view info contained Tel Aviv's unnumbered tel Jan 1, 11 a. m.² (being repeated London) Dept strongly believes Brit should impress on Egyptians necessity their refraining from further attacks similar that on Tel Aviv. Otherwise chain of reprisals set off may well jeopardize progress toward final settlement so far made.

LOVETT

¹ This telegram was repeated to Tel Aviv for information.

² See telegram 2 and footnote 1, *supra*.

867N.01/1-249 : Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TEL AVIV, January 2, 1949—4 p. m.

3. Following verbatim text statement issued by Foreign Office on December 31:

"It is a month and a half since Egypt and Israel were ordered by the Security Council to enter into armistice negotiations. Israel accepted immediately, thus once more affirming its desire to make peace without delay. The Egyptian Government not only ignored the Security Council resolution, but renewed their military activities in the Negev. They shelled Nirim, Mivtachim and Imara, captured and occupied certain fresh heights, such as Tel-el-Jamah, Tel-el-Farah and Kirbet Kutshan, carried out widespread sabotage against roads and water installations in the area, and launched armored attacks on Israeli positions and settlements, using tanks which had newly arrived from Egypt. These were the subject repeated complaints by the Israeli authorities to UN observer to no avail. These Egyptian activities, covered by delaying tactics regarding an armistice, went on for weeks.

When Egypt finally indicated its acceptance in principle of the armistice resolution, it coupled this with conditions which the resolution did not justify. The Acting Mediator, Dr. Bunche,¹ then made certain proposals whereby the Egyptian forces at Faluja could be evacuated in stages concurrently with armistice talks. Once again the Israeli Government accepted these proposals, and its attitude was officially described by Dr. Bunche as highly satisfactory. The Egyptian commanders pretended at first that they were willing to cooperate, but when General Riley² went to Cairo to arrange a time and a place for an armistice meeting, and to obtain the name of the Egyptian representative, the Egyptian Government reverted to its earlier uncompromising attitude, thereby recreating the deadlock. It appears that the resolution on Palestine adopted in the meantime by the UN General Assembly, and the failure of the Security Council to approve Israel's application for membership of the UN,³ had encouraged Egypt to revive its intransigence. The refusal of Egypt to enter into armistice negotiations could have no other meaning than that it was set on the prosecution of the war. Faced with the choice between embarking on a course leading to peace or pursuing further the line of aggressive invasion, Egypt chose the latter. Israel could not possibly acquiesce in a situation exposing its safety and territorial integrity to an ever present menace and compelling it to carry indefinitely the burdens of war readiness. The attacks perpetrated by Egyptian forces against Israeli positions at every convenient opportunity as well as the flow from Egypt of fresh men and equipment

¹ Ralph J. Bunche, United Nations Acting Mediator on Palestine.

² Brig. Gen. William E. Riley, United Nations Chief of Staff charged with supervision of the truce in Palestine and senior United States military observer in Palestine.

³ See footnote 3, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. 1, Part 2, p. 1677.

left no doubt as to the intentions of the Egyptian Government. Under those circumstances, not only the release of the Egyptian brigade encircled at Faluja was inconceivable, but the Government of Israel found itself constrained to resume its freedom of action in order once and for all to put an end to the intolerable situation and stabilize Israel's security. It was Egypt's choice that determined Israel's action. In the course of that action, as in any war, only military considerations decided the fixing of the establishment of positions. The new facts created in that regard need not determine the final territorial settlement which awaits the conclusion of permanent peace between Israel and her neighbors.

For such a final and lasting peace settlement the Government of Israel is ever ready, in the firm conviction that the sooner it is achieved, the better it will be for all concerned."

MCDONALD

867N.01/1-249: Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV, January 2, 1949—5 p. m.

4. For American eyes only. Shiloah¹ officially informed mission night December 31 as follows:

Secret preliminary armistice negotiations with Abdullah el Tel² initiated December 25 in atmosphere cordiality.

2. Meetings in complete secrecy owing (a) save King³ embarrassment and possible retaliation from other Arab countries and (b) prevent British interfering.

3. Second meeting was held December 30 in Arab Jerusalem with Shiloah and Dayan⁴ representing Israel, and Tel representing King. Conversations very satisfactory according Shiloah and one two questions on subjects were listed as agenda for further secret meeting to be held January 5 in Jewish Jerusalem. On agenda are such items as delineation frontiers, renewal operations southern potash works, operations Palestine Corporation electric plant, etc.

4. Shiloah promised keep mission secretly informed progress talks.

5. Also stated satisfactory preliminary tentative discussions on military level have been initiated with Lebanese looking toward armistice. In addition Israeli have secretly approached Lebanon Prime Minister on political level and are hopeful.

¹ Reuven Shiloah, Political Adviser in the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

² Lt. Col. Abdullah el Tel, Commander of Transjordan armed forces in Jerusalem.

³ Abdullah, King of Transjordan.

⁴ Col. Moshe Dayan, Commander of Israeli armed forces in Jerusalem.

6. Also Israel has sent secret message to new Prime Minister of Egypt offering negotiate, but Shiloah stated not certain that intermediary "has courage to present offer to Prime Minister."⁵

McDONALD

⁵ Amman advised, on January 2, that the previous day Lieutenant Colonel Tel met at Jerusalem with Elias Sassoon, Colonel Dayan, and an unidentified Israeli Foreign Office representative and was said to have "informed Israelis that as personal representative of King he was prepared receive their suggestions re possible boundary settlements. It is understood Israelis endeavored ascertain for second time whether British are being kept advised of these developments. Tel is alleged to have replied he had forgotten to ask." (Telegram 1, 867N.01/1-249) It is possible that the meeting described in this message is the same as that summarized in Tel Aviv's telegram 4.

Mr. Sassoon was Director of the Middle East Department in the Israeli Foreign Office. His surname is rendered also as Sasson; his given name as Eliahu.

501.BB Palestine/1-349

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

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 3, 1949.

Participants: Joseph B. Keenan—American Representative, Palestine Conciliation Commission
Mr. Wilkins—NE
Mr. Halderman—UNP¹

While discussing current matters relating to Palestine, Mr. Keenan told me that, following his selection as American Representative on the Palestine Conciliation Commission he had seen the President and had had an opportunity to discuss the question of Palestine with him.

Mr. Keenan said that during this conversation the President had emphasized the urgent necessity of preventing further warfare in Palestine which, if it continued, might be the spark setting ablaze a greater conflagration. Mr. Keenan said the President hoped that the action which the United Nations had already taken through the General Assembly and the Security Council would prevent further conflict and that if such action was not effective, the Conciliation Commission would immediately attempt to persuade the parties to reach an agreement.

Mr. Keenan said that the President was strongly of the opinion that the orders of the Security Council should be obeyed and that no party to the Palestine dispute should be permitted to defy the United Nations. Recent action by Israel in Egypt was mentioned in this respect. Mr. Keenan reported the President as stating that he could count on his full support and that he would back him to the limit.

¹ John W. Halderman, Assistant Chief of the Division of United Nations Political Affairs.

501.BB Palestine/1-1149

*President Chaim Weizmann of the Provisional Government of Israel
to President Truman*¹

TEL AVIV, January 3, 1949.

I have been informed by the Provisional Government of Israel of a communication addressed to them by your Special Envoy and of an official assurance given by them that the presence on Egyptian territory of Israeli forces which crossed the frontier in the course of hot pursuit of the Egyptian invaders signified no political or territorial claims by Israel at Egypt's expense and that these forces would be speedily withdrawn.

I feel impelled to address you personally concerning certain basic aspects of this incident. The Egyptian army invaded Palestine with a view to destroying the State of Israel. Israeli forces which accidentally crossed the Egyptian frontier had no intention of destroying the Kingdom of Egypt. The presence of our forces in the Negev conforms to the resolution of the General Assembly of November 29, 1947.² On the other hand, the presence of the Egyptian forces in the Negev represents a deliberate defiance of that resolution by the use of force. The Egyptian army on the 15th of May invaded Palestine, bombarded the civilian population of Tel Aviv, and destroyed Jewish villages and water installations in the Negev though the Jews had not touched a single Egyptian. Egyptian forces occupied and held positions in flagrant defiance of successive cease-fire orders of the Security Council at the end of May and in the middle of July. These indisputable facts clearly reveal which side started and consistently maintained a policy of aggression.

I feel deeply disturbed at the unequal reaction of a great power to Egyptian aggression and Jewish defense respectively. When your Government attempted to secure action by the Security Council for stopping the Egyptian and other Arab invasions, these resolutions were defeated by Great Britain which supplied practically all arms used by Egypt in its war of aggression against us. But when Jewish countermeasures repel the invaders, Great Britain comes to the aid of the aggressor in order to prevent Egyptian invaders from being ejected from territory where they had no right to be.

I deeply appreciate the great constructive contributions which you, Mr. President, made to the solution of this problem, indicating your

¹ Sent by the Israeli Mission in the United States to the White House, which transmitted the message to the Department of State by January 11 for preparation of a reply (memorandum of January 11 by Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, to Mr. Lovett).

² See telegram 1271, November 29, 1947, *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, p. 1291.

refusal to follow British calculations and ill-advised policies. But I am unable to square the United States' warning that they would review their support of Israel's application for membership to the United Nations if our forces remained on Egyptian territory, with United States' sponsorship of Egyptian election to the Security Council while Egyptian forces were actually invading and attacking Israel. As a result of such sponsorship, Egypt, which defied the authority of the United Nations and broke the peace in the Middle East, is now a member of the very Council whose function it is to suppress aggression and maintain international peace.

Finally, I should point out that Egypt, in addition to defying the resolution of November, 1947, also failed to comply with the Security Council's resolution of November 16³ and the Assembly's resolution of December 11, 1948,⁴ which ordered both parties to enter into negotiations for armistice and peaceful settlement. I trust that the above submissions may assist you in determining where the initiative, responsibility, and guilt for the present unhappy situation properly lie.

I should reiterate that the Provisional Government of Israel is ready at any time to enter into negotiations toward the speediest possible attainment of peace.

CHAIM WEIZMANN

³ See telegram Delga 746, November 14, 1948, from Paris; footnote 2 to Delga 746; and editorial note, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, pp. 1582, 1583, and 1597.

⁴ See editorial note, *ibid.*, p. 1661.

501.BB Palestine/1-149: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Special Representative in Israel (McDonald), at Tel Aviv

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 3, 1949—5 p. m.

3. Re ur 1 Jan 1 and unnumbered Jan 1, 11 a. m.¹ Dept surprised at comments made by Ben Gurion, Weizmann and others on your representations based on Deptel 281 Dec 30.² Please make it clear to them and others directly concerned that there should be no misconception in minds of Israelis as to purpose these representations. It was as indicated Deptel 281 to stop a move with most serious implications which Brit were contemplating. Another purpose was to avoid if possible Brit rearming of Arabs which Brit apparently determined carry out if all Israeli forces not promptly withdrawn from Egypt.

¹ Regarding the latter, see telegram 2 and footnote 1, p. 595.

² *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.

It is clear from your two reftels as well as your Weeka No. 1³ that Israeli forces had in fact advanced into Egypt in considerable force and to considerable distance.

US has great strategic and other interests at stake in NE and PGI therefore has no just grounds on which to resent fact that US should react strongly to any action either by Israelis or Arabs containing threat of enlargement of conflict.

You should in fact state that we are making strong representations Egyptians re Egyptian acts complained of in your unnumbered Jan 1, 11 a. m. and 6 Jan 3.⁴ Have also requested Brit make similar representations.

Israelis therefore should only draw simple conclusion that US representations are directed toward composing situation promptly.

Ref last sentence your Jan 1, 11 a. m. re "serious responsibility" US may have incurred through your representations Dept considers that full responsibility rests with parties who are engaging in military operations contrary to SC resolutions.⁵

LOVETT

³ Sent as telegram 5, January 2, not printed.

⁴ Latter not printed; it reported information from Foreign Minister Shertok that on the evening of January 2, an enemy plane, presumably Egyptian, dropped three bombs over Jewish Jerusalem. The message also stated that the Provisional Government of Israel expected the United States to make "very urgent and stern representations to Egypt" concerning this first bombing of Jerusalem (867N.01/1-349).

⁵ A marginal notation indicates that this telegram was cleared at the White House with Clark M. Clifford, Special Counsel to President Truman. It was repeated to London as 12. On the night of January 4, Mr. McDonald handed a paraphrase to Mr. Shertok who "expressed pleasure Dept's explanation. He volunteered information that Israel troop withdrawal was ordered afternoon December 31, that officer in charge asked 24 hour leeway, that withdrawal began January 1 and by morning January 2 'not an Israeli hoof remained in Egypt.'" (telegram 10, January 5, noon, from Tel Aviv, 501.BB Palestine/1-549)

501.BB Palestine/1-349: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Egypt

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 3, 1949—5 p. m.
 NIACT

2. Please seek immediate audience with King¹ and make following oral representation, leaving memorandum in same sense:

1. Amer Govt has been deeply disturbed at recent renewed outbreak hostilities bet forces of Israel and Egypt in Negev, despite SC's resolutions Nov 4² and Nov 16 and Council's basic resolutions calling for cease-fire and truce in Palestine May 29 and July 15, 1948.³

¹ Farouk, King of Egypt.

² *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1546.

³ See *ibid.*, pp. 1070 and 1224.

2. Because serious nature recent fighting and continued neglect countries concerned to heed SC's resolutions, Amer Govt has recently indicated to Provisional Govt of Israel its concern at course events and its belief that Israeli forces should under no circumstances invade territory of Egypt.

3. In same spirit Amer Govt because its long friendship with Egypt feels it must point out similar concern which it has lest attitude of Egypt should be stumbling block to prompt conclusion peace in Middle East. In particular we feel there should be compliance with SC resolution Nov 16, 1948 which called upon parties to Palestine conflict to negotiate armistice either directly or through good offices UN Mediator.

4. It would be most encouraging if Govt Egypt would promptly undertake negotiations looking toward armistice foreseen by SC in its resolution Nov. 16. Any word which King can give this Govt as to his intentions this respect will be appreciated.

5. In light friendly representations made to PGI which have in fact resulted in assurances of withdrawal Israeli forces from Egyptian territory, Amer Govt can expect no less than policy of wise restraint on part Egyptian Govt with respect to further hostilities against Israel. Such incidents as that Jan. 1, when two Egyptian vessels are reported to have approached Israeli coast to attack capital city of Tel Aviv, or recently reported bombing of Jerusalem, can only bring reprisal on part of Israel and will make it difficult for this or any other Govt to counsel PGI against extensive mil operations. Any assurances which King may be able to give as to Egypt's peaceful intent will be awaited with great interest by this Govt.

6. Finally, it should be urged upon King in most serious terms that Amer Govt and people feel time has come to make peace in Palestine. It is essential that hostilities should cease and that statesmanship should be employed to establish lasting peace. We trust that King Farouk as a leader of Arab world will seize this opportunity.

Repeated to London as 11, Tel Aviv as 2.

LOVETT

867N.01/12-2848: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to Mr. Wells Stabler*¹

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 3, 1949—5 p. m.

2. Dept has given careful consideration to Jerusalem tel No. 1550 Dec 23² rptd Amman 15 and to ur 173 Dec 28,³ 172 Dec 28⁴ and 176 Dec 29.⁵ Dept's comment on points raised as follows.

¹ Vice consul at Jerusalem; detailed to Amman.

² *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1687.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1694.

⁴ Not printed, but see footnote 1, *ibid.*, p. 1700.

⁵ Not printed.

Dept anxious see peace restored to Palestine and believes should be accomplished by negotiations, either directly between parties or through Conciliation Commission. Dept would naturally welcome any concrete steps by Israelis or Arabs to bring about such negotiations. In this connection Dept has found reasonable attitude shown by TJ re negotiations with Jews extremely hopeful sign.

US, however, naturally desires avoid becoming involved in inter-Arab jealousies and intrigues and Dept regards question of TJ relations with Arab League as essentially one for determination by TJ. As you point out in ur 176 Dec 29, determining factor seems to be the military one.⁶ Dept believes final attitude TJ re Israelis will be decided by military situation, particularly position of Arab Legion, and by stand taken by UK. Not essential, therefore, and certainly undesirable that US become involved in question TJ attitude re Arab League and other Arab States.

Dept believes that most satisfactory solution disposition greater part Arab Palestine would be incorporation in Transjordan. Therefore Dept approves principle underlying Jericho resolutions.⁷

To sum up, US would like to see TJ negotiate armistice and final peace with Israelis, and believes most of Arab Palestine could be incorporated in Transjordan as outcome such negotiations. However, US can not become involved in inter-Arab politics. If King and TJ officials seek views of US on question of Palestine settlement, you are authorized to state US approval of reasonable attitude so far shown by TJ and to express US hope that TJ, as well as other Arab States, will find way of entering armistice and peace negotiations with Israelis. You are also authorized, if queried re US views on disposition Arab Palestine, to state that US believes logical outcome negotiations between TJ and Israelis would be incorporation greater part Arab Palestine in TJ. You will know best how to do this without giving impression US supporting TJ against Arab League and without involving US in Arab politics.

LOVETT

⁶ In telegram 176, Mr. Stabler gave his opinion that the "King is now in most difficult position for he sees Jews will continue war against him or Iraqis or both unless he agrees in immediate future to peace negotiations. Also knows that if war is continued, Iraqi Army and Arab Legion can be easily defeated and he will lose everything." (867N.01/12-2948)

⁷ Adopted at a meeting of Palestinian Arabs at Jericho on December 1, 1948. It called for the unity of Transjordan and Arab Palestine, with Abdullah as King; see telegram 140, December 4, 1948, from Amman, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1645.

501.BB Palestine/1-349: Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET

US URGENT

TEL AVIV, January 3, 1949—7 p. m.

NIACT

7. Reference Deptel 281.¹ Attention President and Acting Secretary. I am transmitting below verbatim text of Foreign Office note received today as formal reply my representations of midnight December 31.

“Sir: 1. I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the communication from the Government of the US of America which you conveyed to me orally on the afternoon of Friday, 31 December 1948. A copy of this communication, in the form in which it was made, is appended hereto for reference.

2. You have already been informed by the Prime Minister and myself that such Israel forces as entered Egyptian territory did so in hot pursuit of an enemy driven out from a territory he had invaded in the course of a war of aggression. All such forces were recalled without delay and no Israel troops now remain on Egyptian soil. The reports received by the US Government to the effect that Israel forces had ‘invaded’ Egyptian territory, not as an incidental military maneuver, but as an operation deliberately planned, are devoid of all foundation. The Government of Israel never had any intention to stage an invasion of Egypt or to occupy, let alone annex, any part of Egyptian territory.

3. The Government of Israel is not surprised that charges of such utterly unfounded character should be preferred against it by the Government of the UK. It was that government which in the spring of last year encouraged the invasion of Palestine by the armies of Egypt and the Arab states. It has consistently defended this aggression in open defiance of the Charter of the UN and of the law of nations. It has throughout demonstrated and made effective its hostility to the State and Government of Israel.

4. The Government of Israel must nevertheless register its profound resentment at the attitude of the Government of the UK as transmitted without comment by the US Government. In threatening to take action under the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936, the British Government conjures up a contingency which, as will be evident from a study of the relevant provisions of that treaty, has by no means arisen. The British Government furthermore makes its abstention from a ‘conflict’—which in this context can only mean an armed conflict—with the Government of Israel contingent upon the acceptance by the latter of the decisions of the United Nations

¹ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.

Security Council. It is thereby setting itself up, without any warrant whatsoever, as an arbiter and mandatory, not in any actual conflict between itself and the Government of Israel, but in a hypothetical dispute between Israel and the Security Council, and is seeking to justify its arrogation of such authority by invoking a treaty which in the given context is irrelevant. The Government of Israel presumes that your communication is not to be interpreted as identifying the US Government with the attitude adopted by the British Government in this matter.

5. You will recall that on May 15 last the Egyptian Army invaded Palestine with the declared intention of preventing the establishment of the State of Israel or, if prevention were no longer possible, of encompassing its destruction. This invasion, which the Government of the US did not find itself able to halt, was an open act of war, whereby Egypt forfeited all claim to be counted among the peace-loving nations of the world. Yet, this undeniable violation by Egypt of her obligations under the Charter of the United Nations did not deter the Government of the US from sponsoring Egypt's candidature for membership in the SC, with the result that an aggressor state, which in collusion with other aggressor states has made itself responsible for a most flagrant breach of the international peace, now appears in the role of a custodian of world peace and is able to use that authority and cast its vote in furtherance of its aggressive designs. You will doubtless appreciate my government's perplexity and sorrow at finding itself—the victim of Egyptian aggression—under suspicion by the US Government of having taken an action which might 'place in jeopardy the peace of the Middle East'. I should be grateful if you would interpret to the US Government the feelings of the Government of Israel at finding itself, contrary to all rational expectations, faced with a situation which appears so fundamentally to distort the true state of affairs prevailing in the Middle East.

6. As I have already had an opportunity of informing you, the report which the US Government has received from its representative in Transjordan is wholly without foundation. Not only has the Government of Israel not told the Government of Transjordan that 'the time has passed for the negotiation of an armistice', but it is precisely an armistice which Israel is at present attempting to negotiate with Transjordan, in the hope that an armistice will soon lead to a permanent peace. I note your communication does not cite the Government of Transjordan as the source of this report.

7. I should like in conclusion to assure you, and to request you to convey this assurance to the US Government, that the Government of Israel has today in mind but one aim—peace. It nurtures no ambition to invade the territory of neighbouring states. Yet it feels bound to defend its territory and its people against aggression from whatever quarter that aggression may come and to take all legitimate measures dictated by considerations of self-defence. It will not regard that purpose as accomplished until the invading armies have withdrawn to their proper territories and peace has been established between Israel and her neighbours. It attaches the utmost importance to the retention by Israel of the friendship of the Government and people of the US and trusts that no conflict will arise between its

paramount duty of self-defence and its vital interest in the retention of the friendship. It will always be sincerely appreciative of any help that the US Government can lend in restraining aggression and hastening the restoration of peace and hopes that the US Government may find it possible, as in the past, to exercise its good offices in this direction both with the Arab states and with the Government of the UK.

Accept, sir, the renewed expression of my highest consideration."
(Signed: Moshe Shertok, Minister for Foreign Affairs.)

Enclosure referred to in note is copy of the paraphrase of Deptel 281 of December 30 which I read to Shertok and Ben-Gurion as Shertok took it down in shorthand.

[Here follows enclosure.]

For American eyes only: Mission analysis of situation by the above development follows as part Two.²

McDONALD

² See telegram 9, January 5, p. 614.

501.BB Palestine/1-449: Telegram

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Holmes) to the Secretary
of State*

TOP SECRET

LONDON, January 4, 1949—1 p. m.

20. Embassy having earlier asked regarding nature counsel being given Abdullah by UK (Dept's repeat of Amman's unnumbered, December 29, 4 p. m.¹) Burrows² January 3 stated that some time ago when Abdullah asked for advice UK made 3 points:

(a) If possible Abdullah should not finalize any agreement reached with PGI before Conciliation Commission³ arrives (Burrows said accent is on finalize);

(b) There are great advantages in Abdullah and Egypt reconciling their differences and working together;

(c) UK made clear what it considers reasonable settlement with PGI along lines discussed earlier with Dept., i.e. Gaza-Beersheba road as southern boundary Negev; Haifa and Lydda free ports, etc.

2. Upon learning of interview in which PGI representatives threatened Transjordan (paragraph 5, Dept's 4819, December 30⁴) Foreign

¹ Presumably telegram 176, December 29, 1948, 5 p. m., not printed.

² Bernard A. B. Burrows, Head of the Eastern Department of the British Foreign Office.

³ The United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, hereinafter annotated as the Palestine Conciliation Commission.

⁴ This was a repeat of telegram 281 to Tel Aviv, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.

Office telegraphed Kirkbride⁵ to tell Abdullah that it still considered its advice (paragraph 1 above) sound. In view HMG, Abdullah would be courting difficulties if he should continue to negotiate with PGI while Israeli forces still in Egypt. However, HMG aware serious responsibility involved for UK if it should advise Abdullah to refrain from any negotiations which Abdullah wished to undertake. Consequently, although HMG still hoped King would be able to "spin out" negotiations until CC arrives, Kirkbride "should not try to restrain Abdullah from any course of action upon which Abdullah decides in full knowledge facts."

3. In same instruction Kirkbride was told to make clear that if Abdullah, acting upon Jericho resolution accepts formal union between Palestine and Transjordan without limiting this to Arab areas Palestine, UK would have to make clear that it does not recognize and cannot support any claims by Abdullah to areas which may be incorporated into Jewish state.

4. Burrows said that foregoing means Abdullah is free to act as he thinks best regarding negotiations and that he is not under any UK restraint.

5. Burrows said Foreign Office has just received report of January 1 meeting Jerusalem between Abdullah Tel for Abdullah and PGI representatives. Meeting "went rather well." Israelis insisted confining "armistice" talks to Arab Legion area only and listed as points of interest to PGI access northern potash works and suggested restarting southern plant for which water would have to come from Transjordan.

Israelis suggested that boundaries should be defined between Arab Legion and Israeli forces, that prisoners should be exchanged and organization set up to handle claims. Israelis favored dividing Jerusalem and Tel replied this might be acceptable if Arab part Jerusalem included Arab quarters outside old city. Tel mentioned among Arab points of interest return Arabs of Lydda, Ramallah and Jaffa, and suggested he would like to discuss future of Galilee. Israelis made no comment.

6. Burrows asked classification should be observed regarding paragraph 5 above "since Abdullah is negotiating without knowledge Transjordan government" and should be protected from leaks.

7. Burrows commented that UK is pleased talks are continuing and that there have been "no more ultimata." He thought it obvious that while talks are technically concerned with armistice, they have already

⁵ Sir Alec S. Kirkbride, British Minister in Transjordan.

gone well beyond this limit into field peace settlement. Burrows opined limiting talks to Arab Legion area "might be sinister," since there is school of Arab thought (including Samir Pasha) which believes that as soon as some progress is made with Transjordan, Israeli forces will drive south from Baisan along Jordan valley thus cutting off Iraqis who at present show no signs of either negotiating or going home. Arab Legion is already spread thin and could not take over Iraqi front unless assured it would not have to meet Israeli attacks.

8. Asked regarding British ideas for road ahead, Burrows said Foreign Office still believes, and apparently Ambassador Griffis agrees, next move should be US and UK reaching understanding regarding territorial objectives (Embassy's top secret despatch 2497 December 21⁶ and A-2377⁷ December 22). He said British Embassy Washington was instructed January 3 to suggest to Dept. that these talks should begin at once. Foreign Office was encouraged by British Embassy report December 28 that Department willing discuss with UK policy regarding Conciliation Commission which according Foreign Office logically should embrace territorial thinking.

9. Please keep Embassy fully informed.

HOLMES

⁶ Not printed (867N.01/12-2148); it transmitted a memorandum of December 17, 1948, prepared by the British War Office, which dealt "with the strategic significance of Palestine and in particular with the importance which the British War Office attaches to the location of Israel's southern frontier." This memorandum was a followup to the Douglas-Bevin meeting of December 14, as described in telegram 5244 from London of the same day, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1670.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1680.

501.BB Palestine/1-449: Telegram

Mr. John C. Ross¹ to the Secretary of State

SECRET

NEW YORK, January 4, 1949—11:25 p. m.

3. For Rusk² and Satterthwaite.³ Bunche informs that Azcarate⁴ phoned from Cairo this evening that Egyptians have confidentially notified him that they are ready to enter into talks with Israel on all outstanding questions under UN auspices provided Israelis will obey SC cease-fire order by 1400 GMT January 5.

¹ Deputy to Senator Warren R. Austin, U.S. Representative at the United Nations.

² Dean Rusk, Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs.

³ Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs.

⁴ Pablo Azcarate, Acting Mediator Bunche's Representative at Cairo.

Bunche describes this development as most encouraging in long time for there apparently are no strings attached. He has instructed Vigier⁵ to take up matter urgently in Tel Aviv pressing strongly in Bunche's name for acceptance. Bunche has received no word from Tel Aviv regarding observance of SC cease-fire order to date. He has instructed Vigier to sound out Israelis on holding a high level conference on Rhodes with civil and military authorities of both Israel and Egypt under UN chairmanship. He thinks Transjordan could relatively easily be persuaded to join such a conference.

Bunche feels strongly that Israel should grab this opportunity at once if they want a peaceful settlement. He feels certain that it is a bona fide offer.

Bunche requests us to find opportunities tomorrow to impress on Israelis urgent importance of accepting this offer by deadline. He feels that advice from appropriate US officials would tip the scales at this critical juncture. However, he emphasized that matter should be treated with the utmost secrecy during next twenty-four hours.⁶

Bunche commented in same conversation this evening that until above development he was seriously contemplating requesting withdrawal of UN observers on Israeli side of lines at SC Negev committee⁷ meeting Friday, January 7, since observers are bottled up in Haifa and Tel Aviv. He feels that unless the SC can make its cease-fire order stick with the Israelis he will have no course but to pull out the military observers which now give only a false sense of security.

Ross

⁵ Henri Vigier, Mr. Bunche's representative at Tel Aviv.

⁶ After consulting with Messrs. Rusk and Satterthwaite, Robert M. McClintock, Special Assistant to Mr. Rusk, telephoned Mr. Ross at 10 a. m., January 5 regarding telegram 3. He observed to Mr. Ross that "the Egyptian deadline for entering into talks with Israel on all outstanding questions, provided the Israelis would obey the Security Council cease fire order by 1400 GMT today, had already passed, since this hour was 9 a. m., EST. Since the suggested representations which Dr. Bunche thought would be useful if made by the United States to the Provisional Government of Israel would have to be cleared with the President and the deadline was already expired, it seemed impossible for us to act on Dr. Bunche's suggestion. I said, however, that I thought it would be entirely appropriate for the Acting Mediator to telephone Mr. Shertok in Tel Aviv and give him the information which Mr. Azcarate had telephoned from Cairo, together with Dr. Bunche's own estimate of the situation." (memorandum of conversation by Mr. McClintock, 501.BB Palestine/1-549)

⁷ A loose usage for the Committee on the Palestinian Question of the Security Council. Messrs. Rusk and Satterthwaite, in a joint memorandum of January 5 to Mr. Lovett, began preparation of instructions to the United States representative on the Committee. The memorandum noted that the Committee "was appointed pursuant to the Security Council's resolution of November 4, which required Israel and Egypt to stop fighting in the Negev and to withdraw their forces to the positions occupied as of October 14. The purpose of the Committee was to study the situation in the light of this resolution and to determine whether it should recommend to the Security Council possible action under Chapter VII in the event that the resolution had not been complied with." (501.BB Palestine/1-549)

501.BB Palestine/1-549

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 5, 1949.

Participants: The Acting Secretary, Mr. Lovett
The British Ambassador, Sir Oliver Franks
Mr. Bromley, First Secretary of the British Embassy
Mr. Satterthwaite—NEA
Mr. Wilkins—NE
Mr. McClintock—UNA

Sir Oliver Franks said that he had been instructed personally to thank the Acting Secretary of State for the prompt and effective intervention which this Government had made with the Provisional Government of Israel and which had resulted in instructions being given by the Israeli Government for the withdrawal of its forces from Egypt.

The British Ambassador said that Mr. Bevin, in view of the very great strategic interests of both the United States and Great Britain in the Near East and in the light of the necessity for an adequate defense in depth of the Suez Canal, very much hoped that the American Government might find its way clear to exert pressure on the Israeli Government to withdraw to the lines in the Negev established by the Acting Mediator after the adoption by the Security Council of its resolution of November 4, 1948.

I told the British Ambassador that for a variety of reasons I did not feel that we could accede to Mr. Bevin's request. While, in an exceptional case such as that when the incursion by Israeli forces into Egypt threatened a much more grave conflict outside the boundaries of Palestine, we had been willing to make strong representations, our general line of policy was to operate through the United Nations. It did not seem proper for the United States to take on itself the responsibilities of the Security Council and apply them unilaterally. Furthermore, we had found in practice that strong representations, to be effective, should be used sparingly; otherwise notes often were merely interesting documents for the archives but useful for no other purpose. Finally, we had our position on the Conciliation Commission to consider. The Israeli authorities already believed that two of the Members of the Commission were prejudiced in favor of the Arabs, since Turkey was a Moslem country and France not only had 25 million Mohammedans living under its jurisdiction but also had not voted for Israel in last month's sessions of the Security Council. If we were

¹ Drafted by Mr. McClintock.

to achieve anything as an impartial member of the Commission we could not jeopardize that position by taking a line which would cause the Israelis to feel that even the third Member was against them. Meanwhile, of course, we continued to share the British anxiety over the situation in Palestine and were not stinting our efforts to do the utmost to bring about a cessation of hostilities. In fact we were this afternoon addressing new representations to the Governments of Israel and Egypt, based on a report received last night from the Acting Mediator, to the effect that Egypt had said it was willing to undertake negotiations all across the board with Israel under United Nations auspices, provided Israel accepted a cease-fire by 1400 hours GMT today. The deadline was so short that we were inclined to be suspicious whether the offer was bonafide but we thought that a representation was warranted by our desire to do everything possible to facilitate a cessation of hostilities.

Sir Oliver said that the second main point which Mr. Bevin wished to make was that with the continued stress of warfare in the Near East conditions in the Arab countries would become, as he put it, deliquescent, or, to use the more graphic aphorism of the Foreign Secretary, "We should have another China on our hands". Accordingly, it was of the utmost importance that the United States and Great Britain, whose strategic interests were so involved in that area, do their utmost to compose this dangerous situation. Mr. Bevin wondered if the American Member of the Conciliation Commission might not be instructed by his Government to keep in mind the strategic interests of the United States and the United Kingdom and to use his good influence to further those interests. I said that, while naturally we would give background information to Mr. Keenan, our Representative on the Commission, we had no choice but to do our utmost to play the role of a true conciliator. Mr. Keenan and his colleagues had the task of trying to find some common ground for agreement which would be acceptable to all the parties concerned. If they could get agreement between the parties we would be bound to accept such an arrangement. However, Mr. Keenan of course would comport his action to the main lines of policy which had already been made public to the world by Dr. Jessup in his speech before Committee 1 on November 20.² I briefly recapitulated our main points, including the fact that if the Israeli Government desired to benefit by the territorial provisions of the resolution of November 29, 1947, it should be expected to relinquish such areas as were awarded to the Arabs

² See editorial note, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1617. Philip C. Jessup was the spokesman of the United States on questions involving Palestine at the Third Session of the General Assembly at Paris.

by that resolution but were now occupied by Israel, as Jaffa and western Galilee. In other words, they could not have it both ways. As for the strategic implications of the situation, I said that Mr. Keenan would be briefed before he went. The British Ambassador seemed to be satisfied with this answer.

Sir Oliver then said that he had received permission to tell us that shortly British reinforcements would be sent to the Gulf of Aqaba.³ He did not, however, wish to inform us officially of this fact if we had no desire for such intelligence from his Government. In response to questioning the Ambassador intimated that the British reinforcements would be sent from outside by sea and that they numbered three companies in strength. (Mr. Bromley, however, murmured that he thought something like a battalion was being sent to Aqaba.)

I said that we had already received similar reports from other sources, including the press. I did not think that this Government wished to be officially appraised of the Ambassador's information. As a matter of friendly comment, however, we wished to raise a little red flag and point out that if the troops indeed came to Transjordan from outside the Near Eastern area their arrival would be construed in many quarters as a violation of the Security Council truce resolution of May 29, which explicitly forbade the movement of military personnel into Palestine or the neighboring countries.

The interview concluded with Sir Oliver handing me a written statement of his Government's views on the situation in China and a memorandum of its views with respect to the IRO.⁴

³ The British Foreign Office communiqué on this matter, issued on January 8, read as follows: "His Majesty's Government have received a request from the Transjordan Government under the terms of the Anglo-Transjordan treaty of March 1948, to send a British force to Aqaba. His Majesty's Government have acceded to this request." (telegram 91, January 8, from London, 841.23901/1-849)

⁴ Chargé Holmes, on January 5, cabled the Department concerning the instructions sent to Ambassador Franks on January 3 for his conversation with Acting Secretary Lovett. He noted that Mr. Bevin had personally drafted the instructions, which in part called for the Ambassador "to refer to identical lines of policy regarding Middle East worked out between US and UK in fall 1947, and to say that all British actions Middle East are based on this policy and nothing else. British Government understood US views general Middle East problems have not altered since 1947. . . . Franks told to urge USG to participate in resolute effort with UK to arrive at firm conclusions which US and UK can support as Palestine solution. Instruction stated three things necessary to accomplish this:

- "(a) Fix frontiers Israel which US and UK could support;
- "(b) UK recognition PGI;
- "(c) Strong advice to Arabs if not to accept at least to acquiesce in agreed frontiers and to cease fighting."

The Ambassador was instructed "to urge that US and UK come to 'very firm conclusions' and fix definite boundaries and thus arrive at final settlement 'which will save Middle East.'" (Telegram 47, 867N.01/1-549)

Regarding the "identical lines of policy" agreed upon at the "Pentagon Talks of 1947," see *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, pp. 485 ff.

501.BB Palestine/1-549 : Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET US URGENT TEL AVIV, January 5, 1949—11 a. m.

9. Attention President and Acting Secretary. Part Two.¹ Following is unanimous consensus: Mission staff including Service Attachés. While Deptel 3 of January 3 is most helpful and explanatory and is being communicated Foreign Office soonest, the representations made Israel under instructions Deptel 281 of December 30² gave the effect of putting US in new role with relation to conflict between Israel and Egypt. Thus, irrespective of what the precise intent was in instructing me to make those representations in the form indicated, the deduction of the PGI that, by forcing Israel abandon an obviously successful military action (which would have, in mind army and public here, neutralized a forward Egyptian base from which Egypt has during six months repeatedly launched destructive air and other attacks against Israel without occasioning any recorded direct complaint by US or GB), the US is now directly involved in results of action it has taken. If Egyptian attacks should continue, or if misunderstanding our action encourages Iraqi attack in north, the US position will be compared here to Britain as power whose repeated maneuvers are having effect of letting Israel bleed to death by forcing her into position where she is neither free to end the war militarily nor obtain peace by negotiation [as called for by?] Security Council UN.

The military facts as Mission now understands them are that, owing our representations, Israel forces have abruptly retreated from Egyptian territory, abandoning control roads. The tactics of Israel Army apparently were to have raided El Arish and attack Rafah and neutralize them, then withdraw to open path for estimated 18,000 Egyptian troops to escape home to Egypt. Now situation very confused but it appears that the new position of Israeli forces has blocked escape route of Egyptians while leaving Rafah as yet untouched but completely cut off from northeast and southeast. This is what Mission meant when it ascribed "serious responsibility" arising out of US representations.

The public here has only today become aware of US representations and as implications become clearer, I anticipate unfavorable reaction. Mission troubled by possible internal political effect our move particularly as affecting January 25 elections. During last six months, I believe owing intensive efforts this Mission cultivate friendship and to the changed policy of delegation in Paris, the domestic political

For part one, see telegram 7, January 3, p. 605.
Foreign Relations, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.

tide was definitely swinging toward West. These latest developments have given extreme left and extreme right powerful political campaign issue to use against what now appears here to be new and definite Anglo-American alignment. If we cannot now stop Egypt's attack or persuade British to change its consistently antagonistic attitude toward Israel, these reactions will weigh against us.

All evidence here of PGI plans and Israel's self-interest negates existence any intention seize or hold Egyptian territory. Mission sees no inconsistency between US support independent strong Israel and all legitimate British interests in Egypt.

Mission hopes that US action already taken (Deptel 1, January 2³ and Deptel 2, January 3⁴) will be helpful restraining Egypt. Unfortunately substance US representations Israel (Deptel 281, December 30⁵) have come through London and are already widely publicized press here thus giving impression marked US partiality.

In view foregoing and in light of danger reaction with reference election, Mission urgently reiterates its recommendations contained Mistel 323, December 20⁶ that US immediately grant *de jure* recognition or at least ExImBank loan.

Mission has taken into account appointment Conciliation Committee and its terms of reference. Mission considers that situation now created does not permit postponement of actions suggested, and that such actions would facilitate work Conciliation Committee. (Part one sent as Mistel 7, January 3.)

McDONALD

³ Not printed; it advised of the Department's request to the British Embassy to inform the Foreign Office that "in view PGI order withdraw all Israeli forces from Egyptian territory as result our representations . . . Dept strongly believes Brit should impress on Egyptians necessity of their refraining from further attacks similar that on Tel Aviv. Otherwise chain of reprisals set off may well jeopardize progress toward final settlement so far made." (867N.2383/1-249)

⁴ This was a repeat of No. 2 to Cairo, p. 602.

⁵ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1674.

501.BB Palestine/1-549 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Egypt*¹

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 5, 1949—6 p. m.
NIACT

14. Please call on FonMin and make following representation:

1. Acting Palestine Mediator has informed us that his Representative in Cairo telephoned Jan. 4 that Egyptian Govt had confidentially

¹ This telegram and No. 8, *infra*, were cleared with Mr. Clifford.

notified him of its readiness to enter into talks with Israel on all outstanding questions under UN auspices provided PGI obeys SC cease-fire order by 1400 GMT Jan. 5.

2. This Govt regrets that reported deadline provided little time in which to make friendly representations to both Govts of Israel and Egypt expressing hope of US Govt that cease-fire would promptly be obeyed and that negotiations between Israel and Egypt under UN auspices would be immediately undertaken to settle all outstanding questions.

4. [*sic*] American Govt profoundly hopes that Egyptian Govt will not alter its peaceful intent because reported deadline has already expired. US feels that reasonable opportunity should be given PGI in which to accept a serious and bona fide offer. You may inform FonMin that your Govt is making representations at Tel Aviv in hope that both Israel and Egypt will observe immediate cease-fire and commence negotiations for armistice and peace.

Repeated for info only to Tel Aviv as 7, London as 44.

LOVETT

501.BB Palestine/1-349 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald), at Tel Aviv

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 5, 1949—6 p. m.
NIACT

8. Please call on FonMin and express your Govt's gratification on learning from FonMin's note Jan. 3 transmitted your Niac 7, Jan. 3, that no Israeli troops now remain on Egyptian territory.

2. Please add that this Govt is relieved that danger of much more serious conflict in Middle East has been averted. FonMin must realize representations of this Govt by you Dec. 31, pursuant to Deptel 281, Dec. 30,¹ were motivated by sincere friendship of US Govt for Israel and its desire to see PGI avoid course of action which might have led to grave consequences.

3. Dept has been informed by Acting Mediator that his Representative in Cairo Jan. 4 informed him that Egyptian Govt had confidentially notified UN Representative it was willing to enter into talks with Israel under UN auspices on all outstanding questions, provided PGI will obey SC cease-fire order by 1400 GMT Jan. 5. Although this info reached Dept after this deadline had expired, this Govt in friendly

¹ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1704.

spirit desires to acquaint PGI of foregoing info with trust that it may still be possible for PGI and Egypt to enter into negotiations following a prompt and effective cease-fire.

4. Inform FonMin that similar representations are being made to Egyptian Govt, and we are informing that Govt of our belief that a reasonable opportunity should be given PGI in which to accept a serious and bona fide offer.

Repeated to London as 45 and Cairo as 15 for info only.

LOVETT

501.BB Palestine/1-349: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Jerusalem

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, January 5, 1949—6 p. m.

8. GA res 11 Dec 1948 provides *inter alia* that Conciliation Comm will undertake upon request SC functions now assigned UN Mediator or UN Truce Comm by SC resolutions. (Contel 5 Jan 3.¹) When SC makes such request, Dept believes TC should be dissolved. Meanwhile, TC should [in] Dept's opinion, remain as now constituted. SC res 23 April 1948² establishing TC made no provision addition or replacement members (ref Deptel 917 Sep 21³).

LOVETT

¹ Not printed; it advised of the belief of the French Foreign Office that the Truce Commission should discontinue functioning with the arrival of the Palestine Conciliation Commission (501.BB Palestine/1-349).

² See editorial note, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 852.

³ Not printed; it stated that "SC Resolution Apr 23 establishing Truce Commission makes no provision additional members Truce Commission. Dept considers possible establishment Soviet ConGen Jerusalem would not automatically entitle USSR become member Truce Commission. UK has not thus far raised question its participation as result establishment Brit ConGen Jerusalem." (501.BB Palestine/9-1648)

501.BB Palestine/1-549: Telegram

The Chargé in Egypt (Patterson) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

CAIRO, January 5, 1949—7 p. m.

12. ReDeptels 2, January 3 and 4 January 4.¹ As communicated to Department by Embtel 7, January 4,² I was granted audience by His Majesty at 4 p. m., Wednesday, fifth. I opened conversation by men-

¹ Latter not printed.

² Not printed.

tioning Ambassador Griffis³ appreciation of his recent reception by King (Embtel 1782, January 2⁴) mentioning likewise former Ambassador Tuck's⁵ presence in Cairo. His Majesty remarked that he had questioned Ambassador Griffis re somewhat anomalous situation Chargé of this Embassy which had not previously, to his knowledge, arisen in Cairo adding an expression of surprise that Ambassador Griffis had not elected to mention to him subject matter on which I was calling and of which he was ignorant. I responded stating that Mr. Griffis had not been informed prior to his departure which accounted for my soliciting an audience so soon after Ambassador meeting HM. On my mentioning that Ambassador Griffis had called to explain his plans for alleviating ravages of war and that I too came on a mission of peace, King remarked that he had guessed as much. I immediately thereafter emphasized that I had called by express instruction of my government on a matter of urgency. HM replied that he would have received me yesterday (that is, the very day of my application for audience) had that been possible. After thanking King for his helpful promptitude I orally developed points of Deptel 2 above-mentioned. King inquired very particularly as to whether American Government had already indicated its concern to Israelis (I purposely avoided reference to PGI by name) and appeared content on my assuring him to that effect.

Re content numbered paragraph four, HM stated that Egyptian Government desirous of concluding armistice recommended by Security Council November 16, but that implementation resolution November 4 must concurrently take place. On my inquiring if implementation of both SC resolutions might not be effected simultaneously, King supposed this might be the case. HM remarked em-

³ Stanton Griffis, Ambassador in Egypt.

⁴ Not printed; it advised that Ambassador Griffis, on January 2, held a long discussion with King Farouk on the Palestine problem. The King advised him that "he must represent the will of his people and that his people want this war to go on if it takes ten years to finish it." He also stated that "in view of fact that Russian participations in Israel attack had become so obvious, he was constantly astounded at attitude of US in matter; that Palestine was rapidly becoming another Greece and that Russians, despite all American efforts in, and aid to, Turkey, were rapidly becoming entrenched in strategic positions in Palestine back of Turkish center frontier." The Ambassador noted that the King "Certainly indirectly confirmed my constantly stated belief that little progress can be made in Palestine settlement without completely approved blueprint by US and UK." He concluded that the "Department should consider possibilities even if unilateral, of bringing strong pressure on Israel to stop aggression and respect toothless UN orders. While I have in past tended to minimize Egyptian cry of 'Russian, Russian,' I am not now so confident. One thing is certain here, British are becoming extremely jittery re dangers of their own position and involvements which might ensue under their treaties with Egypt and Transjordan." (867N.01/1-249)

⁵ S. Pinkney Tuck, Minister in Egypt from 1944 to 1946 and Ambassador in Egypt from 1946 to 1948.

phatically, however, that he had no faith in Jews or the slightest confidence that they would keep their word in any agreement. At same time HM pointed out that Egypt was in the current hostilities the attacked and not the attacker. Said hostilities, which he stated were now continuing, were of the utmost intensity and carried on by all weapons available to the Israelis, including tear and irritant gases. HM hesitated to describe such gases as being actually poisonous, but stated that Egyptians, who had not yet used them, would do so if the Israelis continued their employment. HM, while not as jovial as described by Ambassador Griffis in Embtel 1782, seemed in good spirits and manifested confidence in outcome of current struggle which he stated was probably the hardest fought engagement in Middle East since El Alamein. HM repeated, as in his January 2 talk with Ambassador Griffis, that the Egyptians had captured Russians. On my inquiring if these were not Russian Jews he stated that some were, but that pure Russians had been taken and likewise Poles, Hungarians, Dutch, and even South Africans. He had had this last-named fact brought to the attention of the South African Chargé d'Affaires even though he had not been able to produce the South Africans alive.

On my suggesting restraint recommended in numbered paragraph five giving reported bombing Jerusalem as example, HM quickly replied that his military informants had assured him that bombing had been effected by unmarked Jewish planes flying high over city with intent to place blame on Egyptians. On my subsequently mentioned reported attack on Tel Aviv by Egyptian vessels, HM stated that this combat had been a running naval engagement wherein Egyptian warships pursued Jewish ditto which endeavored to find refuge Tel Aviv, with resultant cannonading of coast. King remarked that Tel Aviv was not the objective adding that if Egyptians wished to bomb Tel Aviv they could do so anytime from air. He asked from what source American Government credits information, to which I replied that insofar as I was aware the reports had not necessarily been verified. On my mentioning that journalists seemed to have better access to the front from Israeli than from Egyptian side, King remarked that he and his officers did not like journalists about so that their exclusion from the Egyptian lines represented conscious policy. HM added that he believed allied military commanders during last war had found journalists uncomfortable persons.

Nevertheless I stressed the probability of reprisals should Egyptian attacks on Zionist-held territory be made, emphasizing that in such case it would be difficult for US or any other government to persuade Israelis not to attack. Again the King indicated that Israelis were the attackers. In conclusion I reiterated the influence attributed by my government to King Farouk, who is regarded as a leader in

the Arab world, pointing out that as a sovereign and statesman he had exceptional authority and opportunity to bring peace to Middle East.

To this King replied that while indeed he exercised authority his powers were not as great as my government might imagine. He appeared definitely pleased, however, with this tribute to his position but did not refrain from iterating the observation made to Ambassador Griffis on January 2 to effect that US had brought trouble to Middle East and should use its best endeavors to solve the problems it had created. To this I responded by remarking that US Government was basically interested in restoring peace as its efforts near Israeli authorities and its instruction to me evidenced.

On conclusion of audience I handed King memorandum based on Deptel of which a copy will be forwarded by despatch.⁶ In so doing I remarked that while the memorandum which was designed for his convenience did not contain allusions to his person my government, as I had already informed him, had in its instruction to me repeatedly emphasized the vitally important responsibility which HM in his position as sovereign of Egypt and leader in Arab world possessed to bring about a lasting peace.

PATTERSON

⁶ The memorandum was dated January 5; a copy was transmitted to the Department by Cairo on January 7 in despatch 25 (501.BB Palestine/1-749).

501.BB Palestine/1-649.

Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Satterthwaite) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 6, 1949.

Subject: Developments concerning Palestine

Discussion:

An officer of the British Embassy informed us this afternoon that the Embassy had been instructed by Mr. Bevin to tell the State Department that on December 30 King Ibn Saud¹ had stated to the British Minister in Jidda that in view of the General Assembly resolution of December 11 calling for negotiations between the parties to the Palestine dispute, the time had come for the US and the UK to put pressure on both sides to reach a quick final settlement, under the threat of the most severe economic sanctions. The King asked that no other Arab

¹ Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, King of Saudi Arabia.

leaders be informed of this statement on his part, as he had not informed any of them that he was going to take such action. In speaking thus to the British Minister the King said that he was motivated by the fear that the present conflict would facilitate the spread of Communism in the Near East.

Mr. Bevin's comment on this was that it pointed out the necessity of a firm US-UK agreement on boundaries in Palestine and the use of the influence of the US and UK to persuade both parties to reach a final agreement.

The British Embassy officer also stated that a RAF reconnaissance on January 4 showed a party of thirty Israeli troops still occupying a strong point within Egyptian territory six miles west of El Auja. Photographs taken on this reconnaissance revealed that an anti-tank ditch had been bulldozed across the road one mile west of the strong point and five miles inside Egypt. Three anti-tank guns were observed in position at the strong point.

Editorial Note

Acting Mediator Bunche, at Lake Success on January 6, made a report to the President of the Security Council, which advised that "the Government of Egypt and the Provisional Government of Israel have notified my representatives in Cairo and Tel Aviv, respectively, of their unconditional acceptance of a proposal providing for a cease-fire to be immediately followed by direct negotiations between representatives of the two Governments under United Nations chairmanship on the implementation of the Security Council resolutions of 4 and 16 November 1948." The proposal provided that the cease-fire would be effective on January 5, but the date was postponed until the following day, "owing to unavoidable delays in cable communication with Haifa and Tel Aviv." The effective date was finally fixed at 1200 hours GMT, January 7, "Owing to further communication delays." The Security Council, on January 6, released the text of Mr. Bunche's report as S/1187.

The Acting Mediator informed the Committee on the Palestinian Question of the Security Council on January 7 that he had "transmitted a formal proposal to the parties that since it was desirable for the negotiations to be held in the best possible atmosphere, they be conducted at Rhodes. He had also suggested they get under way Jan. 11 or 12." (telegram 11, January 7, 8:22 p. m., from New York, 501.AJ Treaties/1-749)

Editorial Note

Cairo advised, on January 6 that Ibrahim Abdel Hady, the Egyptian Prime Minister, had telephoned the text of an *aide-mémoire* to Ambassador Rahim at Washington. The *aide-mémoire* was said to have expressed "appreciation for the friendly sentiments of US designed to reestablish peace in Palestine"; to have "insisted that Egypt had observed the Security Council's resolutions in regards to Palestine while Zionist adversaries had not done so and had moreover bombarded refugee camps and hospitals. Accordingly Egypt had been obliged to exercise legitimate defense against attacks"; and to have expressed astonishment at the accusation of bombarding Jerusalem, for "ever since May 15 [1948]," Egypt had "endeavored to spare Jerusalem and other holy places from the consequences of military action." (telegram 15, 501.BB Palestine/1-649)

The *aide-mémoire*, an undated message from the Egyptian Embassy to the Department of State, was handed to Mr. Satterthwaite by Ambassador Rahim on January 7. (867N.01/1-749)

501.BB Palestine/1-649 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 6, 1949—3 p. m.
NIACT

3. Confirming Rusk-Ross telephone conversation today, following is attitude to be adopted by USRep in SC Committee on Palestine scheduled for Fri., Jan. 7.

Principal objective is to get SC and its Committee to deal with Palestine in such way as not to impair possibility of success of Conciliation Commission. Inactivity Lebanese, Syrians, Iraqi, Saudi Arabians and negotiations now in process between Israel and Trans-jordan would make it unfortunate for an exaggeration of present Israeli-Egyptian difficulty to throw entire Palestine situation into fresh turmoil. US is exercising maximum influence on both Israel and Egypt to cease present hostilities.

SC Committee should give careful study to the reports of the Acting Mediator and his Chief of Staff on the actual fighting in the Negev and to the statements of PGI and Egypt before making Committee recommendations to SC as whole. If Bunche-Riley reports and statements of parties do not sufficiently clarify the picture, the Committee should, through its Chairman, request additional info from those having access to the facts.

If the facts are fully developed and lead members of the Committee to propose that Committee recommend further action under Chap. VII, USRep would have to state that he must refer such recommendation to his Govt for instructions. If, nevertheless, such proposals come to an immediate vote, USRep should abstain.¹

In view of strength of recent US approaches to Cairo and Tel Aviv and of early departure Conciliation Commission, believe majority other members SC Committee would accept our position if approached privately.²

LOVETT

¹ The Chairman of the Committee on the Palestinian Question reported to the Security Council on January 7 that "the Committee was of the opinion that no further action by it was required at the moment." The Council released the report of the Committee the same day as S/1191.

² This telegram was cleared in substance with Mr. Clifford.

501.BB Palestine/1-749

*Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Samuel K. C. Kopper*¹

TOP SECRET

[NEW YORK,] January 7, 1949.

Subject: Boundary Settlement in Palestine

Participants: Mahmoud Fawzi Bey, Permanent Egyptian Representative to the UN

Mr. John C. Ross, Deputy to the U.S. Representative to the UN

Mr. S. K. C. Kopper, Special Ass't. to the Director, NEA, Department of State

Fawzi Bey asked Mr. Ross and myself to lunch today to discuss further the matter he had raised, in the first instance, with the Secretary last summer, and more recently, and in more detail, with Dr. Jessup and myself in Paris (Delgas 920 and 953, Nov. 24 and 26, 1948).²

This matter has to do with the Egyptian views on what should be the proper boundary settlement in Palestine and the desirability for an informal understanding at the earliest possible opportunity between the United States, United Kingdom and Egypt. The principal features of our conversation today dwelt upon the question of whether such conversations should be undertaken and if so where should they be held.

¹ Mr. Kopper was Special Assistant to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs; at this time, he was detailed as an Adviser to the U.S. Delegation at the United Nations.

² Delga 920 is printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1625; No. 953 is not printed, but see footnote 2 to Delga 920, *ibid.*, p. 1627.

Fawzi Bey said that while he was in Cairo at the turn of the year he had taken this subject up with the Egyptian Government. He now had authority to enter in discrete informal conversations with the American and British Governments regarding the boundary lines which should be established in southern Palestine. He said that his position was one where the Government of Egypt would have to be able to denounce him if dire necessity required it to do so, i.e. if any informal understanding he worked out could not be put over in Egypt. Accordingly, he thought any informal private negotiations should be undertaken in New York. If they were undertaken in Cairo, London or Washington it would lend an official governmental air to the negotiations from which it would be almost impossible to deviate. Besides this some of the Egyptian officials were somewhat wary of undertaking conversations in London because of the political atmosphere surrounding United Kingdom-Egyptian relations at the moment.

Mr. Ross and I pointed out that the establishment of the Palestine Conciliation Commission by the General Assembly on December 11th was a most important factor which we would have to take into consideration before deciding on whether informal conversations should be carried on behind the scene. We said that even assuming such conversations might take place they would have to be handled very carefully and could not in any way impede the work of the Conciliation Commission. Fawzi Bey seemed to understand this. He said that the objective of such informal conversations would be to facilitate the work of the Conciliation Commission.

I explained that following Fawzi Bey's approach to Dr. Jessup in Paris which we of course had reported to the Department it had been agreed informally in Paris by Mr. Rusk, Mr. Ross, Mr. Wilkins and myself that Paris would not have been a suitable place or time to undertake the negotiations envisaged by Fawzi Bey. Mr. Rusk had indicated that it was a matter we would have to take up after the conclusion of the General Assembly. I explained to Fawzi Bey that the question had not been discussed since our return and, therefore, no decision had been taken. Mr. Ross suggested that we endeavor to obtain the views of the Department at an early date.

Mr. Ross then indicated that if the discussions were to be held his first reaction was that New York would be the most suitable location.

I inquired of Fawzi Bey what the position of Egypt was now regarding the boundary settlement. He replied that it was substantially the same as it had been when he spoke to Dr. Jessup. He reiterated that the Jewish bulge in the Negev should be rectified.

Fawzi Bey then repeated what he had indicated to the Secretary last summer and to us in Paris during the fall. There were many Egyptian leaders who were anxious to get the Palestine question

settled so that they could get along with the development of the Egyptian economical and social system. He felt, however, that a prerequisite to this was the settlement of the Palestine situation. He repeated what he had told Dr. Jessup in response to the latter's question regarding the possibility of Egypt and Transjordan working out their differences. Fawzi Bey said that it would be difficult to do this but it was by no means impossible.

Mr. Ross and I informed Fawzi Bey in a personal manner and with complete candor that we thought the more constructive role which Egypt had played in the last number of months was helpful toward gaining a solution to this problem. We promised to let him know the reaction of the American Government to his proposal at an early date.

This conversation took place at Lake Success.

867N.01/1-749 : Telegram

The Minister in Saudi Arabia (Childs) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

JIDDA, January 7, 1949—noon.

21. Legtel 20, January 7.¹ British Ambassador and I received together [by] King 9 a. m. Legation Arab secretary says reception two representatives together to discuss political problems unprecedented SAG-US relations.

King began by saying he was faced by extremely critical situation. He loved Arabs above all else and his greatest enmity was directed towards Jews. He had been severely criticized other Arab states not giving greater support Arab cause. He had failed to heed Syrian pleas additional help. He had only sent originally thousand troops Palestine and would have sent no more but when Jews crossed into Egypt with which country he was bound by closest ties and when Jewish planes flew over Saudi territory (Legtel 9²) he had no alternative but to send additional thousand troops as he had done in past few days in order to defend his friends and take action to insure respect his own territory. He said otherwise he would have been without honor.

King spoke use being made Jews by Russians and disorders which were bound to ensue unless effective measures taken by his friends and by him. He recalled strong ties which united him with British and US. He observed British Government had recently reaffirmed its treaty obligations Egypt, Transjordan and Iraq. This left only Leba-

¹ Not printed; it conveyed the opinion expressed by King Ibn Saud to British Ambassador Trott that there was only one way to deal with the Palestine situation, namely for the "British and US Government[s] to propose economic sanctions against both Arabs and Jews unless they are prepared to put an end to fighting [in] Palestine." (867N.00/1-749)

² Dated January 4, not printed.

non, Syria and Saudi Arabia as Arab states whose friendship had not been publicly acknowledged by either Britain or US. He had repeatedly approached US Government for some assurances re US attitude toward him but had not obtained anything. He could not be left in this fashion and he had therefore taken the step to call together with him both British and US representatives in order stress his appreciation of critical situation and to request them to bring his viewpoints before their governments.

King observed that although Great Britain had committed itself re three Arab countries it had remained silent re Saudi Arabia which had been of unreserved assistance during both world wars. So far as US was concerned Americans partners in Saudi Arabia and he could not understand our silence particularly when he had been so severely attacked by other Arab states by reason of his failure to give greater assistance in Palestine while every protection had been afforded American interests in Saudi Arabia.

HM made reference during audience to request Russian Ambassador Cairo last year (presumably 1947) for resumption Soviet-SAG diplomatic relations. He said he had declined on grounds Soviet had no interests this country.

King concluded "you know my thoughts and you are at liberty state what you may choose in your message to your government expressive my point of view. It is requested viewpoints of your two governments be made known to me. Either you must say you are my friends and will support me or you must say no and then I will know what other means I must take."³

Sent Department 21, repeated London 4.

CHILDS

³ Saudi Arabian Deputy Foreign Minister Yusuf Yassin called Minister Childs to the Foreign Office on January 9 to convey a message "to be accepted as statement from King." Mr. Childs summarized the message as follows:

"1. Palestine situation was very critical and Jewish planes were repeatedly trespassing over Saudi territory. . . .

"2. Arabs will never accept Jewish Government in Palestine or Middle East.

"3. Problem is not one between Arabs and Jews but has gone much farther than that and involves much larger question, namely, one between world and Communism.

"4. Is it possible, I was asked, for US and British Governments jointly to take position of force against the two parties immediately involved in Palestine; namely Arabs and Jews. Could they bring force to separate two parties, a separation to be enforced by power?" (telegram 23, January 9, 11 p. m., from Jidda, 867N.01/1-949)

The Department replied to telegram 23 on January 28. In part, it suggested that the "King could be helpful in telling other Arab states that time has come to negotiate settlement and recommending to them that they work sincerely to achieve this end, either through direct negotiation or through Commission. . . . US Govt has appreciated King's past advice and counsels of moderation to other Arab States. It earnestly hopes that King will find it possible to exhibit same moderation in counseling Arab States in manner outlined . . . above." (telegram 30, 867N.01/1-949)

867N.01/1-749: Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET URGENT
NIACT

TEL AVIV, January 7, 1949—8 p. m.

20. In absence Shertok and Ben Gurion but with Ben Gurion's authority, Shiloah informs (6 p. m.) me of grave events today as follows:

1. At 5 local time, fighting had not ceased in south. Israeli forces were ordered to cease but, according Shiloah, something seems to have slipped on Egyptian side.

2. At 10:30 a. m. today, according incomplete data received by PGI, four British Spitfires "carrying bombs" strafed Israeli troops in Rafah 078079 area. Israel planes engaged combat and downed two, one at Imara 104081. One British pilot badly wounded and probably now dead. Other British is being brought as prisoner to Tel Aviv.

3. At 4 p. m. twelve Spitfires returned area presumably searching for previous flight. Israeli planes rose and shot down one and Spitfires apparently retired.

4. PGI considers attack by British planes as "unprovoked aggression" and declares situation extremely grave.

5. Israel Air Force has received instructions to avoid engagements with British.

[Here follows section numbered 6 dealing with the Israeli-Iraqi front.]

MCDONALD

867N.01/1-849

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

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] January 8, 1949.

Subject: Attack on RAF Planes by IAF Planes

Participants: Julius Holmes, Chargé d'Affaires, London
J. C. Satterthwaite, NEA

Mr. Holmes telephoned at 10:30 this morning to say that the news about the shooting down by the Israeli Air Force of five Royal Air Force planes was true and that Ambassador Franks had been instructed to see Mr. Lovett this morning to give him the facts. Mr. Holmes was sent for by Mr. Bevin who, however, was in a meeting by the time Mr. Holmes arrived at the Foreign Office and these facts were therefore given him by Michael Wright.¹

¹ Michael R. Wright, Superintending Under Secretary of the Eastern Department in the British Foreign Office.

To summarize the information given Mr. Holmes, the RAF planes were attacked over Egyptian territory, the attack was unprovoked, and the RAF planes were under orders not to cross the Palestinian frontier and to avoid combat. A total of five planes were shot down, four out of the first reconnaissance flight and one out of the second.

Much of the information which the British now have is based on a report from the leader of the first reconnaissance flight, who bailed out over Egyptian territory. Another important point that Mr. Holmes made was that the British assured him that the reconnaissance planes did not carry bombs and did not engage in any offensive action.

Mr. Holmes said that the British are on the point of issuing a rather lengthy press communiqué giving full details of the loss of these planes. The final paragraph reads as follows: "In view of these unprovoked attacks, our aircraft have now been instructed to regard as hostile any Jewish aircraft encountered over Egyptian territory."

In reply to Mr. Holmes' query whether the British expected to continue the reconnaissance flights, he was told that the commander of the Royal Air Force has been given discretion in this respect.

Mr. Holmes said that he had been shown a map based on both tactical and photographic reconnaissance which clearly shows a line of Jewish strong points well inside Egyptian territory.

He said also that all this information has been telegraphed to Sir Terence Shone² with a request that he pass it on immediately to the Acting UN Conciliator. Furthermore, Mr. Marriott, the British Consul General in Haifa, has been instructed to go to Tel Aviv at once and give this information to the PGI.

Mr. Wright also told Mr. Holmes that Mr. Bevin views this situation in the most serious light, and considers the situation extremely grave. Mr. Holmes said the British are jittery and worked up about this development. He hoped that he would be successful in calming them down somewhat. Mr. Bevin asked Mr. Wright also to tell Mr. Holmes that the Chiefs of Staff and the Minister of Defense had been consulted concerning the orders that were issued and that they had been approved by Mr. Attlee.³

Mr. Holmes said that he was calling at once in order that we should have this information and know that it was being made public.

Note: The sense of the foregoing was telephoned to Mr. Clark Clifford at the White House at 11:05 a. m. I also told him that Mr. Lovett would appreciate it if he would pass this information on to the President as soon as possible, since the situation might become very serious.

² Of the British Delegation at the United Nations.

³ Clement R. Attlee, British Prime Minister.

501.BB Palestine/1-849 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald), at Tel Aviv

SECRET US URGENT
NIACT

WASHINGTON, January 8, 1949—8 p. m.

13. Re USUN telegram 13 Jan 8¹ repeated to you today call immediately on FonMin and state that this Govt profoundly hopes that reported continuance of military operations by Israeli forces after cease fire deadline has no basis in fact. You should add that this Govt was most gratified yesterday to hear PGI representative assure SC Palestine Committee of Israel's pacific intent, its willingness to abide by cease fire and to negotiate across the board with Egypt under UN auspices. Conclude by saying that your Govt hopes immediate assurances can be given by PGI reaffirming this official statement.

Repeated London as 94, Cairo as 28, USUN 12.

LOVETT

¹Not printed; it advised of information from Mr. Bunche concerning an Egyptian protest that the Israelis had moved into Egyptian territory after the cease-fire deadline and were still there. The telegram also transmitted the Acting Mediator's request that the United States make representations to Tel Aviv to persuade the Israelis to make immediate withdrawal (501.BB Palestine/1-849).

867N.2383/1-849 : Telegram

The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald) to the Secretary of State

SECRET PRIORITY

TEL AVIV, January 8, 1949—11 p. m.

21. Re Deptel 12, January 7.¹ Talks with Shiloah and principal military liaison reveals UN observers left Tel Aviv for Negev on 7 January and are now able examine all positions. It was pointed out by Shiloah that area west of El Auja (El Aujar) is open desert without frontier markings. He offered investigate alleged position Israeli and report to mission.

Re Deptel 11, January 7.² re Egyptian protest to UN, Shiloah asserts UN has not forwarded any such protest to PGI as of 4 p. m. today

¹Not printed; it requested comment on information from the British Embassy that Royal Air Force reconnaissance on January 4 and 5 showed that Israeli troops, armed with three antitank guns, still occupied a strong point in Egyptian territory west of El Auja and that an antitank ditch had been bulldozed across a nearby road 5 miles inside Egypt (867N.2383/1-749).

²Not printed; it repeated the text of the *aide-mémoire* left by the Egyptian Ambassador at 4 p. m. that afternoon stating that shortly after the ceasefire at 2 p. m., January 7, Zionist forces had advanced once more into Egyptian territory.

Footnote continued on following page.

and there is no knowledge here of such actions by Israeli forces. With UN now in field both sides all fighting believed stopped except at Rafah where Israeli claim local Egyptian commander continues artillery fire.

Mission has no way of checking RAF report or the alleged Israeli violations cease-fire and service attachés strongly suggest such technical matters be left UN observers on spot and that mission not become involved.

McDONALD

Footnote continued from preceding page.

tory, had bombarded several civilian objectives at Deir el-Balah in the Egyptian zone in Palestine as well as refugee camps, and that the Egyptian Government could not hold itself responsible for the consequences of continued Zionist violation of the ceasefire (867N.2383/1-749). The Department, on January 7, sent the text of the Egyptian *aide-mémoire* to Mr. Ross at New York and directed him to bring the matter to Mr. Bunche for comment (telegram 8, 501.BB Palestine/1-749).

Egyptian Prime Minister Hady called in Chargé Patterson at 7 p. m. on January 7 and conveyed to him the information contained in the *aide-mémoire*. The Chargé "expressed the hope that the apparent renewal of hostilities after a cease-fire . . . might be due to the short time available for notifying local commanders. I would hasten to apprise my government to [of] Egyptian viewpoint since I was certain from urgent instructions . . . of deep and serious concern of US Government in the importance not only of a cease-fire but also of attainment of general settlement in Palestine at earliest possible moment. . . . I urged upon Hady Pasha the importance of not allowing localized attacks to degenerate into general hostilities inimical to the reestablishment of the cease-fire." (telegram 20, January 7, 9 p. m., from Cairo, 501.BB Palestine/1-749)

867N.01/1-949 : Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

SECRET

AMMAN, January 9, 1949—4 p. m.

13. Mytel 5, January 4.¹ Glubb Pasha² gave following account this morning of meeting held January 5 between Abdullah El-Tel representing King and Dayan and Shiloah representing Israelis:

During course of meeting Abdullah El-Tel said that Transjordan would wish return of Ramle and Lydda as they predominantly Arab areas. Israelis replied in connection this argument they claimed areas in Negev which were predominantly Jewish prior hostilities. Tel is alleged to have commented that these areas small, at which point Israelis asked him to delimit territories he had in mind. However Tel replied that he must refer this question to his government. Other points also raised but no progress made.

¹Not printed.

²Maj. Gen. John Bagot Glubb, Commander of the Transjordanian Arab Legion.

Glubb believed next meeting scheduled for January 12 or 13 in Jerusalem.

In Glubb's opinion progress of meetings too slow due mainly to fact that Prime Minister and Transjordan Government are not supposed to be informed in matter. In final analysis government would have to decide question and sign any agreement and therefore present state of affairs prevents presentation concrete suggestions. Unless both parties are able to cease fencing and come down to point by point definitive discussion of what each one wants and what each is prepared to give other in compromise possible that existing cordiality will be jeopardized and only several more meetings can be held.³

Re Israel's and Egypt's agreement entered direct armistice talks under United Nations auspices, Glubb thought this might give impetus

³ In telegram 15, January 10, Amman advised further that the meeting between the Israelis and Abdullah el-Tel on January 5 were "inconclusive with topics still being discussed in preliminary manner. Israelis presented their credentials signed by Ben Gurion and Shertok. While they seemed dubious about telegram's credentials signed by King only, they nevertheless accepted them. Kirkbride said atmosphere meeting had been described as cordial with Israelis making special effort." (867N.01/1-1049)

Tel Aviv, on January 6, reported on the same matter as follows: "At Foreign Ministry request Shiloah reported meeting last night PGI and Transjordan representatives Jewish Jerusalem on armistice went well. Transjordan representative, in reply question from Shiloah, confirmed there had been no threat of 'peace or war' in previous talks and had added 'if there had been we would not now be talking.' Shiloah added significantly that Transjordan representative stated British now cognizant negotiations." (telegram 14, 501.BB Palestine/1-649)

London, on January 12, advised of information from the British Foreign Office on the meeting of January 5 (telegram 145, 501.BB Palestine/1-1249). This message read in part as follows:

"First point discussed was possibility division Jerusalem into Arab and Jewish areas with exchange isolated pockets of Arab and Jewish populations. Jews said Old City should be international zone in Arab area but insisted that Hebrew University and Hadassah hospital, although isolated, must remain Jewish and must be linked by corridors.

"2. Next topic was Negev in which Jews said they must have access to potash works southern end Dead Sea and access to Red Sea where they propose to build port. They added PGI quite agreeable to provide means to build port for joint use Israel and Transjordan.

"3. When Tel replied Transjordan must have access to Mediterranean it was recognized that all objections to this were difficult to reconcile and left at that.

"4. Transjordan representative again referred to Jaffa and Galilee (paragraph 5 Embassy's 20, January 4) which he said must be returned to Arabs but Jews evaded this issue and repeated that any frontiers set would have to be based on present military situation.

"5. Jews offered to return six Arab Legion prisoners and all Egyptian prisoners in return for Jewish prisoners held by Transjordan and 200 Jews held by Egyptians.

"6. Transjordan representatives referred to plight refugees, said they should return to their homes. Jews did not refuse to agree but argued it would be simpler for PGI to pay refugees compensation and to assist settlements refugees Transjordan. . . ."

to King's bringing out into open Transjordan's present talks with Jews. Hoped Israel would not use these talks to play one Arab state off against another.

Sent Department 13, repeated Jerusalem 9.

STABLER

501.BB Palestine/1-949 : Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET

NIACT

TEL AVIV, January 9, 1949—10 p. m.

URGENT

24. ReDeptel unnumbered (Usun 13) 8 January 4 [3] p. m.,¹ and Deptel 13, January 8, 8 p. m. Called on Foreign Minister at 3:30 p. m. today accompanied by Knox and Archibald.² Shertok replied as follows:

1. PGI fully confirms statement made [to] Palestine Committee SC by Israel representative and furthermore adds the "determination" of PGI to: (1) maintain ceasefire; (2) proceed full negotiations with Egypt.

I then stated, with reference allegations Israel units still remain Egyptian soil, that on basis information received from Ben Gurion and from Foreign Minister himself, I had positively assured my government of total withdrawal as of January 2. Shertok replied:

That as of time he made statement to me Israeli units were actually all out of Egypt but that subsequently, and before ceasefire, it may be that some Israeli units re-entered temporarily as a phase of operations covering a movement near Rafah. Foreign Minister stated that abruptness of withdrawal orders created great military confusion in area (re this assertion service attachés point out that withdrawal under combat conditions always difficult and complicated move to complete within limited time). He added categorically that orders have been issued all Israeli units that found themselves on Egyptian side frontier at time ceasefire to return to Israel side forthwith, and he is confident this being done. (Note: At 6 p. m. today Air Attaché personally asked ICS Dori³ to give him facts and reply was that all Israeli units were in fact out of Egypt on January 2 but that subsequently and before ceasefire hour arranged, Israeli units entered road to Egypt in order to cut it as a phase of attack on Rafah; Dori added that since the deadline hour of ceasefire all Israeli units have

¹ Not printed, but see footnote 1 to telegram 13, January 8, p. 629.

² Col. Edwin P. Archibald, Air Attaché in Israel.

³ Maj. Gen. Yaakov Dori, Israeli Chief of Staff.

been ordered out of Egypt and are in process of coming out on direct orders ICS. This information corroborates Shertok's explanation.)

Foreign Minister then referred to Egyptian allegations Israel violations ceasefire (reDeptel 11, January 7⁴) and stated that PGI categorically denied them. In particular he stated there was no air attack on Arab refugee camp.⁵

New subject: Foreign Minister then stated his wish inform us that PGI considerably perturbed by presence British troops Akaba. He is not aware of any Israel threat to Transjordan territory. At secret meeting 5 January between Israel representatives and Abdullah Tel in Jewish Jerusalem, Israeli asked Tel if King had invoked Anglo-Transjordan treaty. Tel alleged to have at first denied that King had asked for British troops but later was evasive on grounds "military secrecy". PGI formally asking Transjordan for what reason Anglo-Transjordan treaty was invoked. PGI feels only rational deduction is that presence British troops Akaba designed constitute threat to Israel territory in Negev.

New subject: Foreign Minister than referred to "astonishing news" that British Consul General Haifa unofficially advising British nationals leave Israel. Foreign Minister stated that several British nationals had asked PGI Foreign Office representative in Haifa what to do and that representative was urging them stay in Israel.

McDONALD

⁴ Not printed; but see footnote 2, p. 629.

⁵ The four consecutive paragraphs concluding at this point were quoted in a night action telegram to Cairo on January 10. The Department informed Chargé Patterson that this excerpt indicated the intention of the Provisional Government of Israel to observe the cease-fire and to withdraw its forces from Egypt; it also authorized the Chargé to informally "communicate substance this telegram to Egyptian Prime Minister and emphasize hope that Egyptian Govt for its part will do nothing to disturb present tense situation. You should add that US is gratified at present intention of both Egypt and Israel to meet in Rhodes for discussions which we trust will result in establishment of permanent peace in Palestine. Re recent shooting down of RAF planes you should tell Prime Minister that we firmly believe this should be kept to confines of an Israeli-UK incident and should not be permitted to affect negotiations between Arab Govts and Israel looking toward settlement of Palestine conflict." (telegram 33, 501.BB Palestine/1-949)

867N.01/1-1049

*Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Stuart W. Rockwell of the
Division of Near Eastern Affairs*

[WASHINGTON,] January 10, 1949.

Participants: Mr. Eliahu Epstein, Special Representative of the Provisional Government of Israel

NEA—Mr. Satterthwaite

NE—Mr. Wilkins

Mr. Rockwell

Mr. Epstein called at his own request. During the course of the conversation he covered the following points.

1. He stated that he had just received a cable from Mr. Shertok to the effect that any Israeli soldiers who might have reentered Egyptian territory had now been withdrawn from Egypt. The Provisional Government of Israel desired to enter the negotiations with Egyptians at Rhodes with a completely clean slate.¹

2. Although the military situation had been the primary factor inducing the Egyptians to agree to armistice negotiations, the Provisional Government of Israel realized that the representations made in Tel Aviv and Cairo by the United States had been of immense help. The representations had been made at just the right psychological moment and the Provisional Government of Israel was very grateful to the United States.

3. At a time when things seemed to be moving along so well between Egypt and Israel, it was extremely unfortunate that the British should have become involved. It was pure folly to send reconnaissance planes over a delicate military area where a battle was raging and where it was extremely difficult to determine the boundary line between Egyptian territory and Palestine. Israel sincerely hoped that the incident of the five airplanes shot down could be confined to Israel and Great Britain but foresaw that this incident had very serious implications as regards a general peace settlement. Mr. Epstein declared that he personally did not share the point of view of some Israeli pessimists that the British, by sending a force to Akaba, were preparing to invade Palestine and obtain what they had not been able to achieve through the Bernadotte report.² However, the British action in connection with the airplane incident and in sending troops to Akaba certainly indicated that the British intended to carry on a war of nerves against Israel. Israel had no intention whatsoever of invading any of the Arab states and had only taken action against the Egyptians because the Provisional Government of Israel could no longer tolerate the menace of a large Egyptian force only thirty five miles from Tel Aviv. Not only did the British activities threaten a final peace settlement by encouraging the Arabs to intransigence, but they also would have an unfavorable effect on the Israeli elections in that they would induce people to believe that cooperation with the west was a wrong course to follow. Mr. Epstein pointed out that while, of course, the United States was not involved in this British attitude, there would be many people in Israel who would not distinguish between the United States and Great Britain when they went to the polls. Under the circumstances,

¹The Department instructed Cairo on January 11 to "informally state to FonOff that Israeli Rep here yesterday officially told Dept all Israeli troops had withdrawn from Egyptian territory. Very much hope therefore that Egyptian Govt will send top level officials to Rhodes conversations." (telegram 38, repeated to Tel Aviv as 17, 501.BB Palestine/1-1049)

²Dated September 16, 1948; see *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1401. Count Bernadotte was the United Nations Mediator on Palestine.

Mr. Epstein very much hoped that just as the United States had made representations in Egypt and Israel, so it would undertake to point out to the British that the course of action they were following could only lead to further trouble. Later on in the conversation it developed that in making this suggestion Mr. Epstein was not acting under instructions from Tel Aviv but was expressing his own personal desire which he was confident would be supported by Tel Aviv.

4. Mr. Epstein took up the question of peace negotiations with the Arab states other than Egypt. He said that if the Israelis received a guarantee from the Lebanese that they were sincerely prepared to sit down to serious armistice and peace negotiations Israel would withdraw its forces from the Lebanon. However, the Lebanese should not believe that they could get the Jewish troops out of their country by agreeing to peace negotiations but then stalling once the Israelis had left. Mr. Epstein did not appear to think there would be much difficulty in coming to an agreement with the Lebanese once the other Arab states started on the road to negotiations with Israel. As regards the Iraqi, Mr. Epstein said that Nuri es-Said Pasha³ was a moderate man but that he probably did not represent the attitude of the Iraqi Government. He had come to power through *Force Majeure* and his moderation would probably not have much influence as far as negotiations with Israel were concerned. Mr. Epstein did not think there would be difficulties with the Iraqi troops, who were further removed from Tel Aviv than the Egyptians. As regards Transjordan, Mr. Epstein believed that it would be entirely possible to enter peace negotiations with King Abdullah if the British would allow the latter to do so. He thought that the Transjordan Government, if left to its own devices, would not have requested the British to send troops to Akaba.

Mr. Epstein said that when he saw Mr. Lovett tomorrow⁴ at 2:30 he would develop the same trend of thought unless he had before that time received new instructions from Tel Aviv.

Mr. Satterthwaite told Mr. Epstein that the United States sincerely hoped that the incident of the five airplanes could be confined to the Israelis and the British and would not be permitted to hamper the course of peace negotiations. He said that naturally he understood the exuberance of military commanders, particularly when victorious, but pointed out that the Provisional Government of Israel should be careful not to permit a situation to develop which would force the United States to choose between Great Britain and Israel. Mr. Epstein said that he thoroughly agreed with Mr. Satterthwaite.

³ Iraqi Prime Minister.

⁴ The meeting seems to have taken place on January 12; see Mr. Lovett's memorandum of conversation, p. 645.

501.BB Palestine/1-1049

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

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] January 10, 1949.

Subject: Interview with Ambassador of Egypt at 5 p. m.

Participants: Ambassador of Egypt
NEA—Mr. Satterthwaite
NE—Mr. W. L. Jenkins

The Ambassador said he had been informed that Israeli forces still held three posts in Egypt and that although his Government had agreed to send representatives to Rhodes to negotiate with the Acting Mediator of the UN for an Armistice, such representatives would not leave Egypt until all Israeli forces had left Egyptian Territory. His Government would also insist that the negotiations, if undertaken, should be based primarily on the UN Resolutions of November 4 and 16; that Egypt would participate in them with an open mind and a sincere desire for a permanent armistice and future peace.² Kamel Bey expressed great appreciation of the splendid efforts recently made by the US to persuade the Israelis to withdraw their troops from Egypt and believed that without them Egypt would not have agreed to enter the prospective negotiations. He hoped that the US would continue to take the lead in effecting an armistice. He stressed the present dangers to the internal security of Egypt and felt that the hands of his Government had been strengthened in its efforts to maintain order by the strong representations recently made by the U.S. to both his and the Israeli Governments.

Mr. Satterthwaite said that he had been informed today that Israeli troops had left Egypt and stressed the fact that the efforts of his Government to effect a peaceful solution of the Palestinian problem would continue to be in close cooperation with the United Nations. He hoped that the Conciliation Committee would get under way this week.

[Here follow two paragraphs of discussion of possible changes in the Egyptian cabinet and of the arrival in Washington of two Transjordanian officials.]

¹ Drafted by William L. Jenkins of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs.

² New York, on January 11, reported information from Egyptian Representative at the United Nations Fawzi that "Position of Egyptian Government regarding Rhodes discussions is that said discussions comprehend resolutions of November 4 and 16 and December 29. Fawzi emphasized very strongly that these negotiations were not direct and not political although, he added, they are much more important than any previous discussions considering their extent and timing." (Telegram 21, 501.BB Palestine/1-1149) For the resolution of December 29, 1948, see *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v. Part 2, p. 1699.

In leaving, the Ambassador again emphasized the great importance of the role recently taken by the U.S., and offered to continue to keep the Department promptly informed of reports or instructions received from his Government.

867N.01/1-1049: Airgram

The Minister in Syria (Keeley) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

DAMASCUS, January 10, 1949.

A-8. Following almost day-long Cabinet meeting PriMin Khalid al-'Azm sent for me at seven p. m. Sunday for hour's "general exploration of situation with particular reference to Palestine." Explaining that since upon US insistence Egypt had accepted Cease Fire and agreed to open armistice talks Palestine situation had taken on new aspect calling for reexamination Syria's position, and it was therefore important to know UN and particularly US attitude toward further probable Zionist aggression such as feared along Lebanese-Syrian frontier where Zionists following Negeb attack pattern were now refusing access to UN observers. Israeli plane that had recently overflown Syrian lines had dropped tracts charging Syrian officials with misleading their people and promising independence to Druze, Circassian and other minorities if they would revolt. Everything seemed to indicate that Zionists instead of being peacefully inclined still threaten integrity Arab states by dream of empire and intend take each on in turn. As his predecessor had indicated (Legtels 666 Oct 23, 678 Oct 29 and 679 Oct 30¹) Syria has since beginning truce anxiously waited for UN to take effective action to curb Zionist expansion but on contrary has seen repeated aggression go unchecked while Zionists flagrantly flaunt [*flout*] truce and UN authority.

PriMin said British Minister had confirmed to him that after loss several planes through unprovoked Israeli attack in air over Egypt, UK has taken firm stand against Zionists' attempt at aggrandizement and is moving troops by sea to Akaba. What did US proposed to do?

I took occasion to stress our opposition to aggression and our support of conciliation mentioning our recent representations to PGI and Egypt in favor of peaceful negotiations (Deptel 2 Jan 4 [3]²) sense of which had already been communicated to FonOff. He said that was good as far as it went and he hoped this latest *démarche* indicated change in our former marked pro-Zionist policy, but he wondered just how far US could be counted upon in the long run effectively to aid in

¹ None printed.

² This was a repeat of telegram 2 to Cairo, p. 602.

checking Zionists' pretensions. Heretofore US to disadvantage of Arabs had usually appeared to favor Zionists who cynically violated truce, whereas Arabs conscientiously endeavored to observe truce while working in UN for recognition of right of Palestine inhabitants to self-determination. Even when cautioning PGI about aggression in Negeb, US had coupled its representation with protest to Egypt on shelling of Tel Aviv which he said was only normal act of war in retaliation for Zionist attacks upon Egyptian territory.

Saying Palestine conflict colored all thinking, his Govt considered its solution necessarily matter first importance particularly as Soviets are using people's disgruntlement over Palestine to undermine confidence in his Govt which Soviets label Anglo-American tool. In his opinion forthcoming Israeli elections would demonstrate strength of Commie influence in Israel and he hoped this would convince US of danger inherent in uncritical support of PGI. Although strict measures taken to prevent Commie-inspired demonstrations, failure his Govt to take firm action against Zionists, particularly if further feared aggression occurs in Lebanese-Syrian frontier area, might well precipitate widespread disorders that would play into Soviet-Zionist hands and further threaten peace.

I interjected to say that our concern was to serve cause of peace and suggested that distinguished record of our representative on the Conciliation Commission, The Honorable Joseph B. Keenan, should be an assurance to all parties in the Palestine conflict that our influence would be for peace without fear or favor. He asked me to report to my Govt his concern over Palestine developments and to keep him informed of my Govt's attitude and probable course of action, particularly if Zionists continue their militant course.

Although PriMin did not mention Syrian and other Arab military weakness and disunion and their consequent inability forcibly to bring Israeli to terms, he referred to Abdullah's aspirations and popular clamor for renewal hostilities to curb Zionist threat and indicated his hope that US would join with UK in taking firm position against further Zionist expansion and thus presumably create better atmosphere for Palestine solution that would save Arab face, implying that popular temper unlikely support peace negotiations with militant Zionists.

It is significant, I feel, that at no time during discussion did PriMin make usual Syrian assertion that they could never recognize Israel or even acknowledge its existence as would be implied by negotiations. When I suggested that any settlement seemed to me preferable to continued situation, he neither acquiesced nor objected, but I gained

the impression that he personally would favor negotiations if given sufficient prior assurance, similar to UK's recent stiffened attitude, that Israeli will be kept within reasonable bounds by western influence and force if necessary. He repeatedly said regretfully that Syrians had learned that they could not count upon UN alone whose authority the Zionists do not respect.

Dept may consider time now ripe to give informally assurances suggested in Legtel 618 Sept 24, 11 p m,³ which I respectfully repeat at this time, as inducement to Syrians to use facilities of Conciliation Commission to extricate themselves from present impasse and thus serve cause of peace.

In conclusion PriMin said his Govt believing Syria's destiny lies in Anglo-American orbit hopes for closer collaboration with US not only in cultural and economic fields but in political and strategic which latter he considers very important in present state of world order.

KEELEY

³ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1421.

867N.01/1-1049: Telegram

*The Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald)
to the Secretary of State*

SECRET PRIORITY

TEL AVIV, January 10, 1949—9 p. m.

27. Attention President and Acting Secretary. All political officers and service attachés of Mission are of opinion that British actions are destroying chances of peace. Official explanation RAF reconnaissance flights over battle area at moment Egypt accepted US-inspired UN order cease-fire and armistice negotiations and subsequent British troops landing Aqaba while Transjordan negotiations were proceeding satisfactorily are unconvincing. To us such provocative moves appear to be determined efforts forestall direct negotiations Israel-Egypt and Israel-Transjordan which might deprive Britain effective control Southern Negev. British policy is bitterly resented by PGI and people who regard it as direct continuation of persistent UK efforts sabotage establishment of independent and viable Israel.

We are convinced:

1. Current British press propaganda that PGI efforts in Negev are Communist-inspired in order prove vulnerability of Canal defenses is weird misconception of whole issue.
2. PGI, with support whole people, will resist no matter what cost all British attempts to deprive Israel opportunity negotiate directly

under UN auspices with Egypt and Transjordan regarding Negev and peace.

3. Egypt's and Transjordan's fruitful participation will depend finally upon radical change Great Britain's intransigent policy towards Israel and Negev.

4. US actions since December 30 and call for armistice negotiations have enhanced US prestige here and, if firmly pursued London and interested capitals in ME, hold promise of peace.

MCDONALD

501.BB Palestine/1-1149

Memorandum by Mr. Robert M. McClintock

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 11, 1949.

UNA CONTRIBUTION TO POLICY PROBLEM STATEMENT: PALESTINE

United States interest in the Palestine problem as it has developed in the United Nations is a corollary not only of this Nation's role of leadership in the United Nations but also of the United States profound strategic interest in the Near East.

In the United Nations the United States has sought by three principal means to contribute to a solution of the Palestine problem and to the restoration of peace in the Middle East. Thus, in the General Assembly it has taken a leading part in endeavoring to reach a lasting political settlement. In the Security Council the United States has been active in supporting measures designed to maintain a truce in Palestine, to be superseded by an eventual armistice. Also, in the General Assembly the United States has sought to bring prompt relief to the more than half a million Arab refugees who constitute a grave social and political problem in the Near East.

The objectives of the United States regarding Palestine in the United Nations are to secure a prompt and lasting cessation of hostilities; the negotiation by means of the Palestine Conciliation Commission, of which this Government is a Member, of a permanent political settlement; and the relief and eventual rehabilitation of the Arab refugees, for which purpose the President will ask the Congress for an appropriation of \$16 million.

[Here follows final paragraph setting forth the criteria which would guide the United States member of the Palestine Conciliation Commission; for the actual instruction, see page 681.]

501.BB Palestine/1-1149 : Telegram

The Minister in Lebanon (Pinkerton) to the Secretary of State

RESTRICTED

BEIRUT, January 11, 1949—noon.

19. Foreign Minister informed me negotiations are now being conducted through UN mediator for evacuation of south Lebanon by Israeli troops. He believes they will be successful although on previous occasion when Lebanese and Israeli military met for consultations, Israeli officers said they were authorized to negotiate only on basis permanent armistice and Lebanese had no such authority. These negotiations therefore failed. Foreign Minister says Lebanon cannot consider negotiations for armistice so long as Israeli troops remain on Lebanese soil. After evacuation and completion Egyptian negotiations Lebanon expects to undertake similar negotiations. He expressed opinion that other Arab countries would do likewise. Lebanon is prepared to go to almost any length short of signing document formally recognizing existence of state of Israel.

PINKERTON

790E.00/1-1149 : Telegram

The Minister in Lebanon (Pinkerton) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

BEIRUT, January 11, 1949—3 p. m.

21. Foreign Minister informed me yesterday that Lebanon is now prepared to put Palestine episode to one side and consider its foreign policy on basis of friendship with Western Powers in possible future global war. He said Arab east would likely be one of several battle fronts and to prepare for such eventuality Lebanon would like to consider role which it would be expected to play. He added that public opinion here was not yet prepared to accept its responsibilities in this regard but it was rapidly approaching that point. He pointed out that Arab countries, except Syria and Lebanon, have arrangements either in force or temporarily in abeyance defining their positions. This policy of isolationism had been deliberately chosen by Syria and Lebanon but Lebanon had to definitely change its policy, and while Syria has not gone so far it also is changing. Use of port of Beirut and airfield at Rayak was mentioned as example of assistance Lebanon might be prepared to give. He indicated that Lebanon desired some sort of agreement regarding its role and did not exclude even defensive alliance although it was obvious he was not enthusiastic about treaty with Great Britain alone because of special privileges which would be involved. He said they would prefer multilateral treaty or some joint

agreement short of treaty basis. At no time did he indicate possibility of renewal of relations with France and dismissed it casually from conversation.

From previous conversation I am convinced Foreign Minister brought this subject up with me under direction from President and Prime Minister and that it had been discussed with President of Syria.¹

PINKERTON

¹ The Department, on February 11, replied with an expression of warm appreciation for the "friendly attitude Leb Govt and its desire align itself with US and Western Powers in event possible future global war." The remainder of the reply was broadly along the lines of telegram 57, February 25, to Damascus, p. 770; except for the additional suggestion that the Lebanese Government give consideration to early resumption of discussions concerning a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation as a "long step forward in promoting development of US-Leb relations" (790E.00/1-1149).

501.BB Palestine/1-1149: Telegram

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

SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 11, 1949—5 p. m.

17. 1. In tel dated Jan 7¹ Griffis² expresses strong hope Dept will incorporate into pending legislation re US contribution Palestine relief safeguard clause giving Director UNRPR or Dept full discretionary powers re expenditure US contribution. He states it is essential that US contribution be safeguarded and if necessary withheld if relief operation emasculated due lack govt cooperation in NE.

2. Dept is studying possibility incorporating into legislation safeguard clause giving SecState discretionary powers over payment US contribution.

3. However, we have informed Griffis³ we believe SYG, acting through Director UNRPR, has unquestioned authority control all expenditures under terms UN resolution, and that we look to SYG and Griffis to assume full discretionary powers this regard in order insure fulfillment objectives of resolution. In our opinion this applies not only to US funds but to all other contributions as well. Conversely, we believe SYG could not legitimately accord separate and special treatment to US contribution as distinguished from contributions of other govts to UN program.

¹ Telegram 12 from Beirut, not printed.

² Stanton Griffis, Director of United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees, while on leave from his regular position as United States Ambassador to Egypt.

³ In telegram 22 to Beirut, January 11, not printed.

4. Without making reference to paras 1 and 2, pls take early opportunity convey to SYG informally our interpretation his powers, with view to obtaining his assurances this regard as further safeguard US contribution. You may inform him such questions may arise when Congress takes up this legislation next week.

LOVETT

501.BB Palestine/1-1149 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Special Representative of the United States in Israel (McDonald), at Tel Aviv

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 11, 1949—6 p. m.
 NIACT

20. We are disturbed at press reports that Israel is allegedly preparing official protest before SC against UK over recent developments resulting from RAF episode.

For your info following is first para niact tel sent Cairo yesterday, rptd London and all Arab capitals. This sets forth this Govt's earnest hope that RAF-Israeli clash will be confined to framework of an incident and not allowed further to embitter passions in Near East.

You are authorized impart this info to FonMin and instructed to add friendly advice that this Govt would deplore any action by either UK or Israel tending to exacerbate situation because of RAF incident.

Herewith first para Deptel 33 to Cairo.¹

Rptd London as 131, USUN as 18.

LOVETT

¹ Dated January 10, not printed. The bulk of the first paragraph is quoted in footnote 5, p. 633.

Mr. Eban sent a letter dated January 11 to the President of the Security Council in which he set forth his instructions "to convey to the SC the grave concern of the Government of Israel at the menacing attitude adopted by the UK towards the State of Israel. The military, naval, aerial and political measures which the UK has taken in recent days appear likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security and to widen the limits of a local conflict which might otherwise respond to the processes of unprejudiced negotiations." (Telegram 23 from New York) The Security Council released the text of Mr. Eban's letter the same day as S/1201.

Mr. Ross discussed the letter with Mr. Eban on January 11, pointing out that "No action should be taken by anyone which would impair chances of successful outcome of forthcoming negotiations at Rhodes." As a result of the discussion, Mr. Eban indicated "that for the time being he would not press for an early meeting" of the Security Council. (Telegram 22 from New York) Telegrams 22 and 23 are both dated January 11 and are filed under 501.BB Palestine/1-1149.

867N.01/1-1149: Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

SECRET

AMMAN, January 11, 1949—6 p. m.

16. King indicated this morning that while Egypt-Israel talks going on at Rhodes, he does not propose make public fact that discussions now proceeding between Israeli and Transjordan representatives. Believed it preferable for Abdullah el Tel and Dayan to continue their talks in secrecy in order to determine area of agreement. King said his main points are:

- (1) Jews should not occupy territory between Transjordan and Egypt;
- (2) Gaza should belong to Transjordan;
- (3) Right of Arab refugees to go back to homes;
- (4) Return of Ramle and Lydda to Arabs;
- (5) Access for Arabs to Jaffa.

Re Jerusalem if internationalization not possible, King would be willing accept formula of autonomy under Transjordan administration of Arab areas, which he indicated should include Katamon and upper Bakaa, and autonomy under Israeli administration of Jewish areas. He would be prepared make concessions to Jews in southern potash works and guarantee protection. King reiterated his desire for peace and again expressed hope that Jews understood sincerity his intentions arrive at settlement. He reaffirmed full resolve negotiate peace but said it must be done slowly and carefully in order final result will "relieve me forever of Palestine headache".

King remarked, with certain pride as if idea were original, that name of combined Transjordan and Arab Palestine would remain, "Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan" (mytel 15 January 10¹). He made no comment about decree but it is understood it is now before Acting Prime Minister and Cabinet. No final decision taken and certain amendments are still being made.

Repeated Jerusalem as 11.

STABLER

¹ Not printed; it reported that King Abdullah had prepared a draft decree to grant Transjordanian nationality to Palestinian Arabs living in or moving to areas controlled by the Arab Legion and desiring it. The draft decree also provided for abolition of frontier controls between Transjordan and areas under its administration. (867N.01/1-1049)

867N.00/1-1249

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 12, 1949.

Subject: Palestine Developments

Participants: Acting Secretary—Mr. Lovett
Mr. Eliahu Epstein, Special Representative of the Provisional Government of Israel
Mr. Aubrey Eban, Israeli Representative before the United Nations
NE—Mr. Rockwell

After presenting Mr. Eban, Mr. Epstein opened the conversation by expressing the thanks of the Provisional Government of Israel for the efforts recently made by the United States Government to promote armistice negotiations between Israel and Egypt and to bring calm to the tense situation in Palestine.

Mr. Epstein then stated that the diplomatic and press campaign being carried on by the British against Israel and British military activities such as the sending of troops to Aqaba and the alerting of the British Mediterranean naval forces were direct and prejudicial British intervention in the Palestine dispute which he feared would have an unfavorable effect on the Israeli elections. Furthermore, Mr. Epstein had just been informed that day by Mr. Shertok that the Provisional Government of Israel had reliable intelligence to the effect that the British were urging the Egyptians to stall during the Rhodes negotiations unless they could obtain terms which would further British objectives in the Negev. Mr. Epstein said that the Provisional Government of Israel hoped that the United States would continue to exert its good influence and would urge the British to cease their attacks on Israel and their intervention in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Mr. Eban said that he had been instructed by Tel Aviv to present a complaint against the British to the Security Council and to request a Security Council meeting on British "intervention" in Palestine. He had done the first but as yet had not done the second. He desired my advice as to whether it would not be advisable to attempt to obtain from the Security Council a resolution calling upon all governments and authorities concerned to take no action likely to extend the scope of the conflict. He said that the Israeli public was alarmed lest the British be about to send military forces into Palestine and that the Provisional Government of Israel thought that some kind of Security Council action might be helpful in averting this possibility.

¹ Drafted by Mr. Rockwell.

At this point, I interrupted and read to Messrs. Epstein and Eban the news ticker account of my press conference that morning quoting my description of the efforts the United States Government had been making to prevent the extension of the scope of the conflict in Palestine and to encourage the parties to enter armistice negotiations, and of discussions between the United States and United Kingdom Governments on the general subject.

I then reviewed the course of United States action on this matter since the Israeli incursion across the Egyptian frontier. I said that in my opinion it had been unfortunate of the British to send aircraft over a battle zone. I said that it was equally unfortunate that the Israelis should have fired upon these planes. However, regardless of who was right and who was wrong in the question of the airplanes, the whole trouble had started when the Israelis crossed the Egyptian frontier. I said that after having been reassured by Mr. Shertok that all Israeli troops had been withdrawn from Egypt and after having informed the British in this sense, the United States Government had been embarrassed by the fact that Israeli forces had subsequently returned to Egypt.

I said that I would look into the question of the alleged British interference with the Egyptian participation in the armistice negotiations at Rhodes but that I simply did not believe that the reports which the Provisional Government of Israel had received on this matter were true. I also said that the Department had received no indication whatsoever that the British were planning aggressive action against Israel and that while of course the United States Government could give the Provisional Government of Israel no assurances in this regard, I thought that it was highly unlikely that the British had any such plans. Although the United States Government had advised the British against sending a force to Aqaba, I thought that they were doing so merely as a safeguard against possible Israeli action similar to that taken against Egypt. I pointed out that Great Britain had treaties with Transjordan and Egypt and said that the Provisional Government of Israel should remember that the British were extremely angry over what had recently happened. I said that I believed the British would take no action if the Israeli forces stayed where they were but that if the Israelis crossed any of the Arab frontiers, Israel would have to realize that it might be getting into a war which would be very different from that which they had been waging against the Arabs.

Mr. Epstein said that the Provisional Government of Israel of course realized this. He added that it would be extremely unfortunate if the Rhodes negotiations should break down, since we were rapidly approaching the point of diminishing returns in peace talks and the

Provisional Government could not much longer tolerate the menace of Arab armies so near to Tel Aviv. I said that as I believed Clemenceau one said, there are things which are too important to entrust to the generals. At this particular moment, those who had struggled all their lives for the establishment of a Jewish state were called upon to exercise the highest degree of restraint and statesmanship. In this connection, and in response to Mr. Eban's question, I believed that it would be unwise for Israel to aggravate the situation by requesting Security Council action. I said that Israel had made its point by tabling a complaint against Great Britain and that this seemed sufficient, particularly in view of the fact that it seemed hardly likely that the British were preparing to take military action against the Jewish state. I stated that it seemed to me that some good progress might be made in the Rhodes conversations if the situation in Palestine remained static, and I reiterated my conviction that the Israelis must not engage in any more aggressive action.

As Messrs. Epstein and Eban were leaving Mr. Epstein told me that the Export-Import Bank had passed favorably on a project loan to Israel and that the matter was now before the National Advisory Council. He asked me to put in a good word with the Council. I said that I hoped to be able to do so within the next day or two.

S901.01/1-1249

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 12, 1949.

Subject: Transjordan

Participants: Mr. Lovett—Acting Secretary
 Samir Rifai Pasha—Former Prime Minister of Transjordan and Special Emissary of King Abdullah
 Haidar Bey Shukri ¹
 Mr. Satterthwaite—NEA
 Mr. Wilkins—NE

Samir Pasha and Haidar Bey called on me today at their request following their recent arrival to the United States as special emissaries of King Abdullah of Transjordan.

Samir Pasha conveyed to me the greetings of King Abdullah and expressed the hope that the friendly relations which existed between Transjordan and the United States would grow stronger and stronger in the future.

¹ Brother-in-law of the former Transjordanian Prime Minister.

I thanked Samir Pasha for the King's greetings and told him that we appreciated the hospitality and confidence which the King and his Government had extended to the American representative in Amman. I also said that we admired the dignity and restraint with which the King and his Government had conducted themselves during the troublest [*sic*] times resulting from developments in Palestine.

Samir Pasha remarked that the King and his Government had long hoped the presently existing friendly relations between Transjordan and the United States might be formalized by recognition and expressed the view that Transjordan's conduct would seem to justify American recognition.

Samir Pasha said he understood the United States might be in a position to extend recognition simultaneously or after the *de jure* recognition of Israel and argued that it would be of benefit not only to the United States but also to Transjordan if such recognition could precede action relating to Israel.

Samir Pasha pointed out that when Great Britain had stood alone in 1940 following the defeat of France, King Abdullah and his Government had stood by the British. Mr. Satterthwaite recalled that at this time King Abdullah's Arab Legion had assisted in the relief of Baghdad in 1941 following the Rashid Ali Rebellion.²

I replied no one could deny that the attitude of King Abdullah and his Government during the war and, more particularly, during the past year in Palestine would justify the recognition of Transjordan by the United States. I said it was logical and long overdue. Recent developments had, however, affected this situation. I pointed out on a confidential and personal basis that I had recently appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and had there been questioned on Great Britain's activities in the Near East. I said that I had been queried regarding the movement of British troops at Akaba and in Transjordan, on the incident of the RAF planes over the Palestine-Egyptian frontier and on British troop movements in the Mediterranean. I said it was unfortunate, that these activities—whatever their purpose—had cast a cloud over such favorable developments as the Transjordan-Israeli talks regarding Jerusalem and the scheduled Egyptian-Israeli talks at Rhodes. I added I hoped these peaceful developments would prevail.

Samir Pasha seemed to appreciate the problem which confronted this Government at this particular time and did not further press the question of immediate recognition.

² For documentation on this subject, see *Foreign Relations*, 1941, vol. III, pp. 486 ff.

Samir Pasha said he planned personally to deliver a letter from King Abdullah to the President when he called on him on Friday, January 14 and asked if it would be possible for him personally to carry the President's reply to King Abdullah when he returned to Amman in about a week or ten days. Mr. Satterthwaite said he would endeavor to make arrangements to this effect and that if the President's reply was not ready prior to Samir Pasha's departure from Washington he would see that it reached him in New York before he left the United States.³

³ One of the subjects discussed at the conversation (but not recorded in this memorandum) was King Abdullah's aspiration for a Greater Syria; but see instruction 3, March 29, to Amman, p. 882. Previous documentation on the interest of Transjordan in a Greater Syria is printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, pp. 738 ff.

10 Files ⁴

*Message Released by the United Nations Security Council on
January 13, 1949*

S/1205

CABLEGRAM DATED 12 JANUARY 1949 FROM THE ACTING MEDIATOR TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING A REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL CONCERNING THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN EGYPT AND THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL

For transmission to President of Security Council:

I have the honour to inform you, pursuant to my Report of 6 January² on the agreement of Egypt and Israel, to order a cease fire in the Negev and to undertake negotiations on the 4 and 16 November resolutions, that the first stage in the negotiations between representatives of the two Governments on the implementation of these resolutions was reached today, 12 January, with the arrival in Rhodes of both the Egyptian and Israeli delegations. The Egyptian delegation, headed by Colonel Mohamed Ibrahim Seif el Dine, arrived at Rhodes early in the afternoon and the Israeli delegation, headed by Dr. W. Eytan³ arrived later in the afternoon. Both delegations are empowered to negotiate, conclude and initial an armistice agreement, subject to its final ratification by their respective Governments.

I have today met each delegation separately and discussed with them questions of procedure and agenda for subsequent joint discussions. I

¹ Master files of the Reference and Documents Section of the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

² See editorial note, p. 621.

³ Walter Eytan, Director General of the Israeli Foreign Office.

shall hold further meetings with each delegation tomorrow morning, 13 January, and the first joint meeting under United Nations chairmanship is fixed for 3:30 p. m. on the same day. These preliminary meetings have been encouraging in that both delegations have evinced a sincere desire for a successful outcome of the discussions and a readiness to reach with as little delay as possible discussion of substantive matters.

811.4611/1-1349

Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to the President

WASHINGTON, January 13, 1949.

Subject: Your appointment with Samir Rifai Pasha.

Samir Rifai Pasha, personal envoy of King Abdullah of Transjordan and former Prime Minister of that country, has an appointment with you at 11:45 on Friday, January 14. He is bearing a personal message to you from King Abdullah.¹

Samir Rifai Pasha has informed us that the message conveys the King's greetings to you and his wishes for the prosperity of the US, offers to you the King's congratulations on the outcome of the elections and expresses the hope that the present cordial relations existing between our two countries can be formalized in the near future.

Samir Rifai Pasha has indicated that he would like to receive from your hands a message in reply which he could carry to King Abdullah. A proposed reply to the King,² based on the information which Samir Rifai Pasha has given us, is attached for your consideration.

[Annex]

Draft Communication by President Truman to King Abdullah ibn Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan

[WASHINGTON, undated.]

YOUR MAJESTY: On behalf of the Government and people of the United States, I wish to express to Your Majesty my deep appreciation for your kind message of friendship which has been conveyed to me through your distinguished representative, His Excellency Samir Rifai Pasha. I am personally most grateful for your generous sentiments concerning the outcome of the American elections. May I also take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Your Majesty

¹ Dated December 18, 1948, not printed.

² Below.

for the warm hospitality which has been extended to Americans in your country, and to reciprocate the friendly sentiments which inspired Your Majesty's message.

I am confident that the relations of cordiality and friendship which prevail between the Transjordanian people and those of the United States will continue to be strengthened and extended to the mutual benefit of both our countries. The question of formalizing the present relations between our Governments is under active consideration, and it is hoped that this question can be resolved to the full satisfaction of both our Governments.

My Government and the American people share my fervent hope for the early return of conditions under which Your Majesty's land and people may develop and prosper in peace, well being, and happiness.

I take pleasure in extending to Your Majesty my personal wishes for your continued good health and prosperity.

501.BB Palestine/1-1349

*Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, by Mr. Robert
M. McClintock*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 13, 1949.

Participants: Mr. Bromley, First Secretary of British Embassy
Mr. McClintock, UNA

Mr. Bromley, First Secretary of the British Embassy, telephoned me at 12:15 p. m. today to say that I might be interested in the substance of a telegram just received from the British Embassy in Cairo. The British Ambassador on January 11 had seen the Secretary General of the Egyptian Foreign Office, who said that the Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr. Shertok, on the 10th had said that he planned to go to Rhodes for the present peace conversations. The Egyptian Secretary General expressed the fear that this was a trap to entice the Egyptian Government into over-all talks for a final settlement, whereas the Egyptian Government felt that military issues should first be worked out between the two governments.

The British Ambassador reported that he told the Egyptian Secretary General that it was of the highest importance for Egypt to maintain its decision to enter into direct conversations with the Jews. Even though the latter might wish more far-reaching discussions, the Egyptian Representatives at Rhodes could always refer these points back to their Government and need not enter into commitments.

I thanked Mr. Bromley for this information and said that I was sure Mr. Lovett would be glad to see this confirmation of his statement yesterday to the Israeli Representative that there could be no basis of fact for the rumor that the British were actually dissuading the Egyptians from going to Rhodes.

Mr. Bromley made several private and personal comments. He said he hoped we understood that Mr. Bevin was under a severe domestic pressure on the Palestine issue. In particular, he was under attack from Churchill and Eden.¹

Mr. Bromley added the personal comment in response to my expression of hope that the British Ambassador's conversations yesterday with Mr. Lovett and today with the President² would serve to ease Mr. Bevin's mind, that the Embassy in Washington was under a severe disadvantage vis-à-vis the Foreign Office. The British Embassy here had always been regarded in London as being "too weak" toward Zionist influences in the United States. In fact, Lord Inverchapel, when Ambassador, had been completely disregarded in his reports of the Zionist attitude. I gained the impression that Mr. Bromley was hopeful that his Chief would speak with greater authority, but that he was not entirely assured on this point.

Mr. Bromley said he wished me to know that he personally felt that the views expressed by Mr. Lovett yesterday were completely right, particularly with regard to how our real strategic advantage could be maintained in the Near East. He had in fact addressed a Minute along the same lines to his Ambassador not long ago.

Mr. Bromley said, in response to my question, that his Ambassador's interview this morning with the President had been more general in character than the conversations last evening with the Acting Secretary. The President, said Mr. Bromley, had responded in terms almost identical with those used by Mr. Lovett, although not in such detail.

Mr. Bromley told me that orders had been issued to the RAF in Egypt to discontinue further reconnaissance. He said the recommendation for this order had come from British authorities in Egypt. I commented that this seemed useful since reconnaissance of the type recently attempted appeared to have reached the point of diminishing returns.

¹ Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden, British Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, respectively, from 1940 to 1945.

² The editors have been unable to find in the records of the Department of State any memoranda detailing the conversations of Ambassador Franks with Mr. Lovett and with President Truman. The conversation with Mr. Lovett is summarized in telegram 149, January 13, to London, p. 658. Mr. McDonald's version of the conversation with President Truman is presented in his book, *My Mission in Israel, 1948-1951* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1951), p. 126.

867N.01/1-1349

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

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] January 13, 1949.

Subject: Anglo-Israeli Difficulties

Participants: Mr. Eliahu Epstein, Special Representative of the Provisional Government of Israel
Mr. Joseph C. Satterthwaite, NEA

Mr. Epstein phoned to say that Mr. Lovett had requested him to repeat to me the message which he had just given him following the receipt of instructions to do so from Tel Aviv. He had, of course, at once telegraphed his Government the purport of Mr. Lovett's suggestion to him yesterday that it would be unwise for the PGI to press the Security Council to act on its letter to the SC complaining against British actions in the Palestine area. Mr. Epstein had apparently recommended that the PGI would be wise to follow this suggestion.

The telegram which he has received from Tel Aviv is to the effect that the PGI agrees with Mr. Lovett's proposal and will not press for the introduction of a resolution in the SC¹ unless some new British act of provocation should compel them to reconsider their present position. He added that his Government had full confidence in the course the State Department had been pursuing recently.

Mr. Epstein expressed his personal thanks for the contribution which he considered the State Department had been making during the past few days to a solution of this difficult problem.

¹The Department of State, on January 14, advised Tel Aviv of its gratification at being informed by Mr. Epstein that the Provisional Government of Israel had decided not to press the matter before the Security Council (telegram 31, 501.BB Palestine/1-1449).

501.BB Palestine/1-1349

Memorandum by the Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs (Rusk) to the Acting Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] January 13, 1949.

Subject: United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine

Discussion

On December 11, 1948, at its Third Session the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing a Conciliation Commission to assist the Arabs and Jews in reaching an agreement re Palestine. It is composed of three states Members of the United Nations: France, Turkey and the United States.

The Conciliation Commission in addition will undertake upon request of the Security Council any of the functions now assigned to the U.N. Mediator on Palestine or to the U.N. Truce Commission by resolutions of the Security Council. Upon such request the office of the Mediator shall be terminated. It is also instructed to present to the fourth regular session of the General Assembly detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area. It is further instructed to facilitate the rehabilitation of refugees, maintaining close relations with the Director of the U.N. Relief for Palestine Refugees.

The Conciliation Commission will have its headquarters in Jerusalem. It has been agreed that its preliminary meeting will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, about January 17, and that it will then proceed to Rhodes and Jerusalem. The President on December 29, 1948, appointed Mr. Joseph B. Keenan as the United States Representative. However, plans for his departure have been delayed. It is proposed that Fraser Wilkins (NEA) and John W. Halderman (UNP) be designated as Principal Adviser and Adviser respectively and that they depart immediately for Geneva. A supplemental memorandum will be submitted, setting forth the arrangements for security provisions for the delegation.

[Here follow a discussion of personnel requirements, a recommendation that the designations¹ of Messrs. Wilkins and Halderman be approved, concurrences, etc.]

¹ Mr. Lovett gave his approval to the designations in a marginal notation on a subsequent but undated memorandum to him by Mr. Rusk.

10 Files

*Message Released by the United Nations Security Council on
January 13, 1949*

CABLEGRAM DATED 13 JANUARY 1949 FROM THE ACTING MEDIATOR
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING A REPORT
ON NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT AND THE
PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL¹

TO PRESIDENT OF SECURITY COUNCIL: Following my report of 12 January on the beginning of negotiations between representatives of the Government of Egypt and of the Provisional Government of Israel to seek agreement on the terms of an armistice I have the honour to present a further report on these negotiations.

¹ Released by the Security Council on January 13 as S/1209.

I held informal meetings each delegations separately on morning of 13th at which agreement was reached on all points of procedure and on an agenda² for the discussions.

This afternoon, 13 January, the first joint meeting was held. At this meeting the delegations were introduced. On the formal request of both delegations I assumed the role of Chairman of the meetings. The heads of the two delegations each made a formal declaration of his Government's desire for the establishment of an armistice and pledging his delegation to work persistently and in a spirit of conciliation toward that end.

The agenda for future discussions is sufficiently broad to cover outstanding points with regard to the implementation of the resolutions of 4th and 16th November.

Meetings will now proceed on the substantive items on three levels as follows:

1. Preliminary discussions separately with each delegation;
2. Informal meetings between heads of delegations and United Nations;
3. Joint formal meetings of the two delegations.

The conciliatory spirit of both parties and the progress made in matters of procedure continue to inspire hope for successful results.

² The editors have been unable to locate a copy of this document in the files of the Department of State or in those of the United States Mission at the United Nations.

Editorial Note

Acting Mediator Bunche welcomed the Israeli and Egyptian armistice negotiators in his opening statement at Rhodes on January 13. He noted that "by the terms of the proposal agreed upon, negotiations are to be confined, subject always to the will of the 2 parties, to the means of implementing the SC resolutions of 4 and 16 November 1948. We are not holding a peace conference here. We are not expecting to settle the complicated political issues which bedevil this problem and to which the Conciliation Commission will soon direct its attention."

Mr. Bunche recognized that "there is a great and hopeful significance in your very presence here and your willingness to sit down together and attempt to find a basis of agreement for armistice in the conflict between the armed forces of the governments which you represent.

"Nor am I unaware that this meeting marks the first time in this unfortunate conflict that representatives of the two sides have shown the statesmanship which enables them to sit down together in a com-

mon effort to look beyond a tenuous truce and to negotiate the armistice called for by the SC."

Near the conclusion of his statement, Mr. Bunche appealed "most urgently that every precaution be taken by all governments to avoid any incidents or acts which might jeopardize the constructive progress of your delegations toward armistice accord. I have in mind not only governments directly involved in these negotiations or in the Palestine conflict, but those whose interests impel them to keep close surveillance on developments in the area." (telegram 41, January 14, 3:30 p. m., from New York, 501 BB Palestine/1-1449)

The United Nations released the text of Mr. Bunche's statement on January 14 as press release PAL/413.

867N.01/1-1349: Airgram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kohler) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

Moscow, January 13, 1949.

A-35. In talks prior to his recent departure for home leave, Syrian Minister Farid Bey Zeineddine indicated that he had received further intimation from the Soviet authorities of a possible shift in Soviet policy toward Palestine and the Arab states, along lines reported in Embtel 2186, Sept. 29.¹ While he did not so indicate, it is possible that, on these latter occasions, he did receive something more specific, though we doubt that it went so far at this stage as "an offer to reverse Soviet Palestine policy in return for a demonstration on the part of Syria and other Arab countries that they are not 'instruments of Anglo-American policy'", as alleged by the Acting Director-General of the Syrian Foreign Office (Damascus A-387, Dec. 13).²

The central element in Soviet policy toward Palestine is the question of the status therein of non-Soviet power and influence. In this region, as in all other "dependent, semi-dependent, or colonial areas", the constant first objective of the Kremlin is the removal of the authority or influence of any rival or hostile powers, which in practice means, principally, the authority or influence of the United States or the United Kingdom. Any means which serves this end is acceptable until the objective has been achieved. During this period Moscow supports and uses such disparate and ideologically inappropriate forces as the Zionists in Palestine, the feudal rulers of Egypt, or the "Trotskyites" in Indonesia, as well as real Communists, as in Indochina. Once the first objective is gained, the next objective becomes the fostering of

¹ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1432.

² Not printed.

Communist control. At this stage, uncontrolled and ideologically inappropriate agencies are likely to find themselves neglected, undermined, sabotaged, infiltrated or even abruptly disowned and attacked, depending on the Kremlin's estimate of the shortest direction toward this next objective.

Moscow apparently considers the first objectives satisfactorily attained in Palestine, insofar as the territory presently or potentially under control of the Jews is concerned, and will be likely henceforth to concentrate on securing the establishment of a weak independent Arab state in the remainder of Palestine, free from non-Soviet outside influences. This suggests that the Soviet government will now :

(1) Decrease its support of the Israel government and revert to basic anti-Zionist policy it temporarily suspended but never abandoned (Embtel 1016, May 31).³ Signs of this reversion are already apparent in Ehrenburg's⁴ attack, in *Pravda* Sept. 21, on the bourgeois nature of the government of Israel and subsequent less friendly tone Soviet propaganda, as well as in recent suppression of Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and Jewish press in Moscow, the only Jewish agencies possibly available to Israeli legation as point of contact with Soviet Jewish population.

(2) Extend increasing support to Communists of Israel, encouraging and aiding them to penetrate Government, at same time infiltrating Communist agents into Eastern European emigration, which Israel desires and Kremlin controls. The Embassy recently learned from usually reliable sources that some half-dozen Soviet citizens have been authorized to leave the Soviet Union for Palestine; since normal emigration from the USSR is forbidden, these persons could only be Soviet agents.

(3) Seek to limit territory of State of Israel to that foreseen by GA resolution of November 29, 1947 and generally to curb power of Israel Government. This is indicated by attitude of Soviet UN Delegation at Paris and by practical cessation of direct military aid to Israel Government via Czechoslovakia. It seems clear independent strength and ambition shown by young Israel Government was as unexpected by Soviet Government as by others and that its further rapid extension is not regarded as desirable.

(4) Oppose by every means extension of Abdullah's control or influence, i.e., in Soviet eyes, British control and influence, to Arab Palestine.

At appropriate time and occasion, foregoing measures will certainly be portrayed to Arab Governments as a change in Soviet policy favorable to them, and exploited by every means in order to lay basis for achievement in Arab countries of first objective already gained in Jewish Palestine. However, we do not believe there will be any sudden

³ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, page 1081.

⁴ Ilya Grigoryevich Ehrenburg, a prominent Soviet author and journalist.

public shift in Kremlin's Palestine policy. We should rather expect that the new line will be implemented somewhat later and gradually, with direct approaches to the Arab Governments timed to take advantage of developments connected with UN effort to effect a Palestine settlement.

Department please pass copies to London, Paris, Prague, Cairo, Beirut, Jidda, Baghdad, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem.

KOHLER

501.BB Palestine/1-1349: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 13, 1949—5 p. m.
 NIACT

149. Brit Amb called yesterday under personal instructions of Bevin and asked Acting Secy to read two telegrams, first of which bore obvious imprint of Foreign Secys drafting.

Gist this tel was that Bevin desired clearcut statement US views on Palestine territorial settlement in light mutual and highly important strategic interests UK and US in Middle East. He referred to UK-US understanding as to strategic objectives and joint action in this area¹ "subject to Israel". Lovett confirmed to Sir Oliver Franks that Middle East understanding so far as this Govt is concerned is still very much in effect.

Bevin's tel was couched in a series of questions. His next point was to ascertain precisely what US attitude was with respect to strategic land line of communications bet Egypt and other Arab States, specifically road from Gaza, Beersheba and Jericho, to Transjordan. Bevin referred to Douglas' luncheon in Dec. with himself and Brit Chiefs of Staff.²

Lovett replied that importance this particular strategic road had been mentioned very late in the day. Attitude of US Govt had been clear since autumn 1947 and had been frequently reiterated by President and other officials; namely that Israel was entitled to boundaries (including all of Negev) assigned it by GA resolution Nov 29, 1947. However if Israel insisted on retaining Arab areas of Palestine such as Jaffa and western Galilee it should be expected to relinquish other territory, such as part of Negev, in compensation. Our most recent

¹ The understanding was attained at the "Pentagon Talks of 1947"; for documentation on these talks, see *Foreign Relations, 1947*, vol. v, pp. 485 ff.

² The luncheon took place on December 20; see airgram 2377, December 22, 1948, from London, *ibid.*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1680.

exposition of this policy had been Jessup's speech before Committee 1 of GA Nov. 20, 1948.

Brit Amb in endeavoring explain his Govt's overall concept from which its concern for specific strategic lines derived said he thought UK did not feel that for immediate future it could regard attitude of Israel with any confidence. It was therefore vitally necessary that southern boundaries of Israel should be north of Gaza, Beersheba, Jericho Road. To this Lovett said he thought real strategic security lay in encouraging development in Israel of a westward outlook. Confining Israel in a straitjacket and surrounding this new nation with a circle of a weak Arab enemies kept in ring only by Brit armed assistance, would inevitably result in creation of a hostile state which would turn almost automatically toward USSR. Experience had proved that it was far more difficult to deal with a state after it had turned Communist or pro-Soviet than to keep it friendly to the west before the capture took place. Real security therefore lay not in any particular road in Negev but in attitude of Israel, which would be conditioned by attitude of Great Powers.

Bevin's next query was whether US backed SC resolutions and specifically those Nov. 4 and 16 and that of Dec. 29. We pointed out to Brit. Amb that apparently Foreign Secy was visualizing technical truce lines such as those provided for in Nov. 4 resolution as terms of a final political settlement. While SC resolutions certainly were valid in their limited application to momentary military situation and to problem of transferring truce into an armistice they did not seek to delineate final political settlement. This in fact had been left under GA res of Dec. 11 to Palestine Conciliation Comm. Our views on this final settlement were clear, since we had favored giving all Negev to Jewish State under res. Nov. 29, 1947 but now under formula expressed above contemplated that Israel might have to relinquish part of Negev if it desired to retain western Galilee and Jaffa. It therefore seemed difficult to comprehend why Foreign Secy displayed such excitement since Israel under this definition might get less territory in Negev than in Nov. 1947 when Brit. Govt. remained silent.

Next point in Bevin message was in effect "What is US prepared to do about Palestine situation?". Message added that two govts ought to get together and "do something". Acting Secy replied we had been doing a great deal and that perhaps UK had been doing too much in a non-constructive sense. For example, its sending of troops to Aqaba, the RAF incident, and threatening naval movements in Mediterranean certainly did not encourage Israelis at least to think UK was moving for peace. US for its part, as Brit. Govt. well knew, had worked with energy and no small degree of success in getting PGI to cease its campaign against Egypt and in influencing Egypt to offer

cease-fire and negotiations to Israel under UN auspices. At this juncture when Israelis and Egyptians were on point of sitting down to peace talks on Rhodes, and when we had word of favorable conversations bet Israel and Lebanon and bet Israel and Transjordan looking toward permanent settlement, it would be in highest degree unfortunate if any action should prevent these developments from coming to fruition. Lovett added parenthetically that Israeli Rep had called that same afternoon and stated his Govt believed Brit. agents were seeking to dissuade Egyptian Govt from participating in Rhodes peace talks. Acting Secy told Israeli Rep. he thought there was no basis for this report. However, if Israel should bring its charges against UK before SC it could present eloquent case which would do neither US nor UK any good. Lovett told Brit. Amb he had used utmost endeavor with Israeli Rep. to persuade his Govt. not to bring its differences with Brit before SC.

Bevin's tel was emotional in tone. It concluded with a challenge for US to choose bet supporting SC resolutions or Sov Union. Both Sir Oliver and Lovett disregarded this dramatic peroration.

Second Brit. note resumed threat to regain UK liberty of action (despite SC res. of May 29) to send arms and war material to Arab states. Lovett told Brit. Amb this would have instantaneous results of further exciting popular feeling in Israel, of placing Britain in position of violating SC res (despite Bevin's protestation that these resolutions must be complied with) and also immediately raise question of causing this Govt to lift its scrupulous arms embargo. This would in turn result in sorry spectacle of Britain arming one side in Palestine conflict and US the other, with Russians sole permanent beneficiaries.

Basic difference in point of view UK and US Govts is that Brit are demanding rigid compliance with SC resolutions Nov. 4 and 16 because they wish to use these resolutions as means of enforcing a political settlement. Brit. Amb admitted as much when he said that lines of truce or armistice would undoubtedly foreshadow final territorial dispositions. We already know from McNeil's³ blunt comment to Rep. of PGI in Paris last autumn that UK is frankly seeking to use SC action to oust Israelis from Negev. This Govt however has repeatedly been on record as stating that neither SC nor GA has constitutional power under UN Charter to enforce a political settlement. Efforts of SC are restricted to maintaining international peace and security. We feel that proper means for achievement of final political settlement in Palestine is by negotiations bet the parties either directly or through UN auspices. These negotiations are now in progress and Conciliation Comm is on point of undertaking its responsibilities

Hector McNeil, British Minister of State.

under GA res. Dec. 11. We feel it would be useful in your conversations with high FonOff officials to make clear this basic difference in approach and to emphasize our view that Brit will be starting along path whose end is far from being in sight if they seek to use SC resolutions designed solely to meet specific threats to international security as a means of accomplishing political advantage. In fact Bevin's heated admonition to this Govt to back up SC resolutions sounds queer in light his simultaneous willingness to violate SC res. May 29 by proceeding forthwith to arm Arab allies.⁴

Rptd USUN, eyes only, for Jessup.

LOVETT

⁴ A marginal notation indicates that this telegram was cleared with the White House.

867N.01/1-1349 : Telegram

The Consul at Jerusalem (Burdett) to the Secretary of State

SECRET US URGENT

JERUSALEM, January 13, 1949—6 p. m.

35. On instructions from PGI Colonel Dayan yesterday called on French Consul General in latter's capacity as representative of "country most interested in future of Jerusalem" to urge strongly immediate settlement in Jerusalem by negotiations between Israel and Trans-jordan. Prefaced remarks by stating current talks with Abdullah Tel making no progress and offered no chance success. Asserted UK preventing King Abdullah from reaching agreement and credentials given Abdullah Tel to negotiate worthless. Dayan requested French Government exert pressure on UK induce latter encourage or allow Trans-jordan reach immediate settlement re Jerusalem. Requested French Consul General communicate his statements to me with request US also attempt influence UK. Maintained PGI considers agreement in immediate future more important than possibility obtaining better terms in future.

Dayan proposed settlement Jerusalem question apart from question Palestine as whole. Stated because drain on PGI resources and continued deterioration economy Jewish Jerusalem, PGI could not afford indefinite continuation present mobilization particularly in Jerusalem. Asserted PGI not willing wait for arrival Conciliation Commission and inevitably long delays involved until it became familiar with problem and eventually made recommendations to next GA. PGI anxious to settle question by peaceful means, but capable if this not possible of solving problem by force.

Dayan next offered negotiate on basis following extraordinary concessions made, he stated, in interest quick agreement:

(1) Partition city into homogeneous Jewish and Arab sections. To achieve this, Jews willing relinquish former Arab quarters of Qatamon, German colony, upper and lower Bakka and Maliha which they now hold with boundary line to run west of Maliha. In addition would give up strong military positions of Mount Zion and Der Abu Tor together with Jewish fortified settlements of Ramat Rahel and Talpiyot and Jewish quarter of Mequor Haiyim. Division city on above lines would give Arabs far more than Consul General thought possible.

(2) In return and because of insistence of orthodox Jews, Mount of Ophel, Jewish cemetery on Mount of Olives and Jewish quarter Old City would be excluded from Arab sovereignty and placed under some type international control. Stated PGI might not insist on exclusive [*exclusion*] Jewish quarter Old City from Arab sovereignty.

(3) Hadassah hospital and Hebrew University on Mount Scopus would remain Jewish and be connected with Jewish Jerusalem by new road bypassing Arab residential quarters.

(4) Recognized above would place railroad station and electric power plant in Arab area but their uses would be supervised by international agency. Jewish use railroad would be discussed later in connection with final Palestine settlement and possible Jewish corridor.

French Consul General cabled above to Paris to London for Schuman¹ in hopes latter could discuss with Bevin on current visit.

Consul General comments:

(1) Settlement Jerusalem question would go far towards restoring peace and stability in Middle East which Consul General understands is primary objective US.

(2) Regardless whether UK discouraging Egypt and Transjordan from reaching agreement with PGI for strategic reasons related to Negev, UK would have no valid reasons for opposing settlement confined to city Jerusalem.

(3) Settlement above basis might involve renunciation principle international city as called for by GA resolution but both French Consul General and I believe clause could be included in agreement between PGI and Transjordan to effect agreement would not prejudice any action by UN to internationalize entire area. Even if not acceptable consider establishment peace by agreement more important than internationalization Jerusalem.

(4) Although PGI action may be motivated by hidden tactical reasons and wish to use troops elsewhere, both French Consul General and I believe reflects genuine PGI desire establish permanent peace Jerusalem (Contel 1550, December 23²) avoiding further military action this area.

¹ Robert Schuman, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

² *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1687.

(5) Despite Jewish desire for peace, believe PGI will solve question by force if prospects immediate peaceful settlement fade.

(6) Proposed division city extremely favorable to Arabs and would meet their current demands as to demarcation line.

(7) Proposals made by Dayan would fit very well into suggestions for future Jerusalem contained in Contel 1530, December 13.³

Consul General therefore urges most strongly US seize present opportunity and press for settlement Jerusalem problem immediately. Conditions change very rapidly in Palestine and present opportunity should not be allowed escape by delay. Department may wish discuss question with UK with object obtaining full UK approval for settlement Jerusalem immediately and apart from Palestine problem as whole. Kirkbride in Amman could communicate UK views to King Abdullah and upon PGI receiving assurances through US of UK attitude Dayan and Abdullah El Tel could meet and work out details. Contribution to general stabilization in Middle East and contagious effect throughout Palestine of immediate Jerusalem settlement far outweigh probable advantages delaying in hope sustaining international city in future.⁴

Sent Department 35, repeated London, pouched Amman.

BURDETT

³ *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1665.

⁴ The Department, on January 14, informed Jerusalem that the subject matter of telegram 35 was discussed by officers at the working level with representatives of the British Embassy and it was agreed that the "matter presented possibilities which merited further urgent and very careful consideration." (telegram 24, 867N.01/1-1349)

On January 14, Jerusalem reported the thinking of the French Consul General that the "opportunity obtain real international city past and United Nations will prove unwilling furnish troops and other essentials for effective United Nations control. France's primary objective should, therefore, shift to obtaining peace on terms acceptable to both sides. Consulate General agrees entirely with this reasoning. Extent Jewish concessions should be emphasized. PGI offering give up positions essential to defense Jewish Jerusalem thus indicating clearly is move for permanent peace. Areas involved such that considerable political opposition must be anticipated within Israel." (telegram 36, 867N.01/1-1449)

501.MA Palestine/1-1449

The Acting Secretary of State to the President

WASHINGTON, January 14, 1949.

THE PRESIDENT: There is enclosed for your consideration and for transmission to the Congress, if you approve, a joint resolution¹ to authorize an appropriation for a special contribution by the United States to the United Nations for the relief of Palestine refugees:

¹ For text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, February 6, 1949, p. 204.

The purpose of this legislation is to give effect to a resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations of November 19, 1948,² a copy of which is enclosed. The action of the General Assembly was based primarily upon the report of the Acting United Nations Mediator for Palestine of October 18, 1948,³ which described the situation of the 500,000 Palestinian refugees as extremely critical and urged immediate assistance for them to avert a great human catastrophe. The General Assembly, taking this situation into account, declared in its resolution, "that the alleviation of conditions of starvation and distress among the Palestine refugees is one of the minimum conditions for the success of the effort of the United Nations to bring peace to that land". The resolution further states that a sum of approximately \$29,500,000 will be required to provide relief for 500,000 refugees for a period of nine months from December 1, 1948, to August 31, 1949, and that an additional amount of approximately \$2,500,000 will be required for administrative and local operational expenses. To finance these requirements, the resolution "urges all States Members of the United Nations to make as soon as possible voluntary contributions in kind or in funds sufficient to insure that the amount of supplies and funds required" is obtained.

To provide immediate assistance pending the receipt of contributions, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to advance \$5,000,000 from the United Nations Working Capital Fund, this advance to be repaid from the voluntary contributions of governments.

The proposed legislation provides for a special contribution of \$16,000,000 to the United Nations for the refugee relief program. This amount is deemed to be a fair share for the United States to contribute in order to support the efforts of the United Nations in restoring peace in Palestine and in view of the deep interest of the United States in restoring conditions of stability in that area. To date, fifteen countries have indicated that they will make contributions pursuant to the General Assembly resolution. Among these, the United Kingdom has announced a contribution of one million pounds sterling (approximately \$4,000,000) and France, a contribution of 500,000,000 French francs (approximately \$1,600,000).

The program will be administered by Mr. Stanton Griffis who is taking leave from his post as United States Ambassador to Egypt

² For information on this resolution, see circular telegram of November 19, 1948, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1614.

³ The text of this report is printed in United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Supplement No. 11A*. The report is cited in an American draft resolution sent to the Department from Paris on October 20, 1948, in Delga 411, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1497.

to serve as Director of United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees. With a view to utilizing personnel and organizations experienced in disaster relief, arrangements are being made with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies, and the American Friends Service Committee to handle the distribution of supplies in the field as agents of the United Nations.

The provision for an advance of \$8,000,000 from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation is designed to make a part of the United States contribution immediately available. Without this extraordinary provision, the normal delays in the appropriation process would make it impossible to meet the heaviest requirements of the relief program during the winter months.

Section 3 of the draft legislation is for the purpose of enabling the United Nations to procure material, supplies or services for the purposes of the resolution through the facilities of the United States Government agencies and to simplify the procedures for such procurement.

In view of the urgency of extending relief to these unfortunate peoples, and of the importance of the United States contribution to the United Nations program, I sincerely hope that the proposed legislation may be presented to the Congress for its consideration at the earliest opportunity.⁴

ROBERT A. LOVETT

⁴ President Truman transmitted Mr. Lovett's letter to the Congress for its "favorable consideration" on January 29; the text of the President's message is printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, February 6, 1949, p. 202.

867N.01/1-1449 : Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

SECRET

AMMAN, January 14, 1949—4 p. m.

19. While it is understood that another of regular Abdullah el Tel-Dayan meetings is now scheduled for Saturday, January 15,¹ doubtful whether Tel yet authorized discuss in definitive manner any of eleven points on agenda presented Jews at second meeting in series.

Repeated Jerusalem 14.

STABLER

¹ Mr. Stabler, on January 17, advised he had learned "that due to absence in Rhodes of Shiloah no meeting between Tel and Dayan was held on January 15. As it appears likely that Transjordan will participate in Rhodes talks if present Egypt-Israel negotiations successful, probable that current series Tel-Dayan meetings will no longer be held." (telegram 24 from Amman, 867N.01/1-1749)

867N.01/1-1249: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in France

SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 14, 1949—7 p. m.

134. Benard of French Emb informed Dept Jan 12 that Syrian FonOff had expressed to Fr Minister Damascus its fears impending attempt by Abdullah carry out Greater Syria scheme.¹ Benard said matter discussed with Maurice Fischer PGI spokesman Paris who stated PGI opposed formation Greater Syria and would be willing withdraw Israeli forces from Syrian front if Syrian forces menaced by Abdullah. Benard stated Fr Govt strongly opposed formation Greater Syria, was disturbed over Syrian fears this regard, and expressed hope US did not favor Abdullah's project. (Embtel 146 Jan 12)²

Dept assured Benard US did not favor Greater Syria plan of Abdullah involving other Arab States but was not opposed to incorporation greater part Arab Palestine in Transjordan.

Dept has no info indicating any substance for Syrian concern impending move by Abdullah and it seems hardly likely latter would make move at this time which would cause further dissension among Arab States when they already hard pressed by Israelis. Dept would appreciate any info from field clarifying current situation.³

LOVETT

¹ For earlier documentation on this subject, see *Foreign Relations*, 1947, vol. v, pp. 738 ff.

² Not printed.

³ This telegram was repeated to Arab capitals, London, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv. Mr. Stabler, in reply on January 16, advised that "There are no indications at present that King has, or is even thinking of, any plans to take positive action at this stage toward realization greater Syria. His principal preoccupation now is settlement with Israelis and incorporation as much Arab Palestine as can be obtained in Transjordan. Little doubt exists however that he regards successful achievement these as first and important step in creation greater Syria." (telegram 21, 867N.01/1-1649)

501.BB Palestine/1-1449: Telegram

The Chargé in Egypt (Patterson) to the Secretary of State

RESTRICTED

CAIRO, January 14, 1949—7 p. m.

59. ReEmbtels Rhodes conversations. Press morning 14th re Rhodes conversations describes them as having strictly military character and that in Egyptian view SC decisions November 4 and 16 must be made effective before studying decision December 29.

Text stresses conversations began 13th with Ralph Bunche, interim UN Mediator, and mentions influence of US in bringing about Rhodes talks as supplement to prior representations by Mediator's Cairo representative Azcarate, with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

Further stressed that Rhodes conversations would not possess a political character and that the sole civilian member delegation Mohamed Saleh Foreign Office official who, however, has been detached to serve in office of Mediator.

Press item further states that conversations do not envisage recognition of "pseudo state of Israel" and that there will be neither direct talks with Zionists [n]or round-table conversations. These will be conducted in same manner as those held by late Count Bernadotte,¹ likewise at Rhodes.

PATTERSON

¹ The United Nations Mediator on Palestine was assassinated in September 1948.

867N.01/1-1549 : Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

SECRET NIACT

AMMAN, January 15, 1949—8 a. m.

URGENT

20. Israeli peace offer re Jerusalem as contained in Jerusalem's 35, January 13 and 36, January 14¹ appears to coincide in general terms with King's views as outlined in mytel 16, January 11 and feel he would be willing discuss Jerusalem question with Jews in near future apart from more general problem of Transjordan-Israel peace, particularly since Jews seem ready grant number concessions.

Believe King would insist on complete sovereignty and control of Jewish quarter Old City and also of Katamon, upper and lower Bakaa, Mt. Zion, Deir Abu Tor, Maliha, Talpioth, Ramatrahel and Mekor-haim. He would probably also desire exchange of populations between Arab and Jewish pockets. However it is thought that he would be open to reasonable suggestions and negotiations on any or all of these points provided he could be sure of good faith of Israelis.

King's present dilemma is due in large measure to lack of active and functioning government. Prime Minister is still ill and Acting Prime Minister appears unwilling take any responsibility on matters which he prefers should be handled by Prime Minister. Therefore King is impatiently awaiting return of Samir Rifai Pasha from US to appoint him as Prime Minister.

¹ Latter not printed, but see footnote 4, p. 663.

While preliminary discussions re Jerusalem could be held before formation new government, no definitive talks could take place now nor could Abdullah El Tel be issued with credentials more valid than ones he now holds. Unsatisfactory progress of Tel-Dayan talks resulting from absurd situation re government has been pointed out to King by certain advisers but he apparently feels himself unable remedy matters at moment.

As have regular weekly dinner engagement with King at Shuneh Sunday evening would Department consider it useful for plan in Jerusalem's 35 and 36 to be outlined to King, as personal thoughts and without revealing source, in order obtain his reactions. While French Consulate General may have obtained some reaction through Abdullah El Tel and Musa Husseini (reports of whose interview will probably shortly reach British Foreign Office), it might be desirable to explore matter directly with King.²

Sent Department 20, repeated London 1, Jerusalem 15.

STABLER

² The Department, in reply on January 15, authorized Mr. Stabler to outline to the King the plan set forth in telegrams 35 and 36 from Jerusalem to obtain his reactions. It also cautioned him to "make absolutely clear you not acting in any way as mediator or extending good offices. You will of course recall that US remains on record as favoring internationalization of Jerusalem." (telegram 9 to Amman, 867N.01/1-1449)

Mr. Stabler replied, on January 17, that he had seen King Abdullah and the Transjordanian Defense Minister the previous evening and had advised them of the substance of telegram 9. The King stated that "if it did not seem possible to obtain internationalization of all Jerusalem, then autonomy of Arab and Jewish areas would be best solution to problem." He also advanced the view that a "separate settlement Jerusalem 'not a bad idea'" and that "he wanted to reach settlement with Jews which would be firm and durable and which would be based on mutual interests. Toward that end he always prepared adopt reasonable attitude on specific points under discussion. He hoped Jews would do same." (telegram 22 from Amman, 867N.01/1-1749)

501.BB Palestine/1-1549 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Legation in Switzerland

SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, January 15, 1949—12 noon.
NIACT

65. For Vincent.¹ Deptel 54, Jan. 13,² Keenan will not be able, for personal reasons, undertake duties as US Rep Pal Con Comm. His successor, however, has not yet been appointed. In this situation please be guided by following instructions:

1. You shld say to Fr and Turk Members Comm and to UN Secr that pending arrival US Commissioner Dept has requested you ex

¹ John Carter Vincent, Minister in Switzerland.

² Not printed.

officio to represent this Govt and accordingly we hope Commission's first meetings can be informal in character.

2. If foregoing acceptable to Fr and Turk members you may participate fully with them in discussing precedures to be adopted by Comm. Such wld include:

a. Selection of Comm Chairmen. We wld suggest that Chairmanship rotate on monthly basis between three commissioners, following English alphabet. In this case France would be chairman first month, followed by Turkey, then US.

b. Itinerary of Comm. We wld have no objection if Fr propose that Comm proceed first Jerusalem to make *acte de presence*, later possibly going Rhodes if this is suggested by Mediator or if Comm shld feel such move necessary. We do not favor Comm meeting in Turkey since certain parties to Palestine dispute might not regard this as neutral ground.

3. If, contrary our expectation, Fr and Turk members insist on more formal treatment you must explain you will have to abstain from vote and that US to its regret will not be able participate in Commission's formal deliberations pending arrival its Representative.

4. Since US Rep on Con Comm will be White House appointee we do not contemplate that you should undertake substantive discussions on Palestine problem.³

Repeat Geneva 37 Unpal 1.

Repeated USUN 26, Paris 136, Ankara 25.

LOVETT

³ This message was cleared by the White House. The United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine held its first meeting at Geneva on January 17 with Mr. Vincent acting ex officio. The Commission "rendered homage memory Bernadotte; decided presidency would be exercised in rotation with Turkey as first president; decided establish headquarters Jerusalem beginning January 24; decided issue communiqués on committee work as occasion demanded; discussed with Azcarate practical questions including details establishment Jerusalem." (telegram Palun 2, January 18, noon, from Bern, 501.BB Palestine/1-1849) Mr. Azcarate was Principal Secretary of the Commission.

501.BB Palestine/1-1549 : Telegram

The Consul at Jerusalem (Burdett) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

JERUSALEM, January 15, 1949—1 p. m.

42. Following comments made on 12th by British Consul Jerusalem: Talks between Dayan and Tel not making satisfactory progress. Both sides merely presented demands which realized other could not accept and no attempt made to reconcile differences. UK advised King Abdullah obtain agreement Transjordan Government to talks. Main demands Transjordan included outlet to sea at Gaza, return of Ramle and Lydda, return of refugees and consideration future western Galilee at later date. Jews in general claimed right retain territory now held and specifically partition Jerusalem, mutual compensation

for damages, resumption operation potash works at southern end Dead Sea, together with right use potash works at northern end, and rectification lines at Latrun. No mention made by Jews of refugees.

Regarding shooting down RAF planes, asserted careful interrogation personnel involved proved conclusively Jewish attacks occurred over Egyptian territory. Stated Egyptian Defense Minister approached UK Ambassador Cairo with request UK supply arms and munitions without Egypt's invoking 1936 treaty. On instructions from E. Bevin Ambassador replied UK would not furnish assistance until Egypt invoked treaty and presence Jewish troops in Egypt definitely proved. Reconnaissance flights undertaken in effort obtain definite proof.

Consul emphasized importance to UK of overland communications between Egypt and Jordan and Iraq so that defense treaties with latter two countries could be implemented if necessary.

Considered at least corridor linking Transjordan and Egypt or Transjordan and Gaza vital for British defense needs. Expressed personal opinion UK would use force if necessary obtain route.

Sent Department 42, pouched Amman.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/1-1749

*Draft Message by President Truman to President Chaim Weizmann of Israel, at Tel Aviv*¹

[WASHINGTON, undated.]

MY DEAR DR. WEIZMANN: Your message of January 3 is in my hands. I deeply appreciate your courtesy in personally conveying to me the assurances which have been given to the United States Government by the Provisional Government of Israel concerning the circumstances surrounding the crossing of the Egyptian frontier by Israeli forces. I was gratified to learn that on January 11 [10] Mr. Eliahu Epstein officially notified the United States Government that all Israeli forces had been withdrawn from Egypt.²

I am happy to assure you personally, as the United States Government has assured the Provisional Government of Israel, that the representation which I directed Mr. McDonald to make in connection with this incident was made in the most friendly interest. I so instructed Mr. McDonald because I was convinced that a situation had arisen which threatened to extend the scope of the conflict. As you

¹ Transmitted to the White House by Mr. Lovett with his memorandum of January 17. Presumably it was sent to the Israeli President as drafted.

² See Mr. Rockwell's memorandum of conversation, January 10, p. 633.

know, the United States Government also made strong representations in Cairo.

I am encouraged by recent developments looking toward armistice negotiations between Israel and Egypt. It is my earnest hope that these negotiations can be expanded from the military to the political field and that they can be broadened to include all the parties to the dispute.

It is essential that both Israel and the Arab states leave no stone unturned in their efforts to reach a final settlement. Neither party must permit side issues to distract it from the difficult task of attaining this goal, which will bring to Palestine the lasting peace so essential to the stabilization of the Near East and to the larger objective of international security.

With kind regards,
Sincerely yours,

867N.01/1-1849

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 18, 1949.

Subject: Palestine

Participants: The Acting Secretary, Mr. Lovett
The British Ambassador, Sir Oliver Franks
First Secretary of British Embassy, Mr. Bromley
NEA—Mr. Hare²
UNA—Mr. McClintock

Sir Oliver Franks called at his request to leave an *Aide-Mémoire*³ under instructions of the Foreign Secretary. He prefaced his official remarks with the personal comment that he felt the conversations with Mr. Lovett over the past several weeks had had a material effect on the British Government. For his own part, he had tried carefully to present not only a fair picture of the American point of view, but the arguments which supported that point of view. This he had done not only in official reports of his interviews (he asked Mr. Lovett to read the telegrams recounting his conversation with the Acting Secretary on January 12 and his subsequent talk with the President),⁴ but also

¹ Drafted by Mr. McClintock.

² Raymond A. Hare, Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs.

³ *Infra.*

⁴ For information on these conversations, see Mr. McClintock's memorandum of conversation of January 13 and telegram 149 to London of the same date, pp. 651 and 658.

in a personal letter to the Foreign Secretary in which he stressed the basic reasons for the Department's attitude. Summing up, the Ambassador indicated that the Americans were looking to what to do about the future of Palestine while the British had perhaps been regarding the problem too much in the light of their unhappy experiences in the past. He was relieved to feel that the United States by its recent actions in restraining the Israeli attack on Egypt had shown clearly that it did not feel that Israel could act outside the territorial limits of the former Palestine mandate, although within those limits the American Government thought that final dispositions should be made by negotiation between the parties.

Sir Oliver said that, no doubt, the request of the British Cabinet for a statement from the United States in the sense that the United States Government and the British Government have a common policy relating to the Middle East was conditioned at least in part by considerations of domestic politics. Mr. Bevin had been under considerable attack and Mr. Eden had based his principal argument on the assertion that Palestine was forcing the two Anglo-Saxon Governments apart. However, Sir Oliver pointed out that the Cabinet telegram which he had received, and on which the *Aide-Mémoire* was based, made no reference to the domestic political situation or to the impending debate in the House of Commons on British Palestine policy. All his Government asked was that if possible the attitude of this Government toward making a statement be ascertained prior to the Cabinet meeting on Thursday, January 20.

I replied that there were two reasons why it would be difficult for this Government to make an across-the-board statement with respect to our unanimity of policy with the British Government in the Middle East. The first was a domestic problem—that of security in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I had already seen how top secret information had been leaked from that committee. Certainly, if a sweeping official statement were made, the Senate Committee would wish inside information and would probe into the basis of our current understanding on policy in the Middle East. I could offer no assurances that our top secret testimony before the Committee would not soon become public. The second consideration was that a statement along the lines which seemed to be contemplated, if it were very broad in scope, would arouse an instant Soviet reaction. The USSR saw the United States and the United Kingdom active in current conversations on the Atlantic Pact. There was a danger that a far-reaching statement on the Middle East would lead the USSR to the conclusion that a similar arrangement was being contemplated for that area. How-

ever, I did think it might be possible, if we could limit the statement strictly to the Palestine problem, for us to meet most of the requirements set forth in the Ambassador's telegram.

On other points Sir Oliver said that his Government intended to announce on Friday, January 21, that the Jewish internees on Cyprus would be released. As for his Government's contemplated *de facto* recognition of Israel, he was gratified to know that this Government planned to extend *de jure* recognition to Transjordan as well as Israel immediately after the Israeli elections provided, as was hoped, the Israeli Government returned by those elections was a moderate Government worthy of *de jure* recognition.

Although the *Aide-Mémoire* which Sir Oliver left officially embodied most of the points covered in his telegram of instructions which he said bore the earmarks of having been drafted by the Cabinet itself, it contained one paragraph for my own private information which was not paraphrased in the *Aide-Mémoire*. This referred to the recent conversations between the French Foreign Minister and the British Foreign Secretary. M. Schuman was represented as saying that France had a population which included 25 million Moslems and therefore had to be very careful in the attitude it adopted on Palestine. Nevertheless, the French Government had been on the point of extending *de facto* recognition to Israel when it stayed its hand because of Israeli defiance of Security Council resolutions.

On the main point—the desired United States statement of mutuality of view with the United Kingdom on Middle Eastern policy—it was pointed out to Sir Oliver that much would depend upon the attitude Mr. Bevin would take in the forthcoming debate in Commons. If he backed up the line which he had instructed Sir Oliver to present at our last interview, it would be difficult for this Government to make a statement in support of British policy. The Ambassador said that, as he construed his telegram just received, it indicated that the British Government was not going to harp on the old issues but was looking, as did the Department, toward what to do about the future.

I said that I thought it might be possible, provided that Mr. Bevin's statements in the House of Commons did not seek to re-establish the line which he had taken last week with us, for either the new Secretary of State or possibly the President to make a statement which would indicate that both Governments were in complete agreement in pursuing a policy designed to restore peace in the Near East as quickly as possible. I thought that it might be possible to hang such a statement

on a peg like the announcement of the British decision to release the Jews on Cyprus.

Another possibility, which I advanced merely as an off-the-cuff suggestion, was that perhaps the two Governments could extend recognition to Israel almost simultaneously. This would be convincing evidence of a concerted policy between Washington and London.

It was agreed that Mr. McClintock, in consultation with Mr. Hare and Mr. Rusk, would prepare a tentative draft of a possible statement and discuss it later today with Mr. Bromley of the British Embassy. If some draft could be developed on the working level, Sir Oliver might then send it to his Government with the caution that this was a purely tentative draft and without top level clearance. At the same time Sir Oliver would point out the difficulty which this Government would face in making a statement prior to the debate in Parliament unless it was assured that Mr. Bevin would not rake up old embers.⁵

I told the British Ambassador that Mr. Bevin seemed to have come an encouraging distance from his last position and that the decision to return the Jews from Cyprus and the intent of the British Government to extend *de facto* recognition to Israel would have an immense and beneficial effect on the Israeli elections, particularly if recognition should be given immediately before the elections.

⁵The Department informed London on January 19 that "Such statement was worked out yesterday and telegraphed by Brit. Emb to FonOff. It has not been cleared at White House." (telegram 219, 501.BB Palestine/1-1949) The editors are unable to identify in the Department of State files the proposed statement passed to the British Embassy. London, on January 21, reported information from Mr. Burrows that the Foreign Office had accepted the draft statement, suggesting solely some rewording of paragraph 2 "designed to lay more emphasis on Middle Eastern aspects [of] Palestine [problem]." (telegram 247, 501.BB Palestine/1-2149)

There is in the files of the Department of State a draft statement dated January 21 (867N.01/1-2149). The wording of the latter portion of its second paragraph suggests to the editors, in the absence of the original draft, that the Department of State accepted the suggestion of the British Foreign Office. The draft of January 24, approved by President Truman, is printed on p. 691.

In telegram 247 (see first paragraph of this footnote), Mr. Burrows was said to have expressed Mr. Bevin's hope that the statement would be made before the meeting of the British Cabinet scheduled for the morning of January 24. In its next numbered telegram, of the same date, London observed that "Foreign Office desire for some statement re US-UK agreement on long-term objectives in Middle East springs in part from internal political exigencies since one phase of most attacks on Bevin's Palestine policy is that by his blundering he has managed to do harm to US-UK relations. There is belief here that such US statement in some form would go far to lessen difficulties British Government." (867N.01/1-2149)

867N.01/1-1849

The British Embassy to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON, undated.¹]

PALESTINE

Mr. Bevin has asked the British Ambassador to inform Mr. Lovett that, as the United States Government knows, the British Government attaches the highest importance to Anglo-American agreement over Palestine. The British Government have worked unremittingly to this end.

2. The British Government particularly appreciates Mr. Lovett's assurance that the United States Government stands firmly by its general views on the Middle East, as already explained to the British Government. Since the two Governments are in solid agreement on their long-range objectives affecting the Middle East, would it not be possible for a statement now to be made after this lapse of time in the sense that the United States Government and the British Government have a common policy relating to this area? Mr. Bevin has no desire to publish details now, but there is a view in the United Kingdom that there is no understanding between the two Governments on the Middle East and Mr. Bevin is most anxious to correct this misconception.

3. Mr. Bevin asks the British Ambassador to assure Mr. Lovett and the United States Government that the British Government has an equally earnest desire for peace and an accepted settlement of the Palestine problem, and that the British Government has been striving to that end. The British Government has now again urged the Arab Governments concerned both to settle their differences between themselves and to undertake negotiations, both at Rhodes and on a wider basis through the Conciliation Commission. It is hoped that the Conciliation Commission will soon be able to set to work. The British Government has studied, so far as reports allow, the talks at Rhodes, and is glad to note that progress is being made. The British Government believes that this is due to United States pressure on both sides and to British advice to the Arab Governments, coupled with the evidence of firmness combined with restraint which the British Government has recently shown. The British Government is however, up against a very great difficulty when Security Council decisions are

¹This communication was handed to Mr. Lovett by Ambassador Franks on January 18.

not acted upon, and this seems to involve both Governments in an important point of principle. At the same time, the British Government is anxious that all parties in the Middle East shall look to the West and not to Russia, but it believes that the danger in the Arab States from Russia will grow very rapidly as they feel that they are deserted by the West.

4. Mr. Bevin is encouraged by the fact that the fighting appears to have stopped. The British Government is considering what other steps it could take to facilitate agreement and to encourage negotiations and to further the objectives which both Governments have. One thing which troubles the British Government is that the Transjordan Government, whom it wants to take a good deal of responsibility in the matter, and whose application to the United Nations has been vetoed by the Soviet Union, is not recognised by the United States Government. If the United States Government could immediately recognise Transjordan, even *de facto*, this would make it possible for the British Government to give simultaneous *de facto* recognition to Israel. *De facto* recognition of Transjordan is suggested as the appropriate step in view of possible changes of boundary.

5. Mr. Bevin feels that Mr. Lovett would appreciate that on many occasions the British Government have made concessions about Palestine in an attempt to be helpful and to avoid causing the State Department embarrassment. As will be seen from the above, the British Government wants to make yet another attempt to concert action and to make it clear that in the Middle East, as well as elsewhere in the world, the British and the Americans are working together. In the general setting of world affairs Mr. Bevin believes this to be all-important.

6. In short, Mr. Bevin suggests—

(a) That some agreed statement should be released, to the effect that there is understanding between the two Governments regarding the Middle East.

(b) That Transjordan should be recognised by the United States Government, perhaps *de facto*, and

(c) That the British Government should simultaneously recognise *de facto* the Government of Israel.

Mr. Bevin hopes that these steps would be helpful in an attempt to clear up this disturbed area.

501.BB Palestine/1-1849: Circular telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions in the American Republics*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1949—2 p. m.

As you aware from wireless bulletin, President has publicly stated interest this country in plight Palestine refugees and is asking Congress for \$16 million appropriation to be this Govt's share of \$32 million relief program voted by UNGA Nov. 19. For your secret info Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secy National Defense concerned over grave threat to stability Middle East represented by more than half million Arab refugees living in conditions utmost destitution and squalor, whose fate if not promptly relieved will lead to further deterioration our strategic position in this important area.

Thus far US has been outstanding in its efforts to contribute to UN relief program, whose Director is Stanton Griffis, now on leave from post as Amb Cairo. Response of other Amer Republics has been distinctly disappointing and on whole can be classed as completely negative.

We understand Amb Griffis would like to send personal rep to explore possibilities securing contributions in kind from Brazil, Arg and possibly Chile. Although this is strictly UN enterprise, because US strategic interests involved you are requested tele your private estimate whether Govts concerned would be disposed make contribution and if accordingly it would be worthwhile for UN Director Relief Program send special rep.

Repeated to Cairo for Griffis, USUN.

LOVETT

¹ Sent to Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, and Santiago.

501.BB Palestine/1-1849: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Holmes) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

LONDON, January 18, 1949—5 p. m.

214. 1. I am most grateful to Department for its 149, January 13 reporting conversation between Acting Secretary and British Ambassador. I believe that this frank, firm and friendly talk followed by talk of same character with President constitute genuine contribution to US-UK understanding which already have gone far to put

US thinking before British Cabinet in a light clearer than ever before. Fact that US has reasoned point of view on Middle East problems as whole has begun to make its appearance in thoughtful British publications and conversations for first time without the overworked, and tendentious implication that US views re Palestine slavishly follow dictates of American Zionist pressure groups. It is source of surprise to some that underlying US policy there is hardboiled appraisal of elements of Middle East power and prospects for making best use of them in US-UK defense planning.

2. Impact of Franks' reports of his conversations has derived more from fact spokesmen were President and Acting Secretary than from nature views they expressed. This Embassy at every opportunity has consistently made clear to Foreign Office officials, members of Parliament, military, etc., the trend of US thought on all major points made by Acting Secretary. However, British officials have been obsessed with rightness of their own views and this tempted them to hope wishfully that US attitude as expressed by US Representative SC during US political campaign would change in calmer atmosphere following elections. Bevin and his officials wanted to know on a government to government basis, apart from speeches made in charged Paris atmosphere, what US views really were. Now Bevin has received from both President and Acting Secretary restatement US policy tied up in a single unequivocal and comprehensible package and UK "knows where it stands" vis-à-vis US re Palestine. Embassy is inclined to believe that Bevin has now made his final attempt to sell US on UK Palestine policy. He now can go to no higher US authority and his hopes for UK-US cooperation on UK terms re Palestine have now vanished.

3. Embassy Officer has been shown texts of Franks' telegrams reporting conversations with both Acting Secretary and President. While Franks did not deal in same order or with exactly same emphasis re points made by Acting Secretary in Department's reference telegram he did present US views in clear light and in a context revealing a measure of personal agreement with their substance. Franks stressed friendliness of his reception on both occasions and US concept that Israel is the "most dynamic, efficient and vigorous state in Middle East". Re President's remarks Franks reported that former spoke of good and friendly relations existing between US and UK and expressed regret that in this matter US and UK "are not quite in agreement". Franks reported that President was most friendly throughout interview but that he was also very positive and definite in expression of his views. Since these reports were undoubtedly discussed in detail

at yesterday's meetings British Cabinet attended by defence chiefs, not only their content but friendly tenor of Franks' presentation may be of significance in deciding effect of US views on British Palestine policy.

4. Despite spate of comment and rumor neither British Government nor opposition appears to have decided on manner in which Palestine will be handled before Parliament. While Bevin is fully aware that he is in for rough time it would be erroneous to suppose that he will be ridden out of office on Palestine rail. Labour Party on party grounds will support him strongly and even Conservatives feel that there is point beyond which they would gain nothing by pressing Bevin re Palestine. Time is slightly in favor Bevin whose good points seem to be marshalling themselves in popular consciousness in mitigation of his lapses over Palestine.

5. British Government obviously now has choice re Palestine of going ahead, drawing back or maintaining unaggressively its present attitude and as of this moment there is no clear indication re line which will be adopted. Embassy's guess is that for immediate future UK will do as little as possible re Palestine and as events can be found to give public justification UK will progressively but quietly unbend towards PGI. An abrupt change in policy seems unlikely. It is Embassy's guess also that Bevin will attempt to play down US influence on Palestine events, but it is not unlikely that if he is hard pressed in debate he may bring US role more prominently into discussion with special reference to Bernadotte proposals.¹

HOLMES

¹ The Department, on January 19, replied to the last sentence of telegram 214, stating in part: "you should bear in mind in discussions with Brit fact that Bernadotte plan was rejected in GA not because of lack of support by UK and US but because both Arab and Israeli influences united to deny necessary votes. . . . In view this voting situation inside Assembly, it would be most unfortunate if Bevin or FonOff should imply that US had forsaken its agreement to support Bernadotte plan." (telegram 221, 501.BB Palestine/1-1949)

The concluding paragraph of telegram 219 to London (see footnote 5, p. 674) states that the British communication handed to the Department on January 18 "was drafted pursuant to tele which Brit. Amb said came from Cabinet itself. We believe in light your 214, Jan. 18 that Franks correctly interpreted changed situation by saying he thought Bevin has now abandoned views he expressed Jan. 12 through Amb here and that he is resolutely setting new course." Regarding the conversation of January 12, see telegram 149, January 13, to London, p. 658.

London, on January 19, reported information from Mr. Burrows that a "circular message was sent to Arab capitals January 18 telling governments that advantage should be taken of present period comparative peace to make armistice agreements with PGI on all fronts and then to enter into final negotiations either through CC or directly." (telegram 236, 867N.01/1-1949)

501.BB Palestine/1-1749: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General in Jerusalem*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1949—6 p. m.

30. Ur 47 Jan 17² and previous. Dept appreciates your commendable initiative and your recommendations re proposed Jerusalem settlement. However since GA resolution Dec 11 placed upon Conciliation Commission responsibility for recommendations concerning final Jerusalem regime and since Commission soon to arrive Palestine, Dept desires ConGen not assume active role in Israel-TJ negotiations (last para reftel³). You should make absolutely clear to both sides US not acting as mediator in any way or extending good offices.

Dept's position on Jerusalem settlement in light developments you have reported now under urgent consideration. You will be informed.

LOVETT

¹This telegram was repeated to London and Amman and to Geneva for the American Delegation to the Palestine Conciliation Commission.

²Not printed; it advised of discussions between Transjordanian and Israeli officials on proposals to settle the question of the administration of Jerusalem and of conversations by Consul Burdett and the French Consul General with those officials on the matter (867N.01/1-1749).

³In this paragraph, Consul Burdett proposed "drawing up outline reconciling as far as possible Jewish-Arab positions and presenting it to Abdullah Tel and Dayan for further discussion."

Editorial Note

Secretary Bevin addressed the House of Commons concerning the Palestine problem on January 18. The Embassy took special cognizance of his conciliatory mood and his announcement that the British Government was prepared to release the Jews interned on Cyprus. It also noted that "even more important may be effect in Arab capitals of Bevin's unequivocal public support direct Arab-PGI talks since such support goes somewhat beyond private British counsels to same effect through diplomatic channels. It seems likely that Bevin's direct reference to 'Government of Israel' may be another step on road to British recognition PGI." (telegram 223, January 18, 7 p. m., from London, 867N.01/1-1849)

The following day, Mr. Satterthwaite discussed with Uriel Heyd, First Secretary of the Israeli Mission in the United States, three matters concerning the British which were disturbing the Israelis. Mr. Satterthwaite suggested that "in my view Mr. Bevin's statement in Parliament yesterday indicated that the British do not have hostile

intentions toward the Israeli Government and that I hoped very much that they would before long have means of communicating with each other directly. The announcement of the release of the Jewish DP's in Cyprus would, I hoped, be helpful in clearing the atmosphere before the elections. . . . I also mentioned the U.S. loan which the Export-Import Bank has approved today." (memorandum of conversation by Mr. Satterthwaite, 501.BB Palestine/1-1949)

The Export-Import Bank, on January 19, announced authorization of a credit of \$35 million to Israel to finance purchases in the United States of equipment, materials, and services in connection with agricultural projects and of a further credit of \$65 million to finance projects in the fields of communications, transportation, manufacturing, housing, and public works. The latter group of credits was to be available until December 31, 1949. The text of the Bank's press release on these credits is printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, February 6, 1949, page 173.

501.BB Palestine/1-2849

The Acting Secretary of State to Mr. Mark F. Ethridge

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 19, 1949.

SIR: Before you depart for Palestine to assume your duties as the American representative on the Palestine Conciliation Commission, I am setting forth the following basic positions for your guidance:¹

A) A final settlement on all questions outstanding between the parties in Palestine should be achieved by negotiation as set forth in the General Assembly resolution of December 11, 1948. You should do everything possible as a member of the Conciliation Commission to assist the parties to reach an agreement by this means. You should consult the Department periodically during the course of these negotiations.

B) If it becomes necessary during the course of the negotiations for you to express the views of this Government, you should bear in mind that American policy is based on the following premises:

1. No modifications should be made in the boundaries of the State of Israel as established by the General Assembly resolution of November 29, 1947, without the full consent of the State of Israel.

¹ Mr. Lovett had sent identical instructions to Mr. Keenan in a letter of January 5. The letter is filed under 501.BB Palestine/7-1949.

2. If Israel desires additions to its territory as defined under the November 29 resolution, i.e., areas allotted by the General Assembly to the Arabs such as western Galilee and Jaffa, now under Israeli occupation, Israel should make territorial concessions elsewhere, i.e., the southern Negev. Israel is not entitled to keep both the Negev and western Galilee and Jaffa. If there is no agreement between the parties, the Israelis should relinquish western Galilee and Jaffa and the Arabs should relinquish the Israeli portion of the Negev.

3. If Israel desires to retain western Galilee and Jaffa, the southern border of Israel should not be drawn further south than the thirty-first parallel within the territory allotted to Israel under the resolution of November 29.

4. *Status of Jerusalem*—The resolution of December 11 states that the Jerusalem area should be accorded special and separate treatment from the rest of Palestine and should be placed under effective United Nations control. This could be accomplished by appointing a United Nations Commissioner for Jerusalem and by establishing machinery to enable him to supervise the administration of the area, to guarantee free access to the city and the Holy Places, and to insure adequate protection of the latter. The effective administration of the area of Jerusalem should be left to Arabs and Jews, the delineation of the parts of the area to be administered by each party to be determined by agreement.

It is not unlikely that Israel may call for a land corridor to connect the State of Israel with Jerusalem. Agreement to such a demand would not be in accord with the November 29 resolution, which provided only for freedom of access to Jerusalem; moreover, since such a corridor would bisect the territory which the November 29 resolution allotted to the Arabs, it would create a geographical anomaly. In the event, however, that the creation of such a land corridor appears to be essential to a final settlement, Israel should be prepared to make territorial concessions to the Arabs elsewhere.

5. *The Port of Haifa*—The State of Israel should give assurances of free access for the interested Arab countries to the port of Haifa. The Arab countries in turn should undertake to place no obstacle in the way of oil deliveries by pipeline to the Haifa refinery. The products of the refinery should continue to be distributed on the basis of the historical pattern.

6. *Lydda airport*—The airport of Lydda should be open to international air traffic without restrictions, and the interested Arab countries should be assured of access to its facilities.

7. *Palestinian refugees*—You should be guided by the provisions of the General Assembly resolution of December 11 concerning refugees.

8. *Disposition of Arab Palestine*—US favors incorporation of greater part of Arab Palestine in Transjordan. The remainder might be divided among other Arab states as seems desirable.

C) If negotiations, either directly between the parties or through the Commission, should fail, you will be authorized to join with the other members of the Commission in an effort to persuade the parties to agree upon frontiers between Israel and Arab Palestine as set forth in paragraph (3) above. At the same time, the United States Government will concert with the British Government to attempt to induce the parties to reach agreement on this basis.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT A. LOVETT

501.BB Palestine/1-1849 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General in Jerusalem*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 19, 1949—7 p. m.

35. Urtels 35² and 54.³ Herewith Dept general views re desirability direct Israeli-Transjordan negots on future administration Jerusalem :

1. Israel and Transjordan should be encouraged reach any agreement on future Arab and Jewish administrative responsibilities in Jerusalem compatible with para 8 of GA Palestine Res. of 11 Dec '48. In particular, this might include agreement on areas of Jerusalem which Arabs and Jews will separately administer, either by local population alone or with assistance of Transjordan and Israel.

2. U.S. as Member of U.N. and Conciliation Comm can give support only to such arrangements for Jerusalem as fall within GA Resolution, requiring *inter alia*, that the Jerusalem area "be accorded special and separate treatment from the rest of Palestine" and that Conciliation Comm present next GA "detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area". US cannot therefore support any arrangements which would purport to authorize estab of Israeli or TJ sovereignty over parts of Jerusalem area.

3. Dept does not consider that GA reference to "permanent international regime" requires direct administration by U.N. of Jerusalem area. Res. itself states objective of "maximum local autonomy for distinctive groups consistent with the special international status of the Jerusalem area". However, while this would permit exercise of broad administrative responsibilities by Arabs and Jews in areas defined by mutual agreement, some clear representation of U.N. interest in Jerusalem area is required. Dept is considering various forms which latter might take.

¹ This telegram was repeated to London and Amman.

² Dated January 13, p. 661.

³ Dated January 18; it outlined a proposed agreement on the future administration of Jerusalem which had been prepared by Consul Burdett and the French Consul General. The last paragraph of the telegram read as follows: "French ConGen and I propose present above outline including suggestions as to demarcation line and international enclaves to both Dayan and Abdullah on twenty-[here follows garbled portion]. Will act in purely personal capacity but any indication Department may be able give of its approval of proposals in general would be most helpful." (501.BB Palestine/1-1849)

4. Arrangements re Jerusalem agreed upon by Israel and Trans-jordan should be of provisional character and subject to approval by GA. However, GA could be expected view with much sympathy any proposal re Jerusalem mutually accepted by Arabs and Jews even though direct responsibility of U.N. thereunder might be less extensive than certain U.N. Delegations have thought necessary.

5. Conciliation Comm should be brought into any Israeli-Trans-jordan discussions re Jerusalem at any early stage. Suggestions advanced by Israel envisage area for direct U.N. administration and other U.N. responsibilities. Moreover, Comm has specific obligation make proposals to next GA on Jerusalem and Holy Places. Comm can advise parties on kind arrangements compatible with GA Res. and likely to be accepted by U.N.

View Deptel 30 Jan 18 Dept desires you not carry out plan outlined last para ur 54 Jan 18.

Communicate this tel to US Rep Palestine Conciliation Comm on arrival Jerusalem.

LOVETT

501.BB Palestine/1-1949 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Holmes) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

LONDON, January 19, 1949—7 p. m.

237. Burrows today supplied following re continuation PGI Trans-jordan negotiations (Embassy's 145, January 12).

1. Sassoon and Dayan on January 16 disguised as UN observers visited King Abdullah at his headquarters in Jordan Valley escorted by Abdullah Tel. PGI representatives took initiative re meeting which is not known to Transjordan Government.

2. Jews pressed for immediate settlement and Abdullah replied that he too anxious for settlement and wanted friendly relations with PGI. Abdullah said he was willing to extend cease-fire to whole front and to convert it into armistice. However, Transjordan must have exit to Mediterranean and he suggested this should be at Gaza. He remarked that if Egypt got Gaza this would mean control by Mufti.

3. Jews said they had no intention of discussing territorial adjustments with Egypt at present and would not do so without informing Transjordan beforehand.

4. Abdullah warned Jews that he would become permanent enemy PGI if Israel went Communist.

5. Jews spoke bitterly re British attitude toward Israel. To this Abdullah replied their blame UK undeserved since UK had helped

PGI by withholding arms Arab Legion. UK is still withholding arms.¹

6. King and PGI representatives agreed to hold another meeting as soon as "military situation with Egypt cleared up". Burrows commented that Foreign Office was "very interested" in this meeting but that it was not particularly pleased that Abdullah had elected to play off PGI against the Egyptians (Embassy's 236, January 19).²

HOLMES

¹ Mr. Stabler, on January 24, reported information from King Abdullah about the meeting at Shuneh on January 16. The latter was said to have stated that he had received Messrs. Sassoon and Dayan "to discuss with them present developments re armistice and peace negotiations. Meeting lasted half hour. Stated he had emphasized to Israelis his desire for peace and his hope Israel would work with him in reaching lasting peace based on mutual interests. Indicated Transjordan must have outlet to sea at Gaza and that Egyptians must be obliged leave that territory. (Re this His Majesty said if he had Gaza it would not be necessary to have sovereignty over Jaffa; however, if not possible have Gaza, then Transjordan must have Jaffa.) King stated he had not gone into precise details re his terms for peace, already generally known by Israelis. He described meeting as satisfactory" (telegram 31 from Amman, 867N.01/1-2449).

² Not printed, but see footnote 1, p. 679.

501.BB Palestine/1-1949: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

NEW YORK, January 19, 1949—11:41 p. m.

70. Following is text of agreement between Israeli and Lebanese officers signed at Ras-en-Naqura 14 January, in pursuance SC Resolution November 16, as obtained from UN SYG today:

"We, the undersigned, being duly accredited military observers of the Israeli and Lebanese Armies, on this day do hereby agree to the following:

1. The Israeli authorities will evacuate their troops and relinquish control over the following villages: Deir, Siriane, Aalmne, El Qoussacr, Qantara and Yardun. This evacuation will be completed not later than 0800 hours local time Sunday, January 16, 1949.

This evacuation is to be considered as a good-will gesture and a prelude to further discussion on the matters contained in the Resolutions of the SC of 16 November 1948.

2. It is agreed that discussions involving the requirements of the November 16, 1948 Resolution of the SC will be entered into by both parties not later than Wednesday, 19 January 1949.

3. It is agreed that during the present armistice talks no military act of aggression, in the form of air operations, ground operations, patrols, firing of weapons, or destructive missiles of any sort shall be directed across the frontier by either side against the personnel or equipment of the opposing force, or against the inhabitants, including public or personal property.

4. It is further agreed that movements of civilians, particularly refugees, shall not occur from one side to the other.

5. This agreement is drawn up in the presence of the UN Military Observers whose signatures appear below."

AUSTIN

501.BB Palestine/1-1949: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

NEW YORK, January 19, 1949—11:41 p. m.

71. Following is text of declaration approved by Israeli and Egyptian representatives at Rhodes conference January 14 on agenda item "assurances as regards military offenses and national security" declaration will become preamble of armistice agreement. Text obtained from UN SYG:

"We, the undersigned, in full authority entrusted to us by our respective governments, desirous of promoting the return of permanent peace to Palestine, and recognizing the importance in this regard of mutual reassurances as regards the future military intentions of the parties, hereby affirm the following principles which will be fully observed by both parties during the armistice:

1. The injunction of the SC against resort to military force in the Palestine dispute shall be henceforth scrupulously respected by both parties.

2. No aggressive action by the military forces—land, sea or air—of either party shall be undertaken, planned (the use of the term 'planned' in this context has no bearing on normal staff planning as generally practised in military organizations), or threatened against the people or the armed forces of the other.

3. The right of each party to its security and to freedom from fear of attack by the armed forces of the other shall be fully respected.

4. The establishment of an armistice between the armed forces of the two parties is accepted as an indispensable step towards the liquidation of armed conflict and the restoration of peace in Palestine."

AUSTIN

501.BB Palestine/1-1949: Telegram

*The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State*¹

SECRET PRIORITY

NEW YORK, January 19, 1949—11:41 p. m.

72. SYG Lie through Cordier is making available USUN all important reports of Rhodes conversations submitted by Bunche in inter-

¹ This telegram was repeated to Athens.

ests of keeping US Government and especially US representative on Conciliation Commission fully informed prior to convening of Commission. Reports in daily classified summaries since January 14 have covered highlights of negotiations to date. Text of Israeli-Lebanon agreement transmitted mytel 70, January 19, and text of declaration approved at Rhodes January 14 transmitted mytel 71, January 19.

In addition to information previously reported on Faluja withdrawal, Bunche has reported that terms of agreement provide that heavy equipment to be evacuated to Egypt under UN supervision and control and held in UN custody until Chief-of-Staff satisfied anticipated armistice effective. UN staff plans for withdrawal approved by both parties with minor modifications. Bunche on January 17 noted that Israelis very conciliatory in discussing Faluja agreement.

In answer to SYG's request for reports on downed RAF planes in Negev and Aqaba landings (mytel 44, January 14²), Bunche has replied that in view of prospects for significant results from Rhodes talks he desired to avoid inciting SC debates leading to recriminatory exchanges between Egyptians and Israelis which might have unfavorable repercussions in Rhodes. Bunche reported that until full information available and carefully appraised, he did not feel able to present to SC a charge of breach of truce in Aqaba landings. He reported that as of January 15 his information was incomplete and also noted that SC President had not requested reports on either downed RAF planes or Aqaba landings. While personally deploring incidents, Bunche reported he would make full reports to SC only when full information available and SC decides to take up question.

AUSTIN

² Not printed.

867N.01/1-2049 : Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

AMMAN, January 20, 1949—1 p. m.

26. Mytel 159, December 15.¹ Apparently on suggestion of King Supreme Moslem Council for Palestine in Jerusalem decided on January 18 that his Majesty should be proclaimed King in all Mosques in Palestine on Friday January 21. Religious ceremony is planned at Dome of Rock Mosque in Jerusalem to be attended by new Mufti of Palestine, President Supreme Moslem Council, Military Governor and other high civil and religious dignitaries. Short invocation will

¹ Not printed.

be read which refers to King as "Our Lord Great King Abdullah Ibn Hussein".

Sent Department, repeated Jerusalem 20.

STABLER

Editorial Note

Various posts in the Arab countries, beginning on January 21, replied to the Department's circular airgram of December 29, 1948 (see *Foreign Relations*, 1948, volume V, Part 2, page 1696), on the refugee problem. On that day, Jidda reported that "Up to the present, no Arabs from Palestine have sought refuge in Saudi Arabia" (despatch 15).

Cairo advised, on January 28, that the support given to roughly 8,000 refugees was a sizable drain on the Egyptian treasury "although percentage-wise not nearly as formidable as the expense borne by the Lebanese and Syrian Governments." It noted additionally that "If the roughly 250,000 refugees now in the Egyptian occupied area of Palestine were driven into Egypt the result would be almost catastrophic for Egypt financially." Cairo concluded that "There is ample evidence that the Egyptian Government has decided that the refugees are not in Egypt to stay. The refugees have been kept isolated in the desert on the far side of the Suez Canal where a strict guard is maintained over their camp. No new refugees have been allowed to come to Egypt since last May and the Government predicates its whole approach on forcing the refugee problem on the Jews and the United Nations to the greatest degree possible" (airgram 102).

Amman informed, on February 3, that the continued presence of 89,000 refugees in Transjordan and 302,000 in Arab Palestine would adversely affect both areas "in serious way through constant drain on almost nonexistent resources" and that the areas under Transjordanian control could only assimilate a "very small number refugees under existing conditions since money, jobs and other opportunities scarce" (telegram 46 and airgram 5).

Beirut, on February 4, stated that "The continued presence of some 90,000 Arab refugees in the Lebanon . . . would almost undoubtedly be considered unacceptable by the Government and an unbearable burden." It also gave its opinion that "Prospects of permanently settling any large number of Palestine refugees in Lebanon are very poor," inasmuch as "(1) Unemployment already exists and present economic conditions do not warrant consideration this possibility [; and] (2) Politically absorption of large number Moslems into Lebanon would upset present sensitive balance which exists between Christians and Moslems" (airgram 35 and telegram 55).

Damascus, on February 4, reported estimates of 80,000 to 100,000

refugees in Syria and that the small cash dole and foodstuffs supplied to them had resulted in "utter demoralization and impoverishment" of practically all of them. Damascus noted also that the "presence of refugees in Syria has constituted economic burden primarily on communities rather than on govt which as early as August, 1948 practically abandoned its relief expenditures as unsupportable budgetary drain" (airgram 30).

Baghdad, on February 5 and 7 noted the presence in Iraq of 5,000 refugees whose maintenance was possible despite the severe economic depression. However, the "Absence demand for labor makes impossible absorb any additional refugees now" (telegram 47 and airgram 54).

All messages cited above are filed under 501.MA Palestine, with the dates of the messages serving as dated enclosures, except for airgrams 35 from Beirut and 54 from Baghdad, which are filed under 501.BB Palestine.

501.BB Palestine/1-2349: Telegram

The Ambassador in Greece (Grady) to the Secretary of State

SECRET NIACT

ATHENS, January 23, 1949—1 a. m.

152. Palun 7. Under Bunche's instructions, John Reedman, senior political adviser [Acting] Mediator's staff, arrived Athens from Rhodes afternoon January 22 for purpose confidentially acquainting USDel progress Egyptian-Israeli negotiations.

Egyptians and Israelis have agreed on preamble to armistice agreement and separately on Faluja pocket (Unpal 7).¹

Differences on other points are as follows:

Israeli position: (1) Eytan informally proposed re coastal strip effective withdrawal Egyptian forces leaving such defense units as are agreed upon for administration and maintenance police control; (2) Israelis will accept principle withdrawal Israeli mobile and striking forces from area in northwest Negev as yet undefined which both sides would consider as threat to other. Bunche believes area might approximate that south of October 14 line; (3) Israelis will not agree to any armistice line which would result in advance Egyptian forces from present positions; (4) Israelis will not agree to return Egyptians in any form to Bir Asluj; (5) Israelis will not negotiate on basis of Egyptian civil governor in Beersheba; (6) Israelis hold firm position to retain El Auja but might not prevent agreement on this point alone. Israelis very probably would not permit Egyptians to return.

¹ Also identified as telegram 92, January 21, 5 p. m., to Athens, not printed; it repeated the texts of telegrams 70, 71, and 72, all dated January 19 and printed *ante*, pp. 685 and 686 (501.BB Palestine/1-1949).

Egyptian position: (1) Egyptians expect adherence November 13 line under November 4 resolution; (2) Egyptians will accept present lines in coastal strip which coincide approximately with November 13 line; (3) Egyptians prepared withdraw (Israeli point 2) on basis agreement but are likely to press for Israeli withdrawal to November 13 line; (4) Egyptians will press for November 13 provisions re Bir Asluj and Beersheba except willing to modify claim to defense forces in Bir Asluj for civil administration and police; (5) El Auja must be held as defense outpost; (6) *status quo* requested for Egyptian forces in Hebron-Bethlehem area but will work out arrangements definitely to include [t]his group in armistice. Israelis accept this position.

Bunche believes agreement can be worked out for coastal strip and for principle of withdrawal in greater part northwest Negev but fears armistice may fail because no compromise can be reached on apparently (approximately five characters garbled) points of Bir Asluj and Beersheba and El Auja. Bunche feels it would be regrettable if armistice agreement should fail for these reasons and hopes US Government will consider what diplomatic action it could take at Tel Aviv and Cairo; had suggestion closeness agreement on major points should not be prevented by less important considerations. Bunche considers time factor important because negotiations have already lasted ten days, Israelis may modify views after January 25 election, Egyptians may modify views after January 26 meeting Arab League PolComm and present agreement re Faluja pocket might collapse if no armistice agreement.

It seems apparent Israeli military may be willing risk [the loss of?] political credit of agreement before election and possibility Bunche will report Israeli non-compliance SC November 4 resolution to UN in order to keep Egyptians out of Negev. It also seems apparent Egyptians hope to retain token positions in Bir Asluj and Beersheba and thus to score political victory in spite of military defeats. Egyptians undoubtedly consider such positions would be advantageous to Egypt at time of political and geographic settlement.

Reedman informed information re Israeli and Egyptian positions plus Bunche's views would confidentially be reported Department for consideration as to what action, if any, could be taken. It was added that it might not be appropriate for US alone to approach Tel Aviv and Cairo in view US membership Conciliation Commission.

As Bunche has not yet reported to Lake Success re present stage negotiations Reedman requests substance not be repeated elsewhere for moment.

Sent Department 152, Jerusalem 2.

GRADY

501.BB Palestine/1-2349: Telegram

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

SECRET

NEW YORK, January 23, 1949—5:20 p. m.

85. In two cables from Rhodes dated January 22, Bunche expressed to the SYG great discouragement over Israeli-Egyptian negotiation. He did not give a detailed report of the negotiations and difficulties¹ but stated he felt that his usefulness was nearly ended and urged that the SC at once hand over his function to the Conciliation Commission as he had recently requested. It was Bunche's opinion that the current situation demands pressure i.e. governmental levels rather than persuasion by an individual.

In reply SYG Lie cabled on January 23 expressing complete confidence in Bunche, informing him that all had full confidence in his ability, and urging that he must carry on his functions through a completion of the current talks even if they became completely stalemated.

Bunche also expressed alarm to the SYG at reports which had reached him from newsmen that US was considering naming him as US representative on the Conciliation Commission.

AUSTIN

¹ In a telegram of January 24, 8:45 a. m., to Mr. Rusk, transmitted through the facilities of the United States Navy, Mr. Bunche advised that the previous evening he had been informed officially by the Israeli Delegation at Rhodes that the withdrawal of Egyptian forces at al-Faluja, scheduled to begin on the morning of January 25, had been postponed pending conclusion of an armistice agreement with Egypt. Mr. Bunche called this action a "flagrant breach" of the Egyptian-Israeli agreement on the subject and expressed the opinion that such "arbitrary and unilateral action," unless rectified quickly, would result in termination of the negotiations. Mr. Bunche, to save the negotiations, proposed a 48-hour extension, hoping that the Egyptians would stay on and that the Israelis would be induced to honor their agreement (501.BB Palestine/1-2449).

867N.01/1-2449

*Draft of Proposed Statement by the Secretary of State on United
States-United Kingdom Attitude Toward the Middle East*

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] January 24, 1949.

Recent news about the Middle East has many encouraging aspects. The announcement today by the French Government of its *de facto* recognition of Israel is a major contribution to the settlement of the Palestine question. Similarly, the announcement by the British Government of its decision to accord *de facto* recognition of the Provisional Government of Israel at an early date is a welcome and constructive step, and follows closely upon its recent decision to release the Jewish

internees on Cyprus for entry into Israel. The Department of State has closely followed the armistice conversations on Rhodes under the auspices of the United Nations Acting Mediator for Palestine and earnestly hopes that they will come to a successful conclusion. We trust also that the news of peace conversations between Israel and Lebanon, and between Israel and Transjordan, will be borne out by a statesmanlike decision among the Governments concerned to put a permanent end to the hostilities in the Holy Land. This Government, which with France and Turkey, is a Member of the United Nations Palestine Conciliation Commission, stands ready to do its utmost to assist the parties to compose their differences and to find lasting peace. I am delighted that the Honorable Mark Ethridge of Louisville, Kentucky, will serve as the United States Representative on the Conciliation Commission.¹

There has recently been a good deal of speculation as to what were said to be differences of view as between the British Government and the American Government on the Palestine question. While at times there may have been differences of opinion in London and Washington as how best to deal with the Palestine problem, there has been no difference whatever in our main objective. This Government and the British Government have in fact long been united on the basic policy of increasing the economic well-being and sense of security of the Middle East and have sought to speed the return of lasting peace to Palestine.

Today's events show that the three Governments have reached a common attitude on an important element of a Palestine settlement and lead us to believe that the close cooperation which marked the work of our Delegations in the General Assembly will be continued.

It is my hope that the work of conciliation will continue and that early in this new year we will find our friends, both in Israel and the Arab States, using their great talents and energy in the constructive work of peace.²

¹ The White House, on January 24, announced the appointment of Mark F. Ethridge as the U.S. Member on the Palestine Conciliation Commission (telegram 40, January 24, 7 p. m., to Jerusalem, 501.BB Palestine/1-2449).

² A marginal notation bears President Truman's "OK."

501.BB Palestine/1-2449

*Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Stuart W. Rockwell of the
Division of Near Eastern Affairs*

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] January 24, 1949.

Subject: Palestine

Participants: Mohamed Kamil Abdul Rahim, Egyptian Ambassador
NEA—Mr. Satterthwaite
NE—Mr. Jenkins
Mr. Rockwell

The Egyptian Ambassador called at his request. After discussing generalities, he mentioned the armistice negotiations going on at Rhodes between Egypt and Israel. He stated that the Israelis were maintaining an uncompromising position and refused to consider withdrawing to the October 14 military lines in accord with the Security Council resolution of November 4. The Ambassador was fearful least Israeli intransigence would cause the negotiations to break down and said that if the negotiations failed there would be very unpleasant results in Egypt. He said that no country could afford to allow the resolutions of the United Nations to be flouted and he called upon the United States to use its influence with the Israelis in order to persuade them to comply with the resolutions of November 4 and November 16. After all, he said, the Israelis have now received a loan, have practically achieved their territorial objectives, and are sure of obtaining *de jure* recognition. He thought that it was high time for the United States to do something for the other side, and to persuade the Israelis to abandon their uncompromising attitude.

Mr. Satterthwaite said that the United States Government was extremely interested in seeing a lasting peace come to Palestine and would do everything within its power and make every effort to urge upon both parties the necessity for moderation. He pointed out that the Conciliation Commission was on the point of departure for Palestine and that the impending arrival of the Commission seemed to bring the date of final peace negotiations nearer.

The Ambassador went on to say that Egypt had decided to cease paying so much attention to the Palestine dispute and "to turn its eyes" to the West. He wished every possible step to be taken to repair the damage in relations between the United States and Egypt which had been produced by the Palestine situation. He mentioned Egyptian plans for a request for technical advice and assistance from the United States. In conclusion, he once more referred to the necessity for compliance by the Israelis with the Security Council resolutions of November 4 and November 16 and emphasized the unfortunate effects which would be produced in Egypt if the Israelis failed to do so.