

Secretary's Daily Meetings, Lot 58 D 609

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Executive Secretariat (Humelsine)

[Extract]

SECRET EYES ONLY

[WASHINGTON,] April 15, 1949.

Subject: Summary of Daily Meeting With the Secretary

Participants: The Secretary
 The Under Secretary
 Mr. Rusk
 Mr. Kennan
 Mr. Bohlen
 Mr. Humelsine

Arab Refugee Problem

Mr. Webb said that Mr. George McGhee was back from his preliminary survey of the Arab Refugee problem and that he was seeing McGhee and Rusk on this subject at 5:30 in the afternoon. In connection with this item, Mr. Acheson said that it was his opinion that we should have a more positive program in regard to our relationship with [the] Israeli[s]. Mr. Rusk said that in this connection the Department was making a study of the various steps that we could take to put positive pressure on the Israeli Government in an attempt to secure a reasonable and fair settlement of the problem.

IO Files

*Message Released by the United Nations Security Council on
 April 16, 1949*

S/1308

CABLEGRAM DATED 16 APRIL 1949 FROM THE ACTING MEDIATOR TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING DECLARATIONS BY ISRAEL AND SYRIA CONCERNING THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

FOR PRESIDENT OF SECURITY COUNCIL: I have honour to report that following identical declarations addressed to M. Henri Vigier as my representative and Chairman of Israeli-Syrian armistice negotiations were signed by heads of two delegations and exchanged 13 April. These declarations developed out of Syrian proposal for a formal ceasefire agreement. As preliminary to armistice negotiations, and as indicated, both parties wish them communicated to Security Council.

Declaration made on behalf of Israel reads

"I have the honour to make to you the following declaration on behalf of Israel:

'Israel accepts and confirms the resolution of the Security Council of 15 July 1948 as a measure which forbids any recourse to military force of any form. Such a measure will remain effective so long as the Security Council has not expressly abrogated it.

It is understood that such a measure obligates the interested parties to grant every facility to United Nations observers in order to allow them to ensure a complete and effective supervision of the ceasefire.

I should be grateful if you would communicate this declaration to the interested parties and the Security Council. Alouf Makleff'"

[Here follows the declaration in French by Syria signed by Fezi Selo.]

The armistice negotiations will be formally resumed on 21 April.

867N.01/4-1649: Telegram

The Chargé in Transjordan (Stabler) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET URGENT

AMMAN, April 16, 1949—8 a. m.

166. With conclusion of Transjordan-Israel armistice agreement, next item on Transjordan-Israel agenda is presumably initiation talks through special committee (Article VIII Armistice Agreement) leading to settlement remaining differences and to peace accord between two countries. Israel for its reasons is most anxious to commence such direct talks without third party soonest and is probably pressing Transjordan through various mediums in this regard. As Department is aware, Abdullah is also anxious to settle Palestine problem soonest but at present is taking no action re special committee in view public reaction in Transjordan and Arab Palestine to armistice agreement (last paragraph Legation's 158, April 9¹). However, as resentment wanes, it may be expected Abdullah will appoint Transjordan delegates to special committee and instruct them meet early date with Israelis. In ensuing talks it is thought that in his desire for settlement and in belief RI [*he?*] could count on no outside assistance, he would be inclined accede somewhat too rapidly and generously to Israeli demands which include Jerusalem settlement and other points.

While it is realized that policy of US Govt is to encourage and promote steps which might lead to settlement Palestine problem, it is equally true that cardinal point of US policy is support UN. It would seem, however, that with commencement special committee talks and with probable accession by Transjordan to Israeli demands, UN, PCC

¹ Not printed.

and GA Resolution December 11 would be relegated to background position of insignificance and future of Jerusalem and other matters would be decided without taking into account world community. With this possibility in mind, it is suggested Department might wish consider instructing me advise King on friendly and personal basis that he might do well to proceed slowly re special committee talks in order await outcome Lausanne Conference and possible further negotiations under auspices PCC. Although King has often expressed his belief that UN has proven itself ineffective and impotent, it is thought he would nonetheless accept this advice, which might be coupled with reaffirmation US attitude re internationalization Jerusalem and US policy on final territorial settlement.²

Sent Department 166, repeated Jerusalem 89, for USDel PCC, London 27.

STABLER

² The Department, in its reply of April 20, stated that it had "given careful consideration suggestion advanced ur 166 Apr 16 but after review all factors involved believes it not desirable approach King this sense." (telegram 49, 867N.01/4-1649)

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 16, 1949—noon.

300. Palun 127. [From Ethridge.] Department's suggestion re Jerusalem conveyed French delegation along lines indicated Unpal 76.¹ Boisanger did not comment this suggestion but said he thought agreed position within PCC possible.

Secretariat has produced working draft proposals re Jerusalem as requested by Jerusalem Committee, drawing on French paper and various unofficial suggestions by USDel. This paper represents sound basis work in view USDel and we think might be adjusted to trusteeship pattern.

Paper proposes following international organs, all other powers to be in hands authorities Jewish and Arab zones.

UN administrator appointed by GA would have direct control and power make regulations re holy places to which *status quo* applies and supervision protection and access other holy places in area. Could call on authorities to grant rights passage visitors these places, and power decides disputes re holy places.

All persons in area would be entitled human rights as set forth UN December and administrator may bring questions appropriate authorities and if necessary to appropriate UN organ.

¹ Identified also as telegram 195, April 13, to Jerusalem, p. 910.

Area would be demilitarized and formal assurances given by parties re demilitarization and inviolability demarcation lines. Administrator would report violations SC.

Administrator authorized recruits small force for protection holy places and his headquarters staff.

Administrative council consisting 10 members, 4 from each zone and two neutral, would be responsible for common public services, coordination measures for maintenance peace and order, budgetary matters and other municipal matters common to area such as town planning.

International tribunal appointed by President ICJ would have jurisdiction disputes re competence organs and courts within area and also whether acts of organs compatible statute.

Mixed tribunal would have jurisdiction cases in which parties do not belong same zone.

Responsible Jewish Arab authorities would be called on to negotiate economic arrangements with view facilitating commerce between zones.

Under foregoing plan international organ would exercise actual governing power only over holy places, which point already agreed by states concerned. As to other main points such as demilitarization, peace and order, free access and human rights, USDeI thinks international obligations should be proposed and might be substantially strengthened by giving international tribunal power hear complaints and render advisory opinions on motion international authority. This might be more effective means effectuating international interest than direct reference appropriate UN organ, where debates likely to be on political basis and result ineffective resolution. Reference such organs could follow, taking into account advisory opinion and subsequent attitude parties concerned. States concerned might find it difficult to reject expression international interest through such method.

Principle questions re trusteeship which occur to us at present follow:

Can main purposes trusteeship under charter be reconciled with objectives international community re Jerusalem and with public opinion in area?

In addition to direct international authority over holy places, should not international interest be afforded expression re other basic points in regard area as whole? If so, should this not be focal point of internationalization and would not creation trusteeship, with administration awarded adjacent states focus attention rather on division city between separate sovereignties?

[Ethridge]
BURDETT

867N.01/4-1649: Telegram

The Chargé in Transjordan (Stabler) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

AMMAN, April 16, 1949—5 p. m.

168. King said this morning that on April 15 he had received Eytan, Sassoon and Dayan at Shuneh to discuss various matters relative to armistice agreement and special committee talks. HM indicated that Israeli attitude much more friendly and reasonable than during previous meetings re triangle. Israelis had agreed in areas affected under Article 6 armistice terms would remain unmolested and that villagers would be given free passage back and forth to Arab lines. HM said he had told Israelis that Transjordan would be prepared accept peace agreement at Lausanne conference regardless attitude other Arab states. However, he also indicated to them that he doubted any accord could be reached at such conference and that only direct talks could result in agreement. He pointed out to them that such agreement would have to be sanctioned and guaranteed by PCC or by one or more great powers.

King informed that he would instruct government commence special committee talks immediately. (It is understood first meeting will be held at Shuneh on April 21 in presence Transjordan Prime Minister who still being in Cairo as yet uninformed. Prime Minister expected return April 18 and it is believed he may wish postpone such talks.)¹

[Here follows final paragraph speculating on the composition of the Transjordanian delegation to the Lausanne Conference.]

Sent Department 168, repeated Jerusalem 90, London 28.

STABLER

¹ Further details of the meeting of April 15 were furnished by London on April 20, based on information reported to the Foreign Office by Minister Kirkbride. King Abdullah was said to have asked for a port on the Mediterranean, either in the vicinity of Gaza, with access via Beersheba, or at Acre; compensation for Arab refugees; and the unfreezing of Arab assets in Israel. The Israelis appeared taken aback by the first of these points, stating "such port would divide Israel. They offered full transit facilities to Transjordan to and through Haifa. King countered by offering Israel transit facilities to Aqaba if Transjordan took over Beersheba." (Telegram 1524, 867N.01/4-2049)

501.BB Palestine/4-1949: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 19, 1949—5 p. m.

309. Palun 130. From Ethridge for the President and Acheson. Please read this in connection with Palun 129 April 19.¹

[Here follow first two paragraphs requesting Mr. Ethridge's relief as American member of the Palestine Conciliation Commission, to return to his newspapers.]

As for the work here: We are beginning to see the beginning of the end. I assume a Jerusalem plan acceptable to the US and in major degree to countries involved can be worked out. In fact it is in the making and Halderman will present it to Department when he comes home. At any rate, it will not be presented to Assembly until September.

After nine weeks we have persuaded Arabs to sit down for peace talks with the Jews. If there is full-dress debate at Lake Success on admission of Israel, there will be a delay of several weeks in beginning those talks on any effective basis for reasons set out in Palun 129. If such a delay were inevitable, I would in any case have to ask for relief. If fight over Israel's admission is not serious, negotiations would go along quickly at Lausanne, I am convinced. Egypt and Israel apparently both anxious to sign; outstanding difficulties between Israel and Lebanon and Syria not so serious that long negotiations would be involved. Major negotiations between Transjordan and Israel, and my belief is that Israel will get pretty much what she wants and give very little, if anything.

Refugee problem, most serious of all, is one that will hang on for two or three years. Commission cannot solve it, but can set up machinery for solution providing US Government agrees to general plan.

¹ Identified also as telegram 308 from Jerusalem, not printed; Mr. Ethridge reported that at the Israeli Prime Minister's request, he had "proceeded from Jerusalem to Tiberias April 18 for purpose of further discussions re refugees and Jerusalem prior to PCC departure for Lausanne. Ben-Gurion added nothing new of substance to his previous statements of Israeli policy to PCC but made some interesting remarks re details which are being reported separately."

Following this meeting, Mr. Ethridge saw Mr. Comay, who informed that the Israeli Foreign Office was "considerably concerned" because the question of Israeli admission to the United Nations had been referred to Committee One by the General Assembly. Mr. Comay was unsure whether this action was merely a delaying device by the "Arabs, British and others" or whether a full-dress debate would follow "during which it would be necessary for Israel substantively to state its position re such outstanding questions as refugees and Jerusalem." Mr. Ethridge concluded that "In view of Israel's intransigence particularly on refugees and territorial questions and her unwillingness to heed advice from US which I believe would have kept her out of her jam at GA, it would probably be salutary to have world public opinion brought to bear upon her through UN." (501.BB Palestine/4-1949)

Neither French nor Turks want to take initiative on that, but are willing to work under guidance of US. I have agreed with George McGhee on a plan which he will present to Department. My colleagues on Commission have agreed that if State Department approves in consultation with British, French, and Turks, they will accept any plan American Delegate introduces. In any case, Department will no doubt shortly give an answer on general procedure and Commission can set up machinery.

Frazer Wilkins of US Delegation thoroughly familiar with everything that has gone on and could be deputized to continue in Lausanne. I would be glad of course to be at the Department's call in the States and to give all the help there that I can.

[Here follow the last two sentences of the telegram, bearing on Mr. Ethridge's return to the United States, with May 15 being the suggested date of arrival.] [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/4-2049: Telegram

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

TOP SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 20, 1949—9 a. m.

311. Palun 132. From Ethridge to Acheson. Comment Amman telegram 166¹ [, repeated] to Jerusalem as 89.

(1) From what I learn Abdullah is so anxious to make peace that it is probably too late to give him any advice that would do him any good.

(2) Reported to us yesterday unofficially that Transjordan Delegation at Lausanne would be headed by Transjordan chief but most of delegates would be Palestinian Arabs. In that case they would offer stronger resistance to Israel's further demands than Abdullah would and therefore advice probably unnecessary.

(3) Even if foregoing were not true, I believe that any assurance given him should go no further than reaffirmation of previous US position as contained in President's recent message to Abdullah and our promise that if in course of negotiations there was threat of force or duress and facts warranted it we would be prepared to make unilateral representation at Tel Aviv.

(4) As I have interpreted both US and UN policy it has been to encourage direct negotiations toward an honest and fair agreement. Therefore heavy responsibility involved in intervening in Transjordan affairs by attempting to persuade her to adopt different negotiating

¹ Dated April 16, p. 919.

tactics than she would otherwise do. Wisdom such course appears highly doubtful unless US frankly prepared to sponsor effective measures to prevent further Israeli incursions on Arab Palestine and Transjordan territory. Our understanding current Arab opinion UN and US re Palestine leads us to think any advice from US would be misinterpreted perhaps too optimistically and that its acceptance would proceed from ulterior motives.

[(5)] Territorial question appears really important on this connection. Re Jerusalem, we are not at all sure Transjordan would prefer international to bilateral division city. While they would accept international they have shown no enthusiasm for it. Furthermore parties cannot control Jerusalem solution in same way as boundaries. Even if they made agreement it would still be possible superimpose international regime of only kind that now seems possible, namely one which will recognize respective sovereignties adjacent states. In view actual situation, preliminary agreement between parties might be more helpful our objectives than otherwise. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/4-2049: Telegram

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

SECRET.

JERUSALEM, April 20, 1949—10 a. m.

312. Palun 133. From Ethridge. On April 18 I visited Ben-Gurion at Tiberias at his request. Prior to my departure from Jerusalem, Comay informed me Ben-Gurion would discuss such pending questions as issuance of conciliatory statement re refugees by Israel Government and Israeli views re some form of internationalization of Jerusalem. Ben-Gurion mentioned neither question and apparently had no intention of doing so. Instead Ben-Gurion analyzed at length Britain's mistaken imperialistic policy in Middle East in past and present and stressed economic and humanitarian role which position of US in world affairs ought to require US to play in this area. Ben-Gurion said that British were still attempting to operate in Middle East under policies in vogue toward end of 19th century; that Britain was attempting to rule through little kings like Abdullah; that US should declare its second independence of British Foreign Office; and that US must develop Middle East economically and raise living standard throughout area.

Jerusalem: Ben-Gurion did not seem to wish to discuss internationalization of Jerusalem as set forth in paragraph 8 General Assembly Resolution December 11 but confined himself to observation that Jerusalem could not be capital of Israel "for several years."

Jerusalem was too near "edge of Israel." If, however, Israel's eastern boundary were Jordan, Jerusalem could become capital immediately. Meanwhile, Tel Aviv was not suitable capital, apparently for security reasons but Haifa would be and might be. Israel planned to make Jerusalem center for watchmaking, diamond-cutting and other light industries. Return of tourists and pilgrims would be important to its economic existence. Demilitarization of Jerusalem could not be foreseen under existing circumstances.

Refugees: Ben-Gurion made no reference to possible conciliatory statement by Israeli Government re refugees and it was obvious from trend of his remarks that there has not been slightest change in Israeli views despite statement of American position by McDonald. Ben-Gurion emphasized role which US should play economically in Middle East and stressed that resettlement was only logical answer. Egypt was overpopulated and if Arab states were wise Egyptians would be resettled in Iraq. There was no reason why Palestinian and Israeli Arab refugees should not be resettled in Iraq and in Syria, both of which were seriously underpopulated. Israel itself cannot and will not accept return of Arab refugees to Israeli territory for security and economic reasons. Israel will, however, contribute to assistance for refugees in three ways:

(1) Compensation for Arab land to be paid to Arab farmers through Israeli-Arab mixed claims commission. Ben-Gurion mentioned, in this connection, that Israeli could have war claims against Arab states but that these claims should be considered separately and apart.

(2) Israel would permit Arab refugees to return with object of reuniting separated families.

(3) Israel would assist in resettlement of refugees elsewhere, probably by making available its knowledge and information of Near East countries and by sending Israeli experts and technicians at no charge to assist in whatever resettlement program might be developed.

Territorial settlement: Ben-Gurion indicated Israel had no intention of relinquishing any part of Negev. If I thought its southern portion "a wilderness", which I said I did having flown over it that morning, I should "come back and see it in ten years." Israel could develop even most unpromising parts of Israel territory because "it not only loved but needed it." Transjordan would not be granted corridor to Mediterranean nor would there be corridor between Transjordan and Egypt. Israel could not be cut in two. British would not be permitted access across Israel under cover of Transjordan. Transjordan could have "free zone" in Tel Aviv or Haifa or anywhere else it chose on Mediterranean with right of passage. Present Gaza strip might become autonomous like Luxembourg. If Egypt did not want Gaza because of refugees therein Israel would accept and permit those

refugees to return to their homes. Transjordan could have [access to the Mediterranean?] without corridor but with right of free passage. Israel believed it should have all of west coast of Dead Sea as Transjordan had all of east coast, particularly if Transjordan absorbed rump of Palestine. British bases in Arab Palestine under Anglo-Transjordan treaty would not be permitted. Arab Palestine might be accorded special status in settlement through federal device in union with Transjordan.

Peace settlements: Ben-Gurion considered that Israel would be able to conclude settlements with Egypt and Lebanon first because of close affinity with each. Israel and Egypt had much in common and agreement would break ice. Immediate prospect re agreement with Lebanon was more dubious as there were rumors of another Lebanese Government crisis. Ben-Gurion hoped for quick armistice and peace settlement with Syria. Iraq would not negotiate. Transjordan would. Israel must always consider whether Arab state representatives really represent their countries. Farouk is probably Egypt but who is Zaim and does Nuri speak for Iraqi people. Ben-Gurion felt Zaim coup might not be internal and considered Nuri British agent and hated by Iraqis. Abdullah was definitely British tool. Israel, nevertheless, could endeavor to conclude settlements with as many Arab states as possible as quickly as possible. Individual problems between states could not be considered outside framework of settlement. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

Editorial Note

Mr. McClintock, on April 20, drafted a telegram to Mr. Ethridge for the signature of Secretary Acheson. After reference to Palun 129 and 130 of April 19 (see page 923) and discussing the relief of Mr. Ethridge, the draft telegram read as follows: "This Govt is not disposed to change policy because of Israeli intransigence as most recently manifested by Ben Gurion as reported Palun 133, April 20. We support resolution of Dec. 11 and your able effort to present logic of that resolution to Israeli and Arab Govts still has our full backing. If Israeli application for admission UN calls forth major inquiry in present GA and Israelis, as you predict, decide to stall at Lausanne, we would then be disposed to utilize your desire for relief to derive maximum diplomatic advantage. Your resignation from PCC could therefore have political significance and would serve to show Israeli Govt that US Govt is not pleased with its tactics.

"However, we are disposed to resort to fullest diplomatic pressure on Israel at present time and are prepared, if Israeli Govt pays any heed to our suggestions, to tell them that if they will go ahead on a

reasonable peace settlement, including satisfactory assurances re Jerusalem and refugees, we will do our utmost to insure that GA handle membership question with maximum of swiftness and minimum of debate. In such case, as you predict in Palun 130, talks at Lausanne might go along quickly. We should in that event wish very much that you continue as our Representative with assurance that once Lausanne conversations reached successful conclusion you would at once be relieved of your responsibilities on PCC.

"Therefore, as I see it, we should within a few weeks be able to relieve you of the PCC assignment either by reason of Israeli intransigence and consequent stalemate, or by Israeli willingness to compromise and therefore a speedy conclusion to your efforts." (501.BB Palestine/4-2049)

The editors have been unable to find any evidence that the draft telegram was actually sent.

867N.01/4-2049 : Telegram

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

TOP SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 20, 1949—4 p. m.

316. Primary US objective in Palestine understood by Consulate General to be restoration peace and tranquility. Policy based on premise long-term stability, economic and political development Middle East and its affiliation with western democracies of vital interest to US. US position on refugees and boundary settlement dictated by above considerations. Support for internationalization Jerusalem apparently motivated largely by general policy supporting UN resolution and wishes Christian particularly Catholic groups rather than on consideration vital strategic interests US. Attitude Israel regarding final settlement as reported Palun 126¹ again pointedly underlines necessity facing question what measures US will take to implement policies adopted in national interest.

Conclusion armistice agreements apparently marked important step towards achievement US objectives. However, cognizance must be taken of fact agreements acquiesced in by Arab states under varying degrees of force or threat of force on part of Israel. Arabs realized were defeated militarily, felt could count on no action by UN or great powers to curb further aggression by Israel and thus must sign armistice on any terms. Use of blackmail particularly flagrant in case of Transjordan negotiations which UN official characterized as marked by "utter perfidy on one side and utter stupidity on other". Inevitable

¹ See telegram 291, April 13, from Jerusalem, p. 911.

result has been storing up turbulent reservoir resentment against Israel, UN and US which will constantly seek favorable opportunity burst forth. In addition has created strong reaction against Arab ruling groups and repeated calls to "new generation" to free country from despotism present rumors [*rulers?*] as first step towards resumption military action against Zionism. With discrediting old leaders, blow to Arab nationalism and frustration resulting from failure anti-Zionist campaign, younger men seeking new set values which Communists only too willing provide.

Hasty conclusion peace treaties ignoring rights of one party will only breed instability and preparations for renewal of fighting contrary to interests of UN, US, Israel and Arabs. Department may, therefore, wish instruct American Legation (Amman telegram 166, April 16 to Department) to informally advise King US prepared, if warranted by facts, to make strongest representations to Israel against use of force or threats of force both during and after peace negotiations including talks in Special Committee. This would give Transjordan badly needed confidence and permit it to negotiate without duress and on equal basis with Israel and would be in accord with traditional US policy of favoring agreements openly and freely arrived at. Would prevent King from feeling must give in to such damaging demands as those in Article 6 of Armistice agreement. President's message to King could be interpreted to King in above manner and similar assurances might be given other Arab states. In adopting this position US should be prepared take requisite measures against Israel if necessary. Regarding Jerusalem now appears not likely PCC will be able obtain real UN control over Jerusalem and that international regime will take forms mentioned in Palun 127.² Such regime could be superimposed regardless nature agreement reached between Transjordan and Israel in direct negotiations. However, because special UN interest and obligation maintain peace and security in Holy City essential that Transjordan not accept settlement imposed by duress and that rights and interests Palestine Arabs be protected. King Abdullah has not always shown much zeal in protecting interests Palestine Arabs and their confidence in him has been considerably shaken by terms armistice agreement. If UN insists (perhaps through Jerusalem Committee of PCC) on participating in any Jerusalem settlement as third party involved could assist in reaching equitable agreement that would contribute to permanent tranquility. Such settlement should include return to Arabs of traditional Arab areas seized by Jews with demarcation line running approximately as outlined in Consulate's telegram 35, January 13. Also compensation for property remaining in Jewish

² Identified also as telegram 300, April 16, from Jerusalem, p. 920.

Sections, resumption of public utility services in entire city using existing facilities, free access to Mount Scopus and free use Nablus-Bethlehem road.

As means controlling Israel suggest postponement until September session Israel application for UN membership. Israeli actions including two offensive in Negev, attack in Galilee, seizure southern Negev, incursion into Syria and liberal use of big stick in armistice talks hardly support her claim to being "peace-loving state". Nor does her refusal to abide by sections GA Resolution December 11 regarding refugees and Jerusalem indicate much respect for organization she now seeking join. Postponement would enable US to continue tactics of acting through UN on Palestine question and would demonstrate to Israel that she cannot continue to ignore with impunity opinion world community.³

Sent Department; repeated Amman 22.

BURDETT

³ The Department replied, on April 26, that it "appreciates reasoning ur 316 Apr 20 but after careful consideration all factors involved believes it not desirable take step suggested third para re instructions Leg Amman." (Telegram 222, 867N.01/4-2049)

501.BB Palestine/4-2049: Telegram

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

SECRET PRIORITY

NEW YORK, April 20, 1949—11:05 p. m.

509. Bunche today told us he would remain as Acting Mediator only until the Syrian negotiations were completed. Is fairly optimistic that when negotiations reopened after the religious holidays on April 21 they would make good progress.

In discussing his draft proposed SC Resolution (Beirut's No. 132, Palun 95, March 24) and Department's suggested changes (Deptel 193 to New York,¹ Unpal 70, March 29), Bunche said that there was no need for PCC to share in cease-fire observation as suggested Department's paragraph 6,² since each armistice agreement is self-contained arrangement providing for an armistice commission chaired by chief of staff of the truce supervision organization or senior officer of organization designated by him. Commissions are to handle questions relating to terms of armistice and minor disagreements and difficulties. Outbreak of fighting must be referred to SC in any event. Bunche

¹ This was a repeat of No. 156, March 29, to Beirut, p. 884.

² See paragraph numbered 3 in No. 156.

pointed out that such an arrangement is a continuation of existing situation under which chief of staff handles locally minor incidents, refers basic disagreements to Mediator, while actual fighting must be referred to SC.

In connection with the armistice commissions, Bunche said it was the intention after the Syrian negotiations were completed to combine the commissions, establishing one for Northern and one for Southern areas. The UN and the Israeli personnel would remain the same, the Arabs changing as the agenda of the commissions might require.

Bunche believes that Riley or his successor, together with a force of about thirty officers and thirty enlisted men, should continue to be empowered to supervise the truce organization in maintaining the cease-fire.

Re Department's suggestion for paragraph 5,³ Bunche does not believe it necessary specifically terminate office of Mediator in SC Resolution, pointing out that office established by GA and December 11 Resolution provided for automatic termination when functions transferred to PCC.

Bunche agrees that the Truce Commission might be dissolved, as suggested in Department's addition to paragraph 3.⁴

Resolution along foregoing lines will have to be sponsored by some SC member since Acting Mediator has no such authority.

Bunche is prepared, if asked, to make an oral statement to SC, supplementing his written report following conclusion of Syrian negotiations. He furnished USUN a rough draft of his proposed written report which is summarized in Usun 510, April 21.⁵ Text being forwarded by pouch.

Bunche has refused suggestion from Lie and other sources that he should lobby for the early admission of Israel to UN. Feels this inappropriate for Acting Mediator, and that before Israel admitted should "come clean" on the following points: (1) report on Bernadotte's assassination; (2) attitude toward refugees; (3) attitude toward internationalization of Jerusalem; (4) boundary demands. He reacted favorably to informal suggestion above points might best be covered at opening Lausanne Conference.

In respect to the report on Bernadotte's assassination, Bunche stated he had been assured by Israelis that it would be ready before GA opening, although it would be largely a negative report. Eban has promised him to expedite submission.

³ See paragraph numbered 2 in No. 156.

⁴ See paragraph numbered 1 in No. 156.

⁵ *Post*, p. 933.

Bunche fully shares Ethridge's observations and recommendations on refugees, which he discussed fully in Beirut.

He was bearish on prospects for effective internationalization of Jerusalem. Said that only if USG willing put strong pressure on Israelis will Jerusalem be internationalized. Believes Jerusalem question has been pretty well settled by the probable Transjordan-Israeli deal under which Abdullah will get Arab Palestine and part of Jerusalem. He anticipates, however, that such arrangement may blow up when Abdullah realized that small Arab section of Jerusalem likely to be squeezed economically by Israelis so that in less than a year it will not be viable. Israelis fully cognizant weakness of Arab Jerusalem. Although not hostile to the concept of two trusteeships for Jerusalem, Bunche is definitely skeptical.

In respect to boundaries, Bunche observed that Israelis would never commit themselves on what their eventual goals were. It was clear that they did not intend to give up territory in Negev, or elsewhere, which had been assigned them in armistice agreements. Until some clarification of this point, however, the Arabs have legitimate grounds for hesitation and doubt about final arrangements.

Bunche expressed his great appreciation for Department's backstopping and effective intervention during numerous critical periods in his negotiations.

He emphasized repeatedly that he is most anxious to get away for a long rest as soon as possible since he is in very poor health.

AUSTIN

867N.00/4-1349

*President Truman to King Abdullah Ibn el-Hussein of Transjordan.*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON, undated.]

I have received Your Majesty's message of April 13, 1949, concerning the restoration of Arab refugee property in Israeli-occupied areas.

In accordance with its instructions, the Palestine Conciliation Commission, on which the United States Government is represented, is actively discussing with the Israeli Government the question of implementation of the General Assembly resolution of December 11, 1948 with respect to the return of refugees to their homes and compensation for the property of those who do not return. In addition, the United States Government has emphasized to the Israeli Government its hope

¹ Transmitted to Amman in telegram 52, April 21, 7 p. m., with the instruction: "Pls transmit fol reply from Pres to King Abdullah (urtel 162 April 13):" Regarding No. 162, see editorial note, p. 916.

Telegram 52 was repeated to Jerusalem for Mr. Ethridge and to Tel Aviv.

that no action will be taken prior to the negotiations called for under that resolution which would prejudice the attainment of an agreed settlement on the question of the return of refugees to their homes and the restoration of property to refugee owners. The United States Government will continue its efforts to this end.

Your Majesty is assured that the question of the Arab refugees, which is under active consideration by this Government, is a matter of deep personal concern to me.

I appreciate Your Majesty's good wishes, which I heartily reciprocate.

HARRY S. TRUMAN

501.BB Palestine/4-2149: Telegram

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

SECRET

NEW YORK, April 21, 1949—12:30 p. m.

510. Bunche has made available to USUN rough draft of his report to SC. It briefly reviews the truce period and armistice negotiations, is couched in general and judicious terms. No specific criticism made of the parties except for sharp statement that some of the ten UK personnel killed in operation were lost under conditions which fully justifies the UN in holding the governments concerned responsible. In some instances had adequate protection been given the deaths could have been avoided.

Report draws some broad conclusions re technique of settling disputes on basis of Palestine experience. For example, concludes that an imposed truce can be applied and supervised for a period of four to five months at the most but then must be superseded by the next step toward peace. Observes that independent communication and transportation systems indispensable for success of negotiations and life of personnel.

Negotiations leading to armistice agreements described as being in each case tortuous and difficult. Demonstrate, however, that once the parties could be brought together they could, with UN assistance, be led to reasonable agreement. Asserts there is good reason to believe that peace settlement will be forthcoming in due course by virtue of efforts of PCC. He expects armistice agreements to remain in force successfully.

His conclusions point toward his suggested SC Resolution (mytel 509, April 20). Since armistice agreements provide for own machinery for supervision and call for UN assistance in this regard, unnecessary to continue impose on states concerned the onerous conditions of SC

truce. Suggests SC might consider adopting new resolution declaring unnecessary prolong truce of July 15 Resolution, but reaffirming order to desist from further military action pursuant to Article 40, and calling on authorities to continue observe unconditional cease-fire. Such action consistent with realities of situation and would fully safeguard basic objective of SC that fighting not be resumed.

Suggests that remaining Mediator's functions be transferred to PCC since there is no longer any useful function to be performed by the Mediator. Further activity by him would unfavorably impinge on PCC work. Concludes that in such situation as Palestine most effective instrument of Mediator or Conciliator is prompt and vigorous UN action.

AUSTIN

667N.48/4-2249

*Memorandum by the Coordinator on Palestine Refugee Matters
(McGhee) to the Secretary of State*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 22, 1949.

Subject: Palestine Refugee Problem.

Discussion

Attached are the following papers on the Palestine Refugee Problem based on careful study by the Departmental officers concerned and observations during my recent visit to the Near East. They develop from the Policy Decision of March 15, 1949,¹ certain new Policy Recommendations and a Proposed Plan of Action.

1. Policy Decision of March 15, 1949.
2. Conclusions.
3. Policy Recommendations.
4. Proposed Plan of Action.
5. Proposed Steps to be Taken Within U.S. Government.
6. Tentative Approach to Total Cost of Program.²

Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposed Policy Recommendations be approved.

¹ See Mr. McGhee's memorandum of March 15 and footnote 4 to that memorandum, p. 828.

² Nos. 2 to 6 are printed, below. Their specific authorship is not indicated but the presumption is that they were drafted in Mr. McGhee's office. All of these papers were dated April 27 unless otherwise indicated. The editors suggest that papers of earlier date were originally attached to the memorandum of April 22 and that these revisions, chiefly dated April 27, superseded the earlier papers and were subsequently attached to the memorandum of April 22.

[Annex 1]

PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

CONCLUSIONS

1. Although the total number of Palestine refugees and destitute persons now receiving relief is 950,000,* it is assumed that the maximum number of bonafide displaced persons who must eventually be repatriated or resettled will not exceed 700,000. The difference will be largely applicable to Arab Palestine.

2. The disposition of the refugees is now a political issue of the highest order between Israel and the Arab States, neither of which will consider it as a refugee problem. This situation will probably continue until there is some general peace settlement.

3. In the meantime, continuing and vigorous pressure will have to be exerted upon Israel and the Arab states if their agreement to repatriation and resettlement, respectively, on the scale required, is to be secured. With the exception of Transjordan, which appears to see in the refugees an opportunity to improve her political and economic position, the Arab states are reluctant to accept refugees for permanent resettlement for political as well as economic reasons. They take the position that Israel, and to a lesser extent the United Nations and the United States, created the problem and are responsible for its solution. They feel that this should be through repatriation, in accordance with Article 11 of the General Assembly Resolution of December 11, 1948. The Israelis, on the other hand, are reluctant to repatriate any large number of refugees because of economic and security considerations, and because of the need for land to carry out their planned Jewish immigration program. The Israelis take the position that the problem was created by the invasion of the Arab states, and must be solved by resettlement.

4. Agreement by Israel to repatriate at least 200,000 refugees, pursuant to the General Assembly Resolution, is considered a necessary precedent to any ultimate and satisfactory solution of the refugee

*Distribution of refugees and destitute persons, as estimated by Palestine Conciliation Commission:

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Syria | 85,000 |
| Lebanon | 131,000 |
| Iraq | 5,000 |
| Arab Palestine | 630,000 |
| Transjordan | 99,000 |
| Egypt | |
| Israel | |

Total 950,000

[Footnote in the source text.]

problem. This is necessary to reduce the total to a number capable of assimilation on a self-supporting basis in the Arab countries within a reasonable time, and to provide a favorable atmosphere for assumption by the Arab states of the responsibilities involved in the resettlement. In view of the large-scale preemption of Arab lands, housing and employment possibilities in Israel, primary attention should be directed to securing repatriation of refugees to those formerly predominantly Arab areas now under Israeli military occupation which are outside the boundaries of the Jewish state as defined in the resolution of November 29, 1947.

5. There has been no appreciable absorption of refugees into the existing economies of the Arab states, nor can there be under present conditions without increase in unemployment, further depression of the already low standards of living and deterioration of the political stability of the Arab states, already seriously undermined by economic problems and the recent hostilities.

6. The refugees will continue to be largely dependent for their support upon assistance from outside the Arab states, after termination of the present UNRPR relief program now expected at the end of the year. The present number of refugees cannot be supported by the Arab governments nor by the voluntary relief organizations, either within or outside the Arab states.

7. At the earliest possible date and certainly at the termination of the present UNRPR program, assistance to the refugees should wherever possible be on a work rather than a relief basis, even though the initial cost per refugee is greater. A work relief program will serve to check the present serious deterioration in morale among the refugees, and will result in accomplishment of useful work directed toward their own resettlement, toward raising the economic potential of the country in which they live and toward an orderly reduction in need for further outside assistance.

8. Absorption of the refugees into the economies of the Arab states on a self-supporting basis can only be achieved through raising of the economic potentials of the countries involved through increase in amount or productivity of arable land, development of new industries, improvement in transportation, etc.

9. Apart from political considerations Syria, Iraq and Transjordan offer significant possibilities for resettlement or employment of refugees. Lebanon offers limited possibilities. Egypt and Saudi Arabia could take only token quotas. Although possibilities for immigration to other countries should be thoroughly explored, the number involved would probably not be great. Resettlement possibilities:

| | 2-3 Years | 5-10 Years |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Syria | Up to 200,000 | Up to 750,000 |
| Iraq | Token | Over 750,000 |
| Transjordan (and Arab Pales- tine) | 150-200,000 | Same |
| Lebanon | Up to 50,000 | Same |
| Egypt | Token | Same |
| Saudi Arabia | Token | Same |
| Other | Small | Same |

10. Overall responsibility for the refugee problem should be placed squarely on Israel and the Arab states. All outside assistance should be under the auspices of the United Nations. Any plan developed to deal with the refugee problem should be formulated within this context, and should utilize all possible sources of assistance including interested and able UN member states, specialized agencies, related international organizations and private organizations. Although any United States contribution to solution of the refugee problem should be made available within the framework of UN responsibility, the US should assure that its assistance is effectively utilized through supervision of development and work relief projects undertaken wholly or largely with US funds.

11. The objective of a refugee program should be to repatriate or resettle the refugees as rapidly and economically as possible, while minimizing present and potential economic and political dislocations. For example, although on political grounds Syria and Iraq are reluctant to take refugees, their ability to provide a basis for eventual self-support is far greater than that of Transjordan, whose acceptance of the majority of the refugees would necessitate permanent subsidization of the county.

12. In order to secure the cooperation of the Arab states, any solution of the refugee problem must be formulated within the broader framework of the interests of the countries concerned. This will require full recognition of the legitimate economic development aspirations of the countries involved, in their own interest as well as in the interest of solving the refugee problem. Nationals of the countries concerned should in many cases be the immediate beneficiaries of the projects, with the refugees benefiting indirectly. Since the development projects required for solution of the refugee problem will probably absorb most of the external financing available for the Near East during the next few years, the questions of economic development and of the solution of the refugee problem are indivisible, and both must be taken fully into consideration and carefully coordinated in any overall plan which is evolved. This would also apply to United States assistance to the Near East through the "Point Four" Program.

13. Insofar as possible all outside assistance to the Arab states in connection with the refugee problem should, for internal Arab political reasons, have at least the appearance of being as a result of the request of the states concerned.

14. The present distribution of the refugees among the Arab states has an important bearing on the situation that would result if no further outside assistance were provided after termination of the UNRPR program. Only Lebanon and Transjordan would face a really difficult situation in caring for or assimilating their refugees. If Transjordan acquires all of Arab Palestine, including the Gaza strip, she will have on present figures 729,000 refugees, in comparison with an original population of 850,000. Transjordan is in reality an artificial state created by the British, and exists only by virtue of a British subsidy. The total government budget is only \$5,000,000. It is itself unable to do anything for the refugees and their care, and at the termination of the UNRPR program, would remain a responsibility of the UN, the UK or whoever would be willing to assume it. In their present mood and circumstances other Arab states have neither the desire nor the resources to assume it, and would be in good position *not* to assume it.

15. No new program which gives hope of solving the refugee problem should be initiated unless financing can be assured for the achievement of certain minimum objectives. Failure of the program due to lack of financial support would further prejudice UN and US prestige and relations with the Arab states, and further aggravate the dangerous economic and political conditions created by the refugee problem. Although as much as possible of the financial assistance required should be furnished on a loan basis, grants will continue to be required, particularly for work relief and local currency costs.³

[Annex 2]

PALESTINE REFUGEES

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. As an essential condition to the solution of the Palestine refugee problem, the United States exercise continuing pressure on Israel by all appropriate means to repatriate a minimum of 200,000 Arab refugees, to Israel and Israeli-occupied areas of Palestine, from refugees now outside this area eligible for and desiring repatriation.

³ Mr. McGhee, in letters of April 29, transmitted copies of the Conclusions and of the Proposed Plan of Action, below, to London, Beirut, Damascus, Tel Aviv, Amman, Baghdad, and Cairo.

2. The United States exercise coordinate pressure on the Arab states to accept and cooperate in the resettlement of the remaining Arab refugees (approximately 500,000).

3. It be recognized that there will be need for continuing outside assistance for the refugees after termination of the present UNRPR program (now estimated as December, 1949).

4. Such outside assistance continue to be extended under the auspices of the United Nations.

5. Such assistance place primary emphasis upon work relief rather than direct relief, and be directed toward a progressive reduction and eventual elimination of outside assistance, through reintegration of the refugees on a self-sustaining basis into the political and economic structure of the Near East, in such a manner as to create a minimum of present and potential economic and political tensions.

6. The United States cooperate actively with the Palestine Conciliation Commission in the development of a program for achieving the foregoing objectives, for presentation to the General Assembly at the September session.

7. Funds required for execution of this program be obtained to the maximum extent possible through loans to the states concerned from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United States Export-Import Bank and from other member states, and through assistance from the United Nations and its specialized agencies and international organizations.

8. The United States be prepared to contribute as a grant, subject to Congressional appropriation, its share of such additional technical and financial assistance as it considers necessary to achieve the minimum objective of the overall program, while at the same time refusing to accept direct responsibility for the problem and confining United States assistance thereto within limits consistent with the national interest.

9. The general plan of action set forth on the attached statement be pursued in the attainment of these objectives.

[Annex 3]

PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION

1. Initiate immediately, together with the United Kingdom, a concerted program to overcome the present political stalemate preventing the Arab States and Israel from facing the refugee problem realistically and constructively. Full use should be made of direct diplomatic approach, official statements, publicity, etc., particularly as a back-

ground for the forthcoming extended talks between the Arab States and Israel in Switzerland.

2. In the meantime encourage all new public and private programs and projects, such as the UK pilot irrigation project in Transjordan and the International Bank flood control project in Iraq, which can be initiated within the present context and which will serve to alleviate the refugee problem in both its short and long range aspects.

3. Recommend to the Palestine Conciliation Commission that it establish permanent headquarters and add to its staff such administrative and technical personnel as are required for carrying out its operational responsibilities as they arise. Services should be initiated as soon as practicable to achieve coordination with the UNRPR program, to facilitate repatriation, resettlement and compensation, employment and emigration of refugees, and to represent the refugees vis-à-vis Israel and other governments.

4. Support the PCC proposal that it add to its staff other technical experts to initiate certain planning studies with respect to the refugees and the problems which will be faced in their repatriation and resettlement, which can be undertaken immediately within the present political context. Assist in the recruitment of the necessary personnel.

5. Initiate immediately planning required for the establishment of a broader economic survey group to be set up under the authority of the PCC as soon as political conditions permit, which would, in full cooperation with the states concerned and with other interested UN members, international and private organizations, examine the situation in the countries concerned in the light of existing surveys and recommend measures required to:

- a. Overcome economic dislocations created by the recent hostilities;
- b. Provide necessary assistance for refugees from the hostilities and for their reintegration into the political and economic life of the area on a self-sustaining basis;
- c. Foster actively such economic development projects as are required to achieve the foregoing and which will, at the same time, serve to increase the economic potential of the countries concerned.

The technical group would recommend specific projects and sources of financing, as well as an integrated economic program and means of carrying it out.

6. At an appropriate stage in the work of the economic survey group, a more permanent agency would be created, pursuant to PCC recommendation, to carry out the approved program. Such agency would rely wherever possible on direct action of the states concerned, other UN members, international and private organizations. It would coordinate such activities, facilitate the furnishing of technical and

financial assistance required and exercise general supervisory functions.

[Annex 4]⁴

PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

PROPOSED STEPS TO BE TAKEN WITHIN U.S. GOVERNMENT

1. Approval of proposed Policy Recommendations and Plan of Action by the Secretary.

2. Preliminary discussion of proposed policy and plan of action with the President, particularly with respect to Recommendations 1 and 8.

3. Preliminary discussion of proposed policy and plan of action with Congressional leaders, particularly with respect to Recommendation 8.

4. Preliminary discussion of proposed policy and plan of action with the British, and determination of part UK can and will play in refugee program.

5. Initiation of action under Recommendation 1 and 2 and Proposed Plan of Action 1-5.

6. Preliminary discussion with Presidents of International Bank and Export-Import Bank to determine extent to which their institutions can participate in financing development projects which will contribute toward refugee resettlement.

7. Discussions with representatives of U.S. private organizations interested in the Palestine refugee problem to obtain their views on the proposed program and the contribution they can make to it.

8. Referral of whole question of the Palestine refugee problem to the National Security Council for decision as to action called for in the light of the national interest.

9. Final decision by the President on action to be taken in the light of the NSC decision.

10. Final discussion of President's program with Congressional leaders, with indication of possible financial assistance to be sought from Congress.

11. Assuming political conditions in Near East permit, activate economic survey group called for in Recommendation 6 and Plan of Action 5 by assisting PCC to obtain outstanding American to head up group and competent technicians for its staff.

⁴ This paper is undated.

[Annex 5] ⁵

PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

TENTATIVE APPROACH TO TOTAL COST OF PROGRAM

1. Approach on basis of cost for support of refugees:

Assume that outside assistance for direct support of the refugees will be required on a decreasing scale for 3 years.

Assume that 700,000 refugees must be supported for the first year, whether resettled or repatriated, an average of 500,000 for the second year, and an average of 300,000 for the third year.

Assume that the total outside cost of supporting refugees is \$30.00 per person per year on a relief basis and \$60.00 per person per year on a work relief basis.

Assume that 3/4ths of refugees will be supported the first year on the basis of work payments and 1/4th on the basis of relief, and that in the next two years 7/8th will be supported through work payments and 1/8th through relief.

Total Cost for Direct Support on This Basis

| | 1st year | 2nd year | 3rd year | Total |
|--------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Relief | \$ 5, 250, 000 | \$ 1, 875, 000 | \$ 1, 125, 000 | \$ 8, 250, 000 |
| Work | 31, 500, 000 | 26, 250, 000 | 15, 750, 000 | 73, 500, 000 |
| Total | \$36, 750, 000 | \$28, 125, 000 | \$16, 875, 000 | \$81, 750, 000 |

2. Approach from standpoint of resettlement cost:

Assume total cost of resettlement is \$350.00 per person and for repatriation \$175.00 per person.

Assume 2/3rds of these sums will be paid for wages and other local currency costs which will be furnished on a grant basis, and 1/3rd for foreign exchange expenses or other items which can be set up on a loan basis.

Assume these funds will be required over a period of three years in ratio 5.3.3.

Total Cost for Resettlement

| | 1st year | 2nd year | 3rd year | Total |
|-------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Loan | \$32, 000, 000 | \$19, 000, 000 | \$19, 000, 000 | \$ 70, 000, 000 |
| Grant | 64, 000, 000 | 38, 000, 000 | 38, 000, 000 | 140, 000, 000 |
| Total | \$96, 000, 000 | \$57, 000, 000 | \$57, 000, 000 | \$210, 000, 000 |

3. Although there is on the basis of "2", adequate grant funds for expenditure for wages of refugees it cannot be assumed that all of

⁵ This paper is undated.

these funds will be applicable to refugees. Some refugees will not be employable on resettlement projects, and some resettlement wage expenditures must be made to other local labor.

Capital outlays in addition to those required for refugee resettlement will also be required to assure a balanced program within each country and to provide some legitimate development in the countries concerned not directly connected with refugee resettlement.

4. It is tentatively estimated that total cost of an integrated program will be between 250,000,000 to 300,000,000, of which approximately 2/3rds will be on a grant basis and 1/3rd on a loan basis. Source of such funds might be as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| International Bank and/or Ex-Im Bank | \$100,000,000 |
| Compensation from Israel | 50,000,000 |
| Grant thru UN | 100-150,000,000 |
| U.S. share (70%) of grant† | 70-105,000,000 |

†Near East already allocated \$12,000,000 for fiscal 1950 for technical assistance under planning for Point Four Program. [Footnote in the source text.]

501.BB Palestine/5-449

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] April 25, 1949.

Item No. 3—President Weizmann's Visit

The President went over the four points¹ which we hoped he would stress with President Weizmann. He approved of them all.

After luncheon I got separated from the President and Mr. Weizmann and involved with other guests. The President, Mr. Weizmann, the Israeli Ambassador, and the Vice President discussed the four points.

The President told me, after the interview, that he had made all four points. He said that President Weizmann had taken a helpful attitude on all of them. He said that the internationalization of Jerusalem could be worked out. He foresaw no insoluble difficulty in the boundary matters. He said that Israel would help financially with the refugees. I am not clear as to what was said about repatriation, although I know that the President pressed him on this matter.

As we were leaving, President Weizmann asked the President again for assistance on UN membership. I said that the Israeli representa-

¹The four points were set forth in a memorandum of April 23 from Mr. Rusk to Secretary Acheson for his conversation with President Truman concerning the latter's luncheon with President Weizmann later the same day. They dealt with the position of the United States on the internationalization of Jerusalem, boundary settlement, the refugee question and Israeli membership in the United Nations (867N.01/4-2349). The luncheon was actually held on April 25.

tives could really be of more assistance than we could if they would show a conciliatory attitude along the lines mentioned to Mr. Weizmann by the President.

As we were parting, President Weizmann said that he thought it might be a good idea for him to have a talk with me. I think that it might be worthwhile to follow this up while they are here.²

²The editors have found no documentation in the Department of State files indicating a followup conversation with President Weizmann.

501.AA/4-2649

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 26, 1949.

Subject: Israel's Desire for Admission to the U.N.

Participants: The Secretary, Mr. Acheson
 Mr. Elath, Ambassador of Israel
 Mr. Eban, Israeli Representative at Lake Success
 Mr. Satterthwaite, Director, NEA

Ambassador Elath opened the conversation by reviewing the position of Israel's application for admission to the UN. He said that his Government attached such importance to this matter that he wished to introduce Mr. Eban, who was in charge of the problem at Lake Success and have him discuss the situation with me.

Mr. Eban then spoke at some length along the lines of a conversation he and Mr. Elath had had with Senator Austin in New York a few days ago. He emphasized the great disadvantage under which in his opinion the Israeli Government was working by not being a member of the U.N. The six Arab States, on the other hand, had the great advantage of not only being able to express their views to the GA, but they also, by virtue of their six votes, could have considerable influence on the votes of other members.

Mr. Eban remarked that the questions of Jerusalem, the Arab refugees and the boundaries seemed to be those causing the greatest difficulty. He then went on to discuss these three problems, devoting the greater part of the exposition to the Jerusalem situation.

He said that the Israelis had not only supported the plan for Jerusalem set forth in the resolution of November 29, 1947 but had participated in its drafting. Subsequently, however, the Arab States themselves had violently opposed the implementation of this plan by engaging in hostilities. He felt that insufficient importance had been attached internationally to the fact that whereas one year ago the conditions in Jerusalem had been those of utter destruction and

chaotic warfare, peace and order had subsequently been restored, thanks to the efforts of the Israeli Government, to a remarkable degree. The problem was one of integrating the necessities of the State of Israel with the desires of the other states to maintain and protect the Holy Places. In this connection he asserted that 95% of the Holy Places are controlled by the Arabs. He thought, however, that considerable progress had been made and that a solution satisfactory to the U.N. was possible. In this connection he cited the address of President Weizmann of April 23 which, he said, had the full support and authority of the Israeli Government.

With reference to the refugees Mr. Eban thought that emphasis should be on resettlement rather than repatriation, although the Israeli Government had never rejected the idea of repatriation.

He felt that there should be less difficulty in reaching a settlement regarding boundaries and hoped that by negotiation this could be worked out at Lausanne.

Toward the conclusion of his rather lengthy exposition, the intent of which was to present as strong a case as possible for Israel's early admission to the U.N., Mr. Eban said that his Government planned, at an early stage of the Lausanne talks, to make a statement of a conciliatory nature which he hoped would be of assistance in expediting Israel's admission.

When Mr. Eban had finished I said that I felt that the Israeli Government itself was in a much better position to facilitate its entrance into the U.N. than we were. I recalled that I had suggested to President Weizmann at the White House luncheon yesterday that if Israel would only make some conciliatory gesture or statement along the lines that we have suggested, we would then have some basis on which to talk to the other nations in the General Assembly.

Frankly, I continued, I had been very disappointed in my failure to obtain any results from the two long talks I had with Mr. Sharett. Not only had my suggestions not been acted upon but in some ways it seemed that we were farther away from a solution than when I had talked with Mr. Sharett. The three questions, in order of importance, which appeared to call for some explanation by the Israeli Government were the refugees, Jerusalem and the boundaries.

With reference to the refugees, I had never suggested that Israel accept a specified number now. I had only suggested to Mr. Sharett that Israel first announce that it would accept the principle of repatriation. Next, at least half of the refugees had come from areas outside the Israeli boundaries fixed by the UN Resolution which were under Israeli military occupation. Surely it should be possible to allow a good number of such refugees to return to non-strategic areas. Then, later on, when the final peace settlement had been reached, or shortly

before, it should be possible to determine the exact number which could be repatriated. Mr. Sharett, in spite of my two talks with him, had flatly rejected this thesis and had even gone so far, when I had suggested the emotional and moral values that my proposals might have, as to suggest that such values should not be taken into consideration in international settlements. I had therefore been pleased to read President Weizmann's statements. I could only wish that he had been present when Mr. Sharett had been making his views known to me.

With reference to Jerusalem, I was glad to note that progress was apparently being made and mentioned in this connection the arrangements which were under way for Dr. Weizmann to discuss that problem with Cardinal Spellman.

As to the boundaries, I was disappointed to learn from Mr. Ethridge's telegrams that Mr. Ben-Gurion was apparently adamant in clinging to the view that Israel was entitled not only to the territory allowed it by the UNGA resolution but to all the rest of the territory it occupied militarily. Since, in writing at least, I understood the Government of Israel to accept the position that it was willing to negotiate on the basis of the November 29, 1947 resolution, it seemed to me that this was a very unwise position to take.

We were fully in accord with Israel's making the best bargain it could but did not want this bargaining to be on the basis of threats. This was particularly important in view of the fact that a bad bargain would not lead to permanent peace. As they knew, the Arab Governments were already under heavy attack from their public and press for having been too hasty in signing armistice agreements. If the final boundary settlements were such as to lead the Arab peoples to believe they had been imposed by force, Israel would, in my view, be acting contrary to its own best interests.

Again I pointed out that I was not trying to tell the Israeli Government what it should do. The U.S. had supported Israel's application for membership and would continue to do so. Unless, however, the Israeli Government were willing to make its position known on these important issues, it would be difficult for the U.S. Delegation to go to the other nations at Lake Success and endeavor to persuade them that they should also vote for Israel's admission at this session.¹

¹ The Department, on April 27, informed New York that the "US not in position join in sponsoring resolution for admission Israel pending further info re possibility Israeli reps Lausanne giving assurances concerning status Jerusalem, Palestine refugees, and territorial settlement which would create favorable atmosphere for admission Israel.

"Such res unnecessary for action on application and would, if presented in manner suggested, be attempt influence other dels. Our position of support for application when actually considered remains unchanged." (telegram Gadel 23, 501.AA/4-2749)

Both Ambassador Elath and Mr. Eban replied briefly to my remarks. They felt that perhaps Mr. Sharett's real views had not been fully understood. Mr. Eban expressed himself as optimistic regarding the possibility of reaching an agreement on the boundaries and Ambassador Elath felt that the question of the refugees could also be worked out, once the question of the danger to Israel's vital interests had been eliminated. They said they would, of course, make my views known to their Government and seek clarification of their Government's views on the points I had raised.²

²The Department summarized this memorandum for Tel Aviv on April 28 in telegram 250 (501.AA/4-2849). The telegram also noted that "Elath called Apr 28 once more to urge speedy action re Israeli membership UN. Expressed conviction Lausanne talks would not be real success as long as Israel not member, since Arab states would see no reason take speedy action toward final peace as long as world community apparently did not regard Israel as worthy of membership. Dept reiterated necessity Israel's making conciliatory gesture on three above points in order create atmosphere favorable admission Israel. Elath said he realized Israel would have to make some compromise re refugees, but that naturally Israeli Govt did not wish give away this valuable trump card before final peace negotiations."

Telegram 250 concluded with the instruction to Tel Aviv to "Pls seek earliest appropriate opportunity convey PrimMin and FonMin substance Secy's conversations with Eban and Elath, emphasizing in strongest terms points made by Secy."

501.BB Palestine/4-2849

The President of Israel (Weizmann) to President Truman

WASHINGTON, April 26, 1949.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Our meeting yesterday was a memorable occasion and again, on behalf of my government and myself, I thank you for your hospitality and profound understanding.

Because of the peace negotiations about to begin in Lausanne, I was especially heartened by your observations regarding the admission of Israel to the United Nations. So long as the Arab governments seek by political means to destroy the elements of stability in the present situation, neither Israel nor the Arab peoples will be free to turn their energies to peaceful development. No single act, in my judgment, will contribute so much to the pacification of the Middle East, as the speedy admission of Israel to the United Nations, and the withdrawal of this final act of recognition from the arena of political debate.

I was also extremely happy to learn that you were familiar with the position of my government on the question of Jerusalem. As I stated last Saturday, although Israel bears a direct and inescapable responsibility for Jewish Jerusalem, I am satisfied that there is no real incompatibility between the interests and concerns of Christianity, to which His Holiness the Pope has recently given eloquent expression,

and the aspirations of the people of Jerusalem to assure their government and security in conformity with their national allegiance. I firmly believe that a harmonious solution of this problem can swiftly be secured with international consent. The concern which you expressed and the considerations which you emphasized lend added force to the urgency for a speedy and broadly acceptable solution.

I stress again that we are fully mindful of the problem of the Arab refugees and of our own obligations toward them. But, except to a limited degree, the answer lies, as I stated, not in repatriation but in resettlement. As a scientist and a student of the problem, I know the possibilities of development of the Middle East. I have long felt that the underpopulated and fertile acres in the river valleys of Iraq constitute both a seductive invitation to neighboring countries and a massive opportunity for development and progress in the Middle East. Similar opportunities exist also in northern Syria and western Transjordan. In that development the government of Israel will make its contribution.

For all that you have done, Mr. President, in facilitating the establishment and recognition of my country—beginning with your plea for the admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees—I again express the profound gratitude and thanks of the people of Israel. Your leadership has been a source of inspiration and encouragement to us. And under your leadership I look forward in the long future to warm and friendly relationships between the government of the United States and the government of Israel.¹

Yours sincerely,

CH. WEIZMANN

¹ President Truman sent a brief acknowledgment on April 27, in which he expressed his appreciation of "your frank conversations in regard to things pending with regard to Israel.

"I hope everything will work out in a satisfactory manner and we can eventually get a lasting peace in the Middle East."

501.BB Palestine/4-2649

*Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Satterthwaite) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk)*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 26, 1949.

Subject: United States Position Regarding Jerusalem

The Palestine Conciliation Commission which meets in Lausanne today will resume its consideration of some kind of international

¹ Sent also by Leonard C. Meeker of the Office of the Legal Adviser, and Durward V. Sandifer, Acting Director of the Office of United Nations Affairs.

regime for Jerusalem on the basis of the December 11 Assembly Resolution. It will be necessary to give some directives to Mr. Ethridge and for this purpose four possible alternatives are outlined at the end of this paper for your consideration.

Until now the discussions with Israel and Transjordan on this subject have led to no agreement, except that both parties reject any far-reaching scheme of internationalization. The Prime Minister of Israel flatly stated to the Commission at Tel Aviv 7th of April "that the Israeli Government accepted without reservation the international regime for the holy places, but maintained that Jerusalem outside the holy places should be a part of the State of Israel". He added that the State of Israel "would take its case on the Jerusalem question to the General Assembly".

A recent telegram from Mr. Ethridge (Palun 127)² outlines a proposal which combines certain elements of the French paper and various unofficial suggestions by the USDel which Mr. Ethridge thinks represents a sound basis for the Commission's recommendations to the General Assembly. This combined draft, which is the basis of Alternative 2 below, is based on a minimal international obligation for Jerusalem under which a United Nations Administrator appointed by the General Assembly would have direct control over the holy places, including power to control access to them and decide disputes regarding them. The Jewish and Arab authorities respectively would be responsible for the day-to-day administration over their respective zones. Jerusalem would be demilitarized and formal assurances given by the two parties regarding inviolability of demarcation lines. This proposal appears to follow fairly closely the line indicated by the Secretary to Mr. Sharett on April 5.

This memorandum sketches four possible approaches to the Jerusalem problem.

Alternatives

1. International control of holy places alone.

The PCC might recommend that it was inadvisable or impossible to give concrete expression to the international interest in Jerusalem other than by providing for United Nations control of specified holy places in the Jerusalem area. This control could be exercised by a United Nations Administrator designated by and responsible to the General Assembly. The Administrator would have power to make regulations for use of holy place guards. The expenses of the Administrator, an appropriate staff, and the guards would be met by the United Nations budget. This arrangement for United Nations control of the holy places would be subject to approval by the General Assembly and

² Identified also as telegram 300, April 16, from Jerusalem, p. 920.

would come into force when accepted by the Governments of Israel and Trans-Jordan; these Governments, it is presumed, would partition Jerusalem, aside from the holy places, by agreement between themselves, and such direct discussions are now actually in progress. The resolution of the General Assembly approving the above arrangements for the holy places could contain provisions regarding access to the holy places.

2. United Nations administration of holy places, partition of Jerusalem, and international undertakings covering the area.

In Palun 127 the United States Delegation to the Palestine Conciliation Commission has suggested a plan which goes somewhat further than the previous alternative but falls short of a true international regime for the City of Jerusalem. Under this plan the holy places in the Jerusalem area would be subject to the regime outlined in Alternative 1 above. In addition, the remainder of Jerusalem would be partitioned into Arab and Jewish zones, to be administered by Trans-Jordan and Israel, respectively. Persons living in one of the zones would have the citizenship of the state administering that zone. Jerusalem would be demilitarized. There would be international undertakings that the Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the General Assembly in December 1948, should be taken as a standard for the conduct of administration in the two zones. There would be an international administrative council, four from each zone and two neutral, to advise the two groups of zonal authorities on common services, coordination of police functions, city planning, economic arrangements, and other matters of municipal concern. There would be a right of access across the zones of Jerusalem to the holy places for all persons determined by the United Nations Administrator to be entitled to frequent these places. For the most part, local courts would perform judicial functions in their respective zones. There might be a mixed tribunal to handle civil cases in which there was zonal diversity of parties. There should be an international Court of Justice to decide questions concerning the interpretation and application of the arrangements for Jerusalem. This tribunal would give its opinion upon request by the authorities of either zone or by the United Nations Administrator. Opinions of the tribunal should be regarded as binding on the zonal authorities and the Administrator. All of the above arrangements for Jerusalem would be embodied in an instrument perhaps called a Statute. This Statute would first be approved by the General Assembly. It would come into force upon deposit with the Secretary General of acceptances by the Governments of Trans-Jordan and Israel. Finally, the Statute would provide that it could be amended

or revoked by the General Assembly in a further exercise by that body of its dispositive power over Jerusalem.

3. *United Nations trusteeship for the Old City.*

A third alternative has been suggested, in which the arrangements referred to above in Alternatives 1 and 2 would be augmented by placing the Old City of Jerusalem under the international trusteeship system of the United Nations. The Old City, about one square mile which is now occupied by the Arabs, contains important Christian, Jewish and Moslem shrines. Under such an arrangement the United Nations Organization itself could be the administering authority for the trust territory, pursuant to Article 81 of the Charter. Under this alternative, the provisions with respect to holy places in the Jerusalem area would be the same as those outlined in Alternatives 1 and 2. The actual administration of the trust territory would presumably be carried on by a United Nations Administrator and staff provided for by the Trusteeship Council, but its public utilities would be assimilated to the other parts of the city. Trusteeship over the Old City of Jerusalem alone would have serious political disadvantages from the Arab point of view.

4. *Two trusteeships for Jerusalem.*

A fourth alternative would be to institute the arrangements contemplated in Alternative 3 by means of placing the Arab zone of Jerusalem under Trans-Jordanian trusteeship and the Jewish zone under Israeli trusteeship. The provisions of Alternative 1 with respect to holy places might be retained, with a United Nations Administrator controlling them. During Secretary Acheson's talk with Foreign Minister Sharett of Israel early in April, the Secretary suggested trusteeship as a possible solution for the Jerusalem problem. Mr. Sharett, while not committing himself or purporting to express the views of his Government, indicated that he thought trusteeship might provide a solution and that the idea deserved to be looked into. If Trans-Jordan and Israel were to become administering authorities over two trust territories in Jerusalem, problems would be raised by the seating of these two countries on the Trusteeship Council when they are admitted to membership in the United Nations. Not only would Israel and Trans-Jordan be admitted to the Council, but two more nonadministering powers would have to be elected to the Council. Enlargement of the Trusteeship Council would probably impair somewhat the efficiency of that organ, More important, however, the problems of the two Jerusalem trust territories would be so different from the problems of the other trust territories that it is questionable

whether it would be appropriate to place Jerusalem under trusteeships and introduce into the Trusteeship Council two or four states having no experience with colonial problems. Naturally Israel, Trans-Jordan, and the two additional nonadministering powers would have a voice in all matters coming before the Trusteeship Council. It appears from Palun 127 that the United States Delegation to the Palestine Conciliation Commission doubts the advisability of trying to accomplish through trusteeships the objectives of the international community concerning Jerusalem.

Recommendations

The Offices which join in this memorandum believe that Alternative 2 would be preferable to any of the others. There are several reasons which point toward this conclusion :

1. The United States Delegation to the Palestine Conciliation Commission regards a plan along the lines of Alternative 2 as constituting the most realistic and desirable plan under the circumstances.
2. Such a plan would give expression to the interests of the international community in Jerusalem.
3. At the same time it would not involve the United Nations Organization in substantial expenses or administrative responsibilities.
4. This plan, perhaps with certain modifications and adjustments, would seem to be possible of acceptance by the respective parties.
5. The plan would avoid certain difficulties for the Trusteeship Council which it is believed would result from a plan comprising two trusteeships for Jerusalem.

If you concur, we think instructions in the sense of the above should be sent to Mr. Ethridge. If you feel that the Jerusalem problem requires further consultation within the Department at the present stage, it is suggested that you might wish to meet at an early date with officers of NEA, UNA and L to discuss this problem in order to reach a Departmental decision on the instructions which should be sent to Mr. Ethridge.

867N.113/5-1949

*The British Embassy to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

PALESTINE ARMS EMBARGO

In view of British treaty relations with certain of the Arab states and of the British Government's concern about internal security in the Middle Eastern countries, the Foreign Office have been giving

¹ Handed to Secretary Acheson by British Ambassador Franks on April 29; see Secretary Acheson's memorandum of conversation, April 29, p. 958.

thought to the question whether the time has not come, now that armistice agreements have been signed, for the Palestine arms embargo to be lifted. Mr. Bevin thinks that, as Dr. Bunche has announced that he considers his mission complete, there will be no need to discuss the matter with him, but Mr. Bevin would like to learn the views of the United States Government on this question.

2. Mr. Bevin is convinced of the urgent need to make some immediate and favourable response to repeated Arab requests for arms. Now that armistice agreements covering the whole front in Palestine have been signed, and in view of the declaration which Mr. Bevin made at the signing of the Atlantic Pact to the effect that it did not minimise either British interest in or determination to support others not included in the Pact with whom the British Government had had long years of friendship and alliances, there appear to be no sufficient arguments to justify continued British refusal to supply the armaments requested. This is particularly so in the case of Egypt where, as the State Department know, the first steps towards technical military talks between the British and Egyptian authorities are now being taken. The British Ambassador at Cairo considers that the talks cannot succeed unless the arms embargo is raised, at least so far as Egypt is concerned. In order to secure British military requirements there, the British Government must be prepared to assist the Egyptian Government to build up their own military strength. The British Government cannot hope to persuade any Egyptian Government to agree to their requests unless they can prove conclusively that they are willing to help in the development of strong, well trained and well equipped Egyptian armed forces. Mr. Bevin believes that Mr. Acheson will agree that a military agreement with Egypt would have an important effect on the stability of the whole of the Middle East.

3. The need to fulfil British treaty obligations to Iraq and Transjordan is, in Mr. Bevin's view, hardly less pressing than in the case of Egypt. There is reason to fear trouble in Arab Palestine from the ex-Mufti's irregulars, who must now be disbanded, as well as from the Kurds in Iraq. The British Government therefore feel that the least they can do is to permit the supply of certain quantities of war material to Egypt, Iraq, and Transjordan and, if necessary, to the other Arab states for internal security and training purposes. The British Government would ask for suitable guarantees that these supplies would not be used for offensive purposes in Palestine. Such supplies would, however, in any case amount to so little that any resumption of fighting against the now well-equipped Israeli army would be out of the question.

4. Mr. Bevin is sure that Mr. Acheson will agree that it cannot have been the intention of the United Nations to make it impossible for the Arab states to keep order within their own frontiers, yet this has been the effect of the embargo, notably in Iraq. In view of the approval given by the Acting Mediator some time ago to the supply of war material by France to Syria for internal security, and of the fact that Dr. Bunche's functions have virtually come to an end, the British Government would be prepared, provided they had the support of the United States Government, to proceed on the lines suggested above without further reference to the United Nations.

5. It may be that the United States Government, if they are in general agreement with these arguments, would prefer to deal with the matter in one stage by raising the embargo altogether forthwith. The British Government would not object to this. But since it might be held necessary to obtain a United Nations resolution for that purpose, there are perhaps advantages in going no further than the proposal made in paragraph 3 above. In this connexion the British Government would see no objection to the supply of war material by the United States to Israel for internal security purposes.

6. The British Government would be grateful for the views of the United States Government on this question as soon as possible.

[WASHINGTON,] 27th April, 1949.

501.BB Palestine/4-2849

Memorandum of Conversation With the President, by the Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 28, 1949.

Item No. 2—Letter from Dr. Weizmann

The President showed me a letter from Dr. Weizmann,¹ a copy of which will come to us today.

The letter referred to a request that we assist by talking with other members of the United Nations on the subject of admission of Israel to the United Nations. The President agreed that Dr. Weizmann's attitude on refugees was not satisfactory and thought that we were not in a position to bring pressure on other members of the United Nations.

I related to the President my last meeting with Ambassador Elath and Mr. Eban.²

¹ Dated April 26, p. 947.

² See Secretary Acheson's memorandum of conversation, April 26, p. 944.

501.BB Palestine/4-2849 : Telegram

Mr. Mark F. Ethridge to the Secretary of State

SECRET

LAUSANNE, April 28, 1949—11 a. m.

PCC 1. Palun 136. From Ethridge. Scheduled commencement PCC meeting with Israel and Arab states at Lausanne April 26 held up 24 hours on account delayed arrival interested delegations. On April 27 PCC met separately with Israeli Delegation consisting of Gershon Hirsch and Eliahu Sassoon, with Egyptian Delegation consisting of Abdel Chafey el Labab and Mahmud Rhmazi and with Lebanese Delegation consisting of Fuad Bey Amoun and Mohamed Ali Hamade. PCC meeting with Syrian Delegation consisting of Adnan Atassi planned April 28. PCC informed Transjordan Delegation will arrive this week. Saudi Arabia will not attend, but will accept such arrangements as other Arab states make with Israel. Iraq refused at Beirut to attend and has not yet sent expected informal observer. Yemen understood maintain same position as Saudi Arabia.

Substance of remarks by Israeli Delegation indicated Israel had not altered its position re refugees and Jerusalem as stated by Ben Gurion, Sharett and Comay. Hirsch made no allusion whatsoever to conciliatory statement re refugees nor manifested any disposition to work with PCC on possible plans for internationalization of Jerusalem. On contrary Hirsch stressed conclusion of peace with Arab states was primary objective. Refugee question and Jerusalem could not be discussed in advance, but could be considered during peace talks. Hirsch and Sassoon strongly urged PCC recommend to GA that it not debate refugees and Jerusalem at Lake Success while they were being considered at Lausanne. Hirsch believed if full debate took place at Lake Success public declarations on refugees and Jerusalem would undoubtedly be required which would have important effect on quiet negotiations at Lausanne. Hirsch stated that there was no disposition on part of Israeli Delegation now to discuss current questions at Lausanne if debate took place at Lake Success. It was made clear, nevertheless, that little progress could be expected at Lausanne in interim.

Hirsch also indicated Israeli Delegation would be unable to exchange views with Syrian Delegation before present Israeli-Syrian armistice negotiations were concluded. Peace talks with Arab States should be limited in each case to subjects of common concern. Egypt, for example, had no more right to discuss Jerusalem than Persia or Turkey. Israel hoped, therefore, that pertinent agenda would be arranged between Israel and various Arab States. PCC, on other hand, might have its own agendas with Israel and Arab States respectively.

Egyptian and Lebanese Delegations both stated their presence at Lausanne indicated cooperation with PCC and desire for peace. Both considered, however, that solution for refugee problem and Jerusalem were essential before peace talks could progress. Discussion re territorial questions was premature at this stage. Amoun indicated, however, that Lebanese Delegation was ready to discuss Jerusalem and Holy Places with Jerusalem Committee immediately.

Following meetings with Israeli, Egyptian and Lebanese Delegations, PCC considered Israeli request that PCC recommend to GA that it not debate such questions as refugees and Jerusalem while PCC was discussing at Lausanne. PCC decided it would be presumptuous on its part to make such recommendation and felt that if it were subsequently necessary to submit special or periodic report to GA such reports should be confined to statement of Israeli and Arab cooperation with PCC and degree of acceptance of provisions of GA resolution December 11.

[ETHRIDGE]

501.BB Palestine/4-2849 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Switzerland

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, April 28, 1949—7 p. m.

544. Unpal 85. For Ethridge. Elath Apr 28 gave Dept copy cable sent by Sharett Apr 27 to Dr. Mohn¹ and you. Fol salient points.

Israeli Govt much concerned over Syrian unwillingness to withdraw forces occupying Israeli territory. Israel agreed withdraw forces from Leb during Israeli-Leb armistice negots and negot with Syria can make no progress unless Syrian Govt prepared accept same principle. Syrian delegation appears using presence Syrian troops on Israeli soil as means bringing pressure on Israel agree to what is liable become permanent alteration in frontier between two countries. Israel bound insist withdrawal Syrian troops as essential condition conclusion armistice agreement. Israeli Govt also disturbed by press reports concerning Syrian intention mobilize immed 20,000 additional men and inclined view this may be cover for new aggressive action contemplated against Israel. Under circumstances Israel sees little profit in discussing final settlement with Syrian delegation Lausanne and so long as no progress is made in Israeli-Syrian armistice negots owing Syrian Govt refusal accept polit boundary as armistice demarcation line

¹ Paul Mohn, Chief Political Adviser to Mr. Bunche.

Israeli delegation Lausanne will be instructed not enter formal or informal conversations with Syrian reps.²

Elath bespoke Dept's assistance persuading Syrian Govt agree withdrawal troops. Dept stated US only recognized Syria Apr 27 and Dept doubted advisability approaching Syrian Govt this matter at present. Informed Elath that believed preferable await outcome such efforts as Dr. Mohn might make this regard but would reconsider situation if no progress made Israeli-Syrian negots next few days. Dept stated belief it essential Israeli-Syrian armistice agreement be speedily concluded so that Syria could effectively participate in Lausanne talks.

ACHESON

² Mr. Sharett's message of April 27 was summarized by Mr. Ethridge in his telegram from Lausanne of April 29. Mr. Ethridge also added that "PCC decided April 29 inform Foreign Minister that SC and Bunche were responsible for armistice agreements and PCC had no jurisdiction.

"My personal opinion is armistice agreement between Syria and Israel should if possible be concluded prior Lausanne but that Israel argument without validity based on understanding Syrian line in Israel established before truce whereas Israel's line in Lebanon established after truce. Furthermore past armistice agreements were concluded without prejudice political settlement." (Palun 138, 501.MA Palestine/4-2949)

This telegram was repeated to Damascus as No. 184 and to Tel Aviv and New York. Mr. Bunche informed the United States Mission at the United Nations that private military talks between the Israelis and Syrians to discuss armistice lines and reduction of forces had broken down at the first meeting on April 27 (telegram Delga 63, April 29, 5:32 p. m., from New York, 501.BB Palestine/4-2949).

501.BB Palestine/4-2949

The President to Mr. Mark F. Ethridge, at Jerusalem

[WASHINGTON,] April 29, 1949.

DEAR MARK: I appreciated very much your letter of the eleventh and I was particularly interested in the attitude of the Arabs with regard to the present situation.

I am rather disgusted with the manner in which the Jews are approaching the refugee problem. I told the President of Israel in the presence of his Ambassador just exactly what I thought about it. It may have some effect, I hope so.

Sincerely yours,

[HARRY S. TRUMAN]

867N.113/4-2949

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 29, 1949.

Subject: Palestine Arms Embargo

Participants: Sir Oliver Franks, British Ambassador
The Secretary of State

Mr. John D. Hickerson, Director for European Affairs

Sir Oliver Franks came in to see me at 12 noon today by appointment made at his request. He handed me the attached self-explanatory memorandum dated April 27, 1949 entitled "Palestine Arms Embargo."¹ Sir Oliver summarized briefly the contents of this memorandum, stressing the British Government's concern about internal security in the Middle East countries and stating that Mr. Bevin is convinced of the urgent need to make some immediate and favorable response to repeated Arab requests for arms. Sir Oliver stated that in all cases except Egypt the arms would be entirely for the maintenance of internal security. As regards Egypt, he stated, the first steps toward technical military talks between the British and Egyptian authorities² are now being taken and the British Government proposes to furnish the Egyptian Government, in order to secure British military requirements there, assistance in building up Egypt's own military strength.

I inquired whether the British Government contemplates talking to Dr. Bunche about this matter. Sir Oliver replied that his government did not contemplate approaching Dr. Bunche about this in view of his announcement that he considers his mission complete. I also inquired about the time element and Sir Oliver replied that while his government regarded the matter as urgent, he did not believe that he could mention any particular time element within which they desire to act.

I inquired whether he had any information about the type and quantity of arms involved. Sir Oliver replied that he had very limited information on this subject. He went on to say that he understood that nothing more than small arms would be involved for countries other than Egypt. For Egypt the British Government contemplates supplying not only small arms but probably some light artillery and some light tanks.

I told Sir Oliver that we would examine his memorandum carefully and sympathetically and get in touch with him later about it. I pointed out that I had inquired about timing largely for the reason that the furnishing of arms to Middle East countries by the British Govern-

¹ See p. 952.² For documentation on this subject, see pp. 186 ff.

ment may introduce an element of importance in connection with the consideration in Congress of our Military Assistance Pact. Sir Oliver commented that this had probably not been considered in London and that he would call Mr. Bevin's attention to this aspect of the matter which he himself considered as one of importance.

Sir Oliver commented in passing that it was not clear whether the government contemplated formal action for lifting of the Palestine Arms Embargo by UN action or whether, if the U.S. Government agreed, his government simply contemplates assuring the Middle East governments in question that the arms will be furnished without formal action by the UN.

501.BB Palestine/4-2949 : Circular telegram

*The Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic and Consular Offices*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 29, 1949—5 p. m.

Unrealistic and intransigent attitude of both Israel and Arab states re agreement to repatriation and resettlement, respectively, of Arab refugees has created problem of serious concern to USG and major obstacle to PCC's task of implementing Dec 11 res with respect to refugees. Coincidental with PCC meetings Lausanne, Dept considers it essential that strongest diplomatic approach be made to both sides in endeavor to soften their respective attitudes this question and to support PCC in its task. We are suggesting similar approach to Arabs by UK Govt.

Pls make earliest approach to PrimMin and FonMin of Govt to which you are accredited along fol lines:

USG continues support principle of repatriation of refugees so desiring in accordance GA res of Dec 11. On Apr 5 Secy made strong representations to Israeli FonMin re Pres' conviction of necessity for early Israeli agreement to repatriation; Pres on Apr 25 took occasion Weizmann's visit to press him re repatriation; Secy made similar approach to Israeli Amb Apr 26. USG will continue use best efforts vis-à-vis Israel this regard. However, USG is in full agreement with PCC's second progress report to UN, which emphasizes likelihood that not all refugees will decide return to their homes and consequent necessity obtaining agreement in principle by Arab states to resettlement those not desiring repatriation.

Earliest beginning to liquidation this question essential in view rapid depletion UNRPR funds. Since establishment UNRPR, UN members

¹At Jidda, Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut, and Amman, presumably for action; and to London and Jerusalem and to Bern for Mr. Ethridge, for information.

have contributed generously to alleviation plight of refugees, and have relieved Arab states of large measure enormous burden of relief. However, unless evidence is forthcoming that both sides are cooperating with PCC in endeavoring liquidate problem, and that concrete progress is being made therein, there is likelihood further aid would not be forthcoming from international sources, and that legislatures UN member states would be unwilling agree to further extension assistance.

Ref is made to recommendation of PCC in its progress report that Israel and Arab states might undertake program of public works which would make possible return of refugees and early absorption those not desiring return to their homes. USG notes with interest PCC's expressed willingness recommend favorable action on such a request by UN organs if Israel and Arab states should apply for technical and financial aid in preparing and executing such a program.

USG deeply hopeful Arab states will give early indication their willingness to contribute to resettlement of those not desiring return Israel. This would immeasurably facilitate ability PCC to formulate effective plans for disposition refugee question as whole, and would be important element in influencing attitude of UN member states towards possibility further assistance.

At meetings with PCC in Lausanne, USG considers both Israel and Arab states have significant responsibility for cooperating with PCC in obtaining agreed settlement to permit earliest feasible liquidation this problem, and avoid its perpetuation as threat to peace, stability and development of all Near Eastern states.²

ACHESON

²The Department additionally informed London, on April 29, that "McGhee's survey of Arab refugee situation, and reports of our diplomatic missions and PCC emphasize fact that no progress possible re liquidation problem until political atmosphere improved by Israeli agreement to principle repatriation and Arab agreement to principle resettlement. USG therefore proposes employ coordinate and continuing diplomatic pressure both sides, in order provide maximum support PCC discussions Lausanne. It would be of considerable value if FonOff would instruct diplomatic missions approach Arab Govts soonest in endeavor obtain their agreement to principle accepting for resettlement those refugees who do not desire return to Israel." (Telegram 1473, 501.BB Palestine/4-2949)

501.BB Palestine/4-3049: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 30, 1949—1 p. m.

342. Colonel Dayan yesterday furnished following information:

(1) Activities of special committee—at last meeting Arab delegation stated they were proceeding to Lausanne and proposed special

committee suspend work until their return. Israeli "put pressure" on Transjordan stating would not discuss peace or other questions at Lausanne unless Transjordan conformed to armistice agreement and continued special committee talks. Transjordan agreed appoint other representatives to continue work.

[Here follows remainder of telegram primarily concerning action taken by the special committee, principally the movement of traffic on vital roads and the operation of the railroad, and on territorial settlement in Jerusalem. Concerning the latter point, the Transjordanians were said to have "refused discuss any territorial changes stating that should be considered at Lausanne. Dayan emphasized negotiations for territorial changes should be on basis what each party now holds and not on what held before war or ownership."]

BURDETT

867N.01/5-149 : Telegram

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

SECRET

DAMASCUS, May 1, 1949—10 a. m.

259. Transparent hypocrisy in Sharett's cable of April 27 to Dr. Mohn (Deptel 184, April 28¹) is doubtless already evident to all concerned but full comment is nevertheless given in hope of helping to clarify atmosphere and hasten armistice agreement so that broader aspects of problem may be realistically approached.

Israeli contention that natural boundary desired by Syria as armistice demarcation line might become permanent alteration in frontier between two countries seeks to confirm Syria's conviction that if Syria retires to old political frontier as armistice demarcation line, Israel will subsequently accept no alteration in that frontier particularly as Syria knows of no offer of Israel to withdraw from Western Galilee or other areas outside partition frontiers as earnest of willingness to have final sovereignty all such areas for determination in peace talks. Without holding any brief for Syria's "right" to frontier rectification, what is sauce for goose should be sauce for gander.

As evidence of their alleged sincerity let both parties retire simultaneously from areas not contemplated by partition resolution leaving such areas under UN supervision pending determination of sovereignty by peace conference. Otherwise let *status quo* be accepted as provisional for armistice purposes with clear understanding that armistice demarcation lines are tentative only and subject to confirma-

¹ This was a repeat of No. 544 to Bern, p. 956.

tion or rectification by peace conference. Thus latter may proceed in more hopeful atmosphere.

Re McDonald's comment in Tel Aviv Embassy telegram 314, April 29² to Department re Israel's sincerity yet unwillingness to yield even to extent of leaving disputed frontier area for subsequent determination, might it not properly be asked what profit it for Syria to enter into peace negotiations with Israel if only benefits Syria can hope to obtain therefrom, slight rectification of frontier, is relinquished without any *quid pro quo* or other guarantee before peace talks begin. Considering US policy as outlined by Jessup November 20 (Deptel 57 February 25) we can scarcely in good conscience ask Syria to relinquish small salient within partition frontier while remaining silent over Israel's retention even provisionally of extensive area outside partition frontier in Western Galilee conquered by Israel during and in violation of truce. Surely if Israel's professions of desire for peace are genuine, she should be willing to make some concession as earnest thereof as Syria has already done (Mytel 256, April 28³), or at least to leave all controversial issues for determination by peace conference.

Sent Department 259; repeated Bagdad 47; Tel Aviv 22; London 70; Paris 55; Bern 1 for Ethridge; New York for USDel 1. Pouched Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Jerusalem, Jidda, Athens, Ankara, Moscow.

KEELEY

² Not printed.

³ Not printed; it reported that Syrian Prime Minister Zaim had "intimated willingness as part general settlement including realistic frontier adjustments accept quarter million refugees if given substantial development aid in addition to compensation for refugee losses." (890D.01/4-2849)

Telegram 256 also noted that the Prime Minister "reiterated his earnest desire to liquidate Palestine debacle by pursuing henceforth policy of give and take provided he not asked to give all while other side takes all." It concluded that there was a "real opportunity for rapid settlement of Palestine problem if only US Government will exert itself to bring Israelis to face situation realistically and in spirit of fair compromise."

501.BB Palestine/5-149: Telegram

The Chargé in Transjordan (Stabler) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

AMMAN, May 1, 1949—3 p. m.

193. During call on Prime Minister this morning I conveyed to him views of US Government regarding refugee question as contained in Depcirtel April 29, 5 p. m. and left him *aide-mémoire* on subject.

Prime Minister expressed appreciation for these views and for fact

that US Govt is continuing to press Israel regarding acceptance repatriation principle in accordance GA Resolution December 11. He said Transjordan accepted in principle resettlement of refugees not desiring return their homes and was well aware of necessity for resettling such refugees. Transjordan Govt recognized that not all refugees would elect to return their homes. However, Transjordan still maintained its position of insisting that Israel accept principle of repatriation of refugees who do desire return their homes. Settlement of refugee question which he regarded as urgent factor in solution of Palestine problem would be made much easier if refugees had free choice of whether to return to their homes or to resettle in Arab states or elsewhere.

Tawfiq Pasha commented that while he had adopted common line with other Arab states regarding repatriation principle at Beirut meetings with PCC, he had in separate conversations with Ethridge and McGhee expressed willingness and awareness regarding resettlement principle. He felt such parallel approach was realistic as on one hand it did not work against common line of Arab states and on other hand it did provide positive line in assisting PCC work out overall solution to problem.

Prime Minister pointed out that one of essentials in solution refugee question was matter of boundaries. He hoped that UN and US would adhere to partition principle and that Israel would be obliged accept settlement on this basis. He stated that it was clear that solution refugee question would be simpler if Arabs should be compensated by Israel for territories over and above those allotted to Israel by November 29 Resolution. Return to Arabs of such territories would make resettlement much less difficult.

Prime Minister continued that he hoped have opportunity hold further talks with McGhee regarding possible assistance to Transjordan in technical and financial fields. He mentioned number projects and indicated Transjordan Govt might prepare certain concrete proposals. He assured that whatever assistance was received would be put to profitable use in connection Transjordan development.

In conclusion I emphasized to Prime Minister great importance which US Govt attached to acceptance by Arab states of resettlement principle and urged he use his influence with other Arab states in this regard. I also emphasized that US would, as indicated in President's message of April 21 to King, continue press Israel regarding acceptance repatriation principle. Prime Minister thought this was realistic approach and would endeavor to do what he could regarding other Arab states.

Sent Department, repeated Geneva for USDel PCC, pouched Arab Capitals, London, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv.¹

STABLER

¹ The Department's reply, on May 16, requested Amman to "express Dept's appreciation to PriMin for his cooperative and humane attitude towards acceptance resettlement principle. However, you shld endeavor convey to him idea that, while USG deeply hopeful that TJ will be prepared receive refugees up to its absorptive capacity, in its own interests TJ shld keep in mind natural limiting factors of country and should not over-extend itself in this connection." The reply gave the Department's tentative estimates that "maximum potential absorptive capacity TJ together with area of central Pal presently under Arab mil occupation wld permit assimilation of not more than 150,000-200,000 refugees . . . Moreover, assimilation this number possible only on basis intensive development TJ and Arab Pal over two or three year period." (Telegram 60, 501.BB Palestine/5-1649)

867N.48/4-2249

Memorandum Prepared Presumably in the Office of the Coordinator on Palestine Refugee Matters (McGhee)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 2, 1949.

PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

NOTES FOR DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT

Of the attached papers the most important is *Policy Recommendations*: No's. 1 and 8 are the critical recommendations.

No. 1: The real question is how far we go in putting pressure on the Israelis to repatriate a considerable number of refugees (at least 200,000), which Ethridge feels necessary for success of the Lausanne talks and which is believed to be necessary for any ultimate solution of the refugee problem. So far the strong talks given the Israelis by the President and the Secretary on this subject have not resulted in tangible concessions. The present issue is whether we go further through such action as holding up remainder of Eximbank loan (\$49,000,000) and withdrawing Eximbank Mission.

No. 8: This represents an internal decision on the part of the executive. It means that, subject to Congressional approval, reasonable assistance from other UN nations and cooperation from the states concerned, we have decided that we intend to "see through" financially a minimum refugee program, before we raise Arab hopes through assuming leadership in an economic survey group to be created by the PCC. If there are not adequate loans forthcoming from the International and Exim Banks, we intend to request our share as a grant from Congress. Final decision should, of course, be made on the basis of the best advice we can get from Congressional leaders and Bank officials. Ethridge needs such a decision in order to know how far to go in holding out hope to Israel and the Arab states for assistance in repatriation

and resettlement, as an inducement to get them to face these issues realistically and constructively. The range of grant funds that the US might be called upon to make is believed to lie between \$25,000,000 and \$50,000,000 a year for 3 years, depending upon ultimate cost, amount of Israeli compensation, amount available from the Banks and amount contributed by other UN states.

867N.48/5-249

Memorandum of Conversation With the President, by the Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 2, 1949.

Subject: Palestine Refugee Problem

I went over the main points of Mr. McGhee's memorandum¹ with the President, directing his attention specifically to the tentative financial commitments which might be involved.

The President believed that it would probably be necessary for him to make the commitments (subject to Congressional action) but that before he did so he would like to have this matter laid before him in a memorandum which he could submit to the Bureau of the Budget and the Secretary of the Treasury, so that there could be orderly consideration of these new proposed commitments. If we can get such a memorandum to the President tomorrow, he believes that he could have the matter considered and possibly acted on at the Cabinet meeting on Friday. Until that is done he does not believe that it would be proper for me to agree, even tentatively, as this might be misleading.

¹ Presumably the memorandum of April 22, p. 934.

501.BB Palestine/5-249 : Telegram

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

SECRET

DAMASCUS, May 2, 1949—8 a. m.

261. Mytel 256, April 28.¹ When I orally communicated text Depcirtel April 29, 5 p. m. to Prime Minister Zaim last evening he reminded me that several days ago he had expressed his desire speed solution Palestine problem and had stated his willingness to accept as part comprehensive settlement of Palestine conflict quarter million or more Arab refugees for resettlement provided they are compensated for their losses and Syria is given adequate financial aid necessary to resettle them. He reiterated his sincere desire for prompt

¹ Not printed, but see footnote 3, p. 962.

agreement with Israel and his willingness to enter direct negotiations with Israel to that end. He went on to say that as Syria, Transjordan and Egypt are Arab states most directly concerned in Palestine problem, he is willing meet with Abdullah and Farouk in effort to reach common basis for realistic approach to Israel.

While eager to give concrete proof of his sincerity already evidenced by his proffered concessions, he emphasized that unless Israel also manifests spirit of compromise stalemate will continue since Arab states cannot be expected to make all the concessions.

He laughed at Sharett's fear that mobilization 20,000 recruits could be immediate threat to Israel. Call up is internal measure to take potential trouble makers off streets. Without arms and other equipment they could be used only as labor battalions and will, he said, be so used. Israel has, he added, nothing to fear from Syria if it comes to reasonable terms. Others had created debacle; he wishes earnestly to liquidate it so as to get on with more important things: internal development and preparation against Soviet menace which he insists is real threat of moment.²

Sent Department 261; repeated Beirut 56; Baghdad 49; Tel Aviv 24; London 72; Paris 57; Bern 3 for Ethridge. Pouched Amman, Cairo, Jerusalem, Jidda, Athens, Ankara, Moscow.

KEELEY

² Chargé Patterson, on May 3, discussed the content of the circular telegram of April 29 with the Egyptian Prime Minister. The latter was reported to have stated that the "Lausanne talks were based upon UN's December 11 resolution whereby principle of repatriation established. Egypt insisted this principle should be reaffirmed by all participating Lausanne conversations, Zionists in particular. Once principle of repatriation shall have been established as basis of conversations Egypt and Arab States (Prime Minister believed) would at once get down to study of practical aspects of problem." (telegram 430, May 3, 6 p. m., from Cairo)

Minister Pinkerton discussed the circular telegram with the Lebanese Minister and received his assurances that the "Lebanese delegation Lausanne meetings with PCC has been given widest instructions to cooperate with PCC in finding answer problems. He reiterated that [Lebanon?] is already overpopulated and is organized on confessional lines so delicately balanced that acceptance permanent settlement any refugees here would be impossible." (Telegram 217, May 4, noon, from Beirut) Nos. 430 and 217 are filed under 501.BB Palestine/5-349, /5-449, respectively.

501.BB Palestine/5-249: Telegram

The Ambassador in Israel (McDonald) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

TEL AVIV, May 2, 1949—1 p. m.

323. Two hours prior receipt April 29 of Deptel 250, April 28, Ford¹ and I talked at Foreign Ministry about almost identical sub-

¹ Richard Ford, Counselor of Embassy in Israel.

jects. Share distressed² Israel's desire to make conciliatory statement but was embarrassed by Colonel Zasuk's insistence "rectify" international frontier under guise armistice negotiations, thus endangering peace.

Later, April 29, at Kaplan³ tea for Export-Import Bank experts, I talked with Shiloah of Foreign Office who said Israel is puzzled by Department's suggestion "conciliatory gesture about boundaries" because if there is to be no independent Arab state in Palestine and no one considers such possibility, hence Israel's yielding on boundaries could only mean parceling out Palestine territory among neighboring Arab states, a result never contemplated in November 29 GA resolution. In reply, I urged my desire prompt talk with Sharett and Ben-Gurion together.

April 30 morning, when I took General Donovan⁴ to Sharett's residence, I told latter of contents of Deptel 250, April 28, and my wish confer with him and Prime Minister. Foreign Minister agreed try for early date but said absence Prime Minister Jerusalem attending Zionist action SG committee and coming May Day and Independence Day celebrations during first half this week make such conference difficult. I am continuing to press for it soonest.

I believe Israel officials because of their realization of national advantage of close US cooperation and ultimate cooperation with Arab states' desire meet President and Department's views as far as Foreign Minister and Prime Minister consider politically possible. I will continue utilize every formal and informal opportunity press US views in hope securing desired statement soon. Am hopeful on Jerusalem and refugees but pessimistic on boundaries.

McDONALD

² These two words should read "Sharett stressed" (copy in Tel Aviv post files, lot 56-F 31, 350 Israel).

³ Eliezer Kaplan, Israeli Finance Minister.

⁴ Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan, until 1945 Director of the Office of Strategic Services; at this time on an extended tour of the Near East.

501.BB Palestine/5-249: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Legation in Switzerland*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 2, 1949—8 p. m.

566. Unpal 88. For Lausanne. Re Palun 127² Dept considers Secretariat working paper re Jerusalem constitutes sound basic approach and hopes that in due course it can be made basis future work in preference French proposals.

¹ This telegram was repeated to Jerusalem.

² Also identified as telegram 300, April 16, from Jerusalem, p. 920.

Dept also approves suggestion providing compulsory arbitration controversies re fulfillment by states concerned of obligations undertaken re Jerusalem area. We consider that tribunal should be given jurisdiction such controversies on motion UN Administrator or authorities either zone. Our position at this stage should be that decisions should be legally binding.

Dept understanding that UN would bear expenses of UN Administrator, his staff, guards for Holy Places, international tribunal, and other expenses appropriately chargeable. Authorities governing local zones would bear local costs, and costs their participation in mixed bodies.

ACHESON

501.BB Palestine/5-349: Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Vincent) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

BERN, May 3, 1949—11 a. m.

661. Palun 139. During past week PC met separately with Syrian delegation and Transjordan delegation headed by Fawzi Pasha Mulki. Both indicated desire to cooperate for Near East peace. Commissioners, advisers, and Azcarate also had numerous separate discussions with individual members of Israeli and Arab delegates. PCC's underlying impression is Israel and Arab states are sincerely desirous of making peace arrangements soonest but are maneuvering for position.

Israeli delegation is seriously concerned re question of Israeli admission to UN. It fears extensive UN debate may delay and even prevent Israeli admission at this GA session. It continues to suggest PCC recommend GA not debate such matters as refugees and Jerusalem in view Israeli and Arab talks with PCC at Lausanne. PCC has, however, maintained position stated in Palun 136.¹ Israeli delegation is also communicating with Tel Aviv re possible conciliatory statement on refugees. Partial drafts thus far seen are evasive. US delegation hopes satisfactory statement will result but fears Ben-Gurion's strong views will prevent. Israeli delegation has given no indication of working with PCC's committee on Jerusalem re plans for internationalization of Jerusalem area.

Arab delegations are keenly aware of their present tactical position. Arab delegations are not yet ready to meet with Israeli delegation for this reason and because of general reluctance to move quickly. It seems unlikely Arab delegations will engage in substantive discussion with

¹ Also identified as telegram PCC 1, April 28, from Lausanne, p. 955.

Israeli delegation either directly or through PCC until UN debate on Israeli admission is concluded. Arab delegations appear willing, however, to discuss all questions with PCC.

PCC therefore plans to continue to talk with individual delegations and will endeavor to draw up agendas of points which may eventually serve as framework for Israeli-Arab discussion either through PCC or directly. It is also hoped PCC might draw up certain preamble material on which Israel and Arab states could agree and which would serve as point of departure for further discussion as was case at Rhodes.

Eytan, now heading Israeli delegation, also approached Ethridge re Israeli-Syrian armistice negotiations expressing view that if agreement were signed with mandate frontier as armistice line Israel would be willing make border rectifications in peace talks. Syrians are already familiar with this argument and are probably unlikely to forego present bargaining advantage. In order resolve impasse US delegate suggests Syrians might withdraw to frontier while Israelis withdraw from equivalent area in Israeli territory. Area evacuated could then be considered as neutral pending and without prejudice to effect settlement.

VINCENT

501.BB Palestine/5-349 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Douglas) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

LONDON, May 3, 1949—5 p. m.

709. Proposal contained Deptel 1473, April 29; repeated Bern 556 discussed with Michael Wright and Beith of Foreign Office. Both agreed that UK approach Arab states re principle resettlement might have beneficial effect but felt that in making it, account should be taken differing circumstances countries concerned. Wright pointed out Transjordan has already agreed to accept refugees while there is little likelihood that appreciable numbers could be resettled in Egypt, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. He also remarked Arab states would presumably be reluctant voluntarily give up remaining bargaining weapon by subscribing to resettlement principle. We pointed out that approach did not envisage consideration number each country would be called on to absorb but merely agreement to a principle. Moreover, Arabs should be willing to do so in return for Israeli acceptance principle repatriation.

Our comments appeared to overcome Wright's objections, and he said he would immediately refer proposal to Bevin with recommendation that it be approved.¹

Sent Department 709; repeated Bern 36.

DOUGLAS

¹ London, on May 4, advised that Mr. Bevin had given his approval and that the Foreign Office had sent instructions to British missions in Arab capitals "directing them to inform respective governments that UK fully supports representations made by US representative re agreement principles resettlement." (telegram 1740, 867N.01/5-449)

The Department informed London on May 4 that the "Views you presented to FO as reported Embtel 709 of May 3 timely and coincide Dept thinking. Irrespective great difference ability individual Arab States absorb refugees essential they as group make progress toward recognition principle which will permit states who can to take such action at appropriate time without breaking Arab line. . . . Essential that both [Arabs and Israelis] make progress toward compromise position and US and UK should assist in achieving this end with all means available." (Telegram 1515, 501.BB Palestine/5-349)

867N.48/5-449

Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 4, 1949.

Subject: Repatriation of Arab Refugees from Palestine

At our meeting on Monday¹ you directed me to submit to you the estimated cost for a program of repatriation and resettlement of the Arab refugees from Palestine. This was for the purpose of having the estimated cost subjected to orderly consideration by the Budget Bureau and the Treasury Department before the matter came to you for decision.

You will recall that the matter comes up at the present time not in connection with any announcement of detailed figures, but with Mr. Ethridge's desire to lay some plan for solution of the problem before the Delegates meeting at Lausanne. Mr. Ethridge did not wish to do this unless the United States Government would agree in principle to substantial United States financial assistance in carrying out the program. He felt, and we agreed, that he was wise in this, that to make a proposal and later have it fail for lack of financial support would affect the United States interests adversely in the Middle East.²

DEAN ACHESON

¹ See Secretary Acheson's memorandum of May 2, p. 965.

² Attached to this memorandum is a second memorandum dated May 4, sent to President Truman by Secretary Acheson, which dealt with the estimated cost of the Palestine refugee problem. It is not printed; for the version of May 9, which superseded it, see p. 983.

867N.48/5-449

The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Johnson)

WASHINGTON, May 4, 1949.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: Reference is made to Secretary Forrestal's letter dated September 23, 1948, in which he transmitted a memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff¹ concerning the relief of the Arab refugees from the Palestine hostilities, who numbered at that time approximately 300,000.

As you will recall, on November 19, 1948, the General Assembly approved a resolution calling for a \$32,000,000 program for the relief of Palestine refugees, to be raised by voluntary contributions from the member states of the United Nations. The resolution recognized that "the alleviation of conditions of starvation and distress among the Palestine refugees is one of the minimum conditions for the success of the efforts of the United Nations to bring peace to that land". The enabling legislation for a United States appropriation of \$16,000,000 as our contribution to such a program was signed by the President on March 24, 1949.

The United Nations relief program is expected to terminate by the end of 1949, when the funds at its disposal will be exhausted. No provision now exists for continuing assistance to the refugees from international sources after termination of the present program. It is recognized, however, that the need for assistance will continue beyond 1949, and that the administrative and material resources of the Arab states and of voluntary relief organizations are wholly inadequate to support an assistance program of this magnitude.

For some time the Department has been studying the question of the long range disposition of the refugees, who now number at least 700,000. The consistent refusal of Israel and the Arab states to agree in principle to the repatriation and resettlement, respectively, of the refugees, has rendered it impossible for the Palestine Conciliation Commission, which is charged by the General Assembly with facilitating settlement of the problem, to initiate any measures looking towards its progressive liquidation. A concerted diplomatic approach to both Israel and the Arab states is being undertaken by the Department, in concert with the United Kingdom, in an effort to secure the agreement of both sides to repatriation and resettlement on the scale required.

¹ A partial quotation from the letter of then Secretary of Defense Forrestal and the full text of the Joint Chiefs of Staff memorandum of September 22, 1948, are included in telegram Telmar 19, September 28, 1948, to Paris, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1427.

Assuming that these political obstacles can be overcome, however, there is no possibility under present conditions of any appreciable absorption of the refugees into the economies of the Arab states, already seriously weakened by internal economic difficulties, without increasing unemployment and depressing the already low standard of living. Absorption of the refugees on a self-supporting basis can only be achieved by raising the economic potential of the countries involved, through increase in the amount or productivity of arable land and creation of new employment opportunities.

In the Department's opinion, any continuing program of assistance would have to be based on three primary considerations. First, it should be formulated on a work relief basis rather than on the basis of direct relief. Such a program would raise the morale of the refugees, would result in the accomplishment of useful work directed towards their resettlement, towards raising the economic potential of the states involved and towards a progressive reduction and eventual elimination of the need for external assistance. Second, in order to secure the cooperation of the Arab states, any solution of the problem should be formulated within the broader framework of the interests of the countries concerned, with special reference to their economic development. Third, any outside assistance should be made available under the auspices of the United Nations.

On the basis of the preceding considerations, it is apparent that considerable financing from external sources, both in the form of direct grants for work relief projects and loans for economic development purposes, are required for solution of the problem. The financial requirements for such a program, which will require a minimum period of three years, are tentatively estimated at \$250,000,000-\$300,000,000 from all sources. These funds should be provided by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and/or the United States Export-Import Bank, in the case of projects meeting their requirements; by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and related international organizations; and the remainder by grants and loans from the governments of interested United Nations member states.

From the political point of view, the Department considers that failure to resolve the refugee problem would serve to perpetuate conditions of insecurity and unrest in the Near East, and that the refugees would serve as a focal point for the breeding of political extremism of both a leftist and a rightist character. From an economic standpoint, transfer of full responsibility for custodianship of the refugees to the Governments of the Arab states, even if they agreed to accept it, would constitute an insupportable strain upon the local economies, and thereby further aggravate political unrest and instability.

In order to formulate more precisely the nature and extent of this Government's interest in the refugee problem, and the degree to which we should participate in effecting a solution, an appreciation of the probable effects of the refugee problem upon our military and strategic interests in the Near East would be of considerable value to the Department.

It would be appreciated if you would transmit the foregoing to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the request that such an estimate be prepared for the Department's guidance.

Sincerely yours,

DEAN ACHESON

501.MA Palestine/5-449

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

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 4, 1949.

Subject: Visit of Israeli Ambassador.

Discussion:

The Israeli Ambassador, Mr. Eliahu Elath, has an appointment with you at 4:15 this afternoon. He is under instructions from his Government to deliver to the Secretary a copy of a statement which has been prepared for Israeli representatives to make before the *ad hoc* Committee of the United Nations General Assembly when the question of the admission of Israel to the United Nations is discussed by that Committee. The background of this matter is briefly as follows:

One of the most important problems which must be cleared up before a lasting peace can be established in Palestine is the question of the disposition of the more than 700,000 Arab refugees who during the Palestine conflict fled from their homes in what is now Israeli occupied territory and are at present living as refugees in Arab Palestine and the neighboring Arab states. The December 11, 1948, resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on Palestine resolved that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date. The Israelis have consistently maintained that the solution of the Arab refugee problem lies not in repatriation but in resettlement in the Arab states. Representatives of the Arab states, on the other hand, have insisted that a prerequisite to a final peace in Palestine is the acceptance by Israel of the principle of the repatriation of those Arab refugees who desire to return to their homes.

Arab and Israeli representatives are now meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, with the Palestine Conciliation Commission to discuss a

final peace settlement. Mr. Mark Ethridge, the American member of the Commission, believes that the question of the refugees is the key to the success of the Lausanne meeting and has been urging the Israelis to make a conciliatory statement accepting the principle of repatriation. If the Israelis do this, Mr. Ethridge believes the Arab representatives will be influenced to conclude a final peace with Israel.

The Department, through the Embassy in Tel Aviv and here in Washington, has been backing up Mr. Ethridge on this point. When Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett was in this country the Secretary emphasized to him the desirability of Israel's making a conciliatory statement concerning the refugees and the President recently spoke in the same vein to President Weizmann of Israel.

The case of the admission of Israel is now up before the United Nations and several members thereof have expressed displeasure that Israel has so far disregarded the section of the December 11 General Assembly resolution concerning the repatriation of the Arab refugees.

Under these circumstances, the Israeli Government has apparently decided to make some kind of a statement on refugees in the *ad hoc* Committee of the General Assembly. Since the Secretary urged upon Mr. Sharett the desirability of making such a statement, the Israeli Government desires that a copy of the statement be furnished the Secretary.

Recommendation:

It is probable that the statement will not be satisfactory from our point of view in that it will not be the kind of firm acceptance of the principle of repatriation which we would like to see the Israelis make. Under these circumstances, it would be most undesirable if Israeli representatives at Lausanne and in the United Nations were to seek to give the impression that the statement had been submitted to the United States Government before it was made and had been "cleared". It is therefore recommended that during the Ambassador's visit you limit yourself to listening to what he has to say, to accepting the statement without reading it in his presence, and to thanking him for the Israeli Government's courtesy in making a copy of the statement available to us. If it is impossible to avoid reading the statement in the Ambassador's presence, it is suggested that you inform him that you will wish to consider the statement thoroughly with the officers of the Department concerned with the matter.

As today is the first anniversary of the independence of Israel, it is suggested that you congratulate the Ambassador upon this event.

501.BB Palestine/5-449: Telegram

Mr. Mark F. Ethridge to the Secretary of State

SECRET

BERN, May 4, 1949—11 a. m.

676. Palun 140. On May 3, Dr. Walter Eytan as head of Israeli delegation Lausanne, made first formal appearance before PCC for purpose presenting "latest" views of Israeli Government re such outstanding matters as refugees, Jerusalem, boundaries and procedure. Substance of Eytan's remarks, particularly re refugees, again indicated Israel had not modified its position as stated by Ben Gurion (Palun 13)¹ or Comay (Palun 126).² Intransigence of Israeli position re refugees came as considerable surprise to PCC in view of more lenient line hinted by Eytan and other Israelis during past week (Palun 139).³ It was indicative to me that Secretary's conversation with Sharett, McDonald's instructions (Deptel 208)⁴ and Secretary's conversation with Elath and Eban (Unpal 85)⁵ have apparently fallen on deaf ears. This is particularly disheartening because Arab representatives are increasingly indicating disposition to come to grips with situation. Fawzi Mulki of Transjordan delegation, for example, indicated in no uncertain terms last evening that Transjordan Government considered primary objective to be quick peace. Such matters as refugees and Jerusalem, although important, were secondary and would almost solve themselves as peace was achieved. Israelis apparently fail to appreciate importance of conciliatory approach toward outstanding problems. Arab fears re public opinion at home are deprecated. Maximum concessions from Arabs appear to be more important to Israelis than constructive conclusion to recent conflict which would represent some meetings of minds. Eytan put Israeli case as follows: (a) *Refugees*: In order remove any possible doubt in minds of public or individual PCC members, Israel

¹ Presumably Palun 133, identified also as telegram 312, April 20, from Jerusalem, p. 925.

² Identified also as telegram 291, April 13, from Jerusalem, p. 911.

³ Identified also as telegram 661, May 3, from Bern, p. 968. In a press conference held at Lausanne on April 30, Mr. Eytan made a statement on the matter which was released by the Israeli Office of Information in New York on May 2. Mr. Eytan was said to have recognized "that the refugee problem is one of the main problems confronting this conference. The Israeli delegation has come prepared to tackle it with sincerity, and above all, in the spirit of realism. We believe it to be soluble. We are prepared to help in finding a solution and to cooperate with the UN and the Arab states in its implementation, on the assumption that cooperation with the Arab states will extend to other spheres too. The solution, however, is inseparable from the general peace settlement with the Arab states." (telegram Delga 70, May 2, 7: 25 p. m., from New York, 501.BB Palestine/5-249)

⁴ Not printed, but see footnote 2, p. 894.

⁵ Identified also as telegram 544, April 28, to Bern, p. 956.

reiterates it accepts no responsibility for fact refugees are refugees. War in Palestine is real and only cause for present situation. Israel had nothing to do with flight of Arabs and sought to avoid creation refugee problem. Eytan said he had duty to emphasize Israeli view that Arabs and Arab states were responsible for war. Israel realizes, however, situation exists in Middle East in which 550,000 people, not 800,000 or more as reported, are homeless and views with concern for humanitarian and political reasons. As Israel is part of Middle East it is interested in contributing to solution of refugee problem. Israel alone could not handle problem; nor could Transjordan. Physical return to Israel is impossible socially and practically. On November 29, 1947, Israel was prepared for large Arab minority. If there had been no war matters would have developed differently both politically and economically. Flight of Arabs has made Israel Jewish territory which returning Arabs would not recognize. Partial exchange of population which has thus resulted is healthier in long run. Experience shows large minorities are troublesome and lead to instability. To return Arabs would be backward step socially and politically and would make matters worse.

Israel would be prepared to contribute to refugee assistance in 3 ways, providing some plan for large-scale international action re refugees were undertaken: (1) Return of presently separated families; (2) Compensation; (3) Technical assistance. Eytan analyzed Israeli contribution as follows:

General: Unless resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees with international assistance were to be considered further discussion with PCC would be fruitless. Israel believes Arab refugees should be resettled under Arab rule for social, political, economic and religious reasons. Israel doubts whether returning Arabs would be content under Israeli rule. Eytan doubted Israel would issue conciliatory statement indicating possibility of repatriation and if it did that Arabs would come back. Eytan cited fact that Arabs from Arab villages transferred to Israel under Israeli-Transjordan armistice were moving out of own free will and in complete absence of force or persuasion which had been strictly enjoined. Eytan doubted whether returning Arabs would be willing to accept obligations such as service in Israeli army.

(1) *Return of Presently Separated Families:* Israelis prepared to study whether scheme can be arranged with Arab states under which Israel would take part of refugees. Time for declaration in terms of numbers has not arrived as figure depends on scheme. Large-scale international help will be required. Israeli delegation is authorized to go into question on this basis. Israelis prepared to reunite separated families based on formula of close relationship.

(2) *Compensation:* Israelis prepared to pay compensation for loss of land owned and cultivated by Arab farmers. Lands owned but not

cultivated would not be compensable. Israel believes compensation should be handled in reasonable way by payment into common fund for refugee use and to avoid squandering by individuals.

(3) *Technical Assistance*: (a) Israelis willing to place its experts at disposition of management of overall resettlement scheme. Arabs have few technicians and Israelis can help. Israel cannot, however, give technical assistance to isolated efforts but only to some general Near East scheme.

(b) *Jerusalem*: Israeli delegation will talk with Jerusalem Committee re Jerusalem and holy places. Otherwise, Israeli views were well known to PCC.

(c) *Territorial settlement*: Israel prepared to discuss frontiers with legitimately interested countries. Gaza strip would be of interest to Egypt and Transjordan but not Syria. Israel did not consider it necessary to settle all details or some political boundaries at Lausanne. Some boundary questions could be discussed in normal fashion between individual states later.

(d) *Arab declarations*: Israel feels PCC has exerted strong pressure on it as though Israel were "in dock". Israel is not responsible for situation in Palestine. Israel considers major concession is due from Arab states with whom real guilt for war lies. Arab states lack courage to state they are seeking peace. Arab states are not interested in peace but in ridding themselves of refugee problem. PCC could ask Arab delegations to issue declaration re peace aims which would clear atmosphere. Thus far Arab states have been pampered. Israel would welcome Arab statement and believes Arabs would respond to PCC request.

ETHRIDGE

867N.01/5-449: Telegram

The Ambassador in Israel (McDonald) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

US URGENT

TEL AVIV, May 4, 1949—2 p. m.

332. At state dinner May 3 Sharett asked me report to Department in strictest confidence that special meeting Israel-Syrian armistice negotiators to be held May 5 without presence UN officials at request Syria. Foreign Minister regards this as crucial test. He pleads for US good offices [garble] urge Colonel Zaim not insist on "rectification" of frontier. If this demand is withdrawn, Foreign Minister optimistic agreement armistice and prospect of peace negotiations.

Comment: I hope Department can act promptly.¹ *End Comment.*

¹The editors have found no evidence in the Department of State files that it ordered the exercise of the good offices of the United States in this matter. On May 7, the Department advised Tel Aviv of its anxiety to receive information concerning the outcome of the Israeli-Syrian meeting of May 5 (telegram 280, 867N.01/5-449). In reply, on May 10, Ambassador McDonald stated he had been advised by General Riley that the "meeting was complete failure. Neither side would budge." (telegram 347, 867N.01/5-1049)

New subject: Foreign Minister told me that Israel expects issue either New York or Lausanne new and comprehensive refugee statement. *Comment:* I hope but I cannot be sure it will be conciliatory. *End comment.*²

McDONALD

² Presumably the statement by Mr. Eytan as reported in *supra*.

867N.01/5-449: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, May 4, 1949—3 p. m.

351. Abdullah Tel, commenting on Jewish attack near Beit Safafa, characterized it clear breach armistice and SC imposed truce. Asserted King and Transjordan Government most disturbed over precipitous action Jews when Transjordan had done everything possible meet Israeli demands. Explained Colonel Dayan after consulting Tel Aviv gave Legion "ultimatum" to withdraw from area allotted Jews by specified hour. Dayan offered delay operations only if Transjordan would immediately appoint new delegates to special committee and convene committee night May 1 to complete discussion questions on agenda. Amman refused appoint delegates immediately but gave Legion orders withdraw from area assigned Jews and take every precaution avoid incidents. Villagers resisted. Tel thought Jewish attack might be warning of what would happen in triangle if delay in timetable occurred. Was strongly critical of Arab delegates on special committee for accepting line giving areas inhabited by Arab villagers to Jews. Felt relinquishment of territory immediately after Egyptian withdrawal created especially unfavorable impression on Palestine Arabs. Said understood tentative agreement reached in special committee re Latrun and free access on Scopus and Bethlehem roads but position of Transjordan Government not yet known.

Sir Hugh Dow, British Consul General, wondered whether Jews seeking pretext seize additional territory. Felt action boded ill for turnover of section in triangle since Jews might claim Legion not able maintain order and occupy large area. Reiterated his belief Israel so accustomed have its own way, concrete action as distinct from representations required before would cease efforts to expand.

Sent Department, repeated Amman.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/5-449 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Legation in Switzerland*¹

CONFIDENTIAL US URGENT WASHINGTON, May 4, 1949—6 p. m.

583. For Ethridge as Unpal 91. Israeli Amb called at Dept May 4 to deliver advance copy of statement on refugees which he said Eban would probably make before GA *Ad Hoc* Committee May 5.² Said statement being made result US Govt suggestion.

Statement declares Arab states responsible for creation refugee problem. Israeli Govt believes solution inseparably linked with solution issues outstanding between Israel and Arab states and can only be found within final settlement creating conditions cooperation between Israel and its neighbors.

Israel anxious contribute solution problem. Study of economic, irrigation and other possible potentialities Arab states reveals greater possibilities for stable solution by resettlement Arab states rather than Israel. Israeli Govt thus contends resettlement in neighboring areas be considered as main principle of solution. "However, Israel will be ready to make its own contribution to a solution of the problem. It is not yet ascertainable either how many wish to return under conditions that may be prescribed by the Assembly or how many Israel can receive in the light of existing political and economic considerations." Extent of Israel's contribution settlement this problem will depend entirely on formal establishment peace and relations good neighborliness between Israel and Arab states.

Israeli Govt has already announced acceptance of obligations to make compensation for lands abandoned and previously cultivated. Reaffirms its obligation protect persons and property all communities living within its borders.

While indicating its readiness to do all possible contribute solution final settlement refugee problem, Israeli Govt hopes that those states which caused problem by their initiative in proclaiming war will face up squarely to their responsibilities and undeniable opportunities available to them for settling problem in manner beneficial their own economic needs. Immediate declaration by all govts their desire for early peace settlement would create favorable atmosphere for discussion this problem.

ACHESON

¹ This telegram was repeated to USUN New York, Tel Aviv, and London.

² Mr. Eban addressed the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee on May 5 in connection with Israel's application for membership in the United Nations. During the course of his address, he discussed various issues between Israel and its Arab neighbors, including the refugee question and the City of Jerusalem. A summary of his address is printed in United Nations, *Official Records of the Third Session of the General Assembly, Part II, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Summary Records of Meetings, 6 April-10 May 1949*, p. 227.

867N.01/5-549 : Telegram

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

TOP SECRET

DAMASCUS, May 5, 1949—10 a. m.

267. Mytel 260 May 1.¹ Zaim tells me and General Riley confirms that Counselor Tarazi of Syrian Foreign Office and Lieutenant Colonel Nasser meeting secretly on Syrian-Israeli frontier today Thursday with Shiloah and Colonel Yadin. Syrian representatives have broad powers and Zaim will also be available by telephone to instruct them if necessary to meet concessions with concessions. Moreover Zaim has reiterated to me his continued willingness personally meet Israelis representatives of equal rank (mytel 256, April 28)¹ for direct discussions all outstanding issues.

Repeated Tel Aviv 26, London 74, Paris 59, Bern 5 for Ethridge PCC, Ankara 39, USUNDel New York 3, pouched Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jerusalem, Jidda.

KEELEY

¹ Not printed.

867N.01/5-749 : Telegram

The Chargé in Transjordan (Stabler) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

AMMAN, May 7, 1949—2 p. m.

199. Legtel 194, May 4.¹ King gave me following account this morning of his talk with Sharett May 5:

Meeting had taken place at Shuneh in presence of Transjordan Prime Minister. King began meeting by expressing pleasure that Sharett and Prime Minister had met and hoped agreement could be worked out.

Sharett said he gratified by appointment new Transjordan delegates to special committee as Israeli public opinion had been "shocked" to learn that committee talks suspended after meeting April 20. (Understood Transjordan representatives now Abdullah Tel and Hamad Farhan ² with Ahmad Khalil as advisor.)

Prime Minister expressed hope that outlines for peace settlement could be reached here to be implemented by delegates at Lausanne but said it appeared that Israelis proposed that only those points of interest to Israel be discussed this stage and that all Transjordan points be deferred to Lausanne. Sharett replied that on contrary Israel wished discuss and settle all points.

¹ Not printed.

² Secretary in the Transjordanian Government.

Sharett then stated particular concern of Israel over resumption work at potash plant and Rutenberg.³ Prime Minister countered by stating that Israel would have to agree to certain Transjordan demands before agreement could be reached on potash and Rutenberg.

Prime Minister then inquired whether Israel would agree to partition lines as basis for final settlement. Sharett stated that Arabs had never accepted partition and therefore it was now part of history.

At this point Prime Minister, who seemed to think Sharett had adopted somewhat "superior attitude" pointed out that he had never wanted war but that Jews through breach truce in Jerusalem, Deir Yassin and other incidents had forced him into it. Consequently Sharett had no right to talk to him as he would to Egyptians or others. Transjordan was entirely willing to agree to most of Israeli demands such as Latrun and Mt. Scopus but could only do so if Israel would agree to Transjordan demands. He said that most important thing was to arrive at peace settlement which was acceptable to people rather than to official bodies and which would guarantee future relationships. He did not want war and way to avoid it was firm and reasonable settlement. He pointed out Transjordan desire for outlet to sea and its concern re refugees. He was willing consider Latrun and Scopus situation if Israel would consider such matters as return Arab quarters Jerusalem.

Sharett replied that Israel was in agreement re peace and was also in agreement with Transjordan on other matters. Said that Israel agreed with Transjordan re undesirability internationalization Jerusalem and also agreed to Transjordan having outlet to sea. Re latter point stated Israel would give Transjordan free port at Haifa.

³ The Rutenberg Hydro-Electric Works were located at Naharim at the junction of the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers. Chargé Stabler, on July 11, advised the Department of his recent visit to the Works, stating "It is understood that prior to the hostilities in May 1948, the Jordan Government and the Jewish Agency reached some form of agreement concerning the protection of the Hydro-Electric works. It is possible that the Jordan Government would have been able to observe this agreement if it had not been for the arrival of the Iraqi forces. When the Iraqi forces came into the area, the Israelis departed, but only after blowing up certain of the dynamos in the main dynamo building. Later the Iraqi finished the job, even removing numerous machines. . . . The area has been under the control of the Arab Legion since the departure of the Iraqi troops three months ago. All looting and damage has been stopped by the Legion and the area is under guard. . . . It is quite obvious that the Rutenberg Hydro-Electric works can only be operated again by an agreement between Jordan and Israel. Jordan, on its part, is incapable of operating such a works by itself and, moreover, the Israelis can control the flow of the Jordan. Israel, on the other hand, cannot commence operations of the works as all the buildings are in Jordan territory. In addition, Jordan can control the flow of the Yarmuk River. It would appear that it would take some time yet to reach an agreement on the operation of the Rutenberg Hydro-Electric Works as it remains, along with the Dead Sea Potash Works, an important bargaining point for Jordan." (Despatch 65 from Amman, 890i.6463/7-1149)

He indicated that Transjordan could not accept Haifa proposal and wanted outlet at Gaza through Beersheba. Sharett replied this not possible as it would cut Israeli territory. King then suggested Israelis should return Ramle and Lydda immediately so Transjordan could have outlet at Majdal or Ascalon.

King said meeting ended on friendly note but felt that no progress had been made. When I inquired whether he was hopeful that talks would lead to early and acceptable settlement he replied "I cannot answer yes or no—it depends on support I receive from US and others". He indicated he would like to meet again with Sharett or Ben-Gurion.

Sent Department 199; repeated Jerusalem 99, Geneva for USDel PCC 10, London 34, Tel Aviv 8.⁴

STABLER

⁴Tel Aviv reported, on May 10, that the Foreign Office had confirmed the meeting of Mr. Sharett with King Abdullah on May 5 and had "informally indicated no progress had resulted from discussion which was described as 'friendly but fruitless.'" (telegram 348, 867N.01/5-1049)

501.BB Palestine/4-2949: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Lebanon

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 7, 1949—4 p. m.

225. Pls take early opportunity resume conversation reported urtel 217, May 4,¹ expressing Dept's appreciation over instructions to Lebanese delegation to cooperate fully with PCC at Lausanne in solving refugee problem, and Lebanese intention use its influence with Arab states to induce reasonable attitude.

You should inform FonMin that Dept is aware of sensitive Christian-Moslem balance and would regret any disturbance to Lebanon's equilibrium. We believe, however, that Lebanon could agree to accept for permanent resettlement reasonable portion of refugees now in Lebanon, selected on basis half Christians half Moslems, in order maintain equilibrium. USG fearful that failure Lebanon indicate agreement to principle resettlement would materially lessen willingness other Arab states to share in burden which Lebanon has so generously assumed up to present, and might accordingly result in perpetuation large-scale refugee problem in Lebanon. US is therefore hopeful that in own interest Lebanon will express willingness in principle accept some refugees for permanent resettlement, as humane and constructive example to other Arab states to take similar action.

¹ Not printed, but see footnote 2, p. 966.

Inform FonMin we are continuing press Israel re repatriation and we agree that compensation by Israel is necessary.²

ACHESON

² This telegram was repeated to Bern for Mr. Ethridge. Beirut replied on May 18, advising of the belief of the Foreign Minister that "it is unlikely Lebanon will be able receive many Palestine refugees for permanent settlement. For possible effect on other Arab states, however, he agreed in principle to accept as many as could be absorbed into Lebanon . . . He expressed belief that number can never exceed token or symbolic acceptance" (telegram 237, 501.BB Palestine/5-1849).

867N.48/5-949

Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 9, 1949.

Subject: Estimated Cost Palestine Refugee Program

1. An expenditure of \$250-275 million over the next three years is estimated to be necessary for repatriation and resettlement of 700,000 Arab refugees on a self-sustaining basis (Tab A).¹ Costs may be greater if a coordinated program cannot be carried out with full cooperation of the states concerned on the basis of sound planning and administration. The program as contemplated would involve capital development projects such as irrigation, rural industries and village development, as well as an interim relief and work program (Tab B).

2. Overall responsibility for the refugees should remain with Israel and the Arab states. Outside assistance should be under United Nations auspices. It is in the national interest of the United States, however, that the program be carried out successfully, and the United States should be prepared to aid Israel and the Arab Governments to this end through appropriate financial and technical assistance.

3. In order to assure success of the program the United States should be prepared to furnish as a grant that portion of the total cost that remains after loans from the International and Export-Import Banks, compensation by Israel and contributions by the states concerned, Great Britain and other United Nations states, and by private and commercial organizations. On the basis of estimated maximum and minimum contributions from these sources, it would be necessary to ask the United States Congress for a contribution to this program in the form of a grant of \$120-150 million over the next

¹ Tabs A and B are not found attached to the Department's record copy of the memorandum of May 9 but are attached to the one of May 4 (see footnote 2, p. 970). It is the opinion of the editors that the same attachments accompanied both memoranda to the White House. Tab A is printed *infra*. Tab B, dated April 21 and entitled "Estimated Costs of Implementing Refugee Settlement," is not printed.

three years, or \$40-50 million a year. No plan will be made, however, involving contributions by the United States as a grant exceeding about 50 per cent of the total cost of the program, based on best available estimates of amounts likely to be forthcoming from the other sources listed above, without seeking new authority.

4. The segment of this assistance which the International Bank and the Eximbank may choose to finance is uncertain in view of the financial risks involved. For that reason participation of the banks is assumed to the extent of only \$15 million as a minimum and \$50 million as a maximum.²

DEAN ACHESON

[Annex 1]

*Memorandum on the Palestine Refugee Problem*³

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 4, 1949.

PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

FINANCING REPATRIATION AND RESETTLEMENT OF PALESTINE REFUGEES

Approximately 700,000 refugees from the Palestine hostilities, now located principally in Arab Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon and Syria, will require repatriation to Israel or resettlement in the Arab states.

1. Total costs of repatriation and resettlement of refugees are estimated at a minimum of \$267,500,000, to be expended over a three year period. This includes \$30,000,000 for repatriation to Israel, \$160 million for resettlement in Arab states, \$27,500,000 for direct and work relief, and \$50,000,000 for subsidiary development projects necessary to achieve balanced development of the economies of the Arab states.

2. If Israel will agree to and cooperate in the repatriation of 200,000 refugees, it is estimated (see Table I) that they can be returned to farms and villages in which dwellings have been rebuilt or restored,

² This memorandum is identical to the one of May 4 (see footnote 2, p. 970), except for paragraph numbered 3, which reads as follows in the version of May 4: "In order to assure success of the program the United States should be prepared to finance that portion not to exceed about 50% of the total cost that remains after loans from international sources and contributions by Israel, the Arab states, Great Britain and other UN states, and private and commercial organizations. On the basis of estimated maximum and minimum contributions from these sources, it will be necessary to ask the United States Congress for contribution to this program in the form of a grant of \$120-150 million over the next three years, or \$40-50 million a year."

Secretary Acheson discussed the estimated cost of the Palestine refugee program with President Truman on May 12. His memorandum of the conversation records that "The President said he would speak to the Director of the Budget about the matter this afternoon, in an effort to get us a prompt reply." (Secretary's Memoranda, Lot 53 D 444, Secretary's Memos)

³ Presumably prepared in the Office of the Coordinator on Palestine Refugee Matters.

and that they can be supplied with farm animals, tools and utensils which have been lost or destroyed, with seed for the first planting and food enough to last until the first harvest, at an average cost of \$150 per person. Approximately half of the estimated \$30,000,000 cost of repatriation represents capital items which would restore the net worth of the Arab properties. The other half represents for the most part wages to be paid to the refugees for work leading to their resettlement, which would go to supply food, clothing and other basic necessities to the dependents of the workers until they become self-sustaining.

3. The 500,000 remaining refugees must be resettled in Arab states. In view of the fact that Transjordan, Arab Palestine and the Lebanon do not provide an economic basis for settlement of all the refugees now within their borders, additional land must be sought elsewhere. Among the Arab states which can be considered for large scale absorption of additional refugees only Syria offers land which can be prepared for resettlement on a self-sustaining basis over the next 2-3 years. Iraq cannot be counted upon for any substantial resettlement because of political difficulties and because development will take 5-10 years.

For projects similar to the Jezirah Valley and the Ghab Swamp in Syria and for development of the Jordan Valley in Transjordan, it is estimated (see Table II) that 500,000 persons can be settled on land newly acquired and irrigated at a cost of about \$320 per capita. On that basis \$160,000,000 would provide for about 85,000 families of six persons. Each family would be settled on 8 acres of land, given the facilities to build houses of the type to which they are accustomed, supplied with farm animals, seeds, simple tools and household utensils, and paid enough in wages to provide food, clothing and other necessities until the first harvest. Resettlement cost for non-agricultural refugees, who will in many cases require working capital as well as homes and other facilities, is assumed to be the same. Included in the cost are such items as schools, roads, water supply, sanitation, and other minimum community facilities. There is also an allowance for limited expansion of government administration and services in the new areas. About 40% of this cost or \$64,000,000 involves capital items which will increase net worth.

4. Although every effort should be made to provide for the sustenance of the refugees through work payments, on resettlement projects, relief feeding will continue to be necessary for as many as a quarter of the refugees for the first year. In addition, although there is an ample wage component in the estimated resettlement cost to employ all able-bodied refugees, many jobs must go to local citizens and it is estimated that as many as a quarter of the employable refugees cannot work directly on resettlement projects in the first year. Even though such

refugees are put to useful work it must be budgeted for separately. It is estimated that the proportion remaining on direct and work relief should be halved in the second year, and halved again in the third year. On the basis of the cost experience of the UNRPR program of approximately \$30.0 per person annually for direct relief, and an estimated cost of twice this amount for persons supported through work relief, the refugees on relief and work relief would require \$15,750,000 the first year, \$7,875,000 the second year and \$3,937,500 the third year, or a total of approximately \$27,500,000.

5. Capital outlays in addition to those required for refugee resettlement must be made if balanced development programs in the countries concerned are to be assured, and some consideration given to their own development requirements apart from those associated with refugees. For additional expenditures of the magnitude of \$50,000,000, allotted to the various countries in accordance with a regional plan, it should be possible to increase chances for success of the program and to accomplish considerable agricultural and other development for the benefit of the present population of the area. This is the most flexible portion of the program and may be reduced if funds are not available.

6. A relatively small amount of financial assistance is counted on through International Bank and Eximbank loans. At the present time both institutions are cautious of lending to the governments of the Near East area. Where governments have specific revenues, such as oil royalties which can be assigned directly for debt service, the banks are inclined to regard loan applications more favorably; however, none of the countries concerned have oil production. Unfortunately Syria, which is the most immediate prospect for large-scale resettlement, has in prospect only transit fees from the Trans-Arabian Pipeline which may amount to less than \$500,000 annually. Syria's poor general financial condition, together with a drastic adverse trade balance, are other factors which make lending by either bank relatively difficult. Trans-jordan is not a member of the International Bank.

7. The minimum program capable of repatriating and resettling the refugees over the next three years will cost, as shown above, about \$267,500,000. The United States will probably be called on to finance the total costs that remain after the following contributions, which are given as possible minimum and maximum figures in the light of the limited evidence available:

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Loans from International Banks | \$15,000,000 to \$50,000,000 |
| Compensation from Israel | 30,000,000 to 50,000,000 |
| Contributions from other states and organizations | 25,000,000 to 50,000,000 |

Assuming maximum contributions from these sources of \$150,000,000 the United States contribution would be \$117,500,000. Assuming minimum contributions from these sources, or \$70,000,000, the United States contribution could still be limited to \$150,000,000 by reducing capital outlays under Paragraph 5 above. A portion of funds appropriated under the "Point Four" Program would be applicable against this amount. Remaining funds would have to be sought through Congressional appropriations. It is assumed that expenditures would take place in three equal installments of \$40-50,000,000 per year. It should be recognized that prolonging the program over a greater number of years may reduce annual costs somewhat, but would add considerably to the total cost because of the added direct and work relief that would be required.

[Annex 2]

TABLE I

Repatriation of 200,000 refugees in Israel (\$150 per capita)
(in millions of dollars)

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Total Cost</i> | <i>Capital Items</i> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Irrigation | \$5.0 | \$1.7 |
| Dwellings | 5.0 | .2 |
| Farm Tools and Utensils | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| Farm Animals | 8.1 | 8.0 |
| Assoc. Facilities, incl. transportation | 8.6 | 1.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <hr/> \$30.0 | <hr/> \$15.0 |

[Annex 3]

TABLE II

Resettlement of 500,000 refugees in Arab states
(\$320 per capita)
(in millions of dollars)

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Total Cost</i> | <i>Capital Items</i> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Land | \$14.2 | \$14.2 |
| Irrigation | 28.4 | 9.5 |
| Dwellings | 42.5 | 2.1 |
| Farm Tools & Utensils | 9.2 | 9.2 |
| Farm Animals | 23.1 | 23.1 |
| Assoc. Facilities, such as Schools | 17.0 | 5.1 |
| Transportation costs, expansion of government facilities, etc. | 25.6 | 4.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <hr/> \$160.0 | <hr/> \$67.4 |

501.BB Palestine/5-949: Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Vincent) to the Secretary of State

SECRET

BERN, May 9, 1949—noon.

699. Palun 142. For the Secretary from Ethridge. Have reservation on TWA flight leaving Geneva May 24 and feel that I must make it. Hope very much that deputy will be quickly designated.

Situation here, leaving aside reaction to US sponsorship of resolution of admission, on which we have no detail yet, is roughly this:

Jerusalem: Reported in separate telegram (see Palun 143)¹ from Barco.² General situation is that Jerusalem Committee about in agreement and we will have no difficulty in getting agreement in committee or Commission on basis of secretariat paper with some amendments. Tactically, however, it would be mistake to advance plan now because it would only confuse other issues. My idea is that plan should be put through Commission after other matters settled and I have discouraged Barco from pushing for agreement now. Feel sure that can be attained when time is ripe.

Negotiations: Although Arab States say they want to negotiate en bloc through Commission Sassoon has already made contact with Transjordan and Egyptian delegations. Both Israelis and Arabs have to think about meetings. Eytan thinks he is making some progress with them. Arabs have assured me that nothing substantive discussed and that they are determined to negotiate en bloc. I have responded that they have a right to do that if they desire but that would presuppose agreement among themselves on such questions as the disposition of Arab Palestine, the Gaza strip, territorial compensation from Israel for territory held beyond partition plan, disposition of refugees who would not be taken back or did not want to go back, and other problems. Obviously they have not agreed among themselves and wanted time to think over what I said. They have asked for a meeting with the Commission on Tuesday and in meantime have appointed Boulas of Arab Palestine Refugee Committee as liaison man among themselves.

Arabs have been urging Commission to present plan to them. They want to be in position to say that peace was imposed by UN. In fact two of them have told me that if I will draft a peace plan they will consider it as "instruction". I have of course refused to do so both on behalf of the US and UN. I have told them that since we have pressed Israeli delegation in two public and several private meetings to reveal its position on all matters we must also press Arabs to reveal their position. The Commission would then undertake to ascertain any common ground and would have a basis for negotiation. If the viewpoints were irreconcilable and the two parties asked for it the Commission would present a working paper and agenda as basis for discussion.

¹ Identified also as telegram 698, May 9, noon, from Bern, not printed.

² James W. Barco, Adviser to the United States Delegation at Lausanne.

Arabs are holding meetings over week-end to undertake to get together. All of them are most anxious for peace, particularly Egypt and Transjordan.

On the basis, no doubt, of Zaim's statement to Keeley, Syria has modified her position. Zeineddine³ until yesterday held stubbornly to position Syria would not consider anything but refugees first. He is now willing to discuss refugees and territorial settlement jointly and expressed in private conversation with me Syria's willingness to take up to 250,000 refugees providing Syria was compensated territorially. He says he has no instruction from Zaim to demand it but he regards Syria's price as panhandle of Palestine, part of eastern Galilee and western Galilee to Acre. He disclosed that Syria is holding up armistice negotiations not because of minor rectification of border but in an effort to get in one agreement, whether in armistice or at Lausanne, cession of much greater territory.

Eytan has told me that Egypt had rather hand over Gaza strip with its 80,000 population and 245,000 refugees to Israel than to Transjordan. That confirmed by Transjordan representative who feels, however, that Egypt will hold on to Gaza strip and give it to nobody. Egypt is interested primarily in shortening her line with Israel which would be accomplished by return of southern Negeb to Arab control.

It is obvious that while Arab delegation are willing to tell me and perhaps other members of Commission what they want they have not yet brought themselves to where they will tell each other, except I am sure they have agreed that what is left of presently held Arab Palestine will go to Transjordan.

Arabs have frankly admitted that they are waiting outcome at Lake Success before getting into real negotiations. Egyptians said to me, "we have weapon and we are using it." Commission feeling is that if Israel wins at Lake Success she will become hopelessly intransigent and if she loses Israel will endeavor maintain her present position as best she can while looking forward to September session. Commission feels that if Arabs win they will feel more confidence but not intransigence and will be more secure with public opinion at home to the point that they can go ahead with negotiations. In any case Lake Success has certainly delayed work of Commission and may further delay it after issue is settled.

When the USDel here has received detail of US sponsorship of resolution of admission will send reaction and comments. In meantime members are staying in their hotel rooms. [Ethridge.]

VINCENT

³ Farid Zeineddine, member of the Syrian Delegation at Lausanne and Acting Secretary-General of the Syrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

501.BB Palestine/5-949 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Israel

SECRET US URGENT

TEL AVIV, May 9, 1949—7 p. m.

282. Info reaching Dept re Syrian armistice negots indicates offer by Zaim of personal talk with Ben-Gurion re outstanding questions, but that possible offer has not reached Ben-Gurion.¹ Pls bring this offer to notice Ben-Gurion in appropriate manner, indicating interest USG in view importance armistice agreement to success Lausanne discussions.²

ACHESON

¹ New York, on May 8, had advised that "Zaim has offered talk personally with Ben-Gurion re armistice lines and other outstanding questions. . . . Bunche suspects that Zaim's proposal may not have been brought to Ben-Gurion's attention. Bunche suggests that it would be helpful if Department would manage to bring Zaim offer to notice of Ben-Gurion." (telegram 573, 501.BB Palestine/5-849)

² This telegram was repeated to New York and Damascus and to Bern for the U.S. Delegation at Lausanne. In reply on May 12, Ambassador McDonald stated he had spoken to the Israeli Prime Minister about a personal talk with the Syrian leader and was informed that he had known of this suggestion from the beginning (telegram 357 from Tel Aviv, 501.BB Palestine/5-1249).

867N.48/5-1049

The Department of State to the British Embassy

SECRET

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

The Department of State wishes to express appreciation to the Government of the United Kingdom for its views¹ concerning a plan of operations which might be adopted with respect to settlement of the Palestine refugee problem. The Department of State is pleased to note the United Kingdom's general agreement with the Proposed Plan of Action² submitted by Mr. McGhee during his recent visit to London.

With reference to the specific comments of the United Kingdom concerning establishment of a survey group, the Department of State is of the opinion that adoption of the procedure suggested by the United Kingdom would imply the assumption of direct responsibility with respect to solution of the refugee problem by the United States

¹ The British views were expressed in the form of a telegram from the Foreign Office to the British Embassy here. The Department copy of this document is undated but was received in Mr. McGhee's office on May 2. It is filed with the *Aide-Mémoire* of May 10.

² See annex 3, p. 939.

in conjunction with the United Kingdom. This Government is not prepared to accept such direct responsibility for solution of the refugee problem. Moreover, it is considered that the establishment of a survey group by the Conciliation Commission is clearly within its terms of reference as set forth in the General Assembly Resolution of December 11, 1948, and that the Conciliation Commission would not be fully discharging its functions if it failed to take such action. The United States does not wish to undermine the authority of the Commission through unilateral or joint action within the range of the latter's competence.

The Department of State agrees with the United Kingdom that the proposed survey group should be small, that it should consist of the best qualified experts obtainable, and that it should be free to make its survey without supervision or interference. It is assumed, however, that these objectives could be achieved under the auspices of the Conciliation Commission if United States and United Kingdom representatives were appointed by the Commission to keep positions in the survey group, in recognition of our special interests in the refugee problem. The United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees may be cited as an example of a United Nations body which was established on sound organizational lines and has carried out its task without interference, essentially under American and British leadership.

The Department of State agrees that it would be desirable for the states concerned to associate themselves with and participate in the work of the survey group. Indeed, it is considered necessary for the success of the group that it be created as a result of the invitation of the states concerned and with their full cooperation, to assist them in carrying out developmental projects of their own choice.

In view of the urgency of the refugee problem, the Department of State agrees that first consideration should be given to projects for which basic surveys have already been made.

The Department of State recognizes that assistance to the states concerned for execution of the refugee program will be required over and above loans likely to be obtained from the International Bank and other fiscal institutions, and is gratified to note the assistance which the United Kingdom has already given Transjordan through the loan of a million pounds.

With respect to paragraph 4 of the United Kingdom statement,³ the Department of State is giving further consideration to the type of

³ Paragraph 4 of the Foreign Office telegram cited in footnote 1 immediately above stated that the task of maintaining the refugees and organizing their resettlement should revert "to full and overt United Nations authority" and that a specialized agency of the United Nations would best carry out the function.

organization required to carry out any program recommended by the survey group, and the proper auspices for such an organization. The views of the United Kingdom will be carefully considered in this connection; however, it is not felt that final decision need be made at the present time.

WASHINGTON, May 10, 1949.

501.BB Palestine/5-1049: Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Troutman) to the Secretary of State

RESTRICTED

GENEVA, May 10, 1949—11 a. m.

410. Palun 145. From Ethridge. After PCC meetings with Arabs at Beirut and with Israel in Tel Aviv, commissioners had informal meetings with Israelis in Jerusalem re preliminary measures which Israel might take without prejudice its interests for purpose creating atmosphere favorable to success of Lausanne talks. During past week Israeli delegation has informed PCC re these measures as follows:

(1) Israeli declaration re refugee problem: Recognizing refugee problem is one of main problems confronting conference. Israeli delegation prepared to tackle with sincerity and in spirit of optimism. We believe problem to be soluble and are prepared to do everything possible to help in arriving at solution. We shall cooperate with UN and with Arab States in implementing solution of problem on assumption that cooperation with Arab States will extend to other spheres as well.

(2) Israeli declaration re proprietary rights of refugees and payment of compensation: Fact that absentee property has been placed under custodian (see paragraph 5) indicates Israel's general attitude. Israel accepts principle of compensation for land abandoned and previously cultivated. Proprietary rights of refugees are recognized by Israel for purposes of such compensation but recognition does not bind government as far as concerns use or restitution of lands involved. Government reserves right to enact legislation for more rational use of absentee property and for purpose of guarding against speculation in such property without prejudice to payment of compensation or to such limited measures of repatriation as may be agreed upon.

(3) Israeli declaration re rights of minorities: Israel fully respected rights of minorities within its border and would punish anyone infringing these rights.

(4) Israeli assurance re blocked accounts: Israel has no intention of confiscating blocked Arab accounts in Israeli banks. Funds would be available to proper owners on conclusion of peace, subject to such general currency regulations as may be operative at time.

(5) A suspension of application of absentee law: Law at present in force placing of refugee property in category of "enemy property" under custodian. Custodian acts as trustee for absentee owners whose

property is administered in their interest and as far as possible preserved against deterioration after manner of similar custodianships in other countries.

(6) Undertaking re deterioration of refugee property, see paragraph 5.

(7) Employment of certain number refugee workers in Israel, e.g., port of Haifa, orange groves, et cetera: under consideration by Israeli delegation.

Re return of presently separated families (Palun 140)¹ Eytan has informed PCC following its request Israel would be willing as preliminary measure to take census by inviting Arabs resident in Israel to furnish details concerning relatives who are now refugees and who would wish and be eligible to apply for repatriation under conditions stated (genuine relatives of close degree of consanguinity and commencement of repatriation not to begin until final Israeli DPS [*sic*] Arab settlement). [Ethridge.]

TROUTMAN

¹ Identified also as telegram 676, May 4, from Bern, p. 975.

501.BB Palestine/5-1049: Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Troutman) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

GENEVA, May 10, 1949—11 a. m.

411. Palun 146. From Ethridge. PCC members and Israeli delegates recently discussed informally possibility of commencing Israeli-Arab negotiations through device of preamble of general principle in which both parties could agree. It was thought such an agreement would create favorable atmosphere and provide point of departure for further discussions and for further agreement. Bunche utilized this device to initiate discussion and agreement at Rhodes.

Eytan recently provided PCC with rough draft which might serve as basis for discussion on principles governing future relations and territorial settlement between Israel and Arab states. Israeli delegation did not consider itself bound to accept draft and presented as preliminary suggestion to facilitate negotiations. Draft agreement consists of preamble and two articles. Preamble cites pertinent paragraphs GA Resolution December 11 and PCC meeting at Lausanne. First article refers to Palestine war, Middle East peace and UN charter. Three principles affirmed:

- (1) Continued observance Armistice agreements;
- (2) Right to security, freedom and sovereignty;
- (3) Agreement prerequisite to establishment diplomatic relations and economic cooperation.

Second article contains definition of boundaries (in blank), undertaking to respect such boundaries, reservation re subsequent boundary changes, contact between frontier authorities to prevent incidents, settlement of frontier disputes by peaceful means through negotiations and arbitration.

PCC was of opinion draft preamble beginning statement of general principles rather than detailed formulation would prove more acceptable to Arab Delegates at this stage. PCC considered Article 1, subparagraphs 1 and 3 unnecessary and unwise respectively. PCC believed it would be preferable to consider agreement along lines of Article 2 after it proved possible to bring Arabs to agreement on less controversial matters.

Present PCC thinking tends to short agreement containing preamble and one article. Preamble would cite GA Resolution December 11 and Lausanne meeting. First and only article would declare intention not to resort to threat or use of force in settlement to any dispute arising from situation in Palestine and to settle any such dispute or question by peaceful means.

PCC draft is being informally discussed with Israeli and Arab delegates. [Ethridge.]

TROUTMAN

867N.01/5-1049 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Iraq (Crocker) to the Secretary of State

SECRET PRIORITY

BAGHDAD, May 10, 1949—1 p. m.

263. In striking contrast to meeting with Foreign Minister reported Embtel 260, May 7,¹ was my conversation with Prime Minister Nuri yesterday. Speaking dispassionately, Nuri expressed views along following lines:

1. First and foremost necessity to solution Palestine and attendant problems is determination territorial boundaries.

2. If some authorities would guarantee Israel would be made to abide by November 29, 1947 and December 11, 1948 UNGA Resolutions, real hope for liquidation Palestine problem would ensue.

3. Implementation such policy would automatically create living space in such places as Western Galilee and Lydda and Ramleh areas to permit absorption as much as 350,000 refugees.

4. Such considerable reduction in number refugees would enable Arab States examine how best they could help in solving problem of remaining refugees.

¹Not printed; it advised that Ambassador Crocker had communicated to Foreign Minister Jamali the substance of the circular telegram of April 29 (p. 959). The Foreign Minister was said to have "countered with number unrealistic and intransigent remarks indicating Iraq adamantly opposed taking any measure help alleviate refugee problem." (501.BB Palestine/5-749)

5. Coincidentally, fullest possible economic development would enable Iraq (a) settle during first four or five years bulk nomadic Iraqi tribesmen who wish make homes in fixed areas and own land and (b) plan on settling Palestine refugees after needs Iraqi tribesmen are met.

6. Such economic development should create conditions which would make possible five or six years hence adoption policy envisaging considerable refugee immigration into Iraq.

7. If UN fails take necessary action in time to stop Israel's constant flaunting [*flouting*] of solemn UN resolution, probably only help Iraq might extend would be to consider advisability arrange voluntary exchange on pro rata basis of Iraqi Jews for Palestine Arabs.

8. Expulsion Iraqi Jews to make room for Arab refugees not policy Iraqi Government would normally adopt as Iraq treats its Jews as Iraqi nationals entitled same rights as Iraqi Arabs. If pressed too hard, however, firebrand Iraqis might take matter into own hands and cause untold misery to thousands innocent persons.

Citing foregoing as some of reasons why he hoped UN would take effective measures to make Israel abide by earlier UN resolutions, Nuri expressed wish to help liquidate Palestine problem. His unwillingness participate Lausanne meeting springs from his sincere conviction that UN has done little to make Israel accept its decisions while at same time has done everything possible make Arabs accept *fait accompli* created by Israeli violations UN resolutions. Now is time for UN rectify situation and enable Arabs work towards development stability and security in Middle East.

Comment: Nuri, who suffered fainting spell in Majlis² two days ago and appeared far from well yesterday, spoke with true ring of sincerity. If we could satisfy him that UN will make Israel accept UN decisions, he would probably be best man in Iraq to help us move ahead in trying solve Palestine and refugee problem. If, however, we persist pressing Iraq to fall in line without exacting positive commitment from Israel in advance, we fear that his attitude because fear of internal upheaval will harden and our task will to that extent become even more difficult.

Sent Department 263, repeated London 93, Jerusalem 25, Tel Aviv 20, Bern 5 for Ethridge, pouched Arab capitals.

CROCKER

² The Iraqi Parliament.

Editorial Note

The General Assembly, on May 11, considered the proposal to admit Israel to membership in the United Nations. Senator Austin noted that the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee of the Assembly had recom-

mended the proposal by a large majority and that the United States was cosponsor of the draft resolution to effect the admission. The text of his statement is printed in the Department of State *Bulletin*, May 22, 1949, page 655.

The Assembly voted 37 to 12 in favor of the draft resolution. There were 9 abstentions, including the United Kingdom and Turkey. The United States, the Soviet Union, and France were among those voting affirmatively. The President of the Assembly thereupon declared that Israel had been admitted to the United Nations. The Assembly's proceedings on May 11 are printed in United Nations, *Official Records of the Third Session of the General Assembly, Part II* (hereinafter cited as GA (III)), *Plenary Meetings*, pages 330, 331. The text of resolution 273 (III) of May 11 appears in GA (III), *Resolutions, 5 April-18 May 1949*, page 18.

Hassouna Pasha, Under Secretary of the Egyptian Foreign Office, expressed to Chargé Patterson on May 12 "disillusioned acquiescence in an accomplished fact with regret that UN had found precipitate action necessary in respect of new state which had not yet shown regard for international obligations, respect for which customarily precedes recognition or acceptance into a fraternity of nations." (Telegram 466, May 12, 5 p. m., from Cairo, 501.BB Palestine/5-1249)

501.BB Palestine/5-1149

The Israeli Ambassador (Elath) to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, May 11, 1949.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I should like to express the deep gratitude of my Government for the invaluable support given by the United States in the discussion of Israel's membership application in the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the United Nations. I believe that the draft resolution gained enormously in effectiveness and prestige through the formal association of the United States with it.

I should like you to know that the conversation which Mr. Eban and I were privileged to have with you on April 26th has had a deep effect on the Israeli Government. In formulating our attitudes on the various outstanding problems, we took care to keep certain principles in mind. In the first place we strongly upheld the right of the General Assembly to be regarded as the ultimate moral arbiter in issues of deadlock or difficulty. It was made clear by our representative again and again that in so far as we find difficulties in the December 11, 1948, Resolution we aspired to resolve them by agreement, not by defiance. We shall stretch ourselves to the utmost to bring our policy in conformity with United Nations resolutions, or if necessary, to seek

authority for any divergences by appeal to the General Assembly itself.

I believe that our delegation was successful in impressing upon the United Nations that the Jerusalem question required the discussion and exchange of new proposals, which, while in accord with the December 11th Resolution, take proper account of realities and of the welfare and sentiment of the population. We were gratified to understand from you on April 26th that in your view any international regime established in Jerusalem should have as its primary concern the protection and control of Holy Places and religious institutions, rather than actual administration of the City, which now enjoys the blessings of peace and orderly life, both in its Arab and Jewish sections. We have been able, with nothing but the influence of argument and discussion, to satisfy the apprehensions of most of the Catholic countries of Latin America. Seventeen out of twenty of these countries have supported our application under no kind of pressure but that of explanation and debate.

Every approach to a genuine peace discussion brings nearer the hope of a successful settlement of the refugee problem. Throughout the *Ad Hoc* Committee's discussions our representative maintained the view, upheld by the Conciliation Commission, that the "final solution of this problem will be found within the framework of the economic and social rehabilitation of all the countries of the Near East." We have endeavoured in all our recent statements to avoid any negative attitudes, and we look forward to an agreement at Lausanne defining the exact contribution of each Government concerned, as well as of the international community. We have noted the Conciliation Commission's judgment that "the refugee problem cannot be permanently solved unless other political questions, notably the question of boundaries, are also solved." Accordingly, our delegation at Lausanne has taken the initiative in asking for an immediate discussion and settlement of outstanding territorial questions. You may have observed that in the debates of the Committee our representative, mindful of our conversation with you, pledged Israel to a settlement of boundaries by agreement through the same methods of negotiation and reciprocal concessions which has had beneficial results in the armistice negotiations. All governments understand that an attitude of give and take may be necessary if an agreed settlement is to be reached at an early date.

It is our hope that the atmosphere of the peace conference at Lausanne will enable our Government to explore the paths of conciliation in more detail and with greater freedom than could possibly be done at a public forum, such as the General Assembly. The United States may have noticed that our delegation at Lake Success austere-

refused to seek any immediate tactical advantage by obscuring the real difficulties still outstanding. Despite the sharp and critical scrutiny which our policy of candour invited, we insisted on bringing our difficulties and reservations into the open light of day. It is therefore all the more significant that an impressive majority of disinterested international opinion has expressed its confidence in Israel in full and detailed knowledge of difficulties which we have neither dissembled nor concealed.

I should like to assure you in conclusion, Mr. Secretary, that the settlement of outstanding questions by agreement with the Arab States under the auspices of the United Nations remains the over-riding objective of my Government's policy.

Accept [etc.]

E. ELATH

501.BB Palestine/5-1249: Telegram

Mr. Mark F. Ethridge to the Secretary of State

RESTRICTED

LAUSANNE, May 12, 1949—3 p. m.

Palun 148. During past four days informal talks have taken place between PCC, Israel, Arab delegations re signature protocol which would permit Israeli Arab talks through PCC to commence. Arab delegation desired that: (1) first objective conversations be solution refugee question; (2) attached map showing [19]47 partition lines be used as base for territorial talks. Israeli delegation was willing adopt device protocol with map showing partition lines. PCC in agreement but did not wish restrict talks to refugee question only. Arab delegation after delay several days during which Syrian delegation apparently took obstructive line finally agreed PCC formulation.

On May 12 PCC Israeli Arab delegations separately signed protocol with map attached.

Protocol is as follows:

"The UN PCC anxious achieve quickly possible objectives GA resolution 11, December 1948 re refugees, respect for their rights and preservation of their property, as well as territorial and other questions, has proposed to Israeli delegation and Arab States delegation that working document attached hereto be taken as basis for talks with Commission.

The interested delegations have accepted proposal with understanding that exchanges of views which be carried on by Commission with two parties will bear upon territorial adjustments necessary to above indicated objectives."

Map consists of Palestine outline on which [19]47 partition lines for Jewish State, Arab State international area of Jerusalem are indicated. Map is not labelled "plan of partition".

Israeli delegation signed with reservations that:

- (1) Israeli delegation could not be party to any exchange of views with Syrian delegation until armistice agreement was concluded;
- (2) No communication re protocol was made to press and;
- (3) Signing in no way prejudiced right of Israeli delegation to express itself freely on matters at issue on which it fully reserved its position.

PCC has no objection to reservations but pointed out:

- (1) Protocol would be applicable to direct Israeli-Syrian talks when governments themselves wished commence;
- (2) UN official press reports will probably appear in future as past re conference PCC matters (Re Palun 147).¹ PCC and its press officer would not in such circumstances be barred from replying or commenting and;
- (3) Both Israeli and Arab Delegations had right to free expression their position at all times.

Arab delegations met reservation of Israeli delegation re Syria by reaffirming their right to discuss all matters re Palestine with PCC. Israeli Arab talks through PCC under protocol may thus continue.

PCC also decided to establish subcommittee for general matters including particularly territorial questions. States members of PCC will be represented by De la Tour Dupin for France, Yenisey for Turkey, Wilkins for US. Israeli Arab views re territorial questions under protocol will be sought by commission.

ETHRIDGE

¹ Identified also as telegram 412, May 10, 11 a. m., from Geneva, not printed.

867N.01/5-1249: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, May 12, 1949—4 p. m.

363. During call with Hare on French Consul General Neuville, latter expressed following views:

[Here follow two paragraphs giving these views.]

Comments:

1.—Military observers agree Israel could easily take remainder Arab Palestine by force.

2.—Legion could probably suppress any disturbances by Palestine Arabs at present unless aided from outside.

3.—Statements of Neuville confirm reports from Consulate General of widespread and growing, although partly concealed resentment against Transjordan. Press and radio statements recently more open

in their criticism and emphasize both giving up to Israel of Arab land and appointment by King Abdullah of puppets to "represent" Arabs of Palestine.

4.—Although Consul General not able agree entirely that Palestine Arabs would prefer union with Israel, following factors tend make this attractive: Failure Transjordan protect their interests versus Israel, realization great military superiority Israel, failure Abdullah provide them voice in determining own fate, consciousness of personal nature Transjordan Government and relative backwardness Transjordan as whole, more favorable economic opportunities in Israel, especially higher priced markets for agricultural products, possibility such union would permit return large numbers refugees to both Arab Palestine and areas now under Israel control.

Sent Department 363, repeated Baghdad 25, Beirut 70, Damascus 27, London 11, Geneva 10 (for USDel PCC), pouched Amman, Cairo, Jidda.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/5-1249: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL URGENT

NEW YORK, May 12, 1949—4:17 p. m.

587. Bunche has sent Vigier a revised compromise proposal for settlement Israeli-Syrian discussions along the following lines:

- (a) Truce lines to be the armistice lines;
- (b) A demilitarized zone to be established on Auja model in Egypt agreement. Syrians to withdraw to their frontier. Israelis also to withdraw. For those points on which it is not possible to persuade Israelis to withdraw, a radical reduction of forces to effective strength should be established;
- (c) Demilitarized zone to be under UN supervision again on Egypt armistice model. Israeli civil officers to operate in zone;
- (d) Syrians to withdraw by stages from demilitarized zone;
- (e) If absolutely necessary, Israelis might be allowed one or two outposts in demilitarized zone. This would be last resort, however.

Bunche says he is working on Syrians and believes that they will agree to foregoing plan. He has warned them that they cannot hope for a more favorable settlement if negotiations break down and the question goes to SC. The essential for them is that Zaim have a face-saving device such as Israeli withdrawal or drastic reduction of forces.

Bunche has talked with Eban, who indicated Israel's unwillingness to make any withdrawals or reduction of forces alleging that possibility of Syrian outpost being left in demilitarized zone should apparently be discussed in negotiations and would nullify withdrawal.

Bunche informed him and Vigier that any outposts which might be established should be in defensive force only and very few in number.

Bunche is using argument with Israelis that his plan will give them their major point which is to get the Syrians out of Palestine.

Bunche would appreciate any assistance possible from Department on foregoing proposals which will be presented at meeting tomorrow.

AUSTIN

501.BB Palestine/5-1249 : Telegram

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

PRIORITY

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1949—6 p. m.

268. Following is text of memorandum on Syrian-Israeli armistice talks left in Dept by Israeli Amb May 12.

1. During the fighting in northern Palestine Israeli troops occupied fourteen villages in Lebanese territory adjoining Eastern Galilee. Syrian troops occupied Israeli territory in two sectors, the first in the Huleh Region and the second between the Sea of Galilee and the Syrio-Palestinian frontier.

2. During the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations Lebanon demanded the restoration of the international frontier. The Mediator and his staff insisted on this point with the utmost vigor. Israel accepted this position, and the Lebanese-Israeli armistice was concluded through a unilateral withdrawal by Jewish forces from Lebanese soil.

3. In the Syrio-Israeli armistice discussions Israel has asked for the application of the same principle, namely, the restoration of the international frontier. Throughout the armistice negotiations with other states, while demarcation lines within Palestine have been fluid and subject to negotiation, the utmost concern has been expressed by United Nations representatives for the preservation of established international frontiers. Thus, a temporary Jewish encroachment into Egyptian territory was most speedily corrected and the utmost concern was devoted to maintaining the integrity of the Palestine-Transjordan frontier during any troop movements or armistice delineations. It may be said that whenever a truce line has been in the vicinity of an international frontier, the armistice line has been based upon the frontier and not upon the truce positions.

4. The Syrian delegation has persistently refused to base the armistice demarcation line on the international frontier and has openly asserted that Syria has claims for frontier revision in the final political settlement.

5. This Syrian position, inadmissible in itself under Article II, paragraph 4, of the Charter and under the precedents established in

other phases of the truce and the armistice negotiations, is aggravated by the fact that the Syrian position on Israeli territory at Mishmar Hayarden is held in violation of truce. This is the only instance remaining in Palestine where any troops are in a position not authorized either under the truce or the armistice agreements.

6. Israel maintains its right to carry out the principle advocated in the Lebanese negotiations, namely, the withdrawal of Syrian troops to the frontier with Israel taking over control on its own territory previously occupied. Nevertheless in an effort to compromise, Israel has been willing to give consideration to a proposal whereby Syrian troops on withdrawing to the frontier would not be replaced by Israeli troops. The proposal is that the vacuum thus created should remain a demilitarized zone containing no forces of either side. This device has successfully solved deadlocks in other armistice discussions. For example, the disputed area at El Auja occupied by Israel troops and claimed by Egyptian forces was made a demilitarized zone. This compromise led to the successful Egyptian-Israeli armistice agreement.

7. This principle applied to the Syrian front would not prejudice the claims of either party in the final political settlement. If Syria has a territorial claim, that claim would not be prejudiced since no Israeli troops would be in occupation of the area. Similarly, Israel's claim to maintain the present frontier would not be prejudiced by the fact of Syrian occupation. The matter, therefore, becomes very grave if Syria declines to accept this compromise and insists on maintaining its present positions intact. In conversations between the Acting Mediator and the Israeli delegation at Lake Success, the former has expressed sympathy for the compromise of the demilitarized zone. This may indeed be the only method of securing the main desires of each party. This Syrians could regard the armistice line as being where it is at the moment, while Israel's main principle would be vindicated by the fact that no Syrian troops were on Israeli soil. It should be added that whereas Transjordanian, Egyptian and Israeli troops are at present in areas not allotted to them by the November 29th Resolution, none of them is on the territory of any existing state. Thus Article II, paragraph 4, of the Charter is nowhere infringed upon.

8. The new Syrian regime has recently been recognized by the United States, Great Britain, and France. These three governments should therefore be in a position to influence the Syrian government in favor of complying with the principles and precedents established before. These principles should not be applied when they redound, as in the Lebanese agreement, to Israel's disadvantage and relinquished when they require an effort on the part of an Arab state.

9. The Syrian position at the moment is so difficult to defend within the principles of the Charter and of previous armistice practice that

Israel would not hesitate to make a complaint to the Security Council. It would, however, be infinitely preferable for this matter to be settled by negotiation and agreement. It is clear, therefore, that all available international influence should be brought to bear in order to persuade the Syrian government to give the same weight to an established international frontier as has been given in all similar circumstances before.¹

ACHESON

¹ The Department, on May 12, directed New York to bring telegram 268 to the attention of Mr. Bunche as soon as possible and to seek his attitude concerning "US approach Syrian Govt in effort persuade latter accept compromise proposal would be helpful," in view of the apparent Israeli acceptance of the main principle of that proposal (telegram 265, 501.BB Palestine/5-1249).

501.BB Palestine/5-1249 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Troutman) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

GENEVA, May 12, 1949—6 p. m.

433. Palun 150. From PCC. On basis of assurance from Department that US would not sponsor resolution admitting Israel unless satisfactory assurance were given at Lausanne on points in question I told Arab delegation that their first reaction when announcement of sponsorship was made was renewed cynicism and intimation that I had misled them. Their more considered reaction is to feel that certainly Israel must have given more assurance to the State Department than it has given at Lausanne. I also hope very much that is true; otherwise I am afraid that what I say to Arabs in other respects will be discounted. If such assurances were received from Israel I would like most urgently to know what they are.

Am glad to report that Israeli delegates' attitude since admission has not seemed to change for the worse. Eytan seems as anxious as ever, if not more so, to go ahead with negotiations and to speed them up. [PCC.]

TROUTMAN

501.BB Palestine/5-1249 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Syria

CONFIDENTIAL

US URGENT

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1949—7 p. m.

NIACT

209. USUN reports¹ that Bunche has sent Vigier revised compromise proposal for settlement Israeli-Syrian discussions. Dept considers this probably fairest possible solution impasse.

¹ In telegram 587, May 12, p. 1000.

For your info proposal is along following lines:

[Here follows a summary of points *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d* in telegram 587.]

Pls inform Syrian Govt soonest Dept sincerely hopes it can agree to foregoing plan. It is most unlikely that they could hope for more favorable settlement if negotiations should break down and question be referred to SC. Syrians stand to gain thru Israeli withdrawal and thru immeasurably improved prospects of reaching final settlement Lausanne which would result from armistice settlement.

Dept is making similar reps at Tel Aviv.²

ACHESON

² In telegram 288, May 12, 7 p. m., not printed, the last two paragraphs stated: "Pls inform Israeli Govt soonest Dept sincerely hopes they can accept this compromise since it should result in withdrawal of Syrians from Palestine which is presumably their major objective, and immeasurably increase possibilities of reaching final agreement at Lausanne.

"Also state Dept is likewise urging acceptance on Syrian Govt." (501.BB Palestine/5-1249)

Telegrams 209 and 288 were repeated to New York.

501.BB Palestine/5-1249 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Switzerland

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1949—7 p. m.

619. Unpal 98. For USDel, Lausanne. Re US cosponsorship resolution admission Israel (re Palun 142¹) Dept concurred view USUN that admission Israel at this session in full accord with Charter and would help settlement Palestine question. US sponsored Israeli application in SC in Paris on Dec. 17, 1948 and again in NY on Mar. 4, 1949. Participation by US among several states to provide formal basis for GA action was not under circumstances of considerable political import whereas refusal to do so would be interpreted as conspicuous shift in our policy amounting to opposition to Israeli membership. Dept believes failure of Israeli application would militate both on Arab and Israeli side against settlement at Lausanne and in later negotiations. Since beginning of Palestine question in UN Arabs have repeatedly delayed acceptance realities of situation until events have moved them far beyond their own best interests. Further, they have intimated privately on several occasions that it would assist settlement if they could be presented with decision with which they would have to comply. When such imposed solutions were arranged, Arabs bitterly opposed and failed to translate such decisions into face-saving formulas for Arab domestic opinion. On Israeli side, Israel is now

¹ Identified also as telegram 699, May 9, from Bern, p. 988.

in position of having received from us support on all questions on which they are entitled to support and time has now come for them to produce basis for settlement. Dept does not believe that transitory question of joining in cosponsoring resolution affects substantially our ability to press Israel for reasonable attitude. If pressure is required, it must necessarily be more substantial in nature. Lastly, US prestige in UN has suffered through apparent changes of attitude on our part during history of this question. Dept considered we should avoid fresh round of confusion and irritation arising from equivocal position on Israeli membership.

Asst Secy Rusk telephoned Elath in NY Fri night subject refugees and called him into Dept on Wed to press for positive action on refugee question. Rusk insisted Israeli Del Lausanne should leave no doubt in PCC that Israel accepts repatriation as substantial element in solution refugee problem. He also urged that time has come for Israel to take second step presented by Secy to Sharett, namely, to begin actual repatriation prior to final determination of numbers to be repatriated and final political settlement. Elath is expected to furnish Dept with further information on early repatriation of families of Arabs now residing in areas under Israeli control as well as other repatriation which could be accomplished without security threat. Rusk stated it necessary for us to know Israeli views on refugees in order to make our own plans on economic and other matters regarding that area. Also insisted that solution of refugee problem should not be used as bargaining point for problems of boundaries and internationalization of Jerusalem. Elath agreed these issues should be kept separate.

Austin's statement in plenary session on Israeli membership being repeated separate telegram.

ACHESON

501.BB Palestine/5-1349 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

NEW YORK, May 13, 1949—1:55 a. m.

Delga 112. Deptels 265 and 268 May 12.¹ Bunche, on May 12, had very unfavorable reaction Israel memo re Syrian-Israel armistice talks because of memo's inaccuracies, half truths and Israel unwillingness withdraw or reduce forces and permit mixed Armistice Commission control demilitarized zone, especially in respect civilian return to

¹ Former not printed, but see footnote 1, p. 1003.

demilitarized area. He received essentially same note from Eban today and rebutted it strongly. Rather than approach to Syrians, Bunche wishes Department would urge acceptance his compromise (mytel 587, May 12) on Israelis who are the recalcitrants. Bunche made following specific comments re memo :

Lebanese agreement not a fair comparison for Syrian agreement since Israelis agreed withdraw from Lebanon as prior condition to negotiations in talk between Ben-Gurion and Bunche December 5. Also, Israelis were definitely outside Palestine invading Lebanon. Thus is not accurate to state that Mediator during armistice negotiation insisted vigorously on this point and Israel unilaterally accepted withdrawal.

Basis for all armistice negotiations has always been truce lines. Israeli incursion into Egypt was a truce violation in October. Bunche said he did not insist on established international frontiers and never heard of alleged principle that "whenever" a truce line was in vicinity of international frontier armistice line was based upon frontier and not upon truce positions. Points out that this not true in Gaza, Auja, elsewhere in Negeb, or in Transjordan agreement. As result of other factors it happens to be true on Lebanese front.

It is absolutely not true that Mishmar Hayarden is held in violation of truce. Only Syrian violation was taking Hill 223 from which they have withdrawn.

Re statement that present dispute is only instance of nonconformity to truce or armistice agreement line, Bunche points to Western Galilee occupied by Israelis in October.

Israelis, in speaking of Syrian withdrawal, omit mention of their own withdrawal or radical reduction of forces on which Bunche has been pressing them hard. Thus it is misleading to state that at Lake Success Bunche has indicated sympathy for Israeli stand re demilitarized zone.

Last sentence paragraph 7 and general approach of memo indicate again Israeli claim that they should have all November 29 area plus what they have been able to seize. Points out this does not square with US position re necessity for compensation if adjustments to be made in November 29 lines.

Not mentioned in memo is Israeli claim that their civilians might return to any point in demilitarized zone. Bunche proposal is that Israeli civilians be allowed to return to Mishmar Hayarden, since it was a Jewish settlement, but that others return be controlled by Armistice Commission.

If Israeli-Syrian talks collapse and cannot be revived, Bunche will report to SC placing blame on Israelis. However, he does not envisage

action in immediate future, expecting May 13 talks to be unfruitful but to be continued.

New subject:

Bunche informed from Tel Aviv through Mohn that Ben-Gurion willing meet Zaim only after conclusion Israeli-Syrian Armistice Agreement. Bunche observes there is nothing in this for Zaim.

AUSTIN

501.BB Palestine/5-249: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Syria

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 13, 1949—4 p. m.

212. Urtel 256 Apr 28¹ and 261 May 2. Dept notes with interest marked progress you report re Zaim's attitude resettlement Arab refugees. This is first concrete evidence Syrian willingness take large number refugees and is particular importance since Syria only Arab country except already willing Transjordan which can assimilate such number within reasonable time. If this opportunity can be exploited back of refugee problem can be broken. You shld take early opportunity discuss matter further with Zaim giving appropriate emphasis his expression of willingness accept quarter million refugees, which Dept regards as humane and statesmanlike contribution to solution this problem. Express hope Zaim will use his influence with other Arab states adopt similarly constructive attitude towards problem, within limits their absorptive capacity, in order assist PCC in permanent liquidation problem. Emphasize steps USG is taking to persuade Israel make appropriate concessions re repatriation (Depeirtel Apr 29), which it is understood will help Arab Govts in accepting responsibilities for resettlement. Development program along lines discussed during McGhee's visit in Damascus well under way and Dept hopes advise you shortly details as finally approved. Meantime you shld avoid any direct offer US assistance while at same time indicating that door is open to appropriate approach through PCC, which has expressed willingness recommend favorable action re assistance requested. You shld in particular avoid any inference that USG is encouraging development projects as bribe to Arab states to accept refugees. Emphasis shld be placed on Israeli and Arab responsibility cooperate with PCC in obtaining agreed settlement refugee question in their own self interest, viz., creation condition for lasting peace in NE, elimination security threat of possible refugee dissidence or com-

¹ Not printed, but see footnote 3, p. 962.

munist exploitation and contribution refugee manpower to development latent resources of recipient countries.²

ACHESON

² This telegram was repeated to Bern for Mr. Ethridge and to London. The same day, the Department sent telegram 196 to Baghdad in reply to the latter's 263 of May 10, p. 994. It noted that Baghdad's "discussions with Prim Min indicate for first time possible future change in Iraqi policy which wld permit immigration Pal refugees. Even if necessary wait 5 to 6 years as indicated in ref tel Iraq may prove of vital importance in ultimate solution refugee problem through resettlement of refugees not repatriated in Israel or assimilable in Transjordan, Syria, or Lebanon. Consequently, you shld take early opportunity discuss matter again with Prim Min giving emphasis to his statement that economic development of Iraq shld create conditions which would make possible considerable refugee immigration in future," along much the same lines as telegram 212 (867N.01/5-1049).

501.BB Palestine/5-1349 : Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT

DAMASCUS, May 13, 1949—8 p. m.

PRIORITY

281. General Riley informs me proposal set forth in Deptel 209 May 12, is no longer valid and that modification thereof already before delegations. At today's meeting Israeli delegate requested interpretation certain aspects current proposal before considering it and is presently seeking instructions Tel Aviv. In circumstances General Riley feels it would serve no useful purpose for me make representations indicated by Department; on contrary that such representations might well confuse situation.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, when it is hoped modified proposal will be discussed in joint session.

General Riley suggests and I agree that I be authorized to support with Syrians, at moment we may jointly consider appropriate, whatever compromise seems fairly to safeguard interests both parties. Legation representations in support of Israeli-weighted proposal in sense penultimate paragraph Deptel 209 can only have stiffening effect.

Syria long ago became accustomed to its inability obtain justice in SC. For US to remind Syria that this situation likely to continue if she fails accept Israeli armistice terms will not. I feel sure, be persuasive, particularly in light of favor currently being shown Israel by US re Israel's acceptance as UN member despite her continued disregard of resolution of December 11 and her failure otherwise fully to live up to standards of UN Charter.

Sent Department; repeated Tel Aviv 30. Department pass USUN New York 5. Pouched Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jerusalem, Jidda, London, Paris, and Ankara.

KEELEY

S/P-NSC Files, Lot 62 D 1¹

*Memorandum by the Secretary of Defense (Johnson) to the Executive
Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers)*²

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, 16 May 1949.

NSC 47

Subject: United States Strategic Interests in Israel.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff position with respect to Palestine, formulated at a time when conditions therein were highly unsettled, was developed principally around the possibility of a United Nations' decision to introduce military forces into that country with consequent possible involvement of United States and/or USSR troops. This policy has been overtaken by events in that the United States recognized the provisional government as the *de facto* authority of the new State of Israel on 14 May 1948 and fully recognized the State of Israel on 29 January 1949.

In view of the foregoing developments, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have prepared a brief study, from the military point of view, of United States strategic objectives in Israel in the light of the current situation, and I enclosed a copy³ thereof herewith. It seems to me appropriate, in the light of developments over the course of the last twelve months and in view of the conclusions reached by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that the National Security Council re-examine and develop an up-to-date policy on the question of the United States position with respect to Israel. If the Council agrees, I further suggest that the preparation of an initial report on this subject be requested from the Secretary of State.

By separate communication, a copy of which is attached,* I am forwarding a copy of this memorandum and its enclosure to the Secretary of State for his information.

Enclosure

STUDY OF UNITED STATES STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN ISRAEL⁴

1. Such strategic importance as Israel possesses is due to its central location in the Eastern Mediterranean-Middle East area. The

¹ Lot 62 D 1 is a serial and subject master file of National Security Council documents and correspondence for the years 1948-1961, as maintained by the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State.

² Submitted by Admiral Souers to the National Security Council with his note of May 17.

³ Below.

* Not reproduced herewith. [Footnote in the source text.]

⁴ This study bears no date.

direct land routes (road and rail) between Turkey and the Cairo-Suez area pass through Israeli territory. In addition, the main land routes from the Caspian area of the USSR and from Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia to Egypt and the Levant pass through or near Israel's territory, as do the pipelines from the Middle East oil areas to the Mediterranean. Israel controls the land approaches to the Cairo-Suez area from the east, the border between Israel and Egypt being about one hundred and fifty miles east of the Suez Canal.

2. There is little possibility now or in the immediate future of Israel becoming an important base area since the country lacks the facilities to accommodate large forces or installations. Furthermore, there is little reason for major base development by the Western Democracies in Israel because of the more highly developed and more accessible Cairo-Suez area some two hundred miles to the West. However, the Israeli area does contain a fine, but small, artificial harbor at Haifa, and an excellent, although limited, system of well-developed airfields and air bases. In our hands, these air installations would be most useful in the interdiction of the lines of communication from the USSR to the Middle East oil resources with medium and short-range aircraft. In the hands of the Soviets, these fields would provide bases from which the Soviets could seriously interfere with our operations in that area.

3. From the viewpoint of tactical operations, Israel's territory and its indigenous military forces, which have had some battle experience, would be of importance to either the Western Democracies or the USSR in any contest for control of the Eastern Mediterranean-Middle East area. It is estimated that in such a contest the USSR has the capability, and would probably attempt to secure or neutralize the oil facilities of the Middle East and to operate against the Cairo-Suez base area. The final line of strong defensive possibilities for the defense of the Cairo-Suez area is at the Jordan rift. Should Israel ally herself with the Western Democracies in the event of war with the USSR, full advantage could be taken of defensive positions in that country and of Israel's forces for the defense of the Cairo-Suez area and for land operations to defend or to recapture the Middle East oil facilities. The cooperation of Israel would be of considerable assistance to the Western Democracies in meeting maximum Soviet capabilities in the Palestine area. Israel, as an ally or as a friendly neutral, would enable the United States to use the Cairo-Alexandretta railway for a limited time for the shipment of supplies to Turkey. Israel as an unfriendly neutral would deny us these advantages.

4. Communist domination of Israel would permit the USSR to control the Haifa terminus of one of the oil pipelines from the Middle

East. It would interfere with our support of Turkey by land routes from the Cairo-Suez area. It would enable the USSR to infiltrate the Cairo-Suez area and would facilitate a Soviet land-offensive against that area.

5. The United States and Great Britain have practically the same strategic interests in the Middle East-Eastern Mediterranean area. However, the international reactions to the Palestine question have produced a complex, entangled political and psychological situation.

6. Israel, after a bitter conflict with the neighboring Arab states, has recently emerged as an independent Jewish nation. In general, the attitude of the of the United States in regard to this development can be considered as favorable to Israel. The United States and the USSR were the first to recognize Israel as a sovereign state. On the other hand, due primarily to her special relations with the Arab states, the United Kingdom has been slow to establish normal relations with Israel.

7. The new State of Israel has close ties with the United States because of our large and influential Jewish minority and is geographically well separated from Soviet-dominated countries. However, there is an opportunity for Communist penetration through Jewish immigration into the new nations from eastern Europe, the Balkans, and China. There are indications that significant numbers of immigrants who have passed through Communist indoctrination courses have already entered Israel. Israel's foreign policy can at present be considered pro-Western although not necessarily anti-Soviet. However, Israel's announced policy is one of neutrality in the "cold war." Israel's leaders have stated privately that their sympathies lie with the West but that for the present it is necessary for Israel publicly to assume a "neutral" position since the new state still needs Soviet support in the United Nations, and desires to facilitate the emigration to Israel of Jews now in the "Iron Curtain" countries.

8. There is considerable agitation for a Mediterranean counterpart of the North Atlantic Pact. Greece, Turkey, and the Arab states have been mentioned as possible members. In spite of Arab opposition to Israel, the strategic location and military strength of the latter make it almost mandatory that Israel be a member, providing the participation of Saudi Arabia and Iran is not precluded by such action, if the pact is aimed to resist Soviet aggression.

9. Israel is surrounded by her defeated foes who are still unfriendly. The United Kingdom has been and still is the proponent of the Arab states. As an expedient in the international field, Israel may accept friendly overtures from other great powers, including the USSR.

Thus, Israel may become a danger or an asset depending upon the nature of her future relations with the Soviets and with the Western Democracies.

10. The British have governed Palestine under mandate and have close ties with some of the neighboring Arab countries. They have military personnel, together with treaty rights, in Egypt, Transjordan, and Iraq. In the event of global war, the United States would probably wish to use facilities in the Cairo-Suez area in conjunction with the British. Hence, any negotiations or arrangements having strategic implications with regard to Israel should be coordinated with the British.

11. Certain expressions of views by the Joint Chiefs of Staff relating to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East have bearing on United States strategic interests in the new State of Israel. These views are stated below for ready reference :

a. From the point of view of the military considerations, the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East is of critical importance to the future security of the United States; and

b. The stability of the Middle East, including assurance that the peoples of this area will not turn to the USSR and against the United States, is a vital element in United States security.

CONCLUSIONS

12. *a.* In the light of the foregoing, it is concluded that United States security interests with respect to the new State of Israel are:

(1) That Israel should be oriented towards the Western Democracies and away from the USSR;

(2) That Communist infiltration should be blocked and domination of Israel by the USSR should be prevented;

(3) That the differences between the new Israeli state and the neighboring Arab states should be reconciled at least to the extent that Israel and the Arab states would act in concert to oppose Soviet aggression; and

(4) That from the United States military point of view it would be advantageous if British relations with Israel were such that a common approach could be taken by the United States and the United Kingdom in achieving mutual objectives with respect to Israel.

b. In view of the interests of the United Kingdom in the Cairo-Suez area, her over-all position in the Middle East-Eastern Mediterranean area, and the general similarity of United Kingdom and United States security interests there, and regardless of the political attitude of the United Kingdom toward Israel, any steps taken by the United States to protect our security interests in Israel should be coordinated with the British.