

867N.01/3-849 : Telegram

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

SECRET US URGENT

TEL AVIV, March 8, 1949—9 a. m.

184. Re Deptel 133 March 5.¹ Conferred Foreign Minister² 5 p. m. March 7. Knox and Andrus³ present. Foreign Minister stated that report received by us apparently based on two misunderstandings.

1. Israeli representatives have made no claim whatsoever for amendment or rectification of Israeli-Lebanon frontier.

2. What was said about frontiers in present preliminary discussion referred to armistice lines concerning which Israeli representatives put forth idea that certain points armistice lines might not logically conform to legal frontiers because of topographical difficulties; if such viewpoint in armistice negotiations is maintained by Israeli it will, of course, be without prejudice to frontier lines.

Foreign Minister emphasized the above misunderstood minor points were far overshadowed by (and merely a part of) two major difficulties as follows.

1. Israelis have agreed in principle to Bunche's proposal the frontier lines will be armistice lines but Israelis make condition that this proposal apply to whole frontier including Syrian and not only part thereof.

2. As regards Netulla salient, while Israelis troops are over into Lebanon on western side of salient the Syrians are occupying Israel territory on eastern side. The Lebanese demand that Israeli withdraw from Lebanon in the west while Syria refuses to withdraw in the east would, because of topography, squeeze Israeli army into a militarily unmaneuverable area if the Syrians attacked. Thus Israeli tentative viewpoint is (1) pending understanding with Syria Israel would prefer that Lebanon-Israel armistice (not frontier) line be drawn through an agreed part of the Lebanon occupied territory west of salient in order prevent withdrawing Israel forces into a salient narrowed by Syrian occupation and a possible military trap; (2) if Syria would agree evacuate Israel territory in eastern salient Israel would readily yield their position in west.

Comment: Foreign Minister's explanation involves very technical military points of involved positions and is given herein as understood by mission. Mission has impression that Israel very anxious for armistice with Lebanon (with which country Israel never felt it had a real quarrel as compared with other Arab states) but that negotiations badly complicated at moment owing interposition of Syrian

¹ Not printed, but see footnote 2, p. 787.

² Mr. Shertok changed his name to "Sharett" as of March 6 (telegram to the Under Secretary of State from Mr. Eytan, 867N.002/3-749).

³ Col. Burton C. Andrus, Military Attaché in Israel.

troops and unwillingness Israel yield all bargaining points to Lebanon and be left with no cards to play for Syrian evacuation of Israel territory. This obviously awkward because it places Lebanon in middle of possible impasse between Syria and Israel. Mission has hopes time and Bunche's skill will solve problem. *End comment.*

While mission believes that very cautious approach should be used at this juncture to avoid complicating individual points of negotiations we are prepared, at Department's instructions, use all influence possible vis-à-vis Israel to assist UN in any fair, militarily logical, and politically possible solution.

Department pass Army.

McDONALD

501.BB Palestine/3-849 : Telegram

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

SECRET US URGENT

WASHINGTON, March 8, 1949—4 p. m.

140. Pls take up with Israeli auths report contained Baghdad Embtel 95 March 8¹ rptd you as 2. If report substantiated state in strongest terms that USG as member PCC would deplore any action leading new outbreak hostilities.²

ACHESON

¹ Not printed; it reported information from the Iraqi Foreign Minister that Israeli forces were concentrating at various points with the apparent intention of dislodging Iraqi troops from the Iraqi-occupied sector of Palestine. It also contained the Foreign Minister's hope that the United States "would do everything possible to restrain Israel from aggression against Iraqi troops." (867N.01/3-849)

² This telegram was repeated to Baghdad and to Jerusalem for Mr. Ethridge. Chargé Dorsz conveyed the substance of the message on March 8 to the Foreign Minister and Under Secretary of the Foreign Office Rawl. Both "expressed gratitude over quick US action." (Telegram 100, March 10, 9 a. m., from Baghdad, 501.BB Palestine/3-1049)

867N.01/3-949 : Airgram

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

CAIRO, March 9, 1949.

A-299. A statement by King Abdullah that he had advised the Arab states before the outbreak of fighting to study the situation in Palestine carefully and that he had ordered his forces to enter the former Mandated territory on May 15, 1948, only when he found that other members of the Arab League insisted on intervention was printed in *Al Garida Al Misriya*, a new evening daily newspaper, yesterday. The new paper, which will apparently be pro-Wafdist in tone, stated that the Hashemite monarch had given his views in a special interview.

King Abdullah was quoted as saying he had marched into Palestine in order to avoid accusations which might have been leveled against him. He had given the order to march in without having changed the views expressed in his warning to the other Arab states. This warning had pointed out that it would not be sufficient to rely on courage and faith to secure victory, but that it was necessary to take into account every eventuality and to be prepared for "behind the scenes" activity.

The order to enter Palestine had been given although he knew that the Transjordanian army and Kingdom lacked sufficient resources to face the situation. "We have made and still are making great sacrifices to safeguard Arab unity", continued King Abdullah, "but we are now faced with two alternatives". He defined these as being either to resume fighting with the object of annihilating the Zionists in Palestine and their supporters abroad, or to acknowledge the present status quo and to sign peace agreements. "I believe", added King Abdullah, "that Transjordan will adopt the latter course".

Explaining his opposition to an All Palestine Government, the King said that in his opinion it lacked the necessary basis and its establishment had been inspired purely by personal ambition. Also it was unreasonable for the All Palestine Government to take Gaza as its seat, as this would deprive Transjordan of a Mediterranean port.

Dealing with the Palestine conference at which he had been chosen King of Palestine, he said that the Palestine Arabs had turned to him in their plight and appealed for liberation. He had responded with more than the resources of his country. "Can I", he concluded, "turn away from them now?"

PATTERSON

501.MA Palestine/2-949 : Telegram

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

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 9, 1949—5 p. m.

144. Pls take early opportunity discuss orally problem Arab refugees with FonMin along fol lines :

1. Problem of early disposition Arab refugee question matter of friendly and growing concern to USG. Israeli Govt will recall strong US support of Dec 11 res of GA, para 11 of which established principle that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at earliest practicable date and that compensation should be paid for property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which under principles of int law or in equity should be made good by the govts or authorities responsible.

2. Altho concern this Govt to alleviate distressed conditions among Palestine refugees has been amply demonstrated, USG has considerably broader interest this problem than temp relief. Considered opinion USG that speedy and equitable solution refugee problem is indispensable if common US-Israeli desire for stabilization and development NE is to be achieved and if exploitation refugee problem by foreign interests inimical best interests peoples NE is to be prevented. USG firmly convinced that insistence by Israeli or Arab Govts to use refugee problem to obtain concessions re final peace settlement would react to serious disadvantage such Govts before world community and US public opinion, and would seriously prejudice establishment cooperative relations among NE neighbors. Conversely, early demonstration magnanimity and humanity in dealing with this problem would contribute greatly to possibility early *modus vivendi* between Israel and Arab neighbors and would substantially increase security that area.

3. Israeli Govt will recall extent to which Israel's objectives have been furthered by USG's attitude re European DP's and has had recent proofs USG's desire cooperate thru measures to facilitate thru IRO immigration European DP's into Israel. US sincerely hopes Israel will display broad humanitarian interest in dealing with Arab refugee problem.

In view our mutual deep interest in objective establishing enduring peace in NE, USG wishes inquire as to plans of Govt of Israel to implement purposes Dec 11 res with respect Arab refugees.¹

Pls repeat reply to US Rep, PCC.

ACHESON

¹ This telegram was repeated to Jerusalem as No. 144, identified also as Unpal 53, for Mr. Ethridge. Mr. McDonald, in reply on March 14, stated that he had stressed to the Foreign Minister on three occasions prior to receipt of telegram 144 the great concern of the United States concerning implementation of the resolution of December 11 and that he thought it preferable to delay a few days before pressing the matter (telegram 207 from Tel Aviv, 501.BB Palestine/3-1449).

501.BB Palestine/2-2849 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Jerusalem

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 9, 1949—5 p. m.

145. Unpal 54. For Ethridge. Dept appreciates your thoughtful tel Palun 57.¹ Specific comments re your numbered paras fol:

(1) Expect completion enabling legis within few days on \$16,000,000 US relief contribution, with advance payment \$8,000,000 available within few weeks. Balance payable fol Congressional action, probably

¹ Identified also as telegram 172, February 28, from Jerusalem, p. 778.

not before April, on appropriation legis. In presenting case to Cong emphasis has been given to viewpoint expressed last two sentences your para 1, and general response Cong indicates concurrence this view.

As one means meeting relief rehabilitation needs after termination UN program, Dept actively considering measures to stimulate more effective drive for voluntary funds. Moreover prominent cits including Bayard Dodge ² [and James Terry] Duce, Aramco, contemplated early formation influential group for purpose launching educational and publicity campaign. At appropriate time Dept will also consider feasibility endeavoring persuade UNICEF extend program beyond present commitment.

(2) Dept is in full agreement and is making representations Israel.

(3) Dept considers this of equal importance with your para 2. Are you in position estimate for prelim planning purposes approx number refugees who would desire return Israel and under what conditions? Have you any suggestions re desirability and practical methods determining more precisely wishes of refugees this question? ³ On assumption large number precisely would be unwilling or unable return Israel, could Arab states be stimulated near future undertake planning on basis short term work projects utilizing refugee labor which would be of permanent benefit to countries concerned? Such projects would enable those refugees who wish remain in countries harboring them to engage in productive activity behalf Arab states. Moreover, such planning would constitute useful transition to realistic attitude by Arab states toward refugee problem as whole. Presumably experts could be made available by UN or other sources in connection such planning upon request Arab states.

(4) Your para 4 requires careful study. Direct compensation from Israel to Arab Govts without some means intermediary control and

² President Emeritus of the American University at Beirut.

³ Mr. Ethridge advised, on March 14, that he had "not been able to devise any method by which desires of Arabs could be made known. Have encouraged organization of camp committee who might communicate wishes to Commission but our thinking is that no referendum possible or valuable just now. Those who have dealt with the refugees say most of them want to be back in Palestine, whether in Israel or not. Inclined to think that is true." (telegram 221, identified also as Palun 81, 501.BB Palestine 3/1449)

In the same message, Mr. Ethridge indicated that "six weeks of effort to get the Israeli Government to commit itself on the refugee problem have resulted in not one single statement of position. That is true also of Jerusalem and all other problems with which we have to deal." Later the same day, Mr. Ethridge transmitted the text of a telegram to him from Mr. Shertok, the date of which was not supplied by Mr. Ethridge. Mr. Shertok's telegram concluded that "if pushed to the wall to say what I think at present stage all I would be able to say is that major solution is resettlement elsewhere and not in Israel" (telegram 223, identified also as Palun 84, 501.BB Palestine/3-1449).

supervision would doubtless result in dissipation funds or failure apply them for constructive resettlement purposes. Another important aspect this question is intention, publicly announced by Israeli officials, to put forth counter-claims against Arab states for war damages. Dept believes any effort by Israel relate question compensation refugees to war indemnities should be firmly resisted. Since former refers to property assets of legitimate residents Pal with incontestable right ownership to properties in question, question has no relation any claims against Arab states. For this reason may be inadvisable make Arab states custodians compensation funds.

Dept recognizes that outside financial aid through loans or contributions will be required assist Arab states in providing for refugee populations during interim phase between termination UN relief and initiation large scale development projects in Arab states. We are examining projects limited in scope and financing which might be undertaken during interim phase. Refugee expert to be assigned to PCC could be extremely useful making recommendations this question. Dept also giving urgent consideration to elaboration Point 4 of Pres inaugural address with respect unilateral and multilateral technical assistance programs in NE, but on most optimistic basis flow of capital resulting from this source unlikely for many months.

(5) We hope tentative proposals will be formulated in few weeks re work projects which would fit in with longer range development schemes while affording work for refugees in areas where now located. Some projects might be financed from private sources, including oil cos which have manifested desire contribute to econ [and] social development.

US commitment re direct grants or loans impossible at present. Until projects are more clearly defined and until Arab states show initiative in requesting aid for specific developmental projects, it will be difficult consider methods financing. Possibility ExIm and IBRD loans dependent on submission sound projects by govts concerned.

At Dept's suggestion UK is also considering question projects for assimilation refugees. Moreover we have informally raised with Brit Emb question UK intentions vis-à-vis Transjordan with respect increased financial aid in light anticipated expansion TJ's population and area.

For your info only, Dept plans appointing George McGhee as US Coordinator on Palestine refugee matters. Announcement will follow shortly.

ACHESON

501.BB Palestine/3-949: Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

AMMAN, March 9, 1949—7 p. m.

91. Glubb Pasha gave following account this morning of armistice talks between Transjordan and Israel at Rhodes:

When talks commenced Israelis raised 4 points as conditions to cease-fire and armistice:

- (1) Free access to Hadassah and Hebrew University;
- (2) Free passage past Latrun;
- (3) Opening railroad to Jerusalem;
- (4) Filling in trench dug by Arabs in no man's land near Government House. In return Jews would give electricity to Arab quarters Jerusalem. (All these points previously discussed in Jerusalem between Dayan and Abdullah Tel.)

As Transjordan delegation did not consider these conditions related to military armistice, officer returned to Amman for instructions. On return officer weatherbound at Cyprus and therefore Transjordan sent message yesterday to delegation instructing it accept 4 conditions but suggesting railroad be under joint control. As cost repair electric wiring in Arab part Jerusalem excessive, delegation also instructed state that instead electricity would prefer that road from Damascus gate past new gate and Jaffa gate and thence to Bethlehem be opened and that Jews give up their positions on Mount Zion, Nebidaoud and Deirabutor.¹

Glubb said that Abdullah Tel thought Jews would accept this arrangement in belief that lines thus agreed would represent final lines in Jerusalem and that Arabs were giving up claims to upper Bakaa, Qatamon et cetera.

Glubb thought that "with any luck" cease-fire agreement would be signed tomorrow. He indicated that for purposes this agreement clause would be added to effect that it would be applicable to Iraqi areas if and when Arab Legion took over Iraqi front-line positions (Legtel 85, March 7).²

He said that next phase at Rhodes would be conclusion armistice but that with turn of events near Akaba one of Transjordan's principal bargaining points disappearing. Consequently, there would seem to be little use in taking any but most reasonable attitude towards Jewish demands.

Sent Department 91, repeated Jerusalem 50.

STABLER

¹The United Nations announced, on March 9, that the Israeli and Transjordanian Delegations held "their first joint informal meeting" that afternoon at Rhodes. The meeting lasted two and a half hours, during which an exchange of views took place on 11 points, in a "very cordial atmosphere" (press release PAL/456).

²Not printed, but see footnote 1, p. 799.

501.BB Palestine/3-949: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

NEW YORK, March 9, 1949—7:55 p. m.

293. Following "memorandum on armistice negotiations at Ras el Naqura and at Rhodes" received from Eban today:

"Israeli-Lebanese armistice talks:

1. The main military problems affecting northern Palestine are:

(a) Question of Israeli forces in occupation of Lebanese border villages.

(b) Presence of Syrian forces on Israeli territory at Mishmar Hayarden.

(c) Presence in Lebanon of Syrian forces which took part in the invasion of Israel and whose presence is related directly to the Arab-Israeli war.

2. Problem (a) does not in itself constitute any insuperable difficulty and could be adjusted in any general settlement of the northern frontier. Indeed, some of these villages have already been evacuated unconditionally. Problems (b) and (c), however, cannot be settled so long as the Syrian Government refuses to enter armistice negotiations.

3. It is obviously impossible for Israel to conclude agreements for the withdrawal and reduction of its forces with the Lebanese authorities, while Syrian forces are allowed to maintain themselves in full strength in positions threatening Israel's security. The principle of withdrawal and reduction laid down in the November 16 resolution must be applied to the whole area; otherwise any government can secure the prospect of military dominance simply by refusing to comply with the November 16th resolution.

4. The November 16th resolution applies to Syria just as much as to any other of the states concerned. Syrian refusal to comply with that resolution is not only inadmissible in itself, but also has a disrupting effect on the negotiations between Israel and Lebanon, who are both clearly anxious to conclude an armistice.

5. The conclusion is that all available international influence should be brought to bear to induce Syria to enter negotiations in order that the dispositions of Syrian forces, like those of Israel and the Lebanon, should be governed by the principles of the November 16th resolution. It appears from his communication to the SC this morning that the Acting Mediator is making efforts in this direction.

Negotiations at Rhodes:

6. A similar position prevails in the Israeli-Transjordan armistice negotiations. The central sector contains a large body of Iraqi troops. If Israel and Transjordan were each to accept the withdrawal and reduction required by the November 16th resolution, while Iraq[is] were not bound by any such principle, the result would be to leave Iraqi forces in a dominant position at the very heart of Israel. No

action agreed to by the Government of Transjordan could remove the threat to Israel security so long as Iraqi troops remain on Israeli territory a few miles distant from the coast and from the most densely populated centres of Jewish population.

7. There are contradictory reports of Iraq's intention to abide by any agreement signed by Transjordan. Reports of Iraq's willingness to this effect were published, later denied by General Riley, given renewed currency and later denied by the Iraqi Premier. The Transjordan delegation has now informed Dr. Bunche that they are now empowered to represent Iraq. It is obviously necessary, however, to have this undertaking from the Iraqi Government itself. Dr. Bunche has now invited the Iraqi Government to confirm officially that it will consider itself bound by any agreement signed by the Transjordan delegation. In the meantime, a discussion is proceeding on the armistice lines on other fronts.

8. The conclusion here is that unless Iraq, as well as Syria, complies directly, or through an accredited intermediary with the November 16th resolution, the prospects of an armistice with the Lebanon and Transjordan will be gravely impaired. Should it become necessary, Israel may have to ask the SC whether Syria or Iraq are justified in refusing to comply with the November 16th resolution."

AUSTIN

867N.01/3-1049

Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 10, 1949.

We received two rather alarming telegrams from our Legation in Amman, the capital of Transjordan, yesterday afternoon. The first¹ indicated that Israeli forces in rather large strength had started moving into the southern Negev area which, according to the telegram, is under Arab Legion occupation. The second telegram² reported that King Abdullah had informed our Chargé d'Affaires that Israeli forces had been attacking an Arab Legion post at Ein Gharandal, four miles inside the Transjordan frontier.³

¹ No. 88, March 9, not printed.

² No. 90, March 9, not printed.

³ A third telegram of March 9, No. 89, gave Mr. Stabler's view that the Israeli advance, when negotiations for an armistice by Transjordan and Israel were proceeding, "seems ultimate in breach of good faith" and a flouting of the United Nations by Israel. The Israeli action was said to be "further evidence to Arabs that Israeli intentions, far from being peaceful, are perfidious and aggressive. . . . Cause of peace, which Israel claims earnestly to desire, is not being served through this later maneuver." Mr. Stabler then recommended urgently that the United States "make immediate representations in strongest possible terms to Israel demanding that Israeli forces return at once to and remain in positions occupied at time commencement Rhodes talks and that Israel finally accept principle that any questions relating to territorial disposition must await final peace settlement." (501.BB Palestine/3-949)

The Department called in Ambassador-designate Elath⁴ and gave him the substance of the reports we had received. Elath brought with him a telegram which Dr. Bunche had sent the Israeli Government from Rhodes quoting a note which Bunche had received from the Chief of the Transjordan armistice delegation at Rhodes informing him under the instructions of the Transjordan Government that Israeli forces had crossed the Transjordan military lines in the Negev on the morning of March 7 and describing the situation as extremely delicate. The Transjordan Government requested in this note to Bunche that Israeli forces cease such operations during their armistice negotiations and withdraw to their original positions.

Elath also had with him the text of Tel Aviv's reply to Bunche which asserted that nowhere in the Negev were Israeli land or air forces operating outside the Israeli borders, and that these forces had not crossed and did not intend to cross the Transjordan frontier. The Israeli reply referred to the fact that the Transjordan note revealed the presence of Transjordan forces in the Negev and stated that this constituted a serious embarrassment to the armistice negotiations. The Israeli Government then registered a strong protest against this "invasion" and requested Bunche to transmit to the Transjordan Government the Israeli demand for the immediate withdrawal of the Transjordan forces to their own side of the frontier.

The Department expressed to Elath the gravest concern as regards the situation and strongly impressed upon him the serious consequences that would ensue should the report of the Israeli incursion into Transjordan be verified. Elath stated that his government was fully aware of and had no desire to provoke such consequences.⁵

This morning Elath has telephoned the Department to say that he has had a further telegram from Foreign Minister Sharett (Shertok) again stating categorically that no Israeli forces had crossed into Transjordan or had any intention of doing so.⁶

⁴ Eliahu Elath, who had recently changed his surname from Epstein.

⁵ The information covered in Secretary Acheson's memorandum up to this point was sent to Tel Aviv in telegram 145, March 9, 7 p. m. The Department instructed Mr. McDonald to convey to the Israeli Foreign Office its expression of "gravest concern" and of "serious consequences" should the reported Israeli incursion into Transjordan be verified (867N.01/2-2849). Telegram 145 was repeated to London, Amman, New York and to Jerusalem as No. 146, identified also as Unpal 55, for Mr. Ethridge. It was sent also to Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, Jidda, and Cairo the following day in a circular telegram of March 10 (867N.01/3-1049).

⁶ Mr. Satterthwaite's memorandum of conversation states that he "thanked Mr. Elath for the prompt response to our inquiries, and took occasion to point out that our representations had not been based on press reports but on information which we had received from our representatives. I expressed the hope that there would be no further developments which might adversely affect the present delicate negotiations." (867N.01/3-1049)

Ambassador Franks has also telephoned me to inform me of telegrams about this situation which he has received. He had been instructed to see me, but thought he would not trouble me by coming down in person. He added that the information he was giving me was for you as well as for me. He said that the movement of a considerable Israeli force south into the Negev toward the Gulf of Akaba was not in line with the Security Council resolution and that the recent armistice could not override the Security Council. The British also have reports, not yet confirmed, that the Israelis have moved into Transjordan territory. He confirmed our information that Bunche is sending observers into the area to report on the situation, and said that his government hoped to hear from these observers soon.

The Ambassador further said that his government had sent instructions to the British forces in Akaba to the effect that if the Israeli forces fire on British forces, the fire is to be returned, and that if Israeli aircraft fly over British forces they will be engaged. The British Consul at Haifa has also been instructed to give the Israeli Government the exact text of the instructions.

The Ambassador then said that the only bit of more encouraging information he had is a report from Amman indicating that the Israeli forces which had made contact with the Arab Legion inside Transjordan had broken off contact at dusk yesterday and retreated westward. This later information is confirmed in a telegram which the Department received from the Legation at Amman this morning that Israeli forces have left Transjordan territory and are proceeding southward toward the Gulf of Akaba.

Sir Oliver Franks then said that he wished to express to me the anxiety of his government and to explain what they had done in the situation. The Ambassador later phoned to say that the Ambassador had forgotten to make the following statement: "We were reluctant to believe that Israeli forces had taken this action, but if the news of an aggression into Transjordan territory is confirmed, British obligations under the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty will, of course, immediately come into question."

I thought the Ambassador for this information and said that I felt sure the British at Akaba would behave with restraint and not allow any minor incident to set off the balloon. I also told him of the reports we had received from the Israelis denying the truth of the report that they had crossed into Transjordan. I pointed out that the frontier is not marked, and that if someone should wander across it without evil intent it would be too bad to set off the whole show. The ambassador said he would use what I had told him in a message to his government. The important point was he said as I would know that "this does touch his people on a very raw nerve".

Secretary's Memoranda, Lot 53 D 444, Secretary's Memos¹

Memorandum by Mrs. Dorothy H. Morgret in the Office of the Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 10, 1949.

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY
AND THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR

Subject: Palestine

The Ambassador telephoned to inform the Secretary he had two or three telegrams about Palestine and he thought he should give the Secretary the important information from them. He was asked by his Government to see the Secretary, but he thought he would not trouble the Secretary by coming down at this point. He said the information was for the Secretary and the President.

The Ambassador said that considerable Israeli force is moving south in the Negeb toward the Gulf of Akaba. This is not in line with the Security Council. The recent armistice cannot override the Security Council. The British have reports, not yet confirmed, that the Israelis have moved into the Transjordan territory. They hope to hear from UN observers soon about it. What they are saying is that something which looks worrying seems about to happen. The Ambassador said they have given instructions to British forces in Akaba saying that if the Israelis behave aggressively to British forces, then the aggression will be returned. He said instructions have been sent to the British representative at Haifa asking them to inform the Israeli Government that we understand this force is moving south and if they do attack British troops, etc, the fire will be returned, or if aircraft fly over British forces they will be engaged. He said the only bit of better information comes from Amman which says the Israeli forces broke off at dusk yesterday and retreated westward. They were contacted by a force of the Arab legion. The Ambassador explained he wanted to express to the Secretary the anxiety of his Government and explain what they have done in the situation.

The Secretary thanked the Ambassador for the information. He said he knew the British at Akaba will behave with restraint and not allow any minor incident to set off the balloon.

The Ambassador said he would use this in a message to his Government.

The Secretary told the Ambassador we have had the same reports and have heard also that Bunche has sent down observers. We have

¹ Lot 53 D 444 is a comprehensive chronological collection of the Secretary of State's memoranda and memoranda of conversation for the years 1947-1953, as maintained by the Executive Secretariat of the Department of State.

also heard that the Israelis say this is not true; they have not crossed the border.

The Secretary said there is no marked frontier and if somebody wanders across it without evil intent, it would be too bad to set off the whole show.

The Ambassador said the important point is, as the Secretary will know, this does touch his people on a very raw nerve.

501.BB Palestine/3-1049: Telegram

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

SECRET US URGENT

JERUSALEM, March 10, 1949—noon.

207. Deptel 146, Ninth.¹ Statement by Shiloah that presence Transjordan forces in Negev is "invasion" of Israel appears to be effort camouflage fact advance Israeli forces in Negev constitutes violation SC Resolution July 15 establishing permanent truce in Palestine.

Under Israeli theory all territory allotted by Nov. 29 GA Resolution to Israel is Israeli territory regardless whether occupied by Israel or Arab forces at time truce went into effect. Therefore presence Arab force on such territory is "invasion". At same time Israel maintains right of conquest to territory allotted Arabs by November 29 GA resolution and now held by its forces. ConGen unable reconcile claim Arab occupation is "invasion" while Israel occupation is not.²

Since truce established by SC in Palestine Transjordan forces have held southern Negev under occupation. Although exact truce lines not delineated by UN observers, territory lying roughly south of parallel 31 controlled by Transjordan through outposts and roving patrols. Thus present advance Israeli forces appears constitute as flagrant violation SC truce order as advance into Arab lines at any other point. Is equivalent to Transjordan attack towards Israeli—"invaded" Ramle or Lydda.

Israeli action apparently intended obtain occupation all Negev before permanent armistice lines drawn at Rhodes. This would face UN with still another *fait accompli* and give Israeli another political and military advantage during time of truce.

¹ This was a repeat of No. 145 to Tel Aviv, not printed; but see footnote 5, p. 811.

² Mr. Shiloah, the head of the Israeli Delegation at Rhodes, sent a message of March 9 to Mr. Bunche, in which he stated that he had been instructed to inform the latter that "nowhere in the Negev are Israeli land or air forces operating outside the borders of Israel." The message continued that the crossing of Transjordanian forces into Israeli territory constituted "a serious embarrassment to the conduct of our present negotiations." The message registered the strongest protest by the Israeli Government and requested Mr. Bunche to transmit the protest and a demand for immediate withdrawal to the Transjordanian Government (telegram 298, March 10, 12:40 p. m., from New York, 501.BB Palestine/3-1049).

Consul General feels strongest representations should be made to Israel Government against any advance by Israeli forces into Negev areas occupied by Transjordan and that representations should not be limited crossing by Israel of old Transjordan frontier as indicated in penultimate paragraph Deptel 146. Advance by Israeli forces constitutes not only violation truce but jeopardized Rhodes armistice negotiations, work of PCC and will destroy slowly developing willingness Arab States negotiate settlement with Israel.³

Sent Department, repeated Amman 14, Beirut 27, Damascus 10, Baghdad 11, pouched Jidda, Cairo.

BURDETT

³ Jerusalem, on March 11, advanced the view that "Because small Arab Legion strength in region Israel apparently believes can occupy area quickly, without serious fighting and with minimum world attention. Israel can then maintain publicly area never under Arab Legion control and any subsequent action by Legion to recover positions constitutes 'invasion' Israeli territory." (telegram 215, 867N.01/3-1149)

501.BB Palestine/3-1049 : Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT
URGENT

TEL AVIV, March 10, 1949—3 p. m.

190.¹ ReDeptel 140, March 8 (reference Embtel Baghdad 95, March 8,² repeated Tel Aviv 2).

Inquired of Foreign Office as directed noon March 9. At noon today received verbal reply from Eytan who stated that Prime Minister had instructed him inform as follows:

1. While government very appreciative of US efforts facilitate armistice and peace US going "a bit too far" in asking information on how Israel disposes its troops within area of Israel.
2. Israel perfectly entitled dispose its troops as it deems necessary for own security and has a perfect sense of its obligations and sense responsibility and reality of present situation.
3. Israel does not consider itself bound to account to anyone re deployment of troops within Israel.

Eytan remarked privately that Prime Minister much upset over inquiry with its implicit questioning of motives.

Facts of situation, as reported mission by MA liaison, are:

1. Past six weeks Iraqis and Palestine Arabs from triangle been raiding nightly farms in Israel coastal strip and area south of Ara-

¹ This telegram was originally received as No. 194.

² Not printed, but see footnote 1, p. 803.

Lajun line. Raiders apparently after cattle, food, and prisoners. Some few farmers killed.

[Here follow paragraphs numbered 2 to 8 giving details of the raids and of Israeli action to prevent the raiders from crossing Israeli lines and containing the statement that "PGI reportedly has no intentions launching offensive against Iraqis but will firmly resist and punish raiders" and comment by Mr. McDonald that "while Israelis will probably not [be] provoked into formal action it is always possible that punitive action or hot pursuit might carry over into Iraqis lines if raids continued."]

Sent Department 190, repeated Baghdad 1.

[McDONALD]

10 Files

*Message Released by the United Nations Security Council on
March 11, 1949*

S/1284

CABLEGRAM DATED 11 MARCH 1949 FROM THE ACTING MEDIATOR TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A GENERAL CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND TRANSJORDAN

FOR PRESIDENT SECURITY COUNCIL: I have the honour to inform the Security Council that on the morning of 11 March at Rhodes the Delegations representing the Governments of Israel and Transjordan in the current Armistice negotiations signed a General Cease-Fire Agreement applying to all sectors in which forces under the Israeli and Transjordan Command are opposed. The text of this Agreement is as follows:

ISRAELI TRANSJORDAN GENERAL CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT

We, the undersigned on behalf of our respective Governments do hereby agree that:

1. A General Cease-Fire between the armed forces of the two parties shall be effective as of the date of the signing of this Agreement.

2. The General Cease-Fire shall be complete and enduring and shall apply to all elements of the Military or para military forces under the command of the parties signatory—land, sea and air—wherever located and shall extend to all sectors in which the armed forces of the two parties are found in proximity to each other beginning in the North at Kh Deir Azab (MR 1510 1574).

3. No element of the ground or air forces of either party shall advance beyond or pass over the lines or positions now held by the foremost elements of its ground forces and no element of air or naval forces of either party shall enter into or pass over the waters adjacent to the coastline now held by the other party for any purposes whatsoever.

4. Complete supervision of the Truce by the United Nations observers shall be allowed and facilitated.

5. Movements of civilians shall not occur from one side to the other except by mutual agreement of the parties.

This General Cease-Fire Agreement shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, interests and positions of either party signatory hereto as regards specific matters which may relate to the Armistice negotiations now in progress or to the ultimate peaceful settlement of all outstanding issues between the parties.

Done and signed in quadruplicate at Rhodes, Island of Rhodes, Greece, on the eleventh day of March nineteen forty-nine, in the presence of the United Nations Acting Mediator on Palestine.

For the Government of Israel
Reuven Shiloah
Col. Moshe Dayan

For the Government of Transjordan
Col. Ashed Sudki El Jundi
Col. Mohammed Bey Mouaita

In urging the parties to undertake voluntary cease-fire at this time, I expressed the hope that its scrupulous observance by both sides would serve to dissipate the tension which has recently developed in the Southern Negev.

The negotiations on the Armistice Agreement continue.

501.BB Palestine/3-1149 : Telegram

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

JERUSALEM, March 11, 1949.

216. According to Palestine *Post* Ben Gurion stated in Assembly speech yesterday "Jerusalem was part of Jewish state, and there was no difference between Jerusalem and other parts of Israel. World recognition would be sought for this".

Repeated Beirut 28, Baghdad 12, Damascus 11, Amman 16, pouched Cairo, Jidda.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/3-949 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1949—1 p. m.

154. Re memo whose text reported urtel 293 Mar 9 you may wish informally tell Eban Dept has already drawn attention US Min Damascus fact Syrian Govt obligated under SC res Nov. 16 to undertake armistice negots.

Concern of PGI for conclusion armistices with Lebanon, Transjordan, Syria and Iraq meets with sympathetic response this Govt.

This underscores our anxiety aroused by reports in Amman Legs tels 88, 89 and 90, Mar 9,¹ rptd USUN, indicating Israeli forces may have penetrated Transjordan territory. Consequences such action shld be very apparent to Eban but you shld stress our grave concern and hope that these reports may prove unfounded.

ACHESON

¹ None printed, but see footnotes 1-3, p. 810.

501.BB Palestine/3-1149: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Jerusalem

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1949—6 p. m.

153. Unpal 57. For Ethridge from Rusk. Dept contemplates concentrating activities here re Palestine refugee problem under George McGhee with title of Special Assistant to Secstate. We believe would be useful for McGhee join you for Beirut conference but that, contrary last sentence, Unpal 54 Mar. 9,¹ official appt shld not be announced until his return from Beirut since we have no desire confuse Griffis' operation or to cross wires with PCC responsibilities under Res of Dec. 11. Consequently McGhee would appear in Beirut merely as Dept Officer on special mission for Secy to gather background info on refugee problem. Upon his return he will deal not only with immed and interim phases refugee problem but, more particularly, long-range measures designed for final settlement.

McGhee tentatively plans arrive Beirut Mar 19. Wld like to see Bunche and may either during conference or afterwards call at Rhodes if Bunche himself not available Beirut or Jerusalem. Returning US, McGhee will spend few days London to concert with Brit. officials on refugee problem.

If you perceive any objections this proposal pls tele. Rptd Cairo 267 for Griffis; Beirut 110, London 817, USUN 157. [Rusk.]

ACHESON

¹ Identified also as telegram 145 from Jerusalem, p. 805.

501.BB Palestine/3-1049: Telegram

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

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1949—7 p. m.

155. Dept considers PM comments paras 1-3 ur 194 [190] March 10 inappropriate. Seems indicate PM misunderstood purpose approach

you instructed make by Deptel 140 March 8. Ask Eytan inform PM USG had no intention "asking info on how Israel disposes its troops within Israel". Add USG concerned by any report indicating possibility new outbreak hostilities Pal and because of this concern desired in most friendly spirit bring Iraqi report attention Israeli auths. State US reps Baghdad being instructed take up with Iraqi auths question raids reported urtel.¹

ACHESON

¹ This telegram was repeated to Baghdad. The Department, on March 11, requested Chargé Dorsz to inform the Iraqi Foreign Minister about the U.S. approach to the Israelis as a result of his request. At the same time, it instructed him to state to the Foreign Minister the "belief USG that in interest preservation peace Iraqi mil auths Pal should make every effort prevent such raids into Israeli areas." (Telegram 84 to Baghdad, 867N.01/3-1149)

Regarding the request of the Iraqi Foreign Minister, see footnote 1, p. 803.

501.BB Palestine/3-249 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Jerusalem

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1949—7 p. m.

156. Unpal 60. Position to be taken by Jerusalem Comite in informal consultations with reps of Israel and Transjordan (Palun 66)¹ believed sound. Dept considers that arrangements for Jerusalem shld be on principle that general administrative responsibilities will be vested in Arab and Jewish admins in respective areas of Jerusalem and that only specified functions will be carried out by whatever internatl and joint auths may be created.

Re French proposal that internatl auth shld consist reps Arabs, Jews, US, France, and Turkey, Dept agrees such auth unwieldy and otherwise undesirable. As means of bringing French to support internatl auth headed by UNRep, USRep Palestine Comm is authorized to inform French that US wld be willing support French national for first UNRep in Jerusalem provided that highly qualified person is made available.

Dept feels that concept of UNRep and one rep each from Arab and Jewish local admin constituting a Comm and acting by majority vote (last para, ref tel) is preferable to concept UNRep with advisory council. Participation of Arab rep and Jewish rep in Comm shld have result of engaging Arab and Jewish responsibility for actions taken by internatl auth in matters of common concern. Power on part of internatl auth in Jerusalem to bring important security matters to attn SC seems desirable, although precise method of such contact wld

¹ Identified also as telegram 185, March 2, from Jerusalem, not printed, but see footnote 2, p. 794.

depend on relation of internatl auth in Jerusalem to UN. Art 4 of draft Jerusalem Statute bears on this point.

Dept is not clear as to reasons for lack of Comite approval of "internatl court with power to decide jurisdictional competence government organs and local courts and questions re exercise powers internatl auth." Dept believes desirable to have some internatl tribunal competent to determine these questions, perhaps only on reference by Jerusalem internatl auth. Use of ICJ or chamber of that Court for this purpose may not be possible under UN Charter and Statute ICJ without amendment. Dept suggests provision for Jerusalem internatl tribunal to be selected, for example, by Pres ICJ.

ACHESON

501.BB Palestine/3-1149 : Telegram

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

NEW YORK, March 11, 1949—9:07 p. m.

319. Following is cablegram from Acting Mediator to SYG transmitting text of general cease-fire agreement between Israel and Transjordan:

"We, the undersigned on behalf of our respective governments do hereby agree that:

1. A general cease-fire between the armed forces of the two parties shall be effective as of the date of the signing of this agreement.

2. The general cease-fire shall be complete and enduring and shall apply to all elements of the military or para-military forces under the command of the parties signatory—land, sea and air—wherever located and shall extend to all sectors in which the armed forces of the two parties are found in proximity to each other beginning in the north at Kh Deir Azab (MR 1510 1574).

3. No element of the ground or air forces of either party shall advance beyond or pass over the lines or positions now held by the foremost elements of its ground forces and no element of air or naval forces of either party shall enter into or pass over the waters adjacent to the coastline now held by the other party for any purpose whatsoever.

4. Complete supervision of the truce by the UN observers shall be allowed and facilitated.

5. Movements of civilians shall not occur from one side to the other except by mutual agreement of the parties.

This general cease-fire agreement shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, interests and positions of either party signatory hereto as regards specific matters which may relate to the armistice nego-

tiations now in progress or to the ultimate peaceful settlement of all outstanding issues between the parties.”

AUSTIN

867N.01/3-1149 : Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT

TEL AVIV, March 11, 1949—11 p. m.

US URGENT

205. ReDeptel 145, March 9, further to our 202, March 11.¹ At 4 p. m. Foreign Minister requested my [me] call. Knox also present. Foreign Minister categorically denied any invasion Transjordan territory or any such intention and gravely stated Israel's resentment US seeming assumption Israel's guilt and consequent warning prior inquiry of Israel regarding its intentions or actions.

Foreign Minister explained as follows:

1. At 10 p. m. last night (March 10) Israeli flag raised over Umm Reshresh police station on shore Gulf of Aqaba just west Transjordan frontier (145885) "thus completing and making effective Israel's possession of Negev".

2. For some days Israel forces moving south in Negev with difficulty owing necessity find new transit avoiding any encroachment on Transjordan frontier; had to avoid eastern road in parts because it crosses Transjordan frontier and had to find new approach to Umm Reshresh in order avoid using road that crosses Egyptian frontier. Movement successful and at no point did Israeli forces cross either Transjordan or Egyptian frontiers.

3. As Israeli units approached Naqb el Aqaba (137890) (not Rasen Naqb which is on Egyptian side 136891) approximately 7 miles NW junction Gulf Aqaba-Transjordan frontier (145885) and also Umm Reshresh they saw from distance unit of Transjordan Arab Legion entrenched there. Israeli forces stopped because under strict orders avoid clash.

4. Immediately Transjordan opened "diplomatic warfare" through three channels:

a. Message conveyed to Foreign Minister from Abdullah that latter shocked hear Israel advancing on Aqaba and that this did not accord with spirit Rhodes and that Israel forces were clashing with Transjordan. King alleged incidents at Naqb el Aqaba, Wadi

¹ Not printed; it gave Mr. McDonald's comment that the "Mission considers highly disturbing Transjordan assertion that it has established a military 'line' across Israeli territory in Negev and now accuses Israel of crossing that line.

"Feeling among Israelis here is that Transjordan and British are determined precipitate clashes on Israel territory in effort force establishment armistice lines after which Transjordan will consider itself in permanent occupation of area." (867N.01/3-1149)

Araba, and Aqaba area. To this Foreign Minister replied that if source King's anxiety was that Israel had intentions Port Aqaba or had crossed Transjordan frontier Foreign Minister could assure him neither was case, if Abdullah was in position equally assure Transjordan troops would not cross Israel frontier all would be well and that Foreign Minister assumed Abdullah aware fact Negev between Egypt and Transjordan was assigned to Israel by UN and that Israel determined exercise sovereignty over it. As regards incidents: Incident at Naqb el Aqaba was well within Israel territory: Incident Wadi Araba was when Transjordan police patrol from Ein Gharandal (170944) fired on Israel troops well within Israel Negev and then withdrew, no incident in Aqaba area.

b. Second channel was Transjordan complaint to Bunche accusing Israel of crossing a Transjordan drawn "line" in Negev. This complaint admitted very helpful existence Transjordan invasion troops in area, Shiloah replied to Bunche as indicated in Deptel under reference and requested Bunche tell Transjordan evacuate area before larger issues are raised.

c. Third channel through HMG representative Tel Aviv who left note Foreign Office callings attention Government to HMG's ally's charges that Israel had crossed frontiers and was attacking Ein Gharandal. Note outlined line of action British troops in Aqaba would take certain instances as follows:

- (1) If Israeli forces crossed Transjordan frontiers and fired they would be fired upon.
- (2) If Israeli forces fire from Israel side fire would be returned.
- (3) If Israeli cross frontier without firing they will be warned and then fired upon.
- (4) If Israeli aircraft flew over British positions they would be fired upon whether they fired or not.

Foreign Minister stated that during the night of March 9-10 the Transjordan forces at Naqb el Aqaba and at Umm Reshresh evacuated and Israel forces occupied positions without firing.

Foreign Minister then read cable received from Eilat² giving details of conversations in Department (reDeptel under reference) in which Eilat stated that attitude was tense and accusatory at first but more conciliatory at end. Foreign Minister said he would be less than frank if he did not state that this attitude of US based entirely on complaints from one side and without prior inquiry of Israeli Government has caused deep official resentment. (He was also probably thinking of inquiry made under instructions Deptel 140, March 8.) He stated that the Israeli move to Aqaba Gulf was undertaken with extraordinary care and great difficulty to avoid infringement Transjordan Egyptian frontiers and to avoid clashes. Conscious

² Alternate spelling of Elath; see footnote 4, p. 811.

that Israel aggression would involve clash British, he stated "if there is no respect for our integrity there should be some respect for our intelligence". He added that if this *ex parte* attitude on part of US were publicly known it would produce most unfortunate reaction.

Foreign Minister concluded by stating that Government had asked Bunche send observers immediately Negev check Israeli position, transit area, and alleged clashes. Also had instructed Shiloah at Rhodes March 11 sign cease-fire agreement with Transjordan in area of which most northern point is village of Budrus (149153) further line to north excluded because lack confirmation that Transjordan has power act for Iraq.

Comment: View tenseness situation and public feeling, earnestly hope that Department will not prejudge Israel's intentions or actions on basis of complaints received from Arab capitals. Information gathered independently by MA's tends confirm Foreign Minister's statement that Israel has tried avoid clashes and has scrupulously refrained from infringing on Transjordan territory. *End comment.*

Pass to Army, Air, Navy.

Sent Department, passed London 16, Amman 4, Jerusalem 19.

MCDONALD

867N.01/3-1249 : Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

SECRET

AMMAN, March 12, 1949—4 p. m.

100. 1. It is understood that Sassoon has sent message to King within past two days to following effect:

(a) Israelis advancing in Negev have no intention crossing Transjordan frontier or of attacking Akaba and King should so inform his "British allies";

(b) Israel hopes Arab Legion and British forces will receive orders not to attack Israeli Forces in order that present excellent relations existing between Israel and Transjordan may continue;

(c) Israel wishes conclude peace settlements soonest with Transjordan provided Transjordan and British will not take aggressive action in Negev. King's reply is expected to be noncommittal.

2. British troops at Akaba have been ordered by British Government to use restraint and in event Israelis cross frontier, to warn them to retire before opening fire. All Israeli aircraft over Transjordan positions will be fired on immediately.

3. Glubb said this morning that in signing cease-fire agreement yesterday at Rhodes Israelis would not agree to clause re extension cease-fire to Iraqi areas if and when Legion took over (Legtel 91, March 9). Bunche consequently informed both sides in writing that

at such time as Arab Legion took over Iraqi front line it would be incumbent on both parties to discuss extension present agreement those areas.

4. Israelis are reported to have occupied in past 48 hours no man's land in Beitjibrin-Faluja area, taking over 15 Arab villages.

Sent Department 100, repeated Jerusalem 63 for PCC.

STABLER

501.BB Palestine/3-1249: Telegram

Mr. Wells Stabler to the Secretary of State

SECRET

AMMAN, March 12, 1949—5 p. m.

101. Government and military circles here have been badly shaken by recent Israeli actions in Negev particularly when armistice negotiations were proceeding at Rhodes. Although still hoping that US and UK as well as United Nations will find some effective method of putting halt to continued violations by Israel of SC resolutions, both in spirit and in letter, they recognize that past efforts to deal with such Israeli violations and *faits accomplis* have resulted in failure—in *de facto* acceptance of advantages gained by Israel through violations. While there are indications that Transjordan, facing realistically its present position vis-à-vis Israel, would be willing conclude peace with that country notwithstanding developments in Negev, there is considerable question as to whether Israel will cease its aggressions at this point. Evidence available at Arab Legion and Iraqi headquarters, and confirmed to certain extent by UN observers, points to intended Israeli attack on "Arab triangle".¹ (Immediately following telegram² quotes text of memorandum on subject provided by Arab Legion headquarters.)

Since previous Israeli violations of SC orders have been undertaken in surprise moves, no opportunity has been offered to take any action concerning them except in nature *ex post facto* protests. Result has been that violations succeeded as *faits accomplis*. However in this instance evidence indicates that Israel plans aggressive measures toward an area which cannot even remotely be construed as "Israel territory" and may translate them into action at any time.

Would earnestly and urgently recommend that Department consider calling in Israeli Ambassador and, informing him of these reports, warn him of serious consequences affecting US-Israel relations if Israel undertakes this or any other aggressive action. Unless this is

¹ The area in Palestine bounded by the towns of Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarm.

² No. 102, March 12, 7 p. m., not printed.

done and Israel is placed firmly on notice another violation and *fait accompli* will probably be chalked up in Israel's favor.³

Sent Department 101, repeated Jerusalem 64 for PCC, USUN 6.

STABLER

³ The Department, in telegram 30 to Amman, March 14, suggested that "If Iraqi and TJ Govts have reliable and specific evidence indicating Israelis planning offensive against triangle, would seem logical for them bring such evidence to attention Bunche." The telegram was repeated to Baghdad and to Jerusalem for Mr. Ethridge (501.BB Palestine/3-1249).

London, on March 14, reported information from Sir Alec S. Kirkbride, British Minister to Transjordan, who was then at London for consultation, that the Transjordanian Delegation at Rhodes had suggested that the cease-fire should apply to the Iraqi front as soon as this front would be taken over by Transjordan but that the Israeli Delegation had refused, saying the matter would be discussed after the takeover. It also advised of a telegram received that morning by the Foreign Office from Amman stating that the Israeli Foreign Minister had informed the Transjordanian Delegation that Israeli forces would occupy Samaria to "maintain order" as soon as the Iraqi forces withdrew (telegram 964, 867N.01/3-1449).

501.BB Palestine/3-1449: Telegram

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

TOP SECRET URGENT

JERUSALEM, March 14, 1949—11 a. m.

222. [Palun 82?] For Acheson's eyes only from Ethridge. All members of Commission remaining here have strong feeling that work of the Commission has been seriously prejudiced by:

(1). Aqaba incident because although technically no border may have been violated at least new territory has been occupied and a SC order flouted. Furthermore it appears evident purpose to take Negev without exchange in contravention US position as stated in GA.

(2). Ben Gurion's statement on Jerusalem previously reported to Department in ConGen telegram 216, March 11.

(3). Failure or refusal of Israeli Government to make any statement re refugees that would put Commission in position to find a key for peace negotiations, despite representations made by Department (see Palun 81¹).

We are not in possession of any assurance that could be given Arabs that any settlement on any question will be respected. As previously reported, this was a major theme of Arabs during our tour of capitals.

Above situation obviously prejudices success Beirut Conference. We have informally discussed calling off conference but my own feeling is that whether it fails or not we must (a) make the effort, (b) get the situation out into the open before there is further deterioration. Consequently we are going ahead with it. If the Department can

¹ Identified also as telegram 221, March 14, from Jerusalem, not printed, but see footnote 3, p. 806.

do anything useful during Shertok's visit to induce him to make one conciliatory gesture it may save the situation. Arabs have constantly impressed upon us that they regard the refugee question as test of Israeli good faith.

The second point they have made as I have previously reported, is that they want guarantees. I have consistently replied that the only assurance in which I can encourage them is through UN. When they see it flouted and the Commission treated as unwelcome interlopers they are not likely to regard that as great assurance. Indeed unless strong action of some kind is taken now Palestine may become even holier as the burial place of the UN.

My own feeling is that if Beirut Conference fails there is little left for us to do but to call for direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states and present a plan for the internationalization of Jerusalem that will be academic. Seems to me therefore, that Department is faced with major decision—whether it should or will try to enforce position that if Israel takes the Negev it should make exchange of territory elsewhere. If the decision is to insist upon that it will require the strongest representations at the earliest possible moment. On the other hand Stabler expressed feeling Sunday that Transjordan would be willing to negotiate peace on almost any basis.

Some of us have the feeling that one reason for Shertok's hasty departure might be desire to avoid showdown with Commission on refugee problem. Whether true or not, I hope the Department will consider the possibility that² exists for turning his visit to our advantage. I am sure that he considers Washington more friendly than the Commission and has not been sufficiently impressed with US interest in UN settlement. I wish he could be shown that this is not the case. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

² At this point in the text appears "(Palun 82)." It is the opinion of the editors that Palun 82 is the same as telegram 222 from Jerusalem. This designation, therefore, has been deleted here and placed in brackets, with question mark, at the beginning of the message.

In the "Summary of Daily Meeting with the Secretary" of March 15, Mr. Rusk, who became Assistant Secretary of State for United Nations Affairs on February 8, is said to have "reported that the Palestine situation is getting more serious. He asked the Secretary whether he had read telegram no. 222 from Ethridge. The Secretary said that he had not but would. Mr. Rusk said we should send this along to Key West at once with an indication that the Department will have some recommendations to make to the President in regard to it but that we desired the President to have this information immediately." (Secretary's Daily Meetings, Lot 58 D 609. This lot is a chronological collection of the records of the Secretary of State's daily meetings with top Department of State officials for the year 1949-1952, as maintained by the Special Assistant to the Secretary of State.)

501.BB Palestine/3-1549

*Memorandum by the Coordinator on Palestine Refugee Matters
(McGhee)¹ to the Under Secretary of State (Webb)*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 15, 1949.

Attached are policy recommendations with respect to Palestine refugees, together with a supporting policy paper which contains on page 20 a statement of recommended planning objectives.² These have been approved by Mr. Rusk, who hopes that they can be discussed at your regular staff meeting at the earliest opportunity.

Since I plan to leave for Beirut the morning of March 17, I would like to discuss this paper with you tomorrow, together with proposed plan of action and planning with respect to the refugee problem which are dealt with in papers attached.

After you have given consideration to these papers, I hope then to be able to discuss them with the Secretary, who has indicated his willingness to do so and to advise me of the President's views with respect to this matter.³

[Annex 1]

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

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 15, 1949.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

(1) It be recognized as in the national interest of the United States that an early and effective solution be found to the problem of the Palestine refugees. Such solution should make possible their repatriation or resettlement in such a manner as to minimize present and potential political and economic tensions prejudicial to United States interests in the area affected.

(2) The United States be prepared to contribute such technical and financial assistance to the solution of this problem as it considers necessary, while at the same time refusing to accept sole responsibility for solution of the problem and seeking to confine U.S. financial assistance thereto within limits consistent with its national interests.

¹ In this position, Mr. McGhee served as Special Assistant to the Secretary of State.

² These papers are printed as Annexes 1 and 2, below. The planning objectives on page 20 are the 10 recommendations in Annex 2.

³ Filed with this memorandum is an undated memorandum, prepared presumably by Mr. McGhee and entitled "Plan of Action [regarding] Palestine Refugee Problem," not printed.

(3) A plan be developed as a matter of urgency for the implementation of this policy, including proposals for relief, rehabilitation, and long-range resettlement projects, estimated costs, and expected sources of funds, and operational procedures, including the part to be played by the U.S., the governments in the affected area, other interested governments, and the United Nations.⁴

[Annex 2]

501.MA Palestine/3-1749

*Policy Paper Prepared in the Department of State*⁵

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 15, 1949.

PALESTINE REFUGEES

THE PROBLEM

The problem is to determine the nature and extent of United States interest in the question of some 725,000 Arab refugees from the Palestine hostilities, and in the light of the findings, to make recommendations concerning United States policy towards the long-range disposition of this question.

DISCUSSION

(1) *Background:* As a result of hostilities in Palestine preceding and following the termination of the British Mandate and establishment of the State of Israel on May 15, 1948, almost the entire Arab population of Palestine fled or was expelled from the area under Jewish occupation. These Arabs, now estimated at 725,000, took refuge in Arab-controlled areas of Palestine and in the neighboring Arab states. The present distribution of the refugees is approximately the following:

⁴ According to a memorandum of April 21, the numbered paragraphs were accepted as a "Policy Decision, March 15, 1949." The authorship of the memorandum is not indicated (867N.48/4-2249). The word "be" in each of the first two paragraphs above was changed to "is" in the memorandum of April 21 and the word "should" was added as the third word in paragraph 3.

⁵ The specific authorship of this paper is not indicated. The first six sections, except for 6(d), and the 10 recommendations at the end of the paper were largely quoted from memoranda prepared separately by the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs and the Office of United Nations Affairs. The former was sent to Mr. McGhee in a memorandum of March 12 by Mr. Satterthwaite as provisional views on "Policy and recommendations concerning solution of the Arab refugee question" (867N.01/3-1249). The latter was in the form of a memorandum by Mr. McClintock to Mr. McGhee on March 14 and dealt with the "Attitudes of UN, individual governments, and refugees themselves toward Palestine refugee problem" (867N.48/3-1449). The Policy Paper begins with a table of contents, here omitted.

Lebanon	100,000- 105,000	an addition of 10-	10.5%	to the normal population
Syria	85,000- 100,000	" " "	3.5- 4%	" " " "
Transjordan	85,000	" " "	21%	" " " "
Iraq	5,000	" " "	0.1%	" " " "
Egypt	8,000- 10,000	" " "	0.04- 0.05%	" " " "
Palestine				
North	230,000	areas under Egyptian, Iraqi, and		
South	225,000	Transjordanian military occupation		

No accurate statistical breakdown of the refugees exists. However, the International Children's Emergency Fund considers 425,000 or 58% of the refugees eligible for assistance under its program: this group consists of infants, young children, pregnant women, and nursing mothers. Approximately 15% of the refugees are aged, sick, and infirm. It would appear that the able-bodied men and women amount to a maximum of 25 percent of the total, or 180,000.

The condition of these refugees, dependent upon their own slender resources and upon those of the neighboring states, rapidly became acute. Since the Government of Israel refused to permit repatriation of Arab refugees into Israeli territory while a state of war existed, and since relief assistance enlisted by the United Nations Mediator for Palestine in August was wholly inadequate to meet a problem of this magnitude, the Mediator referred the problem to the General Assembly in September, with a renewed appeal for assistance. This appeal was reiterated by the Acting Mediator in a report to the United Nations on October 18, 1948,⁶ in which he made recommendations for the establishment of a United Nations relief program for assistance to the refugees.

(2) *Action taken up to present.*

In response to the Mediator's initial request in August for emergency supplies, the Department's only recourse, in the absence of authorized public funds, was to appeal to American voluntary agencies. As a result of this action, funds and supplies exceeding \$1,500,000 have been contributed by American voluntary sources as of March 1, 1949.

On November 19, 1948, the General Assembly unanimously passed a joint US-UK-Belgian-Dutch resolution calling for a United Nations program for the relief of Palestinian refugees. This resolution declared that a sum of \$32,000,000 would be required for a nine months' program, to be raised by voluntary contributions, and authorized an immediate advance of \$5,000,000 from the UN working capital fund.

⁶ United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Supplement No. 11A*. For the proposed United States draft resolution based on the needs of the refugees as set forth in this report, see telegram Delga 411, October 20, 1948, from Paris, *Foreign Relations, 1948*, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1497.

This Government granted a leave of absence to Stanton Griffis, American Ambassador to Egypt, to enable him to accept the appointment as Director of United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees.

On December 7, President Truman announced his intention of recommending to the Congress that the United States contribute 50 percent of the amount called for in the United Nations resolution, or \$16,000,000.⁷ The authorizing legislation for this appropriation has been passed by the Senate, and is now pending in the House of Representatives.

The General Assembly resolution of December 11, 1948, establishing a Conciliation Commission for Palestine resolves "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, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible". A machinery for implementing these objectives is provided by the resolution, which "instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation, and to maintain close relations with the Director of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees and, through him, with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations." We strongly supported the resolution of December 11, and have instructed the American member of the Conciliation Commission to be guided, with respect to the refugee question, by its terms.

With respect to the attitude of the Israeli Government towards the question of repatriation, we have undertaken and are undertaking action on the diplomatic level in two respects: (1) with the underlying purpose of safeguarding Arab absentee property interests in Israel against application of the Israeli ordinance of December 12, 1948 authorizing sale of such property, we are urging Israel not to take unilateral action which would prejudice achievement of an agreed settlement on the return of refugees to their homes and return of property to refugee owners; (2) we are urging Israel to implement the purposes of the December 11 resolution, as a means of facilitating political settlement of the Palestine problem and preparing the way for a *modus vivendi* with the Arab states.

If Israel indicates agreement in principle with the December 11 resolution, or expresses its willingness to cooperate in resolving the refugee question, we also contemplate making representations to the

⁷ For text of statement by President Truman, see telegram Gadel 688, December 6, 1948, to Paris, *Foreign Relations, 1948*, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1648.

Arab states, with a view to their adoption of a more realistic attitude towards the question of accepting a share of the refugees on a permanent basis and with a view to stimulating them to make constructive plans to this end.

(3) *Assumptions that can be made with respect to the problem.*

Failure to liquidate or materially reduce the magnitude of the Arab refugee problem would have important consequences. The Arab states presently represent a highly vulnerable area for Soviet exploitation, and the presence of over 700,000 destitute, idle refugees provides the likeliest channel for such exploitation. In addition, their continued presence will further undermine the weakened economy of the Arab states, and may well provide the motivation for the overthrow of certain of the Arab Governments. Moreover, failure to liquidate the problem would adversely affect the possibility of a permanent settlement in Palestine, and would create a permanent source of friction between Israel and the Arab states.

Conversely, speedy action looking to the equitable solution of the refugee problem would further the restoration of peace and security and contribute to the stabilization of the Near East. It would prevent the exploitation of the refugee problem by foreign interests inimical to the best interests of the peoples of the Near East.

In view of the stated position of Israel towards the question of repatriation, and the large-scale preemption of Arab lands and housing by Jewish immigrants, who are entering Israel at the rate of 25,000 monthly, it would be wholly unrealistic to expect Israel to agree to the repatriation of all those so desiring. Although the Jews originally accepted the partition resolution of November 29, 1947, under which the Arab population of the Jewish state would have numbered 500,000, it is doubtful that the State of Israel would now permit more than a small number of refugees to return to Israel. If Israel could be persuaded to accept any substantial number, it is probable that it would request financial assistance in carrying out their repatriation.

It is reasonable to assume that as many as 600,000 refugees will have to be permanently settled in the Arab states. The Arab states, however, will be unable to accomplish the resettlement of this number without adverse economic and political repercussions, unless material assistance is forthcoming.

It can also be assumed that any machinery and resources which are placed at the disposal of the Conciliation Commission to implement its task will be inadequate to deal with a resettlement problem of this magnitude. Moreover, the resources of the United Nations and its specialized agencies are presently inadequate to handle this problem and, to judge from the response of the member states to the appeal for funds to implement the November 19 resolution establishing a relief

program, the member states would not be willing to contribute the material resources required to carry out a mass resettlement program if such action were proposed in the United Nations.

Finally, it can be assumed that Great Britain is the only major foreign power whose degree of interest in the liquidation of the refugee question is sufficient to insure any significant participation in its solution. (Attention should be called in this respect to Great Britain's close treaty relations with Egypt and Iraq, and to her special position with respect to Transjordan, the latter two of which would probably be heavily involved in any mass resettlement program.)

(4) *United States interests and policy in the Near East.*

The Near Eastern area, which consists of Israel and the Arab states, is an area of vital strategic importance, a communications center, and a major source of petroleum. As such, it is an area of special concern to all the great powers and to certain lesser powers. During recent years our chief objective in the Near East was to prevent inherent rivalries and conflicting interests in that area from developing into conditions which might lead to a third world war, an objective dictated by our primary interest in safeguarding the security of the United States.

Because of the special significance of Palestine, the conflicting interests and aspirations of the Near East as a whole have had a primary focus in that country and, during the past year, found expression in open hostilities. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, this Government took a leading part in seeking a solution of the Palestine problem which would be acceptable to the interested parties. Since the failure of these attempts, we have been active in supporting measures designed to end the conflict, and to achieve a permanent settlement of the Palestine problem. These efforts, carried on within the framework of the United Nations, have been governed by our desire to support in the Near East the principles of the United Nations, and to put an end to the threat to international security and to American strategic interests in the Near East which the present situation represents.

In conjunction with our efforts to achieve the permanent settlement of Arab-Jewish differences with respect to Palestine, we are striving to promote the establishment of cooperative relationships between Israel and the Arab states, as a condition to the stabilization and peaceful development of the area.

On a regional basis, it is our policy to assist the Near Eastern countries in maintaining their independence, to strengthen their orientation towards the West, and to discourage any tendencies towards the development of authoritarian and unrepresentative forms of government. Such efforts are designed both to minimize the de-

bilitating effects of internal discontent, and to strengthen the determination of these states to resist external pressures and intervention.

(5) *Effect of the refugee problem upon United States interests and policy.*

From the political point of view, the stabilization of the Near East is a major objective of American foreign policy. The refugee problem, therefore, as a focal point for continued unrest within the Arab states, a source of continuing friction between Israel and the Arabs, and a likely channel for Soviet exploitation, is directly related to our national interests.

From the strategic point of view, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on September 22, 1948, with specific reference to the Arab refugee question, characterized the Near Eastern area as an area of critical strategic importance, and emphasized the necessity, from a military standpoint, of maintaining the Arab world oriented towards the United States and the United Kingdom. They therefore recommended that, as a measure to strengthen our military position, the United States should make provision for generous assistance to the Arab refugees from Palestine.⁸ The Secretary of Defense on January 25, 1949, characterized the presence of the refugees in the Near East as a serious threat to the political, economic and social stability of this region, and a serious danger to the health and welfare of the peoples of the Arab states and Israel.⁹

Our present policy with respect to Palestinian refugees, as set forth in the Secretary's Policy Problem Book, is the following:

We should use our best efforts, through the Conciliation Commission and through diplomatic channels, to insure the implementation of the General Assembly resolution of December 11, 1948;

We should endeavor to persuade Israel to accept the return of those refugees who so desire, in the interests of justice and as an evidence of its desire to establish amicable relations with the Arab world;

We should furnish advice and guidance to the governments of the Arab states in the task of absorbing into their economic and social structures those refugees who do not wish to return to Israel.

(6) *Attitudes of UN, individual governments, and refugees themselves toward the problem.*

(a) *Attitude of the UN.*

Count Bernadotte, the slain Palestine Mediator, very early established the principle of UN responsibility for the Palestine refugees. In

⁸ See telegram Telmar 19, September 23, 1948, to Paris, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1427.

⁹ See Secretary Forrestal's letter to Chairman Bloom, January 25, p. 697.

Conclusion (G) of his report, dated September 16, in Part Three (Assistance to Refugees), he said :

“So long as large numbers of the refugees remain in distress, I believe that responsibility for their relief should be assumed by the United Nations in conjunction with the neighbouring Arab States, the Provisional Government of Israel, the specialized agencies, and also all the voluntary bodies or organizations of a humanitarian and non-political character.”

However, at the Third Session of the General Assembly in Paris, the United States Delegation was careful to insist in conversations with other Delegations that there was no *legal* responsibility for refugee relief devolving upon the United Nations. The United States Delegation succeeded in eliminating from the United Kingdom draft of the Preamble of the resolution before the Third Committee providing for an emergency relief program, a paragraph which would have established United Nations responsibility for this problem. The issue was placed before the Third Committee and the Assembly on its own merits as a question involving humanitarian as well as political elements which would have to be met on an *ad hoc* basis without establishing a precedent for similar United Nations action in other cases.

Nevertheless, in the eyes of the refugees themselves and to an even greater extent in the view of the Arab Governments, there is a United Nations responsibility for the care of the refugees only slightly less than an imagined United States responsibility, since the Arab Governments are prone to insist that Israel would not have come into existence without United States support and, had there been no Israel, there would have been no refugees.

Subsequent to the passage of the resolution, the UN in the field, under the directorship of Ambassador Stanton Griffis, has undertaken primary responsibility for the emergency phase of refugee relief. There is no doubt that the Secretary General, Mr. Trygve Lie, feels convinced that the United Nations must continue to show effective leadership in meeting this problem. However, in essence, the continuing participation of the United Nations in dealing with the interim and long-range phases of the matter will depend on the attitudes of the Governments who compose the United Nations.

(b) *Attitudes of Governments.*

It was significant that when the Palestine refugee problem was considered by Committee 3 in Paris last autumn, support was more verbal than valuable in tangible terms. Mr. Mayhew of the British Delegation, at the very commencement of the session, insisted that the Third Committee should immediately devise measures to meet the refugee problem. When asked, however, what measures the United Kingdom

had in mind or even if its delegation had a draft resolution, Mr. Mayhew confessed that they had neither ideas nor the embodiment of ideas in resolution form. The British attitude seemed to be one of viewing with great alarm, but most of the spade work in developing the resolution which was finally adopted by the Assembly was done by the United States Delegation. It is probable, however, that it was due to British influence that the Netherlands and Belgium associated themselves with the United Kingdom, and the United States, in jointly sponsoring a resolution. Unfortunately, however, the interest of these governments in contributing to the refugee relief in more tangible terms than sponsorship of a resolution has not proved to be very great. Although the Belgian Government has contributed approximately one-half a million dollars, the Dutch have given nothing, while the French contribution still awaits Parliamentary approval. The British contribution totals one million pounds.

The response of other governments has been even less enthusiastic. In fact, the great brunt of relief expenditures has been borne, perforce, by the Arab States, on whom these refugees are quartered. Dr. Bayard Dodge estimates that from the time the first refugees escaped from Haifa and Jaffa in the spring of 1948, to December 1 in that year, the Arab Governments contributed \$11 million in cash or kind to their sustenance. This sum, in light of the very slender budgets of most of these Governments, is relatively enormous.*

The conclusion seems inescapable, therefore, that even though the United Nations should formulate a program for the interim and long-range relief periods, its constituent Governments cannot be relied upon for very effective contributions with the possible exception of the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom has definitely indicated its mounting concern at the refugee problem, realizing as it does how the presence of 700,000 demoralized and hungry people can threaten the entire stability of the strategic Middle East in which the United Kingdom has a vital interest. Thus, the British Foreign Secretary on March 2 spoke to Ambassador Douglas in London of the depth of his concern regarding the plight of the Arab refugees. Mr. Bevin felt that this was a problem of alarming proportions which "deserves the utmost efforts of the United States and United Kingdom as well as the United Nations", to say nothing of being a political problem of the first magnitude for the reestablishment of peace in the Middle East (London telegram 787, March 3¹⁰).

* The total direct relief offered the Arab refugees by the Israeli Government to date consists of 500 cases of oranges. [Footnote in the source text.]

¹⁰ Not printed.

Although this was the attitude of the British Foreign Secretary, his Foreign Office has as yet not formulated concrete proposals for meeting the problem. Nevertheless, British Missions in the Middle East have been circularized with a questionnaire and the Foreign Secretary, who displays a keen personal interest in the matter, in the last week of February directed that the views of the Commonwealth Governments regarding the refugee problem be ascertained, as they might be helpful not only in a material way but also in the United Nations. Mr. Bevin thought that India and Pakistan, which have wide experience in handling refugee problems, might be of particular help. He felt also that the French Government should be consulted because of its wide Moslem responsibilities. (London telegram 742, March 1¹¹).

On the basis of this evidence, therefore, there would seem to be ground for considerable spade work with the British. Through the British Middle East Office the United Kingdom has extensive economic contact with the Arab Governments and an immense reservoir of experience on which to draw. Furthermore, in very concrete terms the British should be able to tap the resources of such great engineering firms as Gibbs and Cox, who, it is understood, have prepared detailed engineering plans for river development projects and land improvement schemes in Transjordan and other areas where Palestine refugees might be settled.

Since the British and American Governments are in concert as to their strategic requirements in the Middle East, it would seem absolutely essential that any program for that area in regard to refugee relief which would be sponsored by this Government, either in the United Nations or as a separate project, should be accomplished in the closest accord with the United Kingdom Government.

(c) *Attitude of the Refugees Themselves.*

All reports from the field—i.e., those of Dr. Bayard Dodge and Mr. Colin Bell of the Friends Service Committee, recently returned from Gaza, and of Mr. St. Aubin, the Field Director in the Near East of the American Red Cross, plus reports from United States Missions in that area—confirm that the great bulk of the refugees wish to return to their homes and cling to the illusion that it will be possible to do so.

The danger point will come when the refugees realize that it will be impossible for the majority to return home. It is true that Mr. Stanton Griffis in Cairo's airgram A-254, March 1,¹¹ expresses the opinion that, once peace is restored, large numbers of refugees will infiltrate across the Israeli border and return to their former abode. Neverthe-

¹¹ Not printed.

less, the Representatives of the Provisional Government of Israel have very clearly indicated that Israel has no intention of taking back more than a portion of the refugees. The Israeli Representative in Washington, Mr. Eliahu Elath, told Mr. Mark Ethridge that he thought that maybe the Christian Arabs might be permitted to return but that the Moslem Arabs would be an intractable element who could not assimilate in Israel. Furthermore, Israeli authorities have followed a systematic program of destroying Arab houses in such cities as Haifa and in village communities in order to rebuild modern habitations for the influx of Jewish immigrants from DP camps in Europe. There are, thus, in many instances, literally no houses for the refugees to return to. In other cases incoming Jewish immigrants have occupied Arab dwellings and will most certainly not relinquish them in favor of the refugees. Accordingly, it seems certain that the majority of these unfortunate people will soon be confronted with the fact that they will not be able to return home. Unless some alternative is prepared and some hope offered them of an improved life in the future, it is certain that the political, to say nothing of the social, repercussions of this discovery will be very great.

If a proper program can be devised and implemented promptly, it is to be anticipated that the refugees will cooperate in carrying out the program, especially since they will in any case have no alternative. These people, for the most part, have long been inured to hardship and to life on a subsistence level. Although they have a very natural desire to return to their local fig tree and vine, to use Ambassador Griffis' phrase, it should be possible, if they had a reasonable prospect of acquiring some other fig tree and vine elsewhere, to maintain their morale and to put tools in their hands for their own salvation. The danger will be, if through lack of a proper program or adequate funds, they find themselves, on one hand, cut off from a hope of return to their former homes and, on the other hand, bereft of hope in establishing a new life for themselves elsewhere. If this should transpire it seems almost a foregone conclusion that the ensuing conditions of unrest and despair would provide a most fertile hotbed for the implantation of Communism, and we should in that moment expect to see in the vitally important strategic Middle East a reproduction of the present debacle in China.

(d) Attitude of the Arab states.

It is the present policy of the Arab states to insist upon the repatriation of all the Palestinian refugees, and none of the Arab states with the exception of Transjordan contemplates the permanent settlement of any refugees within its own territory. It can be assumed that the most virogonous efforts will have to be exerted by the Conciliation Com-

mission and by interested governments if the Arab states are to be persuaded to adopt a more realistic and cooperative attitude towards this question. Moreover, it can be assumed that their active cooperation could only be obtained under the following circumstances:

(1) they would require evidence that substantial material assistance would be forthcoming from outside sources to aid in solving the refugee problem:

(2) they would require assurances that such aid would be of material benefit to their countries and populations, as well as to the refugees themselves;

(3) they would require assurances that the administration of such aid would involve no derogation of sovereignty; and

(4) they would require evidence that Israel was prepared to cooperate effectively in the liquidation of the refugee question.

(7) *United States Public Attitude Toward the Problem.*

The American public, generally is unaware of the Palestine refugee problem, since it has not been hammered away at by the press or radio. Aside from the *New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune*, which have done more faithful reporting than any other papers, there has been very little coverage of the problem. With the exception of a Sunday feature article by Max Boyd, the wire service stories, if filed, have not been used. Editorial comment is still more sparse. Freda Kirchwey in *Nation*, a few editorials in *America* (Catholic), an editorialized article in the *New Leader* and one editorial each in the *Baltimore Sun* and the *Des Moines Register* nearly exhausts the list. Most of the news articles and editorials have had a friendly slant, except for the *New York Post*, which was violently opposed to helping the Arabs. While some of the articles have addressed themselves to the question of the nature of the settlement as regards repatriation or resettlement, none of them have raised the question of continuing aid. Consequently one may conclude that, barring any dramatic developments which would arouse prejudices or create new issues, a continuing but not spectacular aid program would probably be supported by the enlightened few, and would not, in all likelihood, run into strong opposition.

Congressional Attitude.

In considering the authorizing legislation for the U.S. contribution of \$16,000,000, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was chiefly concerned with the fact that the U.S. Delegation at Paris had taken action which appeared to commit the U.S. morally, if not legally, to a contribution thus placing Congress in the position of being a rubber stamp. It was also concerned about the establishment of a precedent under which the United States might undertake other programs of this character which would not be supported by all UN Members on the basis of the regular scale of contributions. There was no challenge

of the thesis that the contribution was in the national interest, an argument which, though valid, is apparently tiresome because over-worked.

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs readily accepted the Senate action on the U.S. contribution but raised questions concerning the possible application of the matching principle as a condition for the U.S. contribution. The point was not pressed in this instance but is one which should be borne in mind in connection with any further program.

Neither the Senate nor the House Committee probed the problem of continuing assistance. The Department rested its case on the need for relief over a limited period of time on the basis that aid was essential to contribute to the peace settlement and stabilization in the Near East. It also stressed the General Assembly resolution declaring that the right of refugees to return to their homes should be recognized, and the role of the Conciliation Commission in facilitating the economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees. An aside remark by one of the senators in the hearings that the program might go on for three or five years was not taken up. This was the only intimation that Congress might expect to be faced with a request for some kind of continuing program. The fact that it was not picked up is probably more significant in connection with the lack of opposition to the present program than in relation to the possibility of a continuing program. No statement has been made at any time that no further assistance would be needed.

The Senate adopted the joint resolution without objection after the presentation of the report of the Senate Committee (which was also adopted unanimously) had been presented by Senator Connally. The House Committee was unanimous in the adoption of its report to the House. The only hitch thus far has been in the House Rules Committee which postponed action on the rule to report the measure because its members had, with one exception, never heard of the Arab Refugee problem.

It is perhaps not unreasonable to conclude from the foregoing that a reasonable program for continuing aid would not meet with strong opposition in Congress. However, the form of such aid, the question of whether it is multilateral or unilateral, and its bearing upon other aid programs, are matters on which the success or failure of continuing aid may hinge.

(8) *Attitude of Individuals and Groups Interested in the Problem.*

The private groups interested in the Palestine Refugee problem consist primarily of the following: (a) the oil companies (ARAMCO, Standard of N.J., Socony Vacuum, Gulf Oil Company, American Independent Oil Company, Standard of California, Stand-

ard of New York, and the Texas Company, all of whom have varying degrees of interest; (b) Church groups, particularly the American Friends Service Committee, the Church World Service Committee, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the Lutheran World Relief and several small denominations all of whom are associated directly or indirectly with welfare or religious projects in the Near East; (c) lay groups such as the Near East Foundation, the Near East College Association, Middle East Relief, Inc., Middle East Union, Committee for Holy Land Appeal (an over-all body comprising most of the aforementioned groups for the purpose of raising emergency funds) and the American Red Cross. A number of interested individuals, some of whom are closely identified with one or more of the above groups include the following: Winthrop Rockefeller, Nelson Rockefeller, Bayard Dodge, Kermit Roosevelt, Harold Hoskins, Lowell Thomas, Barclay Acheson, Dr. Patton, Edward Miller, Col. Eddy, Terry Duce, and Garland Hopkins.

All of the foregoing would probably give strong support for public assistance measures designed to stabilize the Near East and to promote the welfare of those peoples. Most of these groups are associated with or might be interested in contributing or raising funds from private sources for long-range welfare projects in the area. A campaign is to be launched shortly on the initiative of Kermit Roosevelt and Garland Hopkins to raise funds for a refugee welfare program. Present thinking is that it should extend over a five-year period. The oil companies when approached for relief funds last autumn were reluctant to support a feeding program and indicated, at that time, their greater concern and possible willingness to participate financially in longer range projects which would be of permanent value to the Near Eastern peoples. They will undoubtedly contribute through appropriate channels to private projects of this character. The possibility that some of them might also be induced to finance useful work projects in certain areas should not be excluded in the event that funds from other sources are inadequate. A \$5 million figure was tossed about last autumn as a tentative indication of oil company interest in long-range welfare projects, but it would be unwise to accept this figure as even a tentative target until the programs of voluntary agencies are more fully developed.

Welfare programs are needed immediately in the refugee centers and every effort should be made to induce the voluntary agencies to develop and finance such programs. The campaign referred to above is the only major effort being undertaken. However, it is unlikely that any program financed from this source could be developed in the field for many months. Regardless of the time factor it is important

that any such program be coordinated with the planning of the continuing aid program.

The first approach to the private groups should probably be made at an early date in order to ascertain in more detail the nature of the projects envisaged. We might wish to encourage in-camp training projects as the best means to enable the refugees to adapt themselves to new conditions. We can reveal our concern about continuing aid, but indicate that it is a difficult and complex problem which cannot be quickly or easily implemented. Moreover, an initial effort on the part of private groups will be of value in urging public assistance as it becomes clear that the magnitude of the problem is too great for them to cope with. Their fund-raising activities and the attendant publicity will call attention to the continuing need and help pave the way for Congressional action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following objectives are recommended as a basis for planning with respect to the problem, subject to change as the plan develops:

(1) To stimulate the adoption of plans to expedite the transfer of the problem from its present unproductive relief basis to a basis for a definitive settlement;

(2) To persuade Israel to accept the principle of repatriation of an agreed number or category of refugees, with provision by Israel for appropriate safeguards of civil and religious rights and on condition that those repatriated desire to live at peace within Israel and to extend full allegiance thereto;

(3) To persuade Israel to initiate the gradual repatriation of an agreed number or category as soon as possible;

(4) To urge the Israeli Government to make equitable compensation for the property and assets of those refugees who do not desire to return and of those whose property and assets have been expropriated or otherwise disposed of by the State of Israel;

(5) To provide for the permanent settlement in Arab Palestine in the near future of as large a number of the refugees as appears economically practicable;

(6) Under the assumption that Arab Palestine, or at least a large portion thereof, will be allotted to Transjordan in the final peace settlement, to undertake concerted planning with the British Government with a view to the early integration of a large portion of the refugee population into the economic and political structure of the expanded state as a whole;

(7) To examine the developmental resources common to Israel and the expanded state of Transjordan, with special reference to their water resources, with a view to stimulating cooperative economic development projects, where feasible, for the mutual benefit of both states;

(8) If the repatriation of substantial number of refugees becomes feasible, to give special consideration to those areas having the greatest

relative concentrations of refugees, particularly Lebanon, which is undergoing serious economic pressures and facing potential political pressures, and the Gaza area of southwestern Palestine, with its limited developmental potentialities;

(9) With respect to those refugees who cannot be assimilated in Israel or the expanded state of Transjordan, to examine the potentialities for permanent resettlement elsewhere in the Near East, bearing in mind the capabilities of northeastern Syria and northern Iraq, where basic manpower shortages and large cultivable areas exist;

(10) Where feasible, in the resettlement of refugees, to plan on utilization of projects which will contribute to the long-range development of the productive capacity and economic potential of the area, as contrasted with short-term projects which might be without ultimate benefit to the countries involved.¹²

¹² In a memorandum of March 23 to Mr. McClintock, James Q. Reber of the Executive Secretariat stated that the Policy Paper had been shown informally to the Secretary of State, the Under Secretary, and Mr. Rusk and that the Secretary had informally approved the "conclusions" (actually, the recommendations). The memorandum also stated that "This approval and knowledge of the specific policy issues included in the paper are sufficient to permit Mr. McGhee's operations to be initiated." Mr. McClintock quoted the memorandum in telegram 147 of March 25 to Mr. McGhee at Beirut. The memorandum and telegram are both filed under 501.MA Palestine/3-2249.

501.BB Palestine/3-1649: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, March 16, 1949—11 a. m.

230. Palun 86. [From Ethridge.] Comay¹ met with Jerusalem Committee as official representative Israel, accompanied by Lifshitz and Goulan. He proposed plan consisting internationalization Old City, division remainder area between adjacent states, and international authority over holy places in area.

Introductory statement largely devoted historical summary similar previous statements by Israel representatives on subject, but containing unusually strong condemnation UN for failure implement internationalization city or assuming responsibility for its protection. World opinion described as apathetic when Jerusalem under attack and siege. Jewish Jerusalem today in fact part of Israel and Jewish inhabitants citizens psychologically and in fact. Inconceivable they should be placed under international regime or that Israel could have part in such solution. Present day situation entirely different from 1947 when Jewish Agency reluctantly accepted internationalization.

¹ Michael Comay, Director of the British Commonwealth Division in the Israeli Foreign Office.

In presenting plan he emphasized that world interest Jerusalem largely religious and historical. This interest concentrated in Old City which only half one per cent area and 15 per cent population area. Rest of area predominantly sectarian and world interest would be fully met by international authority over holy places. He judged from past evidence UN does not want responsibility for governing entire area, and this not necessary.

Israel not willing renounce Old City to permanent Transjordan rule. This would be perpetuation unstable and explosive situation. He expressed desire that two parties in control of city proceed to permanent demarcation Arab-Jewish areas. Committee agreed to facilitate this with assistance consuls who participated in previous talks this subject. US and French Consul envisioned.

Comay said he could not commit his Government at this stage, but Committee members are uncertain whether any flexibility in position. Appears certain Israel will not agree to Jerusalem as legal entity separate from Israel. Possible it might relinquish demand re Old City, resulting international regime limited to holy places. Committee members and USDel considers internationalization Old City only basically unfair and unacceptable. Committee has previously adopted general attitude that incorporation city into adjacent states not compatible international regime. In introductory statement, chairman of committee explained its general view that regime compatible with GA resolution might consist international authority with jurisdiction holy places and matters common concern, local Arab and Jewish administrations for remaining government functions.

Committee will probably not meet with Comay before presenting progress report to PCC and talking with Arab representatives in Beirut. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

867N.01/3-1049: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 16, 1949—4 p. m.

94. Embtel 101 March 10.² While recognizing Iraq's needs in combatting possible subversive elements US unable consider lifting arms embargo before peace settlement achieved Palestine or SC Res May 29

¹This telegram was repeated to Tehran, Damascus, Moscow, Ankara, and London.

²Not printed; it reported that a note from the Iraqi Foreign Office cited dangers that Kurdish forces led by Mustafa al-Barzani would in a few days try to enter Iraq. The forces were said to be supported by the Soviet Union and under its influence, in order to achieve Soviet political aims (867N.01/3-1049).

rescinded. Dept assumes Fonoff realizes embargo could not be lifted for Iraq alone.

Emb shld point out that speedy conclusion armistice agreements as called for by GA Res Dec 11 wld hasten final peace settlement.

ACHESON

867N.01/3-1749

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

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 17, 1949.

Subject: Israel-Transjordan Situation.

Discussion:

In response to your request, there are submitted hereunder pertinent excerpts from information we have received concerning the situation between Transjordan and Israel subsequent to my memorandum to you of March 14.¹

Dr. Bunche on March 11 cabled the Security Council that he had directed United Nations observers to make a thorough and prompt investigation of all complaints, to verify military positions and their date of establishment and to apply fully the conditions of the truce. He added that at the time the cable was sent he had had no reports from observers which verified that there had been any fighting in the area.

On March 13 Dr. Bunche cabled the Security Council that United Nations observers were in the field and were making on the spot investigations, but that owing to poor transportation and communications facilities he did not yet have their detailed reports and could not therefore submit to the Council a definite report on this matter. He added that the only incident of fighting thus far reported involved an exchange of fire between Arab Legion and Israeli elements in the vicinity of Ghamr (just over the border in Transjordan) prior to the signing of the cease-fire on March 11. In this engagement one Arab Legion armored car was disabled. Dr. Bunche also stated that he had formally requested the Israeli and Transjordan delegates at Rhodes to inform their Governments that military activity of this kind, regardless of whether actual fighting eventuated, must be regarded as contrary to the conditions of the truce imposed by the Security Council.

On March 16 our Legation in Amman cabled that according to the

¹Not printed; it summarized reports alleging or denying Israeli incursion into Transjordan (767N.90i/3-1449).

Arab Legion Israeli soldiers are crossing the Transjordan frontier in the area of Gharandal to steal sheep. The Legion has been ordered to take no action until United Nations observers have been able to reach the area. If after that forays continue the Legion may have to open fire.

The Department has thus not yet received a definite answer as to whether the Israelis actually did cross the Transjordan frontier. The report from United Nations observers, which apparently will be as authoritative as any we shall receive, has not yet come in.²

Meanwhile, we have been receiving disturbing reports concerning the situation on the Israeli-Iraqi frontier. Information has come in to the effect that the Israelis are moving troops into that area, and the Iraqis, the Transjordanians, and the British are fearful that the Israelis may be about to commence hostilities against the Iraqi-held area of Arab Palestine. In response to our inquiry, the Israelis have admitted that they are moving troops into the area but have stated that they are doing so in order to afford Israeli farmers protection against cattle and food stealing raids allegedly being made from the Iraqi area. This is going on at a time when preparations are being made for the withdrawal of the 20,000 Iraqi troops in the area and their replacement by 2,000 men of the badly over-extended Arab Legion. The Israeli object to this, and state that it is a violation of the truce because the substitution of the Army of one sovereign power for another is not a normal troop replacement.

In our opinion, there is a real and disturbing possibility that Israel may be about to undertake hostilities in this area, in order to occupy more of the Palestine territory allotted to the Arabs by the November 29 General Assembly Resolution and to present the world with another *fait accompli*. Our Mission in Tel Aviv cabled today that the Israeli Chief of Staff has sent a warning to the United Nations that Israel may have to take military action to stop the Arab raids (telegram No. 211 of March 16)³ (Tab A). The Mission adds that there is no tangible evidence that Israel contemplates military action but suggests that you may care to point out to Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett, during his call upon you tomorrow, the desirability of taking no action which would lead to hostilities. In this the Mission in Tel Aviv concurs with a conclusion which we had reached. A memorandum

² Mr. Stabler advised, on March 18, that General Riley the same morning had "Confirmed that Israelis did cross frontiers and that four or five Israeli jeeps were cut off in Transjordan territory at point northern Gharandal." The General also stated that he had received the assurances of the Israeli commander that his troops had been removed to the Palestine side (telegram 117, 867N.01/3-1849).

³ Not printed.

discussing the points which might be taken up with Mr. Sharett during his call upon you tomorrow is being sent to you today.⁴

⁴ Baghdad, on March 17, reported that the Iraqi Foreign Minister had requested urgently to see Ambassador Crocker to express the hope that "US either through Tel Aviv or USDel, PCC would take effective measures to guarantee that Israel will not take advantage transfer Iraqi troops by sending Jewish troops and people into vacated area [i.e., the Nablus-Jenin-Tulkarm triangle] which Transjordanians and local Arabs plan populate." The Foreign Minister also stated that "Iraq wants find peaceful solution Palestine problem and authorizes Transjordan discuss armistice with Israel for areas now in Iraqi hands." (Telegram 115, 501.BB Palestine/3-1749)

Ambassador Crocker, on March 21, informed the Department of his first conversation with newly appointed Foreign Minister Jamali, who "asked again for US assurances that Israel would not take advantage Iraq-Transjordan switch." The Ambassador "reiterated our position re inability act unilaterally and emphasized US will do everything possible to help adjust Palestine problem through UN. Further, I expressed as main hope for Arabs necessity their coming to grips with realities and taking advantage UN machinery which offers best hope for quick adjustment matter. . . . Jamali expressed keenest disappointment re our unwillingness go along with Iraqi viewpoint and pull Iraq's chestnuts out of the fire." (Telegram 128 from Baghdad, 501.BB Palestine/3-2149)

501.BB Palestine/3-1849 : Telegram

Mr. Fraser Wilkins to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

RHODES, March 17, 1949—12 noon.

[Unnumbered.] For Satterthwaite from Wilkins at Rhodes.

(1) According information from Riley and Vigier to Bunche Israeli-Lebanese armistice agreement is delayed because Israelis insist on inclusion article providing Israelis may continue occupy strategic points Lebanese territory until Syrian armistice is concluded.¹

Lebanese delegation, on other hand, has informed Israeli delegation and Bunche disagreeable [*it is agreeable?*] clause providing "no warlike act or act of hostility shall be conducted from territory controlled by one of the parties to this agreement against the other party".

Israelis however are not satisfied believing Lebanese territory might still be used by Syria. Lebanese consider their proposal adds Lebanese guarantee to UN guarantee. Bunche considers Israeli article introduces new element into terms of reference of negotiations which was not raised at time Lebanese and Israelis agreed to negotiate under UN

¹ In a telegram received at the United Nations on March 17, Mr. Bunche stated that an Israeli-Lebanese armistice agreement was "held up solely by Israeli intransigence"; that he had informed Mr. Shiloah "in most emphatic terms that Israeli position in this regard is utterly unreasonable and that if it is not changed before end of this week, I must report to SC that Israelis are deliberately blocking Lebanese agreement in apparent attempt to bring pressure on Syria"; and that "Israeli good faith" was involved. The text of Mr. Bunche's message was transmitted to the Department by New York in telegram 356, March 17, 2: 50 p. m., 501.BB Palestine/3-1749.

chairmanship in accordance with SC resolution November 16. Lebanese delegation and Israeli delegation agreed on March 15 to refer issue to their governments and meet again on March 23. Bunche subsequently informed Israelis at Rhodes he considers their continued insistence on Lebanese signing agreement sanctioning presence Israeli troops on Lebanese soil for indefinite period so unreasonable that he feels compelled to report matter to SC and seriously to consider withdrawing from all negotiations.²

It seems clear Israelis desire tie Syrian negotiations into Lebanese agreement for purpose of bringing pressure on Syria through Lebanon to negotiate and subsequently to make withdrawal Israeli troops from Lebanese territory contingent on withdrawal Syrian troops from Israeli territory. If Israelis continue block agreement Bunche's present program will be prejudiced and commission will undoubtedly be questioned at Beirut meeting by Lebanese and other Arab States regarding Israeli good faith and whether real possibility exists to negotiate regarding refugees and peace settlement.

In order avert threatened stalemate in Lebanese negotiations it is recommended Israeli Government be informed by Department that proposed Lebanese clause seems to have same effect as proposed Israeli article and that early acceptance would facilitate Bunche's task and commission's work on eve Beirut meeting.³

(2) According UP release, Sharett on March 10 warned of possible new outbreaks in Palestine, stated that Iraqi irregulars were raiding along central front and added Israel may be forced to take action to bring things back to normal. Israeli press, in addition, has for some time been calling attention to alleged minor incursions from Iraqi-held Samaria into Israeli coastal plain. Israeli Government has also protested to Bunche on basis of reports regarding replacement of Iraqi troops in Central Palestine by Arab Legion. Developments of this character generally precede Israeli action. It may be assumed, if Israelis are unable make satisfactory arrangements with Transjordan in reported meetings with Abdullah regarding widening of Israeli coastal strip, that Israeli political and press moves may be accelerated and may be followed by Israeli clashes with Iraqis or Arab Legion in central sector. Bunche believes such developments might be forestalled if US were able to express hope to Israeli Government that press

² The telegram from Mr. Bunche, cited in footnote 1 above, stated that if the Israeli position did not change in the next few days, he would "seriously consider" withdrawing from both the Lebanese and Transjordanian negotiations and return to New York.

³ Mr. Wilkins, at Beirut, advised the Department on March 19 that "Israelis have informed Bunche they are prepared sign Lebanese agreement immediately without provision concerning Israeli troops on Lebanese soil." (telegram 121, 501.BB Palestine/3-1949)

reports of possible Israeli action do not indicate deterioration in situation.

Sent Department through Navy. Repeated to Beirut, Baghdad, Amman, Damascus and Jerusalem.

501.BB Palestine/3-1849: Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT
US URGENT

JERUSALEM, March 18, 1949—8 a. m.

233. Palun 88. For Acheson from Ethridge. Technical study entitled "Arab refugee problem" handed me yesterday by Israeli Government largely repeats Sharett's statement in previous conversations. Study begins with denial of responsibility, minimizes dislocation and in brief can be summed up in one sentence "when the whole matter comes up for discussion in the context of general peace talks the Israeli Government will consider whether conditions are stable enough for a certain number to come back without creating a security problem". Study emphasizes Israeli viewpoint that resettlement in Arab states is main solution and not repatriation and continues with estimate of abilities of Arab states to absorb them.

Pouching text.

Sent Department, repeated Baghdad 17, Damascus 14, Cairo 17, Jidda 8, Amman 18. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/3-1849: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, March 18, 1949—11 a.m.

238. Palun 87. [From Ethridge.] While we intend to continue efforts to achieve substantial degree internationalization Jerusalem we consider agreement on separate legal entity practically out of question unless USG willing apply strongest pressure. Mayor New City sixteenth insisted to Jerusalem committee that Israel entitled to all Jerusalem.

USDel accordingly thinking along lines possible compromise formula and submits following for Department's consideration. Will show members Jerusalem committee as informal suggestion. If Department and PCC approve we should sound out Arab representatives in Beirut on this among other possible plans:

- “1) An international regime is established for the Jerusalem area.
- 2) The area shall be permanently demilitarized.

3) The area is divided into Arab and Jewish zones which shall, except as hereafter provided in Article 5, be administered respectively by (adjacent Arab State) and Israel as integral parts of their territory.

4) An international authority for the Jerusalem area shall consist of a United Nations representative and (of other members?).¹

5) The international authority shall have power to make regulations to assure protection of and free access to the holy places. It may provide guards or other personnel at such places, and may also call upon the respective local authorities for assistance and cooperation.

6) The international authority shall have the right to make representations to the appropriate local Israel and Arab authorities, or to the Foreign Ministers of those governments concerning the following matters within the Jerusalem area :

- a) Protection of human rights and the rights of distinctive groups;
- b) Free access to and from Jerusalem and within the city;
- c) Common public services;
- d) Maintenance of peace and order;
- e) The demilitarization of the area.

7) Whenever the international authority decides that a dispute exists concerning any matter specified in paragraphs 5 or 6, and that such dispute concerns a matter seriously prejudicial to the welfare of the area, or of the international interest therein, it may refer the dispute to a special tribunal to be appointed by the president of the International Court of Justice.

8) If the tribunal deems that the dispute is susceptible of decision on the basis of law, it shall decide on that basis, utilizing the present statute or any of the sources set forth in Article 38, paragraph 1 of the statute of the International Court of Justice. Such decisions shall be legally binding on the parties.

9) If the tribunal deems that the dispute is not susceptible of decision on the basis of law, it shall render an opinion *ex aequo et bono*, giving special consideration, where appropriate, to the principles and purposes of the United Nations, important United Nations resolutions and declarations, and important multilateral treaties. Such opinions shall be advisory in character, but shall be regarded as embodying the judgment of the world community on the question in issue.

10) Israel and the Arab States shall deposit declarations accepting, with respect to legal disputes arising between them concerning the Jerusalem area, the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice as compulsory *ipso facto* and without special agreement."²

Sent Department 238, repeated Amman 19. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

¹ As in the source text.

² The Department replied on March 22, stating that "Although fully sympathetic problems your most recent draft attempts to reconcile we feel paras. 1 and 3 are almost mutually exclusive; that right of representation described para. 6 in fact gives international authority very little real power; and that there are grave doubts as to efficacy legal authority described paras. 7, 8 and 9, in absence any executive authority. Accordingly we prefer you do not submit this draft to PCC or Arab Reps Beirut." (Telegram 133, identified also as Unpal 67, to Beirut, 501.BB Palestine/3-1849)

867N.113/3-1849 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, March 18, 1949—8 p. m.

945. Brit Emb Mar 17 orally informed Dept that a request for arms under Anglo-Transjordan treaty had been received from King Abdullah and that in view of recent Israeli moves in Pal and especially situation on Iraqi front "it will no longer be possible to refuse to send arms to Arab Legion". Brit Emb said Bevin informing US Amb of this move.¹ Emb officer thought main reason move was to enable Legion to defend itself if attacked by Israelis after taking over from Iraqis.

At working level Dept expressed great concern this move, pointing out adverse effect it likely to have on armistice negots and emphasizing likelihood resultant pressure to remove US embargo on arms for Israel. Dept also stated Israelis might seize upon UK decision as pretext to reopen hostilities. Dept furthermore expressed belief that sending arms to Legion would place UK in unfavorable moral position, since UK, which has stated Israel has acted contrary to UN resolutions, would be doing so itself.

Dept assumes in absence Emb report that Bevin has not raised this point or that you have handled it there on same basis as earlier discussions same subject. In connection any further discussion this point with UKG, they may be told that in our view minimum requirement prior to any such step would be notification [*consultation*] to [*with*]² mediator.³

ACHESON

¹ At a luncheon on March 16, Mr. Bevin expressed to Ambassador Douglas his concern regarding Israeli intentions, particularly over the possibility of Israeli action against Arab positions in Samaria. He said arms "have continued to flow into Israel on such a scale that it is becoming more and more 'ridiculous' for UK to refuse Arab Legion appeals for arms and ammunition." Failure to heed King Abdullah's requests "would not only adversely affect UK-Transjordan relations which are 'important to all of us', but destroy completely Arab Legion morale." (Telegram 1051, March 18, 5 p. m., 867N.01/3-1849)

² The two corrections were requested by the Department in telegram 1007, March 23, 9 p. m., to London (867N.113/3-2349).

³ This telegram was repeated to Amman and to Jerusalem for Mr. Ethridge. London, in reply on March 19, advised of information from the Foreign Office that the British Government would inform Mr. Bunche as soon as a final decision was made to begin deliveries (telegram 1079, 867N.113/3-1949).

867N.01/3-1949: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Israel

SECRET US URGENT

WASHINGTON, March 19, 1949—2 p. m.

173. Dept welcomes report that Israel-Lebanon armistice to be signed March 19 or 20 and that Syria will enter armistice negotiations. Principal point of concern now becomes problem of Iraqi front Samaria. Obviously prospect of peaceful settlement on entire Palestine question would be greatly set back if fighting broke out over that point. Dept believes Israel and Transjordan should proceed promptly to armistice agreement, that this armistice agreement should be extended to the Iraqi front and that Israel should interpose no objection if Iraqi troops turn over Samaria front to Transjordan. As preliminary step it would seem desirable for existing cease fire to be extended automatically to Iraqi front on assumption by Transjordan of responsibility for that area.

This matter will probably be discussed with Sharett here Tuesday. Request you follow situation closely and do everything possible to bring about rapid conclusion Israel-Transjordan armistice.¹

ACHESON

¹ Concerning the latter point, Thomas F. Power, Deputy Secretary-General of the United States Mission at the United Nations, notified Mr. McClintock on March 18 of a telegram received by Secretary-General Lie from Mr. Bunche stating that "the Syrian Government had indicated its readiness to undertake armistice negotiations with Israel." (memorandum of telephone conversation by Mr. McClintock, 501.LB Palestine/3-1849) Minister Keeley reported similar information from Damascus on March 20, expressing his belief that Prime Minister Azm's decision to negotiate was "motivated primarily by desire to avoid giving Israeli possibility of using Syria's refusal to enter armistice negotiations as pretext for refusing to comply with refugee repatriation clause of December 11 resolution but also to leave no stone unturned to speed final solution Palestine conflict." The Prime Minister also sought the Minister's "friendly advice whether any useful purpose would be served by sending special emissary . . . to US to endeavor to enlist US support of some reasonable solution. I replied that while I felt sure my government would appreciate being kept informed of progress in Syrian thinking, it would not welcome any *démarche* that seemed to by-pass PCC" (telegram 151, 501.LB Palestine/3-2049).

501.BB Palestine/3-2049: Telegram

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

SECRET

AMMAN, March 20, 1949—9 p. m.

121. This afternoon at Shuneh King said that last night he had received Colonel Dayan, Israeli Major whom he described as Sharett's secretary, and Abdullah Tel to discuss Israeli proposals re Arab Legion

taking over Iraqi frontier (Legtel 118, March 18). He indicated meeting was friendly. Israelis said there were several territorial adjustments to be made in "Arab triangle" area but they would not insist they be made at this time. Israelis mentioned certain "high places" but did not specify. King said it was understood such adjustments would await peace settlement. According to His Majesty Dayan then drafted proposals re this matter which agreed to Legion taking over and postponed until later territorial adjustments. Dayan said he would return Tel Aviv with draft and would give King formal answer Israeli Government March 21 at 1800 hours. Meanwhile Abdullah Tel has gone to Beirut to discuss matter with Transjordan Prime Minister.

King seemed pleased by progress meeting and indicated he had told Israelis he prepared work with them for peace but that their frequent changes of heart made it difficult. Re this said that previously Israel wanted Iraqi Army leave Palestine and he had worked toward this end at H-3 meeting with Iraqi Regent and Prime Minister. Now, however, when this almost accomplished Israel appeared to be placing obstacles in the way.

Later this afternoon Glubb gave additional details these conversations as result his meeting with King and Abdullah Tel this morning at Shuneh. Dayan apparently told King Israelis would require road from coast Tafula and several high points along railroad in Tulkarm area. However, he specifically stated that Tulkarm and Qalquiliya would not be involved and would remain Arab. At this point Abdullah Tel said it would be difficult for Transjordan vis-à-vis other Arab states and Palestine Arabs to take over frontier and immediately make territorial adjustments in favor Israel. Dayan allegedly replied Israel Government understood this and therefore would only request Transjordan Government sign paper agreeing to certain territorial adjustments which would not be put into effect until several months after take over.

While it will not be known until tomorrow whether meetings will result in solution to problem, some speculation exists here that Israel, having ascertained King's attitude favorable certain adjustments, may make excessive demands.¹

Sent Department repeated Baghdad 21, Beirut 18 for USDel.

STABLER

¹ In the afternoon of March 21, Transjordan agreed to the proposals under which Transjordan would take over the Iraqi front. Abdullah el-Tel, at 9 p. m., the same day met at Jerusalem with the Israelis who gave their approval to the proposals (telegram 122, March 22, 10 a. m., from Amman, 501.BB Palestine/3-2249).

867N.01/3-2149 : Airgram

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

JERUSALEM, March 21, 1949.

A-41. Amman and Ramallah Arabic newspapers announce the termination of the military government in Arab Palestine and the establishment of a civil administration, retroactive to March 15, 1949.

According to the official announcement Omar Pasha Mater, formerly Military Governor General of Palestine has been appointed Civil Governor General of Arab Palestine and will be under the Ministry of the Interior of Transjordan. Other appointments are: Abdullah Bey el Tel as Commissioner for the Jerusalem District (seconded from the Arab Legion); Ahmad Bey el Khalil as Commissioner for Samaria District; Na'iem Bey Touqan as Commissioner for Hebron District.

The *Palestine Post* in commenting on the change in government says that it was scheduled to take place on April 1, 1949, but that the date was advanced in order to present the Arab League and the Arab States at the Beirut Conference with the established fact that Transjordan was in control of the area.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/3-2249

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

[WASHINGTON,] March 22, 1949.

Participants: S—The Secretary
 NEA—Mr. Satterthwaite
 NE—Mr. Rockwell
 Mr. Moshe Sharett, Foreign Minister of Israel
 Mr. Eliahu Elath, Israeli Ambassador-Designate

[Here follow, after "an exchange of amenities," various views expressed by Mr. Sharett.]

¹ Drafted by Mr. Rockwell. At the outset, according to a memorandum of March 16 from Mr. Satterthwaite to the Secretary, the latter was to see Mr. Sharett on March 18. The memorandum suggested that the Secretary stress to his caller recent Israeli moves in the southeastern Negev, a final territorial settlement, the Arab refugee question, the status of Jerusalem, and "Respect for United Nations Decisions." Concerning the last of these subjects. Mr. Satterthwaite wrote of the certainty of Mr. Ethridge that "Mr. Sharett considers Washington more friendly to Israel than the Conciliation Commission and that the Foreign Minister has not been sufficiently impressed with United States interest in a settlement of the Palestine question through the United Nations. It is suggested that you may wish to leave no doubt in Mr. Sharett's mind that the United States Government fully supports the authority of the United Nations and the Conciliation Commission as regards the final settlement of the Palestine dispute." (501.BB Palestine/3-1649)

Mr. Sharett said that in his opinion things were going pretty well as regards the international position of Israel. An armistice with Lebanon would be signed on March 23.² The situation with Iraq was not so good, since the Iraqis have decided not to be "contaminated" by any contact with the Jews and desire to be the only Arab State which has not entered into negotiations with Israel. A further complication was the fact that Transjordan planned to take over the Iraqi position. This would be a major troop replacement which would be contrary to the terms of the Palestine truce. In addition, there was the difficulty of the raids into Israeli territory from the Iraqi area. In Mr. Sharett's opinion, Israel had shown remarkable forbearance in not taking retaliatory action, with one exception.

At this point, I informed Mr. Sharett that I had discussed the situation on the Iraqi front with the President on March 21. The President had expressed to me his great concern lest by some mishap a military flareup occur in this area. He and I were of the opinion that the withdrawal of the Iraqi Army and its replacement by a lesser number of Transjordanian troops was a move in favor of peace. The President was firmly convinced that a renewal of hostilities must not be allowed to occur because of the situation on the Iraqi front.

Mr. Sharett replied that he could give the President and myself his complete assurance that Israel had no intention of commencing hostilities on the Iraqi front. It was not the policy of Israel to seek further conflict in Palestine. He said that he could not, of course, assure me that there would not be military action in this area, because one could never tell what might happen when two armies opposed each other, but that I could inform the President that the policy of Israel was to seek to avoid hostilities.

I then inquired as to the progress of the armistice negotiations with Transjordan. Mr. Sharett said that things were not going too smoothly there, and that the main trouble was that Transjordan was not a free agent. He was certain that if Israel and Transjordan were left to negotiate together there would be no difficulty, but that the British were interfering. In the first place, it was not true that Israeli forces had crossed the Transjordan frontier. He could categorically assure me that, based on the border as shown on maps available in Tel Aviv, no one in the Israeli capital knew of any Israeli incursion across the frontier.

Mr. Sharett stated that Israel was very much disturbed by the report that Transjordan had requested the assistance of British troops at Aqaba in patrolling the Palestine-Transjordan frontier. In Tel

² The agreement was signed on that date at Ras En-Naqura; for text, see SC, 4th yr., *Special Supplement No. 4*.

Aviv it was suspected that the purpose behind this request was to enable Transjordan to withdraw forces from that area to send to the Iraqi front, thus strengthening its position in that area contrary to the terms of the truce. In Mr. Sharett's opinion the British had violated the truce in the first place by sending forces to Aqaba and had done so again by reenforcing the garrison later. He stated that Israel would be "very much obliged" if the United States would seek to persuade the British to desist from patrolling the Palestine-Transjordan frontier. It was pointed out that the Department had received no information that the British had decided to accede to Transjordan's request.

I suggested that if the British did not patrol the frontier and British forces remained within the town of Aqaba area, Israel surely would not imagine that Great Britain had hostile intentions against the Negev, and the presence of British troops in Aqaba should not be allowed to affect the Israeli-Transjordan negotiations. Mr. Sharett demurred, stating that Israel would have to take into consideration, when it came time to discuss the reduction of forces, the British troops at Aqaba, since to all intents and purposes they were part of military forces of Transjordan. He added that Israel hoped to arrange demilitarized strips on both sides of the Palestine-Transjordan frontier in the same manner that similar strips had been arranged on both sides of the Palestine-Egyptian frontier through the Israeli-Egyptian armistice. The presence of the British troops at Aqaba, however, was a factor which complicated the situation considerably.

I then brought up the question of the Palestinian refugees. Mr. Ethridge had hoped it might be found possible for Israel to issue some kind of conciliatory statement concerning the refugees before the conference called by the Palestine Conciliation Commission at Beirut, but apparently it had not been possible to arrange this before Mr. Sharett's departure. The United States Government was, I said, very much interested in a solution of the refugee problem and felt that Israel had an important role to play. Mr. Sharett declared that Israel was fully cognizant of the implications of the problem as they would affect the future relations of Israel with the Arab states. The matter of a possible statement had been discussed in a Cabinet meeting and it had been decided that Israel could not possibly make such a commitment before the matter was discussed in connection with the final peace settlement. In the opinion of the Israeli Government it was out of the question to consider the possibility of repatriation of any substantial number of the refugees. The most logical solution was resettlement in the Arab countries, where so much land was available. Israel was quite prepared to make financial contributions to this resettlement, and also, if it were

desired, to give technical assistance. Mr. Sharett did not mean to say that there would be no repatriation at all. He thought that it might be possible for Israel to accept a "limited" number of refugees, such as might be necessary to reunite families which had become separated. He reiterated his conviction that the matter was one which had to be discussed at the peace conference and stated that it was impossible for Israel to make any kind of public commitment before that time.³

³ In a separate memorandum of conversation by Secretary Acheson, drafted by Mr. Rockwell on March 22, it is recorded that at the close of the meeting, the Israeli Foreign Minister stated that his Government "was very much interested in obtaining American technical assistance for the organization and training of the Israeli Army." Mr. Satterthwaite informed Mr. Sharett that the United States had no legal authority to send a military mission to Israel. When Mr. Sharett stated that his Government might offer positions as advisers to retired American Army officers, the Secretary replied that the Department would look into the request (867N.20A/3-2949).

501.BB Palestine/3-2249 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

BEIRUT, March 22, 1949—3 p. m.

127. Palun 92. [From Ethridge.] Following conclusion first Commission meeting with Arab States,¹ Commissioners among themselves on March 21 again exchanged preliminary views regarding refugee problem.

Ethridge suggested that Commission might consider adoption of attitude based on following reasoning:

1. GA resolution December 11 in Paragraph 11 made provision for repatriation and compensation. Commission fully supported these instructions and desired detailed views governments and authorities concerned regarding number wishing return and method determining and paying compensation.

2. GA resolution December 11 in Paragraph 11 instructed Commission to facilitate repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of refugees, compensation payments and to maintain close relations with Griffis and with other US agencies. Commission believed for practical reasons greatest emphasis should be given in formal and informal discussions with representatives Arab States to development of program which would facilitate resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation in Arab Palestine and in Arab States of refugees who cannot be repatriated. Commission should stress to representatives Arab States it would be wiser in long run to get away from the narrow objective of rigid insistence on repatriation and concentrate on broader objective of resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation.

¹ As set forth in telegram 126 (identified also as Palun 91), March 22, 11 a. m., from Beirut, not printed; it stated that Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Transjordan were represented (501.BB Palestine/3-2249).

3. GA resolution December 11 in Paragraphs 6, 10, 11 and 12 appeared to give Commission basis for approaching problem broadly.

4. Following practical steps might be taken by Commission:

(1) It should be stressed to Arab States that it is doubtful Israel would be able absorb more than small number of refugees.

(2) Arab States should prepare themselves to continue aid thus far extended and instead of direct relief should attempt resettle refugees and initiate projects for absorbing them.

(3) Peace talks, including particularly territorial settlement in Palestine should commence soonest following Beirut meeting and current armistice talks.

(4) Commission report to April session GA that no general settlement of Palestine question nor successful conclusion to specific problem of refugees seems possible unless there is general economic development in NE and should recommend that GA call upon specialized agencies, internal organizations and member states to render technical and financial assistance upon request governments and authorities concerned in NE (see following telegram).

(5) Commission should immediately establish committee of experts to survey economic needs of area and on request of governments and authorities concerned to render technical assistance including assistance in obtaining financial aid from international and other courses (see following telegram).

Ethridge emphasized foregoing was tentative and for Commission's consideration and would submit working paper in several days. Boisanger fully supported. Yalcin agreed. Yalcin also suggested Commission should determine repatriation figure for Israel but withdrew suggestion following explanation quotas for Arab States and Israel might more logically be established in light more detailed information of various aspects of refugee problem described in Paragraph 11 GA resolution December 11. Yalcin added that during separate talks with Syrian and Transjordan representatives he had gathered impression Syria and Transjordan might vie with each other in taking refugees if greater number increased prospect financial and economic assistance, presumably from US.

Sent Department, repeated Jerusalem 26, Damascus 13, Baghdad 11, Cairo 14, Jidda and Amman unnumbered. [Ethridge.]

PINKERTON

501.BB Palestine/3-2249 : Telegram

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

SECRET URGENT

BEIRUT, March 22, 1949—6 p. m.

128. Palun 93. From Ethridge and McGhee. Following proposals for PCC action on long-range aspects Palestine refugee problem which were discussed in general terms PCC meeting yesterday (see Palun

92)¹ submitted for Department's consent before definitive discussions PCC. Proposals based on Department thinking as reported by McGhee, on increasing conviction Ethridge and PCC that economic development key to long-range solution refugee problem, on desire assure due basis for outside development assistance in light US objective avoid direct responsibility and probable Arab reaction against unilateral offer, and on necessity prompt action if assistance under rehabilitation program can begin to be effective before termination present UN relief program. It is tentatively assumed relief program will not be renewed in light probable difficulty obtaining additional appropriation US Congress and in order put pressure on Arab states initiate work relief projects.

(1) PCC would report to GA in April that no general settlement Palestine question nor solution problem refugees possible without general economic development in Near East. PCC would recommend to GA that it call on specialized agencies, other appropriate international organizations and member states to render on request of governments and authorities concerned, appropriate technical and financial assistance.

(2) Meanwhile PCC, under authority Paragraph 12, GA resolution 11 December and pursuant instructions Paragraphs 6, 10 and 11, would appoint technical commission composed of representatives member states, specialized agencies and international organizations most likely be able render technical and financial assistance. Commission would survey economic development needs of area and, upon request of governments or authorities concerned, provide appropriate technical assistance including assistance in obtaining necessary financing for particular projects from international and other sources. It is envisaged that technical commission be headed by particularly well-qualified objective US citizen who could command confidence US executive, Congress and public, possibly with a UK deputy. Technical experts might be predominantly US with sprinkling of other nationalities including French to give multilateral flavor. Commission might include as members or observers representatives of International Bank, FAO, WHO and other international agencies and of private organizations in position render assistance. Commission's approach could emphasize economic development with refugee problem in background and be on area basis even though relations with governments concerned would probably be largely bilateral. Commission could organize country subcommissions on request individual governments and among other things recommend nature organization required to carry out program developed. Report of technical commission, with comment PCC and GA, would be available to all in position render assistance whose efforts could be coordinated by technical commission or successor even after termination PCC.

¹ *Supra.*

US acceptance of foregoing should be conditional assurance other members PCC that plan could be implemented along lines approved by US and assurance Arab states that requests for assistance would be forthcoming prior to appointment of commission. In addition to Department's comments on concept and timing of above proposal Department's comment requested on whether GA resolution of 11 December re PCC are considered to provide adequate basis for technical commission which could provide authoritative guidance all aspects Near East economic development, whether approval for creation of commission or for its membership need be obtained from GA prior to PCC action, and whether international nature of commission likely to affect adversely possibilities financial assistance from Export Import Bank and private US sources including oil companies. Sponsorship of technical commission by PCC might serve to allay criticism of UN and of US under President's Point 4 program for favoring one area for economic development over others with comparable needs. Assuming acceptance above proposals by Department and PCC, US would assume responsibility proposing to PCC plan of organization, US candidates and terms of reference for commission and taking initiative its activation. Final Department decision re above proposals can await full discussion following McGhee's return first week April after visit remaining Arab states and London. Department's tentative views would, however, be helpful now to Ethridge in informal discussions with PCC and Arab representatives in view close timing if proposals are to be considered in April GA session.

If Department agrees, please repeat Arab capitals, USDel, New York and London with request for views to be repeated to Beirut for Ethridge. [Ethridge and McGhee.]

PINKERTON

501.BB Palestine/3-2349 : Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT
US URGENT

AMMAN, March 23, 1949—4 p. m.

126. Legtel 123 and 124, March 22.¹ King requested me come down to Shuneh this morning in order inform me of developments of last night's meeting between Transjordan and Israeli representatives.

Meetings had taken place in Jerusalem instead of Shuneh and was attended by Fella Pasha Medadha, Abdullah Tel and Hussein Bey

¹ Neither printed.

Sirraj (Under Secretary Foreign Office) for Transjordan and by Walter Eytan, [garble] Colonel Yigal Yadin and Moshe Dayan for Israel.

Israelis presented detailed demands for territorial adjustments on Iraqi front which in some instances represented Arab withdrawals up to 10 miles from present front lines. After many hours conference lasting to 1300 hours this morning Israelis modified demands to points beyond which further modification out of question. They informed Transjordan representatives that Transjordan must agree to these proposals and sign formal agreement within 24 hours or Israel would withdraw its agreement to Arab Legion taking over from Iraqis. Another meeting at which Israelis expect final answer is arranged for tonight at Shuneh.

In brief Israeli finalized demands are as follows:

1. Line in north front to be redrawn south of Ummelfahm (MR 165213) and Arara (MR 159211) to permit free use by Israelis of main road to Afula.
2. Line in east which now runs slightly west of Baqa (MR 155202)—Tulkarm—Qalqiliya road to be redrawn eastwards, not including Israeli possession of Tulkarm or Qalqiliya but including Taiyiba (MR 151186) and Qfarqasim (MR 148169). Line would end at Rantis (MR 152159), now junction between Iraqis and Arab Legion.
3. Line in west which now runs through Qaun (MR 194201) to be redrawn slightly west.

Israelis proposed that this agreement remain secret but that as soon as armistice agreement signed at Rhodes, secret agreement (although still remaining secret) would immediately be regarded as agreed in mutual revision of armistice terms. Implementation of secret agreement would take place in three stages:

- (a) Within three to four weeks—adjustment eastern lines;
- (b) Within six to eight weeks—adjustment northern lines; and
- (c) Within three to four months from date of signature full implementation secret agreement.

Israelis also proposed that with number of days yet to be specified all Iraqi forces would be withdrawn from area of former mandated territory of Palestine.

In return Israel would agree to Legion taking over Iraqi front as soon as armistice agreement signed and would authorize Israeli delegation Rhodes sign armistice at once on basis positions held at time cease-fire agreement signed.

Transjordan representatives pointed out to Israelis adverse effect on Arab public opinion when this agreement became public unless

Transjordan received compensations. It was suggested Israelis withdraw from area close to Road Latrun to Beitsira (MR 154144) or withdraw from Ummburj (MR 147126) area and agree to Legion use of road running north from Beitjibrin. Israelis refused and said they would not agree any compensation.

Transjordan representatives at meeting, with whom I talked at Shuneh, indicated atmosphere of meeting not friendly and that Israelis had taken very strong line. They had impression that if agreement not signed Israelis might take offensive action to make adjustments demanded. (It is understood Dayan told member Consulate General Jerusalem on March 18 that if rectification not made by agreement, Israel would make them anyway.)

King indicated to me he felt that if he refused to sign agreement, Israel would recommence hostilities and whole area might be lost. It would in fact be better to sacrifice another fifteen villages with additional estimated 15,000 refugees than to lose what little left of Arab Palestine. On other hand if he did sign agreement and then armistice signed, it might be more difficult for Israelis to make further excessive demands. He not entirely decided what his attitude would be and it would depend on circumstances of tonight's meeting at Shuneh. If he could be certain that US would take action prevent Israel from reopening hostilities, he would try postpone decision for another day or two and endeavor negotiate more reasonable adjustments. However, in absence this certainty, he felt he almost forced into signing agreement tonight. We only wished it were possible to believe that Israel would present no further demands.

I offered no comment to HM beyond thanking him for keeping USG informed of developments.

Sent Department 126, repeated Baghdad 25, Beirut 22 for USDel PCC. Pouched Jerusalem.

STABLER

501.BB Palestine/3-2349 : Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT
US URGENT

AMMAN, March 23, 1949—7 p. m.

127. Legtel 126, March 23. Israeli demands and 24-hour ultimatum re Iraqi front, both in themselves and in face expressed attitude USG toward extension armistice to this area and toward Transjordan taking responsibility therein, seem totally unreasonable and in nature of blackmail. While King may feel himself forced to sign agreement

tonight, it is however possible that he will succeed in postponing final decision. In view this latter possibility would urgently recommend Department give consideration making strong representations to Israeli Government (if agreement not signed tonight) insisting that matter of territorial dispositions and adjustments be left to peace settlement and that armistice negotiations at Rhodes be concluded at once on present *status quo*.

Transjordan is willing and ready reach peace settlement but it does appear to be rank injustice for USG to stand by while Israel at point of gun in forcing Transjordan into such an agreement. This situation would seem to offer opportunity for USG to show that it intends implement its policy as expressed in UN on November 20.

Will inform Department earliest possible moment whether agreement signed or not.

Sent Department 127, repeated Beirut 23 for USDel PCC, Baghdad 26.

STABLER

*Statement by the President*¹

It is with gratification that I have today signed Senate Joint Resolution 36 authorizing a special contribution by the United States of \$16 million for the relief of Palestine refugees.

The United Nations General Assembly on November 19, 1948, urged all States members of the United Nations to make voluntary contributions as soon as possible to a relief fund totaling \$32 million. The Secretary of State informs me that thus far fifteen other Members of the United Nations have contributed and that other Governments have signified their intention to send money or contributions in kind. There is a pressing need for this fund, for seven hundred thousand refugees are living almost on starvation level. It is the hope of the United States that very promptly the total \$32 million fund will be subscribed by the members of the United Nations, or other countries, which have not yet given to the fund.

I trust that before this relief program is ended means will be devised for the permanent solution of the refugee problem, and that the efforts of the Palestine Conciliation Commission to establish a lasting peace will bring hope of a brighter future to these destitute victims of the recent hostilities in the Holy Land.

¹ Released by the White House on March 24; reprinted from Department of State *Bulletin*, April 3, 1949, p. 419.

867N.01/12-749

Memorandum by the Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 24, 1949.

CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Conversation with Israeli Foreign Minister

I reported to the President my talk with Foreign Minister Sharett¹ which fell into two principal topics:

First, I had again impressed the Foreign Minister to make some statement which would be helpful to the Beirut Conference and would at least give some indication of the willingness of the Israeli Government, assuming conditions of peace and stability to repatriate a portion of the refugees. The Foreign Minister, however, felt that he could not make any statement on this subject except as a part of a general peace settlement.

Second, I had urged upon the Foreign Minister the desirability of a prompt conclusion of the armistice with Trans-Jordan, including arrangements for committing the Trans-Jordan troops to relieve the Iraqi troops. I had reported to the Foreign Minister the President's concern about this matter since he thought it was important for the development of both the armistice and permanent peace that as many troops as possible be withdrawn. I explained that the Foreign Minister had shown a tendency to want to use this matter of a substitution of troops to gain both territorial readjustments on the Samarian front and to try to force Iraq into discussions with Israel. I mentioned briefly the cables on this subject received this morning and our concern that the Israeli forces might attempt to bring about some adjustment of the frontier by military action.

The President was disturbed over the uncooperative attitude being taken and said that we must continue to maintain firm pressure.

¹ See memorandum of conversation that took place on March 22, p. 853.

S11.22767N/3-2449

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

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] March 24, 1949.

Subject: Proposed modification of policy to permit limited number of officers from Israel and Arab States to be trained in U.S.

Discussion:

Since the imposition of the embargo on the shipment of arms to the Near East because of the Palestine conflict, the Department has fol-

lowed the policy of turning down requests from the Arab States and Israel for training of officers of their military services, in the United States. Although such a policy was not explicit in the arms embargo or the Security Council Truce resolutions of May 29 and July 15, 1948, it was felt that it was consistent with our policy of not giving military advantage to either side.

It is believed that the time has now come to reconsider this policy for the following reasons:

1) Armistice agreements have been signed between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Lebanon. Armistice talks are now in progress between Israel and Transjordan (the latter is now in the process of arranging to take over Iraqi military positions in Palestine) and will start shortly between Israel and Syria. It is hoped that these negotiations will preclude any major renewal of hostilities in Palestine.

2) The Arab States have recently shown a desire for closer relations with the West, and have renewed their requests for permission to send trainees to the United States.

3) Israel, despite her announced policy of neutrality between the East and West, has requested permission to send a certain number of officers to the United States for training. Giving such permission would be one way of encouraging Israel towards a Western orientation.

4) Great Britain and France already have student officer missions from some of the Arab States in training, and neither of these powers has seen anything inconsistent between its actions in this respect and its obligations under the various UN truce resolutions for Palestine.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that our present policy be changed to permit the sending of officer student training missions from Israel and the Arab States, in reasonable numbers, consistent with the ability of the various services to handle such missions.

[Here follow concurrences.]

501.BB Palestine/3-1549: Airgram

*The Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Jerusalem*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 24, 1949.

A-31. Unpal. A-1. [For Ethridge.] Following is text of letter Mch 15 from Sec. Defense together with its accompanying memo responding affirmatively to Dept's request that NME continue to provide aid such as military observers, transportation and other facilities, to PCC similar to that already extended to UN Mediator for Palestine:

"My dear Mr. Secretary: With reference to your letter of March 8, 1949, "UNA", in which you request the continuance of the support of

¹ This airgram was repeated to New York.

the National Military Establishment in supplying personnel and other aid to the United Nations in its efforts to reestablish peace in Palestine, I wish to inform you that I have instructed the Secretary of the Navy to comply with your request, bearing in mind certain important principles regarding our participation. A copy of my memorandum to him is enclosed for your information.

It would be appreciated if you would keep me informed of the progress being made by the United Nations, estimating whenever it becomes possible to do so the duration and scope of the continued participation of the Military Establishment in support of the UN in this area. Sincerely yours, James Forrestal."

"MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

March 15, 1949.

Subj: Assistance to the United Nations in the Near East.

Attached is a letter from the Department of State dated 8 March 1949, signed by the Under Secretary of State, which contains a request for the continued assistance of the National Military Establishment in supporting the United Nations Mediator and the Palestine Conciliation Commission of the United Nations in their efforts to maintain peace in the Near East.

Inasmuch as the Chief of Naval Operations was designated Executive Agent of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for supporting the United Nations Mediator in Palestine, and in the light of the attached request from the Department of State and the urgent need for security in this vital area, I desire that the Department of the Navy, with the necessary collaboration of the Departments of Army and Air Force, continue to support the efforts of the United Nations to maintain peace in the Near East. I therefore request that the Department of the Navy deal directly with the Department of State in making the necessary arrangements for this support.

In providing this support, I consider it essential that certain principles be kept constantly in mind. This support by the National Military Establishment of the foreign operations of the United States and the United Nations should be limited to activities in observing and supervising the armistice in this area and should not be permitted to extend to the use of military personnel for other purposes such as guard, protective or enforcement duties or personal services. This type of support of the UN should be shared as appropriate with other members of the United Nations and should be provided on an equitable basis from among the three Services in accordance with arrangements to be worked out by you with the Departments of Army and Air Force. We should, insofar as circumstances permit, reduce the extent of our participation in this Mission as soon as and as much as practicable without jeopardizing the objective of the Mission. Finally, the Department of State should request the United Nations to provide appropriate subsistence, logistic support and reimbursement for the extraordinary expenses of our participation in this mission. James Forrestal.

CC: The Secretary of the Army
The Secretary of the Air Force
The Joint Chiefs of Staff"

ACHESON

S67N.01/3-2449: Telegram

*The Chargé in Transjordan (Stabler) to the Secretary of State*SECRET NIACT
MOST IMMEDIATE

AMMAN, March 24, 1949—4 p. m.

129. Legtels 126 and 127, March 23. King informed this morning that agreement between Transjordan and Israel re Iraqi front area was signed last night at Shuneh but that final clause was inserted to effect that agreement is subject to ratification by Transjordan Prime Minister. Ratification must be communicated to Israel Government in writing not later than March 30 or agreement is null and void. (Immediately following telegram contains summary agreement.¹)

Apparently King told Transjordan representatives that if they could find suitable means to postpone final action, this course had his approval. Consequently Transjordan representatives indicated to Israelis they could not commit Transjordan Government to this agreement without approval Prime Minister. Israelis thereupon agreed to final clause.

Israelis also agreed to several other minor modifications—dates of implementation stages; manner of withdrawal Iraqi forces; insertion Articles 8 and 9. In addition they agreed to modification in adjustment of territory on western front (fourth paragraph No. 2 Legtel 126) whereby line would end at Budrus (No. 149153) which is junction between Legion and Iraqis, not Rantis. On east front (fourth paragraph No. 3, Legtel 126) line will run somewhat east of Qaun (MR 194201) instead of west.

Israelis all clearly indicated that if agreement in present form not ratified, they would advise Legion not to take over Iraqi front. If they did so, Israel would not be responsible for consequences.

While at first His Majesty seemed satisfied that final action on agreement had been postponed, he later appeared to have qualms lest postponement result in creation new difficulties, re both Israel and Iraq. He wished to settle question once and for all as decision to postpone final concurrence in agreement might prolong situation. However, he would let matter stand as now and would discuss it with Prime Minister on latter's return from Beirut Friday or Saturday.

Sent Department 129; repeated Baghdad 27, Beirut 24 for US Del PCC; pouched Jerusalem.

STABLER

¹ *Infra.*

S67N.01/3-2449: Telegram

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

SECRET NIACT

AMMAN, March 24, 1949—5 p. m.

130. Herewith summary agreement referred to in Legtel 129 March 24:

1. Israel agrees to taking over by Arab Legion on Iraqi front.
2. Demarcation lines to be as in map attached to agreement (map signed by Transjordan and Israeli representatives).
3. Agreement to be implemented in following stages: (a) In area west of road from Baqa to Jaljuliya (MR 145173) and from there to east of Qfarqasim—within five weeks after signature general armistice agreement; (b) In area of Wadiara (MR 153209) north of line from Baqa to Zububa (MR 171217)—within seven weeks after signature GAA; (c) All other areas—within fifteen weeks after signature GAA.
4. "Israel, for its part, has made similar changes for benefit of Transjordan" (This is clause without meaning but according to Transjordan representatives included for sake Arab public opinion. Transjordan representatives hope later to change "has made" to "will make").
5. Transjordan guarantees for all Iraqi forces in Palestine and agrees their number to be included in formula governing reduction of forces in GAA.
6. Armistice demarcation line in GAA to be based on positions held on date signature cease-fire agreement as certified by UN.
7. Agreement to be considered revision of GAA to be signed at Rhodes.
8. In case of villages affected inhabitants entitled to full rights of residence, property and freedom. If they leave may take livestock and moveable property and receive without delay full compensation for land they leave behind (Transjordan representatives believe this also empty clause).
9. Israel will pay to Transjordan cost of 20 kilos of first class road in compensation for loss of road between Tulkarm and Qalqiliya.
10. Mixed committee of two representatives from each party and chairman appointed by UN chief staff to peg out lines under this agreement.
11. Agreement not to be published without consent both parties nor "shall it in any way prejudice an ultimate political settlement between the parties."
12. Agreement subject ratification Transjordan Prime Minister, ratification to be communicated in writing to Israel not later than March 30. Failing ratification agreement null and void and without effect.

Agreement signed March 23 for "Hashemite Jordan Kingdom" by Fellah Pasha Medadha and Hussein Sirraj and for "State of Israel" by Eytan, Yadin and Dayan.

Sent Department 130, repeated Baghdad 28, Beirut 25 for USDel PCC. Pouched Jerusalem.

STABLER

867N.01/3-2449 : Telegram

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

SECRET

LONDON, March 24, 1949—9 p. m.

1177. Latest Foreign Office info re Israeli-Transjordan (TJ) undercover negotiations Jerusalem (Paragraph 2, 3 and 6, Embassy 1153, March 23)¹ is report from Amman that Israelis have reduced demand for 15 km. belt to belt 5 km. deep and 60 km. long starting from point TJ line north of Lydda and continuing along Iraqi front to point not far from Jenin. Message sent late last night states Israelis gave TJ until 1900 hours March 23 to accept and that TJ answer was to be given at meeting later that night. Message indicated King considering acceptance even though it involved "all remaining plain land".

2. Late today Burrows said he had no further info re reply made by TJ but that above info had been communicated to Department along lines final sentence Embreftel. He described situation as "somewhat better but still extremely worrying". He was impressed by fact TJ negotiating under duress of clearest kind and was relieved that Abdullah had not put UK on spot by seeking its advice.

DOUGLAS

¹ Not printed.

501.BB Palestine/3-2549

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

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 25, 1949.

Subject: Negotiations in and concerning Palestine.

Mr. Power telephoned this morning to say that Dr. Bunche had reported surprising progress between the Israeli and Transjordan Delegations on Rhodes in reaching the bases for an armistice agreement. He said, however, that the Israelis were complaining about alleged reinforcement of the British garrison at Aqaba and suggested to Secretary General Lie that he approach the United Kingdom Delegation with the thought that it would be helpful if the UK could reduce the number of troops at Aqaba. Bunche thought that the UK might also issue a public statement to this effect and indicate that it would not resort to military action unless Transjordan should be threatened with open aggression. As usual, Dr. Bunche added the suggestion that it would be nice if the State Department also put pressure on the British.

I told Mr. Power that the British were as well aware as we of the secret negotiations being undertaken by the Israelis and Transjordanians supplementary to the armistice talks on Rhodes. The Israelis had very recently threatened King Abdullah that they might resume hostilities against the Iraqis in Samaria. Under these circumstances the British would certainly not feel disposed to reduce their garrison in Transjordan and I did not think the Department of State would be warranted in asking them to do so.

Mr. Power telephoned later this afternoon to pass on Mr. Ross' suggestion that it might be helpful to Dr. Bunche to inform him of the secret negotiations going on behind his back between Israel and Transjordan. I said it was, no doubt, a very human temptation to wish to tell our friend, the Mediator, of what was happening but that I did not think we had any warrant to do so or that we could possibly take the risk with Israel, which had not informed the US of what was going on, using our action with Bunche as a pretext to denounce the agreement now reached secretly with Abdullah. I told Mr. Power that under no circumstances should USUN divulge to the Secretariat or to Bunche its knowledge of the secret negotiations between Abdullah and the government at Tel Aviv. Mr. Power seemed somewhat unconvinced. I later confirmed my position with Mr. Rusk and have informed Mr. Power.

Messrs. Ross and Power had comments on the proposed draft SC resolution sent in Beirut's telegram 132,¹ similar on the whole to our own. We agreed that the Mediator's office, as well as his functions, should be terminated; that the Truce Commission should be liquidated; and that the court of first instance in cases of alleged violations of the armistice agreements should be the Palestine Commission and not the Security Council itself. In general, the resolution should tie up all the loose ends and supplant completely the previous resolutions of the Assembly and the Council dealing with the functions of the Mediator and the Truce Commission. We also agreed that there should be some complimentary reference to the work of Bernadotte and Bunche.

¹ Identified also as Palun 95, March 24; it gave the text of a draft of a proposed resolution to be submitted to the Security Council. In telegram 131, identified also as Palun 94, the same day, Beirut advised that "Bunche-Wilkins conversation resulted in first draft of proposed SC resolution . . . which Bunche plans to transmit to SYG about March 24 for discussion with interested SC delegates on means terminating Mediator's SC functions following conclusion armistice talks under SC resolution November 16." Telegrams 131 and 132 are filed under 501.BB Palestine/3-2449.

501.BB Palestine/3-2549: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Lebanon

SECRET US URGENT

WASHINGTON, March 25, 1949—noon.

145. Unpal 68. [For Ethridge.] Re para 1 Beirut Tel 128 Mar 22, wld prefer not place refugee problem¹ before GA at Apr session since Comite 3 agenda already one of largest at this session and explosive character Palestine problem might cause debate to get out of hand. Seems to us paras 11, 13 and 14 GA Res Dec 11 provide sufficient authority for PCC in reporting to SYG to request him to call on specialized agencies and other govts and authorities to render appropriate assistance if necessary.

Concerning reference your para 1 to gen econ development, we wld prefer more restricted formulation along line that solution refugee problem will necessitate stimulation econ projects which would facilitate assimilation refugees and simultaneously raise econ potential of cooperating states.

Re para 2 distinction shld of course be made between planning phase of long-range operation and its execution with respect concept that proposed technical commission upon request govts or authorities concerned provide assistance in obtaining necessary financing for particular projects from internatl or other sources. In our view PCC shld appt technical comite composed of eminent personnel as you suggest, which wld have sole task of surveying entire refugee problem and of preparing detailed blueprints for solution that problem. PCC cld then recommend to GA or to Govts and authorities concerned on basis its technical comites findings *ad hoc* authority or org, such as regional development board, which would carry out plans technical comite. Such an authority or org might be able facilitate financial assistance from appropriate lending agencies.

We believe Art 12 GA Res Dec 11 provides PCC with full auth appt technical comite any time.

We do not feel necessary have formal assurance from other members PCC that plan proposed by technical comite will have to be implemented along lines approved by US, although this is in fact a necessary consideration. It seems to us that by choice leading personnel and gen position US in internatl community this objective can be achieved without undue stress in spelling it out. Also we do not feel it essential to have assurances of requests for assistance from Arab States before

¹Mr. McClintock, in a telegram of March 24, informed Ambassador Griffis at Paris that "President today signed refugee relief bill. We hope RFC loan will be available within a week." (No. 935, 501.MA Palestine/3-2449)

technical comite is set up. To make such requests prerequisite to estab comite might imply moral obligation on PCC affirmatively to meet these requests. All that seems necessary is assurance by Arab Govts that they will give full cooperation to efforts of PCC and its technical comite in devising long-range solution problem.

Foregoing views preliminary and, as you suggest, final decision will await McGhee's return and further consultation with Ethridge.

ACHESON

501.BB Palestine/3-2349 : Telegram

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

SECRET WASHINGTON, March 25, 1949—5 p. m.

37. Dept appreciates prompt and thorough fashion in which you have reported Israel-TJ talks re Iraqi front, and has given full consideration to recommendations you have made. However, view fact that TJ reps have now signed agreement, Dept does not believe that US representation Tel Aviv would be productive.

We feel that view circumstances Abdullah's instinct to sign agreement (ur 127 Mar 23) is sound and that his reasoning as to effect signing might have on possibility future Israeli demands is logical. Without seeking to give King advice, you may tell him that USG wld regard any attempt at major breach of provisions secret agreement as serious obstacle to progress being made toward peace in Pal and that USG would be prepared give strong advice against such action to any party attempting major breach.

ACHESON

¹ This telegram was repeated to London.

Editorial Note

On the afternoon of March 25, King Abdullah Ibn el-Hussein handed the Chargé in Transjordan, Wells Stabler, a message which he requested be urgently transmitted to President Truman. The message dealt with the subject of territory occupied by Iraqi forces and with the request of Israel for a modification of the present front between Iraqi and Israeli forces. The message was transmitted to the Department by Amman in telegram 132, March 25, 8 p. m. (867N.01/3-2549)

501.BB Palestine/3-2649: Telegram

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

SECRET. US URGENT

AMMAN, March 26, 1949—noon.

MOST IMMEDIATE

134. Deptel 37, March 25. While Transjordan representatives in fact signed secret agreement, agreement does not have any validity until it is ratified by Prime Minister who is understood to have raised objections both as to form and substance of negotiations. (It is possible that Prime Minister may resign over agreement and will have to be replaced by another who would be willing to ratify it, probably Fellah Pasha Medadh.)

Abdullah feels strongly about manner in which agreement has been forced on him but realizes implications of failure to ratify. He is convinced, as are all Transjordan representatives participating in current negotiations, that if agreement is not ratified, Israelis will take action to force out Iraqis (which would also involve Legion again) and make by force territorial adjustments which would probably far exceed what they are endeavoring to extort from Abdullah through negotiation. Abdullah also feels that Israelis would succeed in such moves without any effective action being taken by UN, US or UK to stop them.

However, he approved postponement final action on agreement in hopes some way could be urgently devised to prevent Israel from forcing him into this agreement which he also knows will not improve his position, not only re other Arab States but also re his own people and Palestine Arabs. Hence his message to the President (Legtel 132, March 25).¹

USG informed Israel that it felt latter should interpose no objections to Transjordan assuming responsibility for Iraqi area before question of secret agreement had arisen. Moreover, Israeli Foreign Minister gave formal assurances to President through Secretary of State that Israel has no intentions whatsoever commencing hostilities on Iraqi frontier. Now, however, USG seem prepared permit Israel force Transjordan into paying excessive price without compensation for privilege of taking over Iraqi areas, while at same time threatening that if price not paid, Israel will exact it anyway.

I fear that Israel has so many times been able to violate truce without consequences that King, if he should order ratification of agree-

¹ See editorial note, *supra*.

ment, would gain little comfort or support from substance last sentence Deptel 37.

If USG does not take strong line now to stop Israel's constant, defiant and threatening attitude, I venture to suggest that before Palestine peace is concluded, Israel may well have its frontiers on the Jordan. If this does occur, I submit that it will be only because Israel found apathy and appeasement toward its defiant policy.

In view King's message to President and above, would strongly urge Department reconsider its attitude as expressed in Deptel 37 prior to March 30. Failing this and in event agreement is finally ratified, would then recommend that Department authorize me to inform King, in addition to last sentence Deptel 37, that USG still stands firmly behind its policy enunciated by Jessup in UN on November 20.²

Sent Department repeated Baghdad 30, London 23, Beirut 27 for USDel PCC.

STABLER

² Baghdad reported, on March 29, that Iraqi Foreign Minister Jamali had asked for United States assistance in restraining Israeli territorial demands in areas now held by Iraqi troops (telegram 157, 501BB Palestine/3-2949).

867N.01/3-2749 : Telegram

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

SECRET

AMMAN, March 27, 1949—6 p. m.

135. Prime Minister who appeared to be in somewhat bitter frame of mind made following comments this morning :

1. While he had agreed to despatch King's message to President he thought there was little if any likelihood that either US or UK would or could come to Transjordan's assistance. Postponement final action on agreement had been due to advice received from within Transjordan Government that external assistance might be forthcoming to prevent conclusion this agreement. However, he had told King yesterday that he did not feel optimistic about nature President's reply and on this basis it had been decided to request Israeli representatives to meet with Prime Minister and other Transjordan representatives at Shuneh late afternoon Tuesday March 29. (It is understood Abdullah Tel telephoned Dayan yesterday concerning this meeting and stated that while there was no change in principle re agreement there were few points re implementation which Transjordan representatives wished discussed.) Prime Minister indicated meeting had been put off to March 29 in order await President's reply.

Prime Minister said that at meeting Tuesday he planned to propose modifications in demands and also to seek compensations (probably in Hebron area where Israelis are understood to have informed their delegates at Rhodes they are prepared give up number of villages). He also planned propose that area in triangle which Israelis demand should become no man's land under UN until such time as peace settlement is reached.

He too thought it would be preferable to consider this entire question as military one, to cancel present secret agreement and to incorporate it in terms of general armistice agreement to be signed by two delegates at Rhodes. While Israelis may not agree to suggestions on modifications, he expected they would agree to Rhodes delegates signing armistice agreement including Israeli demands in triangle.

Prime Minister said that following Tuesday's meeting matter would again be discussed in Council of Ministers with view reaching final decision (presumably prior March 30).

In general Tawfic Pasha welcomed delay in final action on secret agreement as it gave Transjordan additional time to attempt reach more suitable adjustments.

(It appears that provided he does not have to ratify agreement with his signature Prime Minister has no intention resigning.)

2. Regarding armistice negotiations at Rhodes Prime Minister said they have been more or less suspended pending outcome negotiations at Shuneh. When queried re Transjordan's position on Jerusalem he replied that Transjordan would have to accept almost any terms which Israelis demanded. Presumably Bunche would draft compromise which Transjordan would be obliged accept. Tawfic Pasha indicated that he no longer concerned about attitude Arab states or others, that his principal concern was welfare Transjordan and Arab Palestine and that he must now act, regardless of cost, to prevent complete disaster.

3. Prime Minister commented at length on future attitude of Transjordan toward UK. Said that this morning he had informed British Chargé that in future Transjordan, while remaining friend and ally of Britain and willing receive advice from British or anyone else, would act as it saw fit in its own interest. Transjordan would no longer regard it as mandatory to follow British advice.

Sent Department 135, Baghdad 31, Jerusalem 744, USDel PCC pouched London.

STABLER

Executive Secretariat Files, Lot 58 D 609

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

[Extract]

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 28, 1949.

Participants: The Secretary
The Under Secretary
Mr. Rusk
Mr. Bohlen¹
General Smith²
Mr. Humelsine

Palestine

Mr. Rusk talked briefly about the Palestine situation. He told the Secretary that the Presidential policy on Palestine was outlined very carefully in Telmar 148³ which was sent to General Marshall at the time of the last General Assembly in Paris. Mr. Rusk said to make the position outlined in this telegram effective it would be necessary to bring Governmental pressure to bear and that such a course of action would cause the President considerable heartburn before it was over. He told Mr. Acheson that there were two papers⁴ regarding this subject that he would like to have him discuss with the President at his 12:30 meeting today. Mr. Acheson indicated that he would do so and thought that he should advise the President to call in his political advisers to talk this over. Mr. Rusk went on to say that if the President exercises reasonable firmness now, we will likely get a reasonable solution to the problem.

¹ Charles E. Bohlen, Counselor of the Department of State.

² Walter Bedell Smith, whose resignation as Ambassador to the Soviet Union was accepted by President Truman on March 25.

³ Dated November 10, 1948, to Paris, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1565.

⁴ The editors are unable to identify the two papers.

501.BB Palestine/3-2849: Telegram

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

TOP SECRET NIACT

BEIRUT, March 28, 1949—5 p. m.

URGENT

149. Palun 97. For the Secretary (and at his discretion for the President) from Ethridge. Talks with Arab governments over past week have only confirmed what I previously reported to Department; That if Jews would only make conciliatory gesture on refugee problem PCC could get on with its work of trying to get peace. Failure of Jews to do so has prejudiced whole cause of peaceful settlement in this part of world.

As we anticipated Commission has been confronted by insistent demand from Arabs that Jews evidence good faith and willingness to abide by GA resolution December 11 before negotiations were entered. They argued since Jews have constantly flouted UN resolution there was nothing for the Arabs to gain by entering negotiations under UN auspices. They have maintained that only when Jews show respect for UN or until other guarantees of fulfillment are forthcoming will they be willing enter peace talks.

Arab attitude toward refugee problem proceeds from two or three reasons. One is that they recognize presence of 700,000 or 800,000 homeless idle people as political weapon against Jews. They feel they can summon world opinion even if some refugees die in meantime. They frankly say, moreover, that when Israel comes up for confirmation in GA they intend to fight her and are trying to get their friends to fight her on ground she cannot pretend to be peace-loving as long as her aggression continues and on ground that, since she is defying UN resolution and directives, as in the Akaba incident and on refugee problem, it is mockery to admit her as nation willing and able undertake obligations of charter. It has been intimated to me that government "friendly to Arabs" might even suggest that GA direct SYG to send telegram to PCC asking whether the countries involved under December 11 resolution had accepted resolution in principle and were assisting in implementing it. If such move is made and not defeated in GA I might be in very embarrassing position of having to join fellow commissioners in reporting that Israeli Government has not accepted resolution in principle and refuses implement it.

Second reason for Arab position is fear of domestic repercussions on refugee problem. Since Egypt and Saudi Arabia have no refugees (Egypt has reportedly sent all of hers into Gaza strip) and Iraq has only about 4,000, figure of 800,000 constitutes about one-tenth population remaining Arab states. Since they generally more advanced

than other Arabs they constitute potential core of dangerous agitators offering a threat to existence of Arab government. They also create, so Arab leaders here have told me, core of irridentist movement that will plague all Arab states and provide basis for continual agitation to point that there will be no possibility of having anything more than armistice in Middle East.

In private conversations both Saudi Arabian and Egyptian have told me that if Israel would take token number of refugees back as preliminary gesture, peace talks could move along. Frightened Transjordanians desperately want peace talks but are also extremely sensitive to idea of "running out" on other Arab states. I am convinced they will talk peace, particularly boundary lines, when they have signed their armistice, but it is likely that on refugee problem they will continue to maintain Arab line. I am more than ever of opinion that if Jews are not deliberately stalling peace negotiations until they can consolidate their position and grab off more land as they seem to be doing in triangle, they are being most short-sighted and making it difficult for themselves ever to have peaceful relations with their neighbors.

Although Commission is making bricks without straw and with, I fear, too little support from home, it is going on with its work. We are staying in Beirut until Arab governments have agreed to further "exchange of views" with Commission in some neutral city where Jews will also be present. In their present mood the Arabs will not even talk about peace conference. We will have to try to ease them into it. In meantime, Commission intends, when it leaves Beirut, to go back to Tel Aviv for talks with [Ben-]Gurion. Jews told us they were ready for direct negotiations, but again refugee problem is not one that can be negotiated directly between Israel and another government, since all Arab governments except Yemen involved.

Although we feel we must go back to Tel Aviv it will do us little good unless Israel Government is pressured by USG to make concession which it could easily make without prejudicing its position in peace negotiations and without revealing its final hand. It is pure rubbish for Shertok to say he cannot do so; Israeli Government already knows how many it will take back and under what conditions. If it had any respect for UN and any desire to live by its ordinances it could make PCC's job easier and shorter and make its own position vis-à-vis the Arabs much more secure than it will ever be if it continues to allow refugee problem to be source agitation in every Arab country and refugees a ready prey to agitators who already working among them.

My own position is most unhappy. It is bad enough to realize UN prestige in this part world already gone, but worse than that is realiza-

tion that US prestige constantly declining and feeling toward US increasingly despairing. Since we gave Israel birth we are blamed for her belligerence and her arrogance and for cold-bloodedness of her attitude toward refugees. Of course everybody expects US to pass miracle but none is needed in this case. All that is needed is effective pressure directed toward making Israel realize that her own interests and ours also are being jeopardized in this strategic area by her intransigence. So far as we are aware, Israel has not replied to approach made in Deptel 144 March 9.¹ Firm reiteration of policy enunciated in GA by Jessup on territorial questions and insistence that Israel abide by resolution as to refugees would, I am convinced, clear atmosphere and bring quick peace which Israel needs as badly as Arabs. If Dept intends to do anything along that line, it should be done before PCC goes Tel Aviv.

I am frankly asking for help. If we do not help out I can see no good result from the work of this Commission. What I can see is an abortion of justice and humanity to which I do not want to be mid-wife; complete destruction of all faith in an international organization and creation of a very dangerous flame against US in this part of world. [Ethrige.]

PINKERTON

¹ To Tel Aviv and repeated to Mr. Ethridge at Jerusalem; it is printed on p. 804.

867N.01/3-2349

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

TOP SECRET US URGENT WASHINGTON, March 28, 1949—6 p. m.

HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH IBN EL HUSSEIN: I have received Your Majesty's message of March 25 concerning the situation affecting the Iraqi front in Palestine. I agree with Your Majesty that the replacement of Iraqi troops by forces of Transjordan would be a move in favor of peace, and that the cease-fire and armistice between Israel and Transjordan should be extended to the Iraqi front.

With regard to the Israeli request for a modification of the present front between the Iraqi forces and those of Israel, I desire to recall to

¹ Transmitted to Amman in telegram 38, March 28, 6 p. m., with the instruction: "Pls convey following message from President to King (ur 132 March 25)."

Mr. Rusk, in a memorandum of March 28 to the Secretary, had discussed King Abdullah's message and had recommended that he discuss the matter with the President and obtain his approval for sending a proposed reply. The memorandum, which was drafted by Mr. Rockwell, noted that "Transjordan, by signing the agreement, might thus be afforded some measure of protection against further Israeli territorial demands." The Department's draft reply was cleared with Matthew J. Connelly, Secretary to the President.

Your Majesty that the policy of the United States Government as regards a final territorial settlement in Palestine and as stated in the General Assembly on Nov 30, 1948 by Dr. Philip Jessup, the American representative, is that Israel is entitled to the territory allotted to her by the General Assembly Resolution of November 29, 1947, but that of Israel desires additions, i.e., territory allotted to the Arabs by the November 29 Resolution, it should offer territorial compensation.

I understand that one of the provisions of the secret agreement which has been initialled by Your Majesty's representatives is that the agreement "shall not in any way prejudice an ultimate political settlement between the parties". Your Majesty may be assured that the United States Government, as a member of the Palestine Conciliation Commission, will regard any attempt at a major breach of the provisions of the secret agreement between Transjordan and Israel as a serious obstacle to the progress being made toward peace in Palestine, and that the United States Government would be prepared to make strong representations against such action to the party attempting it.

I send Your Majesty my best and most cordial wishes.²

HARRY S. TRUMAN

² The President's message was delivered to King Abdullah at 3 p. m., March 29. The latter expressed to Chargé Stabler his "Thought that now no other course of action left open but to accept Israel's demands." (Telegram 137, March 29, 5 p. m., from Amman, 867N.01/3-2949)

501.BB Palestine/3-2849: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Lebanon

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 28, 1949—6 p. m.

148. Unpal 69. [For Ethridge.] Fol tel recd today from USUN:

"SYG has been informed by PCC Secretariat that French and Turkish members favor a Palestine peace conference in Geneva in immed future. He is replying that such a meeting seems premature at this time. Accordingly he will not authorize expenditure of UN funds for trip and meeting in Geneva. SYG understands this is Ethridge position."

Shld appreciate your views. Dept feels SYG shld be guided by recommendations of PCC, particularly if there is any momentum which might facilitate tangible results at a peace conference. If armistice agreements are signed near future we see certain advantages prompt peace talks and are prepared intimate these views SYG if you concur.

ACHESON

501.BB Palestine/3-2949

*Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for United Nations
Affairs (Rusk) to the Secretary of State*

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 29, 1949.

Subject: Suggested Remarks for use in Conversation with the Foreign Minister of Israel.

Discussion

It is recommended that you request Mr. Moshe Sharett, the Foreign Minister of Israel, to call upon you to discuss this Government's views with regard to an equitable settlement of the Palestine problem. Mr. Mark Ethridge, the United States Representative on the Palestine Conciliation Commission, urges again, in Beirut's top secret telegram 149, March 28, attached (Tab A), that without pressure placed by the United States on Israel there can be no good result from the work of his Commission. He says that in the Middle East, since "we gave Israel birth", we are blamed for her belligerence and her arrogance, and for the coldbloodedness of her attitude toward the refugees. He feels that a firm reiteration of the policy announced in the General Assembly by Dr. Jessup on territorial questions, and insistence that Israel abide by the Assembly's resolution of December 11, 1948 as to refugees, would clear the atmosphere and bring a quick peace which Israel needs as badly as the Arabs. If you should see Mr. Sharett before the vote is taken in the forthcoming General Assembly on Israel's admission to the United Nations, your representations would have greater effect. It is suggested that you might speak to the Israeli Foreign Minister along the following lines:

Final Territorial Settlement in Palestine

The United States Government has observed with keen and continuing interest the progress being made toward the establishment of peace in Palestine, as illustrated by the armistice agreements which have been signed between Israel and Egypt on the one hand and Israel and the Lebanon on the other, and by the progress which is being made in the negotiation of an armistice between Israel and Transjordan. The United States Government hopes that armistice agreements will soon be signed between Israel and the remaining Arab States which have participated in the Palestine conflict, and is firmly convinced that there must be no new outbreak of hostilities in Palestine.

The United States Government is deeply interested in an equitable final settlement of the Palestine problem, and looks forward to the negotiations of such a settlement by the parties concerned. The position of the United States Government as regards a final territorial settle-

ment, and as set forth by Dr. Philip Jessup in the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1948, is that Israel is entitled to the boundaries allotted to her by the General Assembly resolution of November 29, 1947, and that no changes should be made in these boundaries without the full consent of Israel. However, if Israel desires additions to this territory, i.e., areas allotted by the General Assembly resolution of November 29 to the Arabs, such as Western Galilee and Jaffa, which are now under Israeli military occupation, Israel should make territorial concessions elsewhere. The President has asked me to state to you his conviction that Israel is not entitled to keep both the areas allotted to it by the November 29 resolution and areas allotted to the Arabs by this resolution, and that Israel should make appropriate territorial compensation for any territory it seeks to retain beyond that allotted to the Jewish state by the November 29 resolution.

Status of Jerusalem

The United States Government firmly supports the principle of the internationalization of the Jerusalem area, as recommended by the General Assembly resolutions of November 29, 1947 and December 11, 1948. The General Assembly resolution of December 11, 1948, stated that an international regime for Jerusalem "should provide for maximum local autonomy for distinctive groups consistent with the special international status of the Jerusalem area". Under these circumstances, it would appear feasible that Jewish Jerusalem could be administered by Israel, perhaps as a trusteeship, and Arab Jerusalem by Transjordan on similar terms. However, in the opinion of the United States Government, it is essential that the Jerusalem area be placed under the overall supervision of some representation of the United Nations.

Palestinian Refugees

The United States Government is deeply concerned by the problem represented by the 800,000 Palestine refugees. The United States is counting heavily upon Israel to play a major role in the solution of this problem, not only in offering financial assistance in the resettlement of those refugees who do not desire to return to Israel, but also in the repatriation to Israel of a substantial number of the refugees. This Government regards such action on the part of Israel as a necessary condition to the establishment of a basis for cooperation between Israel and its neighbors.¹

¹ In a memorandum of March 28 to the Secretary of State, Mr. Rusk examined the problems analyzed in this memorandum, except for the question of the Palestinian refugees, and recommended that Secretary Acheson discuss them with President Truman (50LBB Palestine/3-2849).

890D.00/2-2349

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Transjordan

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 29, 1949.

No. 3.

The Secretary of State refers to the Legation's despatch No. 12 of February 23, 1949,¹ reporting the counsel of Samir Rifai Pasha to King Abdullah regarding this Government's attitude toward the Greater Syria problem, and requesting the Department's guidance in the matter.

For the Legation's information, officers of the Department discussed the Greater Syria issue informally with Samir Pasha in the course of his visit to Washington in January 1949. Although the subject was discussed only briefly, occasion was taken to make it as clear as possible that the Department was concerned over the ambitions of King Abdullah to create a Greater Syria encompassing the territories of neighboring states and that this Government looked with disfavor upon such a scheme. It is apparent from the Legation's despatch under reference that Samir Pasha has either misunderstood or has distorted the Department's views in his counsel to King Abdullah.

It is true, of course, that it is a fundamental principle of our national policy to respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live. Similarly, this Government does not look with favor upon territorial changes that do not accord with the expressed wishes of the peoples concerned. From careful consideration of the Greater Syria plan as envisaged by King Abdullah, however, it would appear that there is insufficient basis to support the contention that such a plan would be "a spontaneous development springing from the will of the people." As it is the Department's opinion that under these circumstances King Abdullah's attempts to further his proposal for the creation of a Greater Syria are a disturbing factor in the Arab Near East, the Government of Transjordan would be in error to believe that the Department in any sense, tacit or otherwise, either favors or condones the scheme.

The Officer in Charge should take suitable opportunity to make the Department's views known to King Abdullah and to Samir Rifai Pasha in a manner which, while as tactful as possible, should serve to remove any further misconceptions regarding our attitude toward this issue.

¹ Not printed.

867N.002/3-2949: Telegram

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

JERUSALEM, March 29, 1949.

253. Press announces decision by Cabinet move Ministries of Health, Education, Religion and Social Welfare and War Sufferers to Jerusalem together with departments of additional ministries. Committee appointed to recommend further transfers. Estimated 1,000 government officials involved in move. Ramallah radio interprets announcement as effort influence Conciliation Commission and show Jewish determination make Jerusalem capital Israel.¹

Sent Department: pouched Amman, repeated Beirut 48.

BURDETT

¹ The Jerusalem Committee of the Conciliation Commission considered the implications of the Israeli decision and concluded that "this constitutes *fait accompli* and part [of the] process establishing capital Jerusalem." The United States Delegation similarly concluded that "this move further prejudices prospects internationalization and confirms opinion that Israel will not relinquish new city of [to] international authority." (telegram 153, identified also as Palun 101, March 29, 10 p. m., from Beirut, 501.BB Palestine/3-2949)

The Conciliation Commission decided, on March 30, to send a written communication to the Israeli Prime Minister calling attention to press reports and adding that "if confirmed, PCC would be obliged to call attention of Israeli Government to incompatibility of such measure with paragraph 8 of GA resolution December 11. . . . PCC requests assurance from Ben Gurion it is not intention Israeli Government to transfer ministries to Jerusalem." (telegram 160, also identified as Palun 102, March 31, 3 p. m., from Beirut, 501.BB Palestine/3-3149)

501.BB Palestine/3-2949: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

BEIRUT, March 29, 1949—2 p. m.

152. Palun 100. [From Ethridge.] ReDeptel 148, March 28, USDel position has been that it will consider any meeting place when it becomes obvious that talks can be held or that they will be fruitful. In meantime, we expect no commitment nor have Arabs agreed to further talks. Arabs are canvassing among themselves now and will give reply to Commission within day or two. Question of meeting place will then come up as Arabs have been asked to indicate their preference.

My own feeling as stated in Commission has been that it is preferable to meet in this part of the world. Jerusalem is out because Arabs consider they would compromise themselves if they negotiated in [garble] Rhodes is distasteful to them psychologically. Tentatively most of the

Arab Delegates have said they prefer Geneva although currency difficulties there very great for most of them. Boisanger has not committed himself directly although in Commission he has frequently referred to Geneva as a possibility. Yalcin definitely is against Rhodes and favors Geneva possibly under instruction as Turks have [garble] claim on Rhodes. Jews have indicated to Boisanger preference for Geneva.

Strongest argument against Geneva to my mind is that unless Arabs send missions empowered to negotiate and sign, there will be constant shuttling back and forth to me, thus prolonging any negotiations and giving the situation time to deteriorate more. If, however, Arabs agree to talks and indicate preference for Geneva, I will have to agree and undertake to impress upon them desirability from their point of view of sending strong delegates.

We concur fully view contained and action proposed last paragraph reference telegram. [Ethridge.]

[PINKERTON]

501.BB Palestine/3-2449 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Legation in Lebanon

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 29, 1949—7 p. m.

156. Unpal 70. [For Ethridge.] Our preliminary reaction draft proposed SC res set forth Palun 95 Mar 24 and commented on in Palun 94¹ is favorable. We believe however this res shld seek to tie in all loose ends and leave no doubt but that functions and Office of Mediator well as Truce Comm are terminated.

We have fol recommendations:

1. To Para 3 add fol new language: "Thanks the Truce Comm established by the SC res of 23 Apr., 1948 for its distinguished efforts in carrying out an arduous and dangerous task and declares this Comm dissolved."

2. Proposed para. 5 of draft res would be more explicit if it read as fols: "Requests the PCC to undertake the observance of the cease-fire in Palestine; upon the assumption by the PCC of this task the remaining functions of the UN Mediator on Palestine under SC resolutions, and the office of the Mediator, shall terminate."

3. Para. 6 might read: "Requests the SYG to appoint the present Chief of Staff of the Palestine Mediator to continue, under the supervision of the PCC, such of the present truce supervision organization as the PCC may require in maintaining the cease-fire, and as may be necessary in assisting the parties to the armistice agreements in the supervision of the application of the terms of those agreements."

¹ Regarding these two telegrams, see footnote 1, p. 869.

Believe undesirable for supervisor armistice agreements have direct access to SC. There will undoubtedly be many allegations of breach of armistice which wld impose a needless and politically embarrassing task on SC of investigating charges which can only be checked by on-the-spot observation. We feel PCC is logical body to whom chief of staff shld report alleged breaches of armistice agreements and PCC wld then be free bring grave infractions attention SC.

4. Feel also there shld be some laudatory reference in SC res to outstanding contribution Bernadotte and Bunche. Probably since latter drafted present proposed res this was omitted.²

Rptd USUN as 193.

ACHESON

² Jerusalem reported, on April 9, that the content of telegram 156 had been discussed with Mr. Bunche, who was "strongly of opinion, however, with which USDel agrees, that PCC should not become involved in armistice agreements." Mr. Bunche was said to be of the opinion that the armistice agreements did not require PCC supervision, a matter he planned to discuss with Department officers on his return to the United States (telegram 280, also identified as Palun 121, 501.BB Palestine/4-949).

501.BB Palestine/3-3049: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to Mr. Ralph J. Bunche*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 30, 1949—7 p. m.

For Acting UN Mediator for Palestine. US Govt refers its proposals of Sept 1948² re export aircraft parts for Near East commercial air-line needs, which proposals were concurred in by you Sept 18.³

This Govt considering desirability liberalizing policy to permit export to Israel and to Arab States, without prior approval of Mediator, aircraft, spares, other aviation items which US Govt satisfied required for establishment and maintenance civil air services and rehabilitation civil air navigation, communications and ground facilities, not limited to services in effect July 15, 1948. Request your early views this proposal.

ACHESON

¹ This telegram was sent to Cairo as No. 339 and repeated to Rhodes. Mr. Bunche, at Rhodes, replied in an undated telegram, received in the Department on April 3, that he concurred in the liberalizing policy. Henceforth, he said, "if US Government satisfied such items will be used for non-military purposes only, I see no need to obtain prior approval of Mediator for issuance of export permits." (Navy telegram NCR 3768, 501.BB Palestine/4-349)

² See telegram 908, September 16, 1948, to Jerusalem, *Foreign Relations*, 1948, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1406.

³ See footnote 1, *ibid.*, p. 1408.

501.BB Palestine/3-3149

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] March 31, 1949.

MY PROPOSED CONVERSATION WITH MR. SHARETT

I went over with the President my proposed talk with Mr. Sharett as outlined this morning with Mr. Satterthwaite.¹ The President approved it and asked that a memorandum of the conversation be sent to him after it had taken place, and said that he would say the same thing to Dr. Weizmann when he arrived in this country.

¹This allusion is not clear to the editors. Possibly, Secretary Acheson was referring to an outline of the matters discussed in Mr. Rusk's memorandum of March 29, which was drafted in Mr. Satterthwaite's office.

867N.01/3-3149 : Telegram

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

SECRET

AMMAN, March 31, 1949—2 p. m.

143. Legtel 142, March 30.¹ After meeting which lasted until 0300 hours this morning understanding had been reached on all points. It was agreed that original agreement and modifications thereto would not be kept secret and that they would form instructions to two armistice delegates at Rhodes who would include terms thereof in general armistice agreement. However, until armistice agreement signed, terms these "instructions" would not be made public. Modifications to original agreement were signed by Defense Minister and Israeli representatives and were appended to original agreement as annex.

Israelis were unwilling accept Transjordan concept that areas demanded by Israel which were not allotted to Israel under partition should be made no man's land, and stated that question of partition did not enter into discussions. While Israelis insisted they should occupy areas up to lines laid down in original agreement, it was nevertheless agreed that neither Transjordan nor Israeli forces would occupy Arab villages within areas affected and that such villages would remain "enclave". Villages would raise own police forces and would have contact with areas under Transjordan or Israeli occupa-

¹Not printed; it advised that the King, the Prime Minister, the Chief of the Transjordanian Delegation at Rhodes, and the Defense Minister would meet with Israeli Representatives on the evening of March 30 to discuss the question of the Iraqi front. The Transjordanians anticipated proposing that "those areas in question which were allotted to Arabs under partition should become no-mans-land under UN until final settlement." (867N.01/3-3049)

tion through UN. This arrangement would preclude possibility large numbers refugees.

Israelis also agreed to change in wording paragraph 4 of original agreement so that it would read "Israel, for its part, will make certain changes for the benefit of Transjordan in area west of Hebron". Re this Israel will make ratification of lines this area which would return to Transjordan authority considerable territory. Also agreed that paragraph 3 original agreement would be entirely eliminated.

Fawzi Pasha said Israelis wished discuss last night question of Latrun for which they willing make compensation. However, Transjordan representatives replied that first step should be signature of armistice based on lines at time of cease-fire agreement and that later further talks would be held concerning Latrun, Hadassah, Potash works, railroad to Jerusalem, etc.

Fawzi Pasha indicated it now expected armistice agreement (draft of agreement concerning Arab Legion fronts has been considered and approved by Transjordan) including terms re Iraqi front would be signed at Rhodes on Monday April 4. It is understood Legion will take over from Iraqis on April 5.

In general, Defense Minister appeared glad to have matters settled and felt Transjordan had used weeks grace to good advantage.

Sent Department 143, repeated Baghdad 35, Beirut 30 for USDel. PCC, Jerusalem 76.

STABLER

501.BB Palestine/3-3149 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

BEIRUT, March 31, 1949—6 p. m.

163. Palun 105. [From Ethridge.] At request French Foreign Office Boisanger has asked Ethridge to recommend that Department approach Israeli representative Washington re new Israeli requirement Jerusalem visitors have civilian visas for entry into Israel. Ethridge agreed report matter Department and suggested French representative Washington consult Department re what action desirable. We doubt wisdom constant heckling approaches but suggest this matter might be included in any general over-all approach re Jerusalem or Palestine which Department may make to Israeli Government.¹

¹ Secretary Acheson, on April 1, informed Mr. Ethridge as follows: "I want you to know that we have given very careful consideration to Palun 97, Mar 28, which I have discussed with the President. We also have in mind Palun 99, Mar 29, and Palun 105, Mar 31. I have asked Sharett to see me Apr. 5 and shall go over these questions with him. The President says that he will cover the same points with President Weizmann when he arrives in this country." (Telegram 166, identified also as Unpal 73, to Beirut, 501.BB Palestine/4-149)

Palun 97 is identified also as telegram 149 from Beirut, p. 876; Palun 99, identified also as telegram 151 from Beirut, March 29, is not printed.

Sent Department 163, repeated Jerusalem 36, Tel Aviv 6, Amman unnumbered. [Ethridge.]

PINKERTON

Editorial Note

The Governments of Israel and Transjordan signed a General Armistice Agreement at Rhodes on April 3; for the text, see SC, *4th yr.*, *Special Supplement No. 1.*

Editorial Note

The meaning of the expressions "Rhodes formula" and "Rhodes-type talks" in connection with the methods of negotiation between Israel and some of its Arab neighbors for armistice agreements is not entirely clear. The United Nations *Bulletin* of March 15, 1949, page 226, states that, with the convening of the Egyptian and Israeli negotiators at Rhodes, there "followed 42 days of almost continuous session. The procedure adopted was for Dr. Bunche to hold preliminary discussions separately with each delegation on each substantive item. Then informal meetings were arranged between the heads of the delegations and the Acting Mediator. And when discussion on the item had reached an advanced stage, joint formal meetings of the two delegations were held."

A press release by the United Nations, No. PAL/456 of March 9, states that the delegations of Israel and Transjordan, the same afternoon, held "their first joint informal meeting which lasted two and a half hours. In a very cordial atmosphere, an exchange of views took place on 11 points raised by both delegations in connection with the delineation of armistice lines, including the Jerusalem sector." (IO files)

The nature of these expressions became of special moment to the Department of State early in 1948. Rufus G. Smith of the Office of United Nations Political Affairs, on March 4, 1948, prepared a memorandum entitled "The Rhodes Formula," which read in part as follows:

"The 1949 armistice agreements between Israel and its four Arab neighbors were achieved pursuant to a November 1948 Security Council resolution which called on the parties to negotiate 'either directly or through the acting mediator on Palestine.'

After adoption of the resolution, Israel said that it would prefer direct negotiations but, if this was not immediately practicable, would be prepared to negotiate through UN intermediaries. Arab replies

did not deal with the procedural aspect and the meetings apparently began with no advance agreement on how they would proceed.

The account of the chief Israeli negotiator and Bunche's reports agree that the first one or two meetings were separate. According to Bunche, the first joint meeting took place on the second day. The Israeli account says that at this meeting the delegations first exchanged views through Bunche but 'it was not long before the delegations were arguing with one another directly.' Bunche's report only says that the two delegations were introduced at that first meeting and that he became chairman at their request. Thereafter, according to Bunche, there would be preliminary discussions between himself and each of the delegations separately, 'informal meetings between heads of delegations and the United Nations,' and 'joint formal meetings of the two delegations.'

Apparently, then, there were both joint meetings with Bunche in the chair and informal meetings between Bunche and each party separately. There is no indication of the frequency of each type of meeting. It is also not clear whether the substantive negotiations took place in the separate sessions, in the joint sessions, or in both. Israel would probably maintain that they took place in the joint sessions, or at least primarily in such sessions. Bunche, while referring to some Israeli descriptions of the negotiations as 'inaccurate and misleading,' has refused to expand publicly on his reports to the Security Council at the time.

Bunche's reports, however, do reflect a gradual change in terminology. By the time of the Israel-Jordan and Israel-Lebanon discussions, which began after the Israel-Egypt agreement was signed, he was talking of negotiations 'between' representatives of the parties under UN chairmanship. Also, in his summary report to the Council on all four armistice agreements, submitted after conclusion of the Israel-Syria agreement, he recommended adoption of a draft resolution referring to negotiations 'between' the parties."

The memorandum continued with a chronological account of the negotiations and their background and aftermath, which, in pertinent part, referred to Mr. Bunche's report of January 12, 13, and 25, printed on pages 649, 654, and 698, respectively; and concluded with a section entitled "An Israeli Account of the Rhodes Negotiations," which presented the views of Walter Eytan, the Chief Israeli Representative at the Rhodes negotiations, as given in his *The First Ten Years* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1958), pages 28 ff.

The Department, on March 7, 1968, informed Amman that "virtually only authoritative reports on procedures followed at Rhodes are those Bunche submitted to UNSC. . . . In any event it [is] clear that 'Rhodes formula' . . . embraced variety of methods, both formal and informal, joint and separate." (telegram 126252)

Mr. Smith's memorandum and telegram 126252 are filed under POL 27 Arab-Isr.

867N.01/4-549

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

SECRET

NEW YORK, April 5, 1949.

[Subject:] Palestine Problem

Present: The Secretary
Mr. Sharett, Foreign Minister of Israel
Dean Rusk

I expressed appreciation for Mr. Sharett's visit and stated that I wanted to congratulate him upon the armistice recently concluded between Israel and Transjordan. I then expressed the hope that the negotiation of an armistice with Syria could rapidly be brought to a conclusion.

I said that I had had an opportunity to discuss with the President the matters which had been discussed between Mr. Sharett and myself in Washington, and that I now wished to discuss with Mr. Sharett the President's views on the general situation.

The President has been following the situation in the Near East with very close attention and deep personal concern.

On the question of the boundary settlement, to which attention would turn as soon as the armistice negotiations had been completed, the President wished to reaffirm his attitude which he has expressed on many occasions.

The President supports the settlement of the November 29 resolution and considers that Israel has a clear and unequivocal claim to the territories allotted to Israel in that resolution and that any changes in such territories adverse to Israel must have Israel's consent. Insofar as Israel might itself wish a rectification of the November 29 frontiers—and we can understand that some rectification will be desired—we believe that these changes must be brought about by agreement. Further, such agreement should result from negotiation and consent in the genuine meaning of those terms. The President believes that Israel must be prepared to offer territorial concessions in one part of its territory in exchange for increments of territory which it

¹ Drafted by Mr. Rusk; it is a redraft in the first person of a memorandum drafted originally in the third person, with no substantive changes. Both memoranda are filed under the same number. Secretary Acheson transmitted a copy to President Truman with his memorandum of April 7, which stated in part: "You will recall asking me to send you a copy of this memorandum so that you could use it in connection with your conversation with Dr. Weizmann when he arrives in this country." (867N.01/4-749)

The Acheson-Sharett conversation began at 11:15 a. m. on April 5 in Apartment 42-A, the Waldorf Towers (marginal notation on Mr. Acheson's memorandum of March 31, p. 886).

desires elsewhere. Actually, the President does not foresee that there should be any serious difficulty in reaching agreement on this basis.

With respect to Jerusalem, the President stands behind the concept of internationalization as set forth in the solution of the General Assembly of December 11, 1948. It is recognized that the interest of the international community is primarily in the Holy Places and in the maintenance of orderly conditions around the Holy Places. International interest is not primarily concerned with regulating the day-to-day activity of the inhabitants as such. For that reason the President believes that it should be possible to work out arrangements, perhaps under the trusteeship system, under which Israeli and Arab authorities could accept responsibilities in Jerusalem, but which recognize international interest and authority for the Holy Places.

I then stated that the most serious difficulty and the source of greatest immediate concern to the President was the question of Palestine refugees. These refugees number some 800,000. They constitute a serious political problem disturbing to the good order and well-being of the Near East. The Assembly resolution of December 11 set up the principle of repatriation. While it can be understood that repatriation of all of these refugees is not a practical solution, nevertheless we anticipate that a considerable number must be repatriated if a solution is to be found.

The President is particularly anxious that an impasse not develop on this subject, with one side refusing to negotiate for a final settlement until a solution is found for refugees, and the other side refusing to take steps to solve the refugee question until there is a final political settlement. We must avoid the argument as to which is the horse and which is the cart, because in fact the political settlement and the refugee solution are part and parcel of the same problem and both are cart and both are horse.

The President believes that now is the time for Israel to make a real contribution to a political settlement by showing that it is prepared to make a beginning on the refugee problem. The Israeli Government could state that it considers this problem a necessary part of a final political settlement, but that it is prepared to move immediately to attempt repatriation of a portion, say a fourth, of the refugees eligible for repatriation. I stated that we hoped that Israel could accept immediately the repatriation of refugees coming from areas now under Israeli occupation, but not allotted to Israel under the November 29 resolution and, in addition, a substantial number into Israel proper.

A statesmanlike move by Israel with respect to refugees would make it possible for the President to continue his strong and warm support

for Israel and efforts being made by its Government to establish its new political and economic structure on a firm basis.

In reply, Mr. Sharett stated first that he was familiar with our views on boundary questions and that he was also hopeful that an agreed solution could be reached. He stated that he realized that mutual adjustments were involved but that he did not see any insurmountable difficulty.

Regarding Jerusalem, Mr. Sharett said that he personally found the suggestions about trusteeship reasonable and worthwhile suggestions for further study, and that his own attitude was that a solution might very well be found along those lines. He stated, however, that he did not wish to exclude at this time another kind of solution which might be reached by agreement between Israel and Transjordan—an agreement which would require the imprimatur of the General Assembly and which would, of course, take into account international interest in the Holy Places. He stated that in prior discussion with Transjordan on the subject of Jerusalem they had found Abdullah insistent upon the principle of annexation rather than of internationalization.

The impression left by Mr. Sharett was that the Israeli Government had not rejected the idea of a joint trusteeship of some sort for the city of Jerusalem, but that it still had in mind the possibility of a direct agreement between Israel and Transjordan which could be agreed to internationally.

On the question of the refugees Mr. Sharett stated that he first had a question about the numbers involved. Israeli experts thought that the number of legitimate refugees was in the number of 500,000 to 550,000, but that there were many local inhabitants who described themselves as refugees in order to obtain relief.

Apart from numbers, Mr. Sharett stated that he could not agree to a distinction between territory allotted to Israel under the November 29 resolution and other territory now under Israel control. The primary reason is that security in Israel is indivisible, and he illustrated this by a detailed explanation of operations in the West Galilee area. He stated that Israel could not give up the minimum security which it had won with so much blood and expenditure by reintroducing large number of refugees into the very areas from which Israel had been seriously threatened.

Mr. Sharett then restated the Israeli position that the refugee problem can only be solved in terms of final peace settlement and that basically resettlement is the proper solution for refugees. He stated that the question arose out of war and could only be settled in a peace. He said there would never have been a refugee problem had the Arabs not initiated the war; that Israel had been willing to accept the pres-

ence of a large Arab minority within its territory, but that the situation is now completely changed and that to return refugees who had once left the country created quite a new problem. He stated that their return would disturb the homogeneity of Israeli areas; they could settle themselves in neighboring Arab states, not only to their own benefit but to the benefit of the Arab states themselves and would increase the productive capacity and capital equipment of such states.

He stated that he would report fully my remarks to his Government and, indeed, that Mr. Ben Gurion would be discussing the refugee question with the Palestine Conciliation Commission on April 7.

I then continued by stating that I thought Israel should consider the refugee question in three phases.

As a first step I thought that the Israeli Government should find a way to state that it is prepared to accept a considerable number of refugees on a repatriation basis. Since there may be some difference of opinion as to the numbers involved, it may not be possible to talk about precise figures, but some quantitative indication of what Israel could do would be an important step. Such a step would permit Mr. Ethridge and the Palestine Conciliation Commission to proceed with an orderly consideration of the entire question, would set the framework for a discussion of a political settlement and would make it easier for us to get the assistance of Congress in dealing with the later aspects of the problem.

As a second phase, I thought that, as peace discussions continued, the Israeli Government might be able to say that since discussions would be going well and there would be a prospect of a settlement, the Israeli Government could then begin actual repatriation. Initially repatriation might be to less critical areas from a security point of view and could be worked out so that it would not jeopardize the Israeli military position.

The final step would be the final political settlement which would include whatever additional contribution Israel could make in terms of repatriation.

Mr. Sharett said that he felt that the two fully understood each other's point of view and that he would report my statement fully to his Government and asked me to express his appreciation to the President for the President's interest and concern in this question.

Mr. Rusk raised with Mr. Sharett the difficulty being caused by certain administrative action by local authorities by which Israel would unnecessarily complicate and prejudice forthcoming negotiations. He cited the recent requirements that visitors to Jerusalem have civilian visas. Mr. Sharett thought that the only visas involved were those required for transit through Israel itself, but that some

question about permits may have arisen in connection with direct entry into Jerusalem from Arab-held territories. He said he would get in touch with his Government immediately and try to clarify that situation.²

² The Department sent a lengthy summary of the Acheson-Sharet conversation to Ambassador McDonald and Mr. Ethridge at Tel Aviv on April 6. The telegram noted that the Israeli Foreign Minister saw the Secretary at the latter's request. After its summary, the Department concluded as follows: "We do not feel that McDonald should associate himself with PCC in meeting with Ben Gurion, since he is not member of PCC. However, Dept desires he as Amb urgently give PriMin full account interview, stressing points made by President and Secy.

"Both McDonald and Ethridge should express to BenGurion serious concern this Govt at reports from UN Mediator of reported Israeli incursion into Syrian territory Apr. 5. Dept understands McDonald has already received direct communications from Bunche and has seen text of urgent message from Bunche to Israeli Govt Apr 5 stating that if any Israeli forces are beyond Syrian frontier he must insist this is most flagrant and dangerous violation of SC truce and that such forces must be withdrawn immediately. McDonald should state that, coming on very day when Secy has in terms of friendly interest so fully explained to Israeli FonMin President's deep concern for prompt peace in Palestine, this report if true would necessar[il]y cause most unfavorable impression here, particularly at a time when Israel membership UN on point being discussed GA." (Telegram 208, 501.BB Palestine/4-649)

The text of Mr. Bunche's message to the Israeli Government was transmitted to the Department by Beirut in telegram 177, identified also as Palun 111, April 5, 11 p. m., 501.BB Palestine/4-549.

501.BB Palestine/4-549 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

BEIRUT, April 5, 1949—1 p. m.

174. Palun 108. [From Ethridge.] During second and last joint meeting between Commission and Arab states at Beirut on April 5, representatives of Egypt, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria informed Commission their governments agreed to continuation of exchange of views at some neutral place at an early date. Iraqi representative stated his government was unable to accept and that prior to further discussion GA Resolution December 11 regarding refugees should be accepted by Israel. Iraqi representative privately stated, however, Iraq would send observer to further meetings.

Egypt, Transjordan and Syria representatives indicated Italy, Brussels, and Evian would be acceptable for meeting in that order. Lebanon preferred Evian. Saudi Arabia had no instructions. Commissioners did not discuss matter further with Arabs re Jerusalem nor among themselves. Commission plans defer decision regarding place and date pending meeting with Ben-Gurion April 7.

Arab representatives made it clear they expected Commission to present their views regarding imperative character paragraph 11 GA

Resolution December 11 and that Israel, if it desired to cooperate, might be expected now to make it possible for Arab refugees to return to their homes and to cancel other present Israeli measures re refugee land and property which are prejudicial to interests of refugees.

Commission explained it planned to visit Tel Aviv April 7 and would present Arab views regarding refugees and would ascertain Israeli attitude.¹

Department please pass to US Mission, New York.

Sent Department 174; repeated Tel Aviv 7, Jerusalem 28, Baghdad 15, Damascus 23, Amman unnumbered, Cairo 17, Jidda unnumbered, London 3. [Ethridge.]

PINKERTON

¹ Mr. Ethridge, on April 4, had expressed his view to the Department that the Arabs had made a real concession in agreeing to go ahead with peace talks and that "If Israel would make concession now on refugees we would be on our way." (Telegram 170, identified also as Palun 107, from Beirut, 501.BB Palestine/4-499)

Editorial Note

The Second Progress Report of the Palestine Conciliation Commission was released in two parts, dated April 5 and 9. They dealt primarily with Arab and Israeli views, respectively, on the Palestine refugee question. The text of the report is printed in GA, 4th Sess., *Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annex*, volume II, page 3.

501.BB Palestine/4-549: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 5, 1949—3 p. m.

266. Article 8 of Israel Transjordan agreement provides for special committee which "shall have exclusive competence over such matters as may be referred to it". Questions listed for committee attention pertain mainly to Jerusalem and have direct bearing on future city.

In defending agreement before Knesset Ben-Gurion stated, according to *Palestine Post*, one of major problems in negotiations overcome when questions connected with Jerusalem left to special committee "to be settled without UN intercession". *Post* quotes Dr. Bunche as saying special committee will find means making life for people in Jerusalem easier and helping Jerusalem return to normal. Diplomatic correspondent of *Post* asserts Israel and Transjordan will negotiate directly through special committee without intervention of any third party on all questions outstanding "including those which would normally be

subject of Peace Conference and which would have been regarded as within scope of PCC". He believes establishment of special committee has seriously weakened position PCC.

Israel has long shown desire settle problem Jerusalem directly with Transjordan without "interference of third party" and Consul[ate] General has consistently maintained UN must be considered interested party in any agreement re Jerusalem. Creation this committee with apparent approval acting mediator furnishes Israel and Transjordan convenient means settling question concerning Jerusalem by mutual agreement and without taking into account UN interest in city. Difficult to perceive how functions assigned committee will not make more difficult carrying out provisions GA Resolution December 11 re internationalization.

BURDETT

501.MA Palestine/4-549 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

BEIRUT, April 5, 1949—4 p. m.

175. Palun 109. [From Ethridge.] On April 4 Eytan, Director General Israeli Foreign Office replied to PCC letter referred to in Legtel 160 March 31¹ and stated:

Ben Gurion directs me to confirm it is intention of Government of Israel to accommodate certain of its departments in Jerusalem and government after careful study of question finds itself unable accept view this step is incompatible with Article 8 of GA resolution December 11. There is in considered opinion of government's advisers nothing in this article nor in any other article of GA resolution December 11 that could be interpreted as forbidding Government of Israel to establish any of its departments in Jerusalem.

Pending final determination of future of Jerusalem Government of Israel deems itself entitled to use accommodation available there as matter of administrative convenience.

Eytan then expressed Government of Israel's regret PCC in April 1 press release in Beirut "should have publicly criticized" government's conduct before reply could be made to PCC letter.

¹ Identified also as Palun 102, not printed; it advised of a letter from the Palestine Conciliation Commission to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, which, in citing press reports on the transfer of Israeli ministries to Jerusalem, stated that if the reports were confirmed the "PCC would be obliged to call attention of Israeli Government to incompatibility of such measure with paragraph 8 of GA resolution December 11." The letter requested the assurance of the Prime Minister that it was not the intention of the Israeli Government to transfer the ministries to Jerusalem. (501.BB Palestine/3-3149)

Eytan concluded by confirming PCC appointment April 7 with Ben Gurion who was looking forward to exchange of views with PCC on present situation and on plans for future.

PCC decided April 5 to take two steps: (1) To write Eytan that PCC press release had not criticized government but had stated content PCC letter which expressed PCC opinion that if it were true Israel planned transfer Ministries to Jerusalem PCC considered it incompatible with GA resolution December 11; and (2) to discuss matter with Ben Gurion April 7.

PCC remains of opinion transfer of Ministries to Jerusalem is incompatible with GA resolution December 11. It is matter of Israel intent. Theory expressed in Eytan's letter that resolution is silent would presumably make it possible for Israel to announce Jerusalem as capital of Israel with impunity.

Boisanger believes US and France should discuss with Sharett in Washington. We agreed report matter to Department and suggested French representative Washington consult Department regarding desirable action.

Repeated Jerusalem 39, Tel Aviv 8, Amman unnumbered. [Ethridge.]

PINKERTON

867N.48/4-549: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom*¹

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 5, 1949—6 p. m.

1176. For McGhee from Satterthwaite. In general discussion with Secy Apr 2 re NEA area, FonMin Bevin² emphasized desirability holding Arabs "in line" and expressed view US and UK shld adopt common line for development potential resources needed for our defense. He stated that after Palestine question settled, he hoped concentrate on several major development projects, particularly Lake Victoria and Lake Tana water schemes and Euphrates. Latter he considered offers possibility establishing under good living conditions population of five to six million capable withstanding Soviet pressure.

Bevin further stated Arab refugee problem being studied. He said 40,000 could be resettled on Jordan slopes and that he was putting pressure on Syrian Govt for resettlement 200,000-300,000 Northern Syria. He hoped Transjordan could absorb remainder.

¹ This telegram was repeated to Jerusalem as No. 187 and for Mr. Ethridge as Unpal 74.

² Mr. Bevin was in the United States to attend the Second Part of the Third Session of the General Assembly, which began in New York on April 5.

Re general area he favors vigorous econ development drive by West, since development important for capital goods market and for food production.

Secy replied that President is greatly interest ME development as complement to Western European recovery, is extremely interested in Euphrates project, and desires concentrate on development problems rather than diffuse our energies. Secy further stated our desire proceed on internatl front and belief IBRD appropriate org for development Point IV program. [Satterthwaite.]

ACHESON

867N.20A/3-2949

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

RESTRICTED

WASHINGTON, April 6, 1949.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: During the course of a call which he paid upon the Secretary of State on March 22, the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Moshe Sharett, stated that the Israeli Government was very much interested in obtaining American technical assistance for the organization and training of the Israeli Army. He said that his Government would like to offer positions as advisers to a limited number of retired United States Army officers, or Reserve officers on inactive status, who were skilled in the various branches of military organization. Mr. Sharett added that the purpose of his request was not to prepare the Israeli Army for offensive operations but to re-organize it in the most efficient manner possible to permit the reduction of the number of men now under arms.

Mr. Sharett was told that the Department would be glad to discuss his request with your office and to give it sympathetic consideration. It was also explained that in the absence of permanent legislation, it would be impossible to comply with his request on the basis of a military mission.

The Department would appreciate receiving your opinion as to whether the procedure suggested by Mr. Sharett is permissible under the law and regulations and agreeable to the National Military Establishment. It appears that it would be desirable and in the national interest to permit competent retired or reserve officers, having the confidence of the National Military Establishment, to assist the Israeli authorities in the basic organization of their army.

It appears also, however, that while we should, if possible, give agreement in principle to Mr. Sharett's request, it would be advisable to postpone the granting of permission to individual officers until such time as the armistice negotiations between Israel and the Syrian Gov-

ernments have been successfully completed, or at least until we are satisfied that the likelihood of a renewal of hostilities in Palestine has passed.

Sincerely yours,

JAMES E. WEBB

501.MA Palestine/4-649

The President to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, April 6, 1949.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: In accordance with Section 1 of the Joint Resolution providing for the authorization of a special contribution by the United States for the relief of Palestine refugees (Public Law 25, 81st Congress, approved March 24, 1949), I have today allocated \$8,000,000 to the Department of State from funds advanced by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation under the provisions of Section 2 of the aforementioned Act, which advance has been deposited with the Treasury of the United States, and established under Appropriation Symbol No. 119/00043.

These funds are to be used by the Department of State as a special contribution to the United Nations for the purposes set forth in the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations of November 19, 1948, providing for the relief of Palestine refugees.

Sincerely yours,

HARRY S. TRUMAN

501.BB Palestine/4-849: Telegram

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

SECRET

TEL AVIV, April 8, 1949—noon.

268. ReDeptel 208, April 6.¹ Ethridge arrived Tel Aviv April 7 in time study Dept instructions before PCC Conference with Prime Minister. After receiving brief report from Ethridge of PCC talk with B[en-] G[urion] and Foreign Office staff I saw Prime Minister. My exchange with Prime Minister followed closely Dept's argument and complemented and reinforced presentation BG PCC.

1. Prime Minister said he had not heard of "alleged Israel violation of Syrian frontier" until morning April 7; charges might be true and if confirmed troops would be ordered back at once and commander punished. Prime Minister insisted Israel concerned only to have Syrians return their side international frontier. Hour later Shiloah (in course long explanation at residence with staff re Israel-Transjordan armistice agreement and related matters being reported airgram fully) said positively that Israeli troops already withdrawn.

¹ Not printed, but see footnote 2, p. 894.

2. On question Israeli's frontiers, Prime Minister's attitude identical with that of Sharett reported Deptel 208.

3. Re Jerusalem Prime Minister said President Truman's view (Deptel 208) was encouraging and that he hoped Israel and Transjordan could reach agreement on administration of city and internationalization of holy places. Israel prepared if necessary challenge PCC's Jerusalem recommendations before GA.

4. Re refugees, Prime Minister repeated Sharett's arguments (Deptel 208) and insisted any repatriation program must be "integral part peace settlement. It must not precede nor follow peace". Israel's contribution to repatriation and resettlement must wait until Arabs no longer threaten resumption war because returning refugees now might welcome invaders. He argued GA December 11 resolve impliedly accepted this thesis and he insisted that Israel's answer on this point was unshakable.

In reply my argument that American and world public opinion was increasingly critical of Israel's position and that it should in own interest accept Dept's program of gradualism, Prime Minister replied: "I am fully aware public criticism but Israel too small make promises it cannot or does not intend to carry out. Israel right self-protection is paramount. Govt must insist irrespective criticism right defend country's existence. Not fair ask it jeopardize safety by repatriation now".

Comment: At present I see no prospect softening Israel's position refugees. Attitude Jerusalem and frontiers more promising. Hence it is fortunate PCC is pressing plans European conference. I hope Dept decides call regional conference heads of American missions (Embtel 259, April 3)² before Ethridge who strongly supports plan leaves this area.

McDONALD

² Not printed; in this message, for the attention of Mr. Satterthwaite, Ambassador McDonald suggested the "possibility regional conference preferably Rhodes while Bunche still there, of heads Missions Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, Amman, Tel Aviv, Jidda, Cairo and possibly Yemen. Attendance Ethridge also obvious advantage him and us, and your or Hare's presence as chairman would be most useful." (501.BB Palestine/4-349)

501.BB Palestine/4-849: Telegram

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

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 8, 1949—1 p. m.

272. In Old City yesterday encountered extreme bitterness and resentment among Palestine Arabs over signature Israel Transjordan armistice. Particularly angered over provisions in Article 6 for turning over to Jews area in triangle containing 16 villages and reportedly 35,000 inhabitants. Asserted villagers defended homes during entire period of conflict and saw no justification for surrender their lands.

Villagers reportedly begging Iraqis to stay and delegation sent Baghdad to plead case. Arabs scoffed at clause permitting villagers remain and stating Jews would not enter villages. Stated essential work surrounding lands to survive and many persons from Tulkarm and Qualqiliya also depend on lands to be given Jews. Pointed to fate villagers left in Faluja area when Egyptians withdrew alleging were terrorized by Jews and forced by physical violence to leave. Anticipated great majority Arabs in area would become refugees.

Open criticism of Transjordan and King Abdullah voiced. Stated in desire conclude immediate peace and obtain title to Arab areas in Pakistan [*Palestine*], King paid no heed to wishes or rights Palestine Arabs. Denied persons signing treaty had right to speak for Palestine Arabs or dispose their territory. US and UK assigned share of blame since failed give Abdullah concrete assurances assistance in event Jewish attack.

Abdullah Tel, Governor Old City, confirmed above feeling Palestine Arabs. Stated as adviser to King had warned him that cession territory in triangle most unwise politically and "would shake kingdom Transjordan". He refused associate himself officially with negotiations despite anger of King although did conduct Jewish officials to Shuneh. Stated that alleged compensation to Transjordan in Hebron area mere fiction since territory of no value and contained no "name" villages. Tel stated from military point of view could sympathize with demands Jews for improvement of lines in triangle. He urged they compensate by giving back villages in Ramle Ludda area (not towns) or Beitjibrin sector. This would enable King to show people concrete *quid pro quo* and offset adverse political reaction. Jews as usual refused to give anything not even village of Dawayima although this discussed for three hours.

Re Jerusalem Abdullah Tel maintained not intention Arabs exclude UN from Jerusalem discussions (Contel 266, April 5) through creation special committee. Said this undoubtedly desire of Jews but Arabs wished and realized needed assistance UN and PCC in Jerusalem settlement. Claimed would not accede to any further demands Jews in Jerusalem and was now time for Jews give something.

Re Syrian coup,¹ Abdullah Tel, who recently proceeded Damascus as emissary King Abdullah, stated revolt entirely internal against associates President Quwwatly who completely corrupt. Stated group surrounding President of Lebanon of same ilk and should watch step or might suffer similar fate. Asserted Iraq and Transjordan both supporting Zaim.

¹ The reference is to the coup by Col. Husni Zaim which overthrew the Government of Syria on March 30; see Secretary Acheson's memorandum of April 25 to President Truman, p. 1630.

From above conversations appears that Israel obtained its demands at cost further bitterness among Arab people and that in acquiescing King Abdullah also incurred public resentment. Only by risking strong popular opposition and possible upheavals can Arab leaders, regardless own wishes, agree to further Jewish demands without receiving real concessions in return. To obtain permanent peace treaties and even temporary stability in area essential find formula for forcing Israel to make concessions in accord with US policy as set forth by Jessup in speech November 20 and to comply with GA resolution December 11.

Sent Department 272, repeated Baghdad 22, Beirut 56, Damascus 19, Amman 21. Pouched Cairo, Jidda.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/4-949 : Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

JERUSALEM, April 9, 1949—10 a. m.

274. Palun 115. [From Ethridge.] On April 7, PCC had 2½ hour meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion and his aides. Discussion revolved around (1) general and specific instructions contained in GA resolution December 11; (2) Beirut meeting with Arab states; (3) date and place of further meeting between Arab states, Israel and PCC.

Discussion revealed, in general, that (1) Prime Minister was willing to send Israeli representatives to some neutral place such as Switzerland or Italy where Arab representatives would also be present for talks either separately or jointly and either through PCC or directly beginning April 26. Prime Minister would consult his government and give definite answer before April 12; (2) Prime Minister was unable to make any commitment regarding refugees prior to peace settlement during which question would be discussed and toward solution of which Israel would contribute what it could; (3) Prime Minister was unable to accept principle of internationalization of Jerusalem area as envisaged in paragraph 8 GA resolution December 11 and intended to argue case before GA in September. International supervision of holy places was acceptable.

Yalcin as PCC chairman opened discussion emphasizing PCC task under general instructions regarding conciliation and specific instructions regarding Jerusalem and refugees. Before Beirut meeting Arabs had wished to make talks with Israel contingent on prior solution for refugee question. At Beirut PCC had been able to persuade Arabs to continue talks at early date at neutral place without advance commitment regarding refugees. PCC had already requested Israel for conciliatory statement on refugees without result. Would Israel now be

willing to accept principle of repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation as stated in paragraph 11, GA resolution December 11?

Ben-Gurion replied it was not within Israel's competence to change GA instructions regarding Jerusalem and refugees. Instructions were matter entirely between GA and PCC. When GA considered PCC reports, Israel would be "on equal footing" to argue its case.

Ben-Gurion pointed out that paragraph 11, GA resolution December 11 specifically stated "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors". Ben-Gurion emphasized Arab states made war on Israel and that Palestine Arabs were invited by Arab states to fight Israel. Peace has not yet been achieved and it was not yet clear Arabs wished to live at peace. Israel was willing to contribute to solution of refugee problem. Such action would be in interest of justice and self-interest of Israel. It would depend, however on whether peaceful relations were established between Israel and Arab states.

Ben-Gurion continued GA decision on November 29 to internationalize Jerusalem was based on reasons no longer valid. UN had failed to protect Jerusalem in May, 1948. Destruction in Jerusalem had been caused by Arab states which defied UN. One hundred thousand Jews had been imperiled. Israel objects to decision of December 11 regarding internationalization and wishes to argue case before GA in September. Although PCC is bound by paragraph 8, GA resolution December 11, Israel does not accept. However, Israel accepts international supervision of holy places. Israel bases its attitude on (1) presence 100,000 Jews in Jerusalem and (2) significance of Jerusalem as capital city since David. Jerusalem is to Jews what Rome and Paris are to Italians and French respectively.

Yalcin replied regarding refugees it was not question between victor and vanquished but one of human rights. If Arab states were wrong they might be punished but not Arab people. Israel has always had world sympathy which has assisted Jews in reaching promised land. If Israel denies Arab rights, world opinion would be alienated. Israel should not, like Hitler, use methods incompatible with standards western civilization.

Ben-Gurion answered that Israel had been faithful to moral principles and reiterated Israel would make its contribution but that it depended on Arab states at time of peace settlement. Ben-Gurion emphatically denied Israel expelled any Arabs from Israeli territory and, with considerable emotion, stated creation of refugee problem was organized plan by Arab states or British or both. Mandatory power should be brought before some world court or morals [*sic*]. Even now propaganda campaign magnifying refugee problem from 500,000 to

800,000 was being waged by those who had instigated Arab war against Israel. Ben-Gurion contended resettlement of Arabs in Arab states would be more humane than in Israel. Repatriation and resettlement would be discussed at peace settlement at which time Israel would not forget humanitarian side of question.

Ethridge outlined development of Arab thinking during PCC tour of Near Eastern capitals and at Beirut during which PCC had emphasized unrealistic character of Arab position of refugees and necessity of considering question within framework of peace settlement. Arabs had made great concession by agreeing. Intermediate steps were now required. Refugee question was key to solution whole Palestine problem. Israel held key. Israel might now make conciliatory gesture which would be appreciated by Arab states and world. US government and people were concerned regarding refugees. Ethridge suggested Israel might take action regarding such subjects as continued flight of refugees from Israel as reported by representatives of refugee groups, deterioration Arab orange groves, blocking of Arab accounts and similar matters. Such action might mitigate problem. At same time PCC could help by investigating refugees on relief roles and determining whether nomads and others were unjustifiably obtaining relief.

Ben-Gurion replied any Israelis expelling Arabs would be punished. Any cases brought to Israeli attention by PCC would be investigated. On subject world opinion regarding refugees Ben-Gurion stated Israel was small and serious situation would arise if world opinion turned against Israel. Self-preservation, however, was more important. If refugee problem was considered before peace settlement and Arabs were repatriated Israel might be attacked; consequently Israel could not undertake any program before such settlement. Israel feared Arab states and not Arabs but, pending peace with Arab states, Arabs readmitted to Israel might become Arab Army. Ben-Gurion appreciated importance of contradicting PCC which represented great individual states and UN but it was question Israeli self-preservation.¹

Sent Department repeated Tel Aviv 29. [Ethridge.]

BURDETT

¹ Consul Burdett, on April 9, reported that "PCC this morning discussed Jerusalem question in light of Ben Gurion statement yesterday (re Palun 115). French delegate maintained that PCC should regard this as rejection GA resolution of December 11 and unacceptable to PCC. For this reason his delegate would not participate in further discussions this subject with Comay. PCC would proceed to draft detailed proposals in light its interpretation GA resolution. Ethridge argued that PCC should not present proposals to GA without having explored fully with parties concerned possible areas [of] agreement. Israel should not be in position to argue that proposals unacceptable because of lack consultation. Regardless position PCC he wanted Halderman consult with Comay. PCC agreed Halderman should do this and make results available for further work on detailed proposals." (Telegram 276, also identified as Palun 117, from Jerusalem, 501.BB Palestine/4-949)

501.BB Palestine/4-949: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

JERUSALEM, April 9, 1949—2 p. m.

278. Palun 119. Commission decided this morning to open further talks at Lausanne on April 26 providing adequate communication facilities available. Official decision will be taken April 12. USDel favored Rhodes but received no support from Jews, Arabs or colleagues in that viewpoint. Ethridge argued against commission leaving this part of the world and insisted upon inserting in summary record statement that it was mistake. Even those Arabs who had at first supported Rhodes withdrew support when Syrian coup came about. Arab press and radio are referring to Rhodes as island of shame. Jews flatly said they did not want to go there.

BURDETT

501.BB Palestine/4-1149

Mr. Mark F. Ethridge to the President

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 11, 1949.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: [Here follows one paragraph of personal observations.]

This is by far the toughest assignment you have ever given to me. The Arabs are shocked and stupefied by their defeat and have great bitterness toward the UN and the United States. The Jews are too close to the blood of their war and their narrow escape, as they regard it, from extinction, and too close to the bitterness of their fight against the British mandate to exercise any degree of statesmanship yet. They still feel too strongly that their security lies in military might instead of in good relations with their neighbors. That is fantastic, of course, for so small a country and I have tried to point out to them that by not making peace quickly they are endangering their own security by stimulating Arab irridentism, and the security of America and the Western World. In other words, the absence of peace plays into Russia's hands.

The Arabs have made what the Commission considers very great concessions; the Jews have made none so far. I appreciate greatly the help you have given along that line and will of course be grateful if you will keep the pressure up.

I am convinced that there is no sound solution to the refugee problem—that is, no solution that will not continue dangerous political agitation—short of the application of Point 4 of your inaugural message to the Middle East. I have been working with George McGhee, who was in charge for the State Department of the imple-

mentation of the Truman Doctrine. He was, as you know, sent out by the Department to look into the refugee situation. He and I are agreed on what we consider a sound approach. He returns to the United States next week and I have asked Mr. Acheson if he will not seek an appointment for him with you.

Again, thank you very much for your many evidences of kindness and confidence.

Sincerely yours,

MARK ETHRIDGE

867N.48/4-2149

*Memorandum of Conversation, Prepared Presumably by the First Secretary of Embassy in the United Kingdom (Jones)*¹

SECRET

[LONDON,] April 13, 1949.

Subject: Meeting re Arab Refugees

Participants: Mr. Michael R. Wright (Chairman), Asst Under-Secretary of State, British Foreign Office
 Mr. E. A. Berthoud, Foreign Office
 Mr. B. Boothby, Foreign Office
 Sir John Troutbeck (B.M.E.O., Cairo)
 Mr. Norman Young (British Treasury)
 Mr. J. Beith (Foreign Office)
 Mr. A. G. Maitland (Foreign Office)
 Miss C. Waterlow (Foreign Office)
 Mr. J. J. McCloy (President, International Bank)
 Mr. G. C. McGhee (Department of State)
 Mr. G. Lewis Jones (American Embassy, London)

The persons named above met in the Ambassadors' Waiting Room of the British Foreign Office on April 13.

Mr. Wright opened the meeting by saying that it was strictly informal and that just as he understood that everything said on the American side was subject to confirmation, so, too, everything said on the British side would have to be taken up with Mr. Bevin and was subject to his approval.

Wright said that Foreign Office information is that the total of refugees is now closer to 900,000 than to 800,000, and that we are all faced with the problem that present relief efforts will end next fall (December at the latest). He said that the UK is anxious to pass from the stage of relief to the stage of resettlement. The UK has

¹ Transmitted to the Department by London in despatch 702, April 21. The despatch noted that Mr. McGhee participated "in a series of conversations" regarding the Arab refugee problem and that the memorandum printed here recorded the most important of these conversations.

in mind a number of long-range plans for the social and economic betterment of the Middle East. He thought the necessity for these being implemented as quickly as possible is emphasized by the recent loss to the West of China. He said that the Middle Eastern countries have many problems not very different from those of China and that it would be tragic if for lack of attention from the US and the UK these countries should go the way of China.

An outstanding source of discord and infection in the Middle East, Wright said, is the presence of the 900,000 Arab refugees, who have an "unsettling" effect wherever they are located. The UK would like to marry its development plans with plans for the resettlement of the refugees.

Wright said that he would be frank: the UK is very "distressed" at the possibility that all aid to the refugees should be through United Nations channels. He did not think that the UN is a particularly efficient body for such work, and the UN approach might permit the USSR to obtain a foothold in the Middle East through participation in UN organizations. Also, in whatever form financial help was given, the major contribution would have to come from the UK and the US. Wright said that the UK fully realized, however, that the US has special problems and that in order to satisfy Congress US aid might have to take place under a UN or a PCC umbrella.

Wright said the Foreign Office has carefully examined all of the developments projects in the area and has selected three short-range schemes which they feel could be put into effect very quickly. "In order to show the way", the UK is unilaterally making a ten-year £1 million loan without interest to the TJ Government for a very simple scheme which would involve resettlement within the next year or two of between 40 and 60 thousand refugees.

The second plan favored by the Foreign Office is the Jordan Canal Plan which would cost £8 million for works and £8 for land purchase, and which would involve agreement between Israel and TJ. In four or five years the Jordan Canal Plan, it is estimated, could resettle more than 100,000 refugees.

The third plan which attracted the Foreign Office was the Gezira Scheme in Syria which, within a few years, could take care of another 100,000 refugees.

The potentialities of Iraq are great, but the works there are larger and more costly than those he had mentioned. Estimates show, however, that within six to ten years it might be possible to settle 200,000 refugees in Iraq.

Wright said that very germane to the refugee problem generally is whether Israel will permit a number of Arab refugees to return to their homes. He said UK policy is that Israel should either take the

refugees back or compensate them, but the UK realized that the chances of Israel following either course are extremely poor. How poor will depend upon the pressure which the US Government is prepared to exercise on Israel in this connection.

Wright said that the £1 million interest-free loan to Transjordan was a firm proposition. However, because of the financial position in which it finds itself, the UK will have to consider its financial participation in wider schemes very carefully.

Wright then asked for the views of Mr. McGhee.

McGhee said that the US is anxious to see the refugee problem settled and is willing to "do its part" in such a settlement. However, the US wished to avoid unilateral responsibility in this matter, and this would indicate the necessity for a UN or PCC facade.

McGhee said that he had just toured the various Arab States, had seen the refugees, and had seen the areas where they might at some future time be resettled. He had discussed the question exhaustively with Mr. Ethridge of the PCC and with a large number of officials working in the area. This had led him to adopt certain basic assumptions in working out the slow process of resettlement:

- (1) Number of refugees is about 700,000;
- (2) Repatriation of a certain number of refugees to Israel (he had in mind 200,000) is of the utmost importance, because such a gesture by Israel would go far to alter the attitudes of the Arab States who now flatly refuse to discuss the refugee question.
- (3) Transjordan, Syria and Iraq, in that order, offer the best opportunities for refugee resettlement; only token contributions could be expected from Lebanon and Egypt.
- (4) Resettlement of refugees is the Middle Eastern development program.
- (5) Re financial aspects it must be recognized that Point Four will be of use only for technical assistance; that in addition to foreign exchange, any program will require providing the local government with local currency; and that Arab States themselves can not be relied upon to make sacrifices to help with a problem not of their making.
- (6) Best approach to Arab Govts would be to stress the development aspect for their benefit and *not* to stress the refugee aspect. Nevertheless, the rise in the standard of living in each Arab country will be the index of its ability to absorb refugees. By the same token, so far as the US is concerned, emphasis on development may be a kind of Pandora's Box which might lead to a flood of demands from South American and other countries for extensive development programs.
- (7) Before the US can make any moves with regard to development and resettlement in the Arab countries, the US *must* have reasonable assurances that the Administration will have funds available for this purpose. To proceed without such assurances would be to risk letting the Arabs down and lowering US prestige disastrously.
- (8) The number of private and UN agencies involved in the refugee problem now and potentially are such that planning on an area basis

will be necessary in order to assure proper priorities between the various projects.

Mr. Wright then asked Mr. McCloy to speak.

McCloy said that the International Bank does not deal in relief matters; its sources of supply would immediately dry up if it tried to do so. The Bank must have reasonable prospects for repayment and "it takes a good deal of imagination to see such prospects in the Middle East."

One idea which had occurred to McCloy was exploring, as a possible factor which might tip the scales in favor of certain projects in the Middle East, the idea of a consortium of countries which would underwrite the Bank's loan. He suggested possibly the UK, US, and France. He admitted that there is no precedent for this in the US, but he did not think guaranteeing such a loan without appropriating funds would be improper for Congress if it chose to do so.

McCloy explained that the UN does not interfere with the Bank's business.

McCloy said that one factor inherent in Middle Eastern countries is that large scale foreign investment would almost inevitably have such an inflationary effect that it would frustrate the investment itself.

McCloy took up McGhee's idea of planning on an area basis and said that he hoped that this planning group would not produce another report. The World had too many such reports and he understood that another one from the Middle East is "on the fire" in the UN Secretariat. It was his thought that it was much better to build one small dam at a time rather than to embark on a grandiose five-year plan for the entire area.

Mr. Norman Young said that there was no sense in the UK loaning sterling to Iraq for local expenses when Iraq has large sterling sums at its disposal in London. He pointed out that on account of the British balance of payments position it would be extremely difficult for the UK to make further loans to the Middle East involving the provision of capital equipment goods on credit. The Treasury was, moreover, opposed in principle to lending for conversion into local currency since it was considered that this must inevitably result in inflation.

Sir John Troutbeck suggested that it might be possible to use the very large oil royalties now being accrued by the Persian Gulf Sheikdoms for regional development, since very little scope for such development exists within the Sheikdoms themselves.

McGhee then discussed attached "working paper" in detail.

At the end of McGhee's remarks, the Chairman said that he found the idea of using PCC as the UN facade very attractive. It had the advantage of being a going concern, to which UN has already given

broad responsibilities. He said that Mr. Bevin is extremely interested in the development of the Middle East and in the refugee problem and that, consequently, the Foreign Office would like to go over McGhee's working paper with Mr. Bevin. He was glad to note from a remark made earlier by McGhee that the US looked with favor upon the £1 million UK Pilot Project in Transjordan.

McCloy said that he did not like the idea of another special survey of Palestine. He said there are a number of active expert groups connected with the UN, including FAO, WHO, etc., who have funds and experts. He thought these agencies might be called upon to supply any technical advice required and that to his mind, in view of the work which has already been done on various ME projects, "a couple of engineers" would be enough.

Wright said the McGhee's idea was "selection" rather than "survey". He suggested that it amounted to a "small PCC working group".

Sir John Troutbeck said that he felt that there was a vital need for statistical information regarding all phases of the refugees. McGhee said this was a problem which he felt should be tackled at once and suggested that if the Foreign Office could name a suitable individual (such as Mr. Mills of the Colonial Office) he felt quite sure that the PCC would welcome an opportunity to avail itself of his services. He was going to look into the possibility of a similar expert being supplied from Washington.

The meeting ended with an expression of appreciation to McGhee for his lucid exposition of the problem. Wright said the Foreign Office would keep in touch with McGhee through the British Embassy in Washington and through Lewis Jones.²

[Here follows an account of the further telephone conversation between Mr. Jones and John Beith of the Eastern Department later the same day.]

² Attached to this memorandum was an undated working paper entitled "Proposed Plan of Action"; for the version of April 27, see p. 939.

501.BB Palestine/4-949: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Jerusalem

SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 13, 1949—11 a. m.

195. Unpal 76. [For Ethridge.] Re Palun 103, Mar 31¹ and 117, Apr. 9,² you are authorized discuss with other members PCC possibility expressing internal responsibility and concern for Holy Places in

¹ Identified also as telegram 161 from Beirut, not printed.

² Identified also as telegram 276 from Jerusalem, not printed, but see footnote 1, p. 904.

Jerusalem by means of Arab and Israeli trusteeships along lines outlined by Secy to Sharett as reported 2nd para Deptel 208, Apr. 6 to Tel Aviv.³

We have impression from Palun 117 that Fr position is unrealistic and that we must seek achieve minimum of internationalization of Jerusalem which will be possible of acceptance by both sides rather than to perfect intricate and logical plan which will have no basis in reality. You are authorized in conversation with Israeli officials to indicate that Sharett told Secy he personally found suggestions for trusteeship reasonable and worth further study, although he did not exclude possibility solution by direct agreement between Israel and Transjordan.

ACHESON

³ Not printed, but see footnote 2, p. 894; the second paragraph of the telegram is virtually a direct quotation of the sixth paragraph of Secretary Acheson's memorandum of conversation of April 5, p. 890.

501.BB Palestine/4-1349 : Telegram

Mr. Mark F. Ethridge to the Secretary of State

SECRET

JERUSALEM, April 13, 1949—1 p. m.

291. Palun 126. For the Secretary from Ethridge. Two days after Commission's talk with Ben-Gurion last week Lipschitz, one of three Israeli members of Jerusalem Committee set up in Foreign Office, called me and urgently asked to see me. Obvious his primary purpose was to arrange meetings here for Comay who seems to be second man at Foreign Office during Sharett's absence. Comay came to Jerusalem and talked with Halderman and Yenissey, Turkish member of Jerusalem Committee. Afterwards he had three-hour talk with me, during course of which he disclosed Israel's position on almost all matters under PCC consideration. Following is summary of Israeli views on primary questions:

Jerusalem: Comay said that Ben-Gurion had been angered by Yalcin's observation that Commission was bound by its terms of reference and question of full internationalization was not therefore debatable. Ben-Gurion had reacted more strongly than had been intended and had therefore over-stated Israel's position. Intent of Ben-Gurion's statement was that if Commission felt bound to propose full international regime in letter and spirit of resolution, Israel would be compelled to oppose in GA. It was not Ben-Gurion's intention to deny possibility of acceptable solution within resolution. He desired to correct PCC report which was sent to Lake Success and would write the Commission letter correcting impression left upon Commission.

Comay's main point was that Commission should strive to achieve plan acceptable to parties concerned, namely Israel, Transjordan (or other adjacent state) and UN. If Committee were to proceed without reference to states immediately concerned, product of its work would probably be unacceptable and would not contribute to solution of problem. He considered it possible to achieve plan which would be acceptable to all concerned. He was convinced that UN would accept plan containing more limited form of internationalization than might have been contemplated when resolution was adopted last December, provided plan were acceptable to parties concerned. Ben-Gurion, basis of his own extensive experience with UN here is convinced that GA would not only accept such plan, but would be extremely pleased to achieve settlement of problem.

Comay advised "month of masterly inactivity" while Transjordan and Israel try to work out through special committee agreement on Jerusalem. He thought there would be no difficulty about Jewish-Arab lines in Jerusalem since Israel would be willing to compensate for Arab expropriated property inside city. What Israel had proposed to Transjordan, in informal talks that seem to be going on now, is division of city into three zones: Jewish, Arab and international (Old City). Dayan told me later that Transjordan had shown reluctance to discuss any matters other than these strictly within armistice terms although Transjordan had previously evidenced willingness to effect opening of Bethlehem and Scopus roads and to deal with other technical matters preliminary to any peace settlement.

Comment: Ben-Gurion's strong reaction in which he virtually announced that Jerusalem would be capital of Israel did in fact create strong reaction in Commission. As reported previously, French and Turkish delegates refused to allow their members of Jerusalem Committee to meet formally with Comay for further explanations of Israeli position. For USDel I said that whether other members met or not I would instruct Halderman to do so and to explore with both sides and all parties concerned fullest possible area of agreement. Commission finally agreed that Halderman should represent Jerusalem Committee in talks with Comay and convey information to Commission. I told Comay that I did not of course consider that he had so far helped us toward a solution and I hoped he would continue his talks with Halderman and give us his full views. He promised to do so "a little later". I am sure what he has in mind is trying to work out a deal with Transjordan and present the Commission with written agreement, achieved perhaps in manner of Tulkarm agreement. Nevertheless, I am willing to consider any agreement that can be made between them although I am afraid it will give my French colleague apoplexy.

Comay has so far not even discussed anything substantive on Jerusalem. It is obvious from French plan previously reported that French will press for full internationalization including international force, special courts, distinct citizenship and special currency for Jerusalem. I consider that impossible and fantastic. I am afraid, however, that Turks will swallow it and that we may come to situation where there will be two reports to GA although I will do all I can to prevent it. Turkish attitude is not based so much upon any consuming passion for protection of holy places as upon distinct pro-Arab bias and upon, I fear, growing desire to put Israel in defensive position whenever possible perhaps a personal reaction to Israel's refusal to give at any point. My own position, I feel, accords with Department's and with my Contel 192, March 7.

It occurs to me Ankara may be giving Yalcin and Yenissey fairly free hand in this stage PCC work and that their reaction is largely personal. Yalcin, for example has consistently opposed Rhodes as meeting place and maneuvered for Geneva whereas Sarper, according to NY tel 450, April 3¹ did not think Turkey would object to Rhodes. PCC work on Jerusalem, refugees and other matters might proceed more smoothly if Department were able to instruct our Embassy Ankara to keep Turkish Government regularly informed of developments and to suggest importance of cooperation within PCC. French, although better informed re Palestine than Turks and having understandably more rigid position re Jerusalem may also have personal bias; consequently French understanding of US position might be improved through their Embassy. Washington views such as those reported Amman telegram 85, April 11² are case in point.

Refugees: Comay's position on refugees was pretty much as has been reported with few additions. He said that at low point there were about 70,000 Arabs in Israel-held territory but number has increased to about 130,000 through infiltration and through taking over of new territory, such as Tulkarm and in Beersheba area. Israel did not feel, therefore, that it could take many more. He asked if Commission had any figure in mind. I told him Commission had not discussed figure because it stuck to principle of resolution but that my own feeling was that since Israel had once accepted state with 400,000 Arabs in it she should be prepared to take back at least 250,000 refugees and compensate others. He said it was completely impossible, that Israel was deterred at moment from reducing her immigration quota of Jews only by sentiment and political dynamite. On any practical basis, he

¹ Not printed. Selim Sarper was Turkish Representative at the United Nations.

² This was a repeat to Jerusalem of Amman's telegram 160 to the Department, not printed.

added, immigration would certainly have to be cut because adequate employment, housing and services were not being provided for those who are coming in and Israel could not possibly double her burden in next two years. Later in conversation he said that it was probable that total number of Arabs in Israeli territory might reach 200,000 eventually through infiltration and "our taking a token number". Aside from economic burden, Israel determined not to have any fifth column inside its lines particularly if faced by stronger Arab state backed by major power.

Comment: It is obvious that Israel has not changed position on refugee problem whatever. Israeli Cabinet yesterday considered memorandum of suggestions from Commission as to steps that might be taken now to mitigate plight of refugees and also proposal of statement by Ben-Gurion clarifying Israeli position and mollifying Arab sentiment. No word has come from that meeting. Israel does not intend to take back one refugee more than she is forced to take and she does not intend to compensate any directly if she can avoid it. Ben-Gurion and Comay have both argued that refugees are inevitable result of war and no state in modern history has been expected to repatriate them. Both cite Baltic states and Turkey. They contend also that number greatly exaggerated and they can prove it. Israel refuses to accept any responsibility whatever for creation of refugees. I flatly told Ben-Gurion and Comay that while Commission was no tribunal to judge truth of contentions, I could not for moment accept that statement in face of Jaffa, Deir Yassein, Haifa and all reports that come to us from refugee organizations that new refugees are being created every day by repression and terrorism such as now being reported from Haifa. I have repeatedly pointed out political weakness and brutality of their position on refugees but it has made little impression. They are aware that world sentiment is being roused to some extent by plight of Arab refugees but they contend they are being subject to calumnies and vicious propaganda. I have answered that they are master propagandists of world and that if Arabs had tenth the genius at it they would rouse public opinion to where it would engulf Israel in wave of indignation, particularly in view of fact that world has so greatly helped Israel to come into being. They don't admit that world has helped. Comay told me that but for US intervention at wrong time (apparently with proposal for second truce) Israel would be at Jordan. "And," he added, "she needs space".

Territorial Settlements: Comay said that there will be little difficulty with Lebanon or Syria and "only minor local adjustments of border on a give-and-take basis to increase our security" will be sug-

gested. He thought either Lebanon or Egypt might be first to sign peace agreement. Israel, he said, has no territorial claims on Egypt and he did not think Egypt would make any on Israel. Settlement of Gaza strip, he thought, would be between Transjordan and Egypt rather than between Israel and Egypt.

As to Transjordan, Comay said that Abdullah had advanced idea of port on Mediterranean with corridor across Negeb but Israel had no intention of giving up Negeb or allowing it to be cut in half. He felt that something could be worked out to give Transjordan guaranteed access to some port, either Gaza or one further north. Any arrangement with Transjordan would depend upon the position of Arab Palestine. He repeated that if Arab Palestine were to fall to Transjordan, which he considers inevitable, a "new situation" would arise in which Israel would have to give greater consideration to her security. That would involve not giving up any territory in Samaria but of getting more by going to the Samaritan foothills. Tulkarm, for instance, would sooner or later have to become Jewish. It would also increase security, importance of Western Galilee which Israel intended to hold in any case.

Comay did not feel that Abdullah would have any great reluctance to give up more of Arab Palestine because, he argued, "He is getting a bonus out of the war by additional territory and more population". Comay insisted that Israel would not sign any peace with Transjordan that envisioned extension of British-Transjordan treaty to Arab Palestine. He said there has been mention of federation of Transjordan and Arab Palestine.

Comay thought that in southern Arab bulge, the armistice lines would pretty well hold.

Comment: Israel's position as to Gaza strip is, I believe, that she does not want it with 330,000 Arabs in it, 230,000 of them refugees, particularly since she has back country upon which they have been living. She is probably content at the moment to let it wither. That is also true as to Tulkarm. Palestine Arabs with whom I have talked say that armistice clause not only created thousands of new refugees in that they will eventually be driven out of villages that were given up but that it was the death sentence of Tulkarm, which has lived on rich land that Abdullah surrendered. Palestine Arabs are bitter with Abdullah, Britain and US. They contend that our inactivity amounted to pressure upon Abdullah to sign.

It is obvious from Comay's statement of Israel's territorial claims that she is in direct contravention of US policy. When I told Comay that he was certainly aware that President and Secretary had only recently reaffirmed to Sharret US views on territorial settlement he replied, "yes, but we hope to change Washington's mind".

General Comment: In spite of all Department has done since January, Israel has stiffened rather than modified her position. Armistice talks emphasized Arab weakness because, as Bunche told me, Israel gave at no point and Arabs gave at every point where concession was necessary. Israel intends to exploit that weakness to the maximum.

Again it seems to me that Israeli position has brought into question whole US policy as to Palestine. One matter of concern is that unfair arrangements sponsored by UN and approved by US would have serious repercussions in Middle East and tend to discredit US, besides providing good basis for exploitation by unfriendly powers.

[ETHRIDGE]

Editorial Note

On April 13, King Abdullah handed a message to Stabler, the Chargé in Transjordan, with the request that it be transmitted to President Truman. In the message the King stated that the confiscation of Arab property in Jewish-occupied areas was against the principles of international law. Noting that a year had elapsed since the Arabs fled their lands, and that their financial condition had worsened, he requested President Truman to exercise his personal influence towards restoration of the property and assets of the Arab refugees. King Abdullah stated his belief that efforts to relieve their condition, which could be made through the International Red Cross and other channels, would be the basic step towards solving the problem of the refugees and toward facilitating the peace talks which were about to begin.

The King's message to President Truman was transmitted to the Department by Amman in telegram 162, April 13, 3 p. m. (867N.00/4-1349)

867N.01/4-1349: Telegram

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

SECRET

AMMAN, April 13, 1949—4 p. m.

163. During conversation this morning King made following comments:

1. He trusted Israel would abide by armistice agreement and would not take any further aggressive action. He believed Israelis were trying to work with him to obtain peace but hoped US, as friend both parties, would use its influence to bring about just settlement. He regarded last paragraph President's message March 28 (Deptel 38,

March 28¹) as guarantee against breach armistice agreement by Israel. I pointed out US Government would be prepared make strong representation to either side attempting such breach.

2. Transjordan would send delegation to PCC meeting at Lausanne composed of Transjordians and Palestine Arabs with latter in majority. However, he believed that any meeting in which all Arab states took part would not result in progress toward peace. Peace settlement between Transjordan and Israel would be reached in direct talks held in this area. He said Transjordan would be willing commence such talks irrespective attitude other Arab states, for Transjordan which had entered war with others, now left alone in Palestine. He reiterated desire for outlet to sea and thought that with six outlets on Palestine coast Mediterranean Sea [Transjordan] should be given one.

3. As British had pressed him so much regarding relations between Transjordan and Egypt, he had agreed to Prime Minister undertaking talks with Egyptian Government. But he believed Farouk remained hostile and regarded latter's message to Zaim regarding necessity for retaining Republic in Syria as directed toward Transjordan and himself. Egyptian forces in Bethlehem-Hebron still of [are] fomenting unrest that area and if they are [not?] withdrawn as promised upon return from Cairo of Prime Minister, they might have to be removed forcibly.

4. Situation in Samaria now quiet notwithstanding efforts junior Iraqi officers to excite disorders. Has appointed Lt. Colonel Mohammed Mayta (formerly Commander 6th Legion Regiment Old City) as Military Commander with orders take strong action to suppress further disorders. Transjordan has now assumed full responsibility for law and order that area and determined to maintain it.²

Pouched Arab capitals and London.

STABLER

¹ See footnote 1, p. 878.

² Chargé Stabler, on April 15, advised that on the previous day Ahmad Khalil, appointed Governor of the Samaria District; Naim Tougan, appointed Governor of the Hebron District; and Ahmad Tougan, a prominent resident of Nablus, called on him at their request. "They indicated that while there was still bitterness and resentment over Transjordan-Israel armistice, it was on wane and that Palestine Arabs wished settle Palestine problems soonest. Only solution was settlement based on partition and on unification Arab Palestine and Transjordan. . . . They considered that acceptance partition principle at Lausanne might make settlement with Israel easier to achieve. . . . This group considered it was entirely possible that Transjordan and Israel could and would establish friendly relations and that at future date exchange diplomatic representatives would take place. . . . Khalil and others inquired whether US would support Arab acceptance of partition principle and would exert pressure on Israel to reach settlement on this basis. While making no specific comment I indicated that adoption reasonable and practical attitude on problem would make early settlement Palestine question more possible and stated policy of US Government on final territorial settlement." (Telegram 165 from Amman, 867N.01/4-1549) Mr. Stabler's message noted that all three of his visitors were Palestinian Arabs.