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2478/1026/65

No. 7.
(1/28/49).

SECRET

British Consulate-General,
Jerusalem.

February 8th. 1949.

S E C R E T.

Sir,

I received by the last bag a copy of Sir John Troutbeck's secret despatch No. 2 of January 24th, in paragraph 13 of which my comments were invited. I am including these with some reflections of my own in this present despatch.

2. It would seem that while we and the United States are agreed on the necessity of resisting the spread of communist influence and infiltration into the Middle East, there is a fundamental difference in conceptions as to how this can and should be done. There is danger that these differences in method may conflict so seriously that co-operation between us and the United States may become impossible and our common object of halting the progress of communism will not be achieved.

3. I suggest that we have too readily assumed that recent official American backing of the Zionist case has been principally due to anxiety to secure Jewish votes, and partly to general inexperience and ineptitude in dealing with Middle East problems. Nor is the American attitude based, as Sir John Troutbeck suggests, largely on wishful thinking. There is serious purpose and policy behind it. America genuinely believes that a Jewish State in the Middle East is likely to prove a stronger bulwark against Communism than can be formed out of the Arab States, and it is worth while to consider in some detail the grounds on which this opinion is based.

4. The positive arguments in favour of the American attitude appear to be:-

(a). The Jews are a Western-looking rather than an Eastern-looking people, and their whole economy depends on the flow of capital from the West, and on technical progress and development on Western lines. America does not believe that the Jewish State will go Communist; but that the trend is the other way. Here it may be noted that, in the recent elections, MAPAM which is a party deeply rooted in the Yishuv, and looking to the Soviet Union for support, only received about 15% of the votes as compared with the 25% which the parties now united in MAPAM got in the 1946 elections to the World Zionist Congress;

(b). America has herself been amazingly successful in assimilating great numbers of immigrants, largely from Eastern Europe, turning them within a generation into loyal and efficient Americans. She is confident that the large leaven of Westernized Jews already in Palestine can leaven the whole lump.

/ Page. 2....

His Majesty's Principal
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office,
London.

(c). America is not perturbed by the fact that large numbers of Jewish emigrants into Palestine are now coming from Eastern communist countries. Since the Jews are the only race that are being allowed to emigrate from Communist-controlled countries, it is at least possible that they are being allowed to go because the Soviet finds them too difficult to assimilate, and the usual methods of liquidation are, for the time being, inappropriate. Some support for this view is given by the fact that, as far as can be ascertained here, the vast majority of the Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe belong to the middle classes, whose existence has been made particularly difficult by the Communists. In the recent elections for the Constituent Assembly, the way they would vote was the main unknown factor, and an analysis of the votes cast now makes it clear that they supported neither the Communists nor MAPAM.

5. America not only has faith in her own pro-Jewish policy, but looks with distrust on our efforts to consolidate an Arab bloc in the Middle East as a barrier to the advance of Communism. The arguments are;:-

(a). The present war has shewn that, even under the sharpest stimulus, the Arab States will not effectively co-operate with one another. This point does not need much elaboration. The strong individualism of the Arabs, which has seemed to us a safeguard against Communism, also operates to prevent union amongst themselves. The Arab League is rent by jarring jealousies; no individual state takes seriously any resolution of the League with which it disagrees; the various Arab armies have refused to co-operate in spite of resolutions enjoining unity of command. It is not too much to say that any Arab country has received with a certain mild satisfaction the reverses experienced by any other.

(b). Under the present autocratic or oligarchic governments in power in the Arab States, it is impossible to push on their economic development on modern lines. But without such development, even if they remain well-disposed to the Western bloc, their value as allies is much impaired. Here distance separating hostile groups is becoming, with the development of air and mechanical transport, a factor of less and less importance in warfare. What is important is the common determination of a people and its government.

(c). The poverty to which the bulk of the population are condemned by the general outlook of their rulers, and the lack of opportunity for the middle classes and intelligensia, combine to make a fertile field for the spread of Communism. The "pathetic contentment" of the masses in Eastern countries which so moved the late Mr. E. S. Montague, has now been replaced by a smouldering resentment of their lot in life, and agrarian discontent and an unemployed educated class create a situation which is full of potential danger. The progress of Communism among a population to which the present system of government in Arab countries denies the hope of betterment may be extremely rapid. The danger may to some extent be guaged by the fact that in the recent elections in Palestine for the Constituent Assembly, the

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Communists secured an absolute majority of 50.0% in the purely Arab district of Nazareth. Throughout Israel, the Communists polled only about 3.5% of the total vote, and of this nearly one half came from the Arab electors who formed less than 10% of the electorate. Some 23.2% of the total Arab vote is said to have been Communist. These are significant figures, especially when we consider the possibility (which Nazareth has already illustrated) that, if the Jews continue to be on bad terms with their Arab neighbours, they may easily see their own advantage in permitting Israel to become the seed-bed for Arab Communism throughout the Middle East.

(d). The United Kingdom has, and will probably continue to have, a Socialist Government. Is it likely that the average socialist Member of Parliament will continue to support a policy in the Middle East which, as he sees it, continues to bolster up despotic or narrow oligarchic governments which supress popular movements in their own countries? No doubt our object is not the support of absolutism, but the encouragement of development schemes for the benefit of the whole population. But such schemes are likely to be thwarted by the selfishness and incompetence of the rulers. They will not willingly accept outside control or even guidance, and without this, financial assistance given to them is bound to be misapplied.

6. The Americans have, therefore, solid arguments for their view that there is a greater danger of Communism making headway in the Arab States than in Israel. It is not a view that I entirely accept, and I have only attempted to marshal the arguments. But what is important for both the United States and the United Kingdom is to work out a concerted policy to ensure that neither the Jewish nor the Arab States go communistic. We shall need, in the case of hostilities with the Soviet countries, to be assured of the goodwill of both. We have to break down the American conviction that the development of the Arab States is hopeless, and to associate them with us in plans for the development of their resources on modern lines. At the same time we must make it clear that we are not hostile to the creation of a strong and viable Jewish State. This means, in the first instance, our mutual devotion to the task of promoting neighbourly relations between Israel and the contiguous Arab States. I am less pessimistic than Sir John Troutbeck as to the possibilities of this being done within a very short period of years. Already in India, and in spite of the open war in Kashmir, the bitterness between Hindu and Moslem is much less than it was two years ago, and both in India and in Pakistan they are finding it possible to live side by side in peace and quietness. It is doubtful whether the division between Jew and Arab goes as deep as that between Hindu and Moslem: there is far less blood spilt between them, and they are not so antithetic in religion. It is an encouraging sign that the Jews have throughout expressed themselves as ready, in principle at least, to give compensation for Arab property which they retain, for, as Machiavelli has truly pointed out that "a man soener forgiveth the death of his father than the loss of his patrimony."

7. A further point about which Sir John Troutbeck expresses apprehension is the expansionist ambitions of the Jewish State. There is no doubt that these are a very serious danger. At one of the meetings of the Commonwealth representatives during the recent U.N.O. session in Paris, Sir Zafrulla Khan, who is perhaps the ablest Muslim statesman alive today, gave a most impressive exposition of this danger. He held that whatever boundaries were fixed for Israel today, the solution could not be permanent, and that for many years to come, the

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would be constant Jewish pressure for wider and wider limits. It is well-known that important organised sections of Jewish political opinion regard expansion beyond the present limits not as a future ideal but as a matter for immediate demand. It is clear, too, that America, in its distrust of efficiency of Arab co-operation, will be inclined to sympathize with and support this demand. Mr. Lovett (see telegram 247 from Washington to Foreign Office) goes so far as to say that our policy of "containing" the Israelis even at the risk of permanently estranging them, is unrealistic, and that the Americans are not prepared to support it.

8. This statement of Mr. Lovett seems to beg the question whether the policy of containing the Israelis, by which presumably is meant the fixation of definitive boundaries between Israel and the Arab States as a result of the present negotiations, is likely to mean permanent estrangement of the Jews. There seems reasonable ground for believing that the present dominant party in Israel do not want to extend the territory which they have at present occupied. The more responsible Jews are talking in terms of a million or a million and a half immigrants spread over a period of ten years; it is not an impossible figure for their present territory to absorb, and it is also possible that the stream of emigrants will dry up before that figure is reached.

9. The reply to Jewish expansionist claims is Arab irredentism, and each encourages the other. It would seem absolutely necessary that we and the United States should be determined, and should express our determination, to resist both. So far as we are concerned, it should be made quite clear that the Anglo-Transjordan treaty will be extended to cover the Arab areas of Palestine. This would prevent a war of aggression on the part of the Jews, who are well aware that if they did attack they would be defeated. So far as America is concerned, it is most necessary that she should abandon the view to which Mr. Lovett has given expression. The most positive discouragement which America could offer to Jewish expansion in the Middle East would be the reopening of Jewish immigration into America. This may not at the moment be a very practicable suggestion, but things change, and one disadvantage has to be weighed against another. It is understood that the late President Roseveldt was prepared to reopen Jewish immigration into America on a considerable scale as an outlet for D.Ps in Europe, but was at that time opposed by the Zionists, who realized that it would have been fatal to their propaganda for immigration into Palestine. Once a settlement of the Palestine boundaries has been made, moderate Zionists would take a less intransigeant attitude towards any such proposal.

10. Fears are also expressed that, owing to waning interest in a settled problem and to disgust with extravagant Jewish demands, American financial support to Israel may dry up, with the result that the Jewish State will not be viable. Economic collapse might then lead to a communistic 'putsch' in Israel. It seems to me that excessive immigration is a greater danger to the viability of the Jewish State than the lack of outside financial backing, and would become likely to lead to economic collapse. The Israeli Government will be quick to realise this and to regulate immigration accordingly, provided it is made quite clear to them that they could not only count on American support, but would meet active Anglo-American resistance, in any attempt to extend their boundaries further at the expense of Arab States.

11. Lastly, there is perhaps an underlying assumption in Sir John Troutbeck's despatch that, while we must continue to support the Arabs, we can only influence the Jews through the Americans. I am optimistic enough to believe that we shall soon

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find we have more influence with the Jews in Tel Aviv than have the Americans. We are still the major power in the Middle East and have far more experience in dealing with both Arabs and Jews. We may not at the moment be particularly popular with either, but both recognize that our policy has, on the whole, been consistent, and present Arab resentment against us is tempered by growing realisation that they would now be better off had they been governed by our advice. But it is unlikely that the United States can be trusted to pursue a consistent policy, uninfluenced by American Jewry on the one hand or by the anti-Jewish feelings of the average American on the other. With our greater knowledge, objectiveness and diplomatic skill, I am confident that we shall obtain greater influence with the Jews in Tel Aviv than will the Americans, and that this can take place without any abandonment of our primary aims of supporting and strengthening the Arab States.

12. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives at Washington, Cairo, Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda and Amman and to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York and the British Middle East Office.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient, humble Servant,

Consul General
Dow

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British Legation,
BEIRUT.

No. 22.
(2/229/49).

February 16th, 1949.

SECRET AND GUARD.

Sir,

In his despatch No. 2 (31/38/1G) of January 24th, in which he commented on Mr. Lovett's views on Anglo-American relations with Israel and the Arab States, Sir John Troutbeck was good enough to invite me among others to express my views on the problems raised. I have some hesitation in doing so. In the first place, as I am, if I may say so, in entire agreement with Sir John Troutbeck's analysis of the situation in the Middle East resulting from the emergence of Israel, and also with his proposals for meeting it, my contribution may involve little that has not already been said. Secondly, the problems involved go so far beyond my province, the Lebanon, that it is with diffidence that I offer any comments. Nevertheless, I am encouraged to do so by the obviously vital importance of the issues raised and the effect which Anglo-American policy will inevitably have on all Middle East countries including the Lebanon.

2. Mr. Lovett's statement that the United States Government stood firmly by the agreed Anglo-American policy for the Middle East and that our differences are limited to the application of that policy to the Negeb is encouraging. If this were in fact the case, there might, in spite of the importance of the Negeb and the difficulty of reaching agreement with the American Government regarding it, be grounds for optimism. It seems to me, however, judging by the general tenor of the Washington telegrams to which Sir J. Troutbeck referred in his despatch, that the differences may be more fundamental and may extend to the whole question of approach to Middle East problems. The United States position as regards the Negeb is that almost the whole area should in principle go to Israel but that any solution which could be worked out by the parties concerned would be acceptable to the United States Government. Thus on the immediate problem of the Palestine settlement United States views are clear and definite. On the subject of the Middle East as a whole, on the other hand, their views appear to be extremely vague. Indeed, I would go so far as to suggest that they are based on little else than wishes and hopes or, at best, speculation. Mr. Lovett stated that he believed that a settlement (of the Palestine question) would have some chance of enduring and would offer the possibility of an early re-establishment of good relations between the parties concerned, which in turn would provide the best chance of safeguarding our common strategic interests.

3. Mr. Lovett explained that American support for the Jewish claim to the Negeb was based on oft-repeated declarations that the United States Government stood by the Assembly Resolution of November 1947. It is strange that he should not have referred to the Bernadotte Plan, which, in exchange for Galilee, gave the Negeb to the Arabs and which, Mr. Marshall had publicly announced, had the

/support ...

The Right Honourable Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
Foreign Office,
LONDON, S.W. 1.

From Mr. Houston Boswall

support of the United States Government. As regards the Security Council Resolutions of November and December, 1948, Mr. Lovett argued that it was not right to treat them in isolation from the whole picture of events since November, 1947, and in particular the Arab invasion of Palestine. It should be noted, however, that in Arab eyes their action in sending their armed forces into Palestine was less of an "invasion" than Jewish immigration had been for a quarter of a century, and the Arabs would contend, with considerable justification, the question should be viewed not merely against the background of one year but of twenty-five years. The American dismissal off-hand of British strategic requirements in the Negeb is also unconvincing. As Sir John Troutbeck points out, there is no guarantee that Israel can be orientated towards the West - the best that can be hoped for judging by public statements by the Israelite Government would appear to be neutrality, supposing such immunity to be possible. The case therefore for the inclusion in a State in treaty relations with His Majesty's Government of strategic roads in the Negeb - a point which appears to have escaped the attention of Mr. Lovett - is a strong one. And yet Mr. Truman said the Negeb "was a small area not worth differing over" and then appears inconsequentially to have been almost intransigent about it.

4. That the United States Government should appear to appreciate the importance of the Arab States as regards the general Anglo-American position in the Middle East would perhaps be encouraging but for Mr. Lovett's suggestion that any settlement of the Palestine question can be expected to lead to the establishment of good relations between the Jews and the Arabs and thus guarantee our strategic requirements. During twenty-five years His Majesty's Government spared no effort in the exercise of their Palestine Mandate to bring the Jews and Arabs together, but without success, and there is no reason to believe that what proved unattainable in Palestine is likely to be obtained against the background of the whole Middle East. Surely the prospects of a Middle East settlement satisfactory to ourselves and to the Americans must depend to a very large extent on the nature of the Palestine settlement. As you yourself, Sir, stated in the House of Commons on January 26th, "little will be gained if a settlement is made which is so manifestly unacceptable to one of the parties that all its energies are devoted for years to come to undoing it". In fact, the world is now confronted with the consequences of a settlement imposed by force - reluctance to be responsible for which and the conviction that the Palestine question was an insuperable obstacle to the satisfactory understanding with the Arab States which was a necessary preliminary to a common Middle East defence system were among the reasons which led His Majesty's Government to give up the Mandate. It is in fact hard to avoid the conclusion that in making the Western orientation of Israel the major problem, the State Department have mistaken the part for the whole. The major problem is surely that the entire Middle East area should be stable and well disposed towards us and not merely Israel. There seems to me a grave danger that efforts to make Israel look West might drive the Arab States to look East and turn them into the arms of the Russians. In any case I do not foresee success for any Middle Eastern policy based primarily on friendship and support for Israel at the expense of the Arabs. Furthermore, the very existence of Israel is a denial of justice to the Arabs.

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5. It is perhaps noteworthy that Mr. Lovett considers that the establishment of good relations between Jews and Arabs is our best chance of safeguarding our strategic interests. The question may perhaps be asked what are our other chances, should the establishment of such good relations prove, as suggested above, to be impracticable. The extension of Jewish influence (which, as Sir John Troutbeck points out, might be inevitable for other reasons) the establishment of a Christian Lebanon, the domination of Saudi-Arabia through dollar imperialism and the isolation of Egypt might possibly serve to maintain the Anglo-American position in the Middle East. It would be ruthless and "real" but if it worked it might be justified on grounds of necessity. The only other alternative which occurs to me is the establishment of authoritarian Governments in a number of Arab countries and the elimination of the present Nationalists and of the quasi-democratic form of government on which they rely for their influence. It is significant that only where authoritarian rule is established, i.e. Transjordan and Saudi-Arabia, has it proved possible for a realist policy to be adopted vis-à-vis Israel, though perhaps selfish would be the better epithet in the case of Saudi-Arabia. This would in all probability mean the setting up of dictatorships in the States of the Fertile Crescent and a return of the Middle East to the age of colonisation, this time by world Jewry and international oil interests. It is hard to believe that such an eventuality could be seriously contemplated and it is equally hard to avoid the conclusion that the United States Government have been blinded by the military successes of Israel and possibly also by their own (British stimulated) diplomatic successes at Tel Aviv and Cairo to which Mr. Lovett refers with obvious self-satisfaction. Now that the Rhodes talks have dragged on for over a month with little apparent success, it is possible that the State Department is less confident, and in any case it cannot be denied that their representations in Tel Aviv were primarily due to British pressure in Washington, and the Egyptian decision to negotiate with the Jews was the result not so much of United States diplomatic pressure as of the hopelessness of their military situation and their reluctance to invoke the Anglo-Egyptian treaty. It is to be hoped that the effect of Israel's victories on American opinion will with time wear off and that in consequence American approach to the Middle East as a whole will become more objective. Middle East policy based on Israel (as a sort of Tobruk) would inevitably fail, much as the French failed to maintain their position in the Middle East from a base in a Christian Lebanon.

6. That Israel has given proof of an at least superficial dynamism and vigour cannot be denied. It should not be forgotten, however, that but for assistance received from abroad after the conclusion of the first truce the issue of the fighting might have been different and Jewish dynamism brought to a standstill. Moreover, as Sir John Troutbeck has pointed out, the viability of Israel is a matter of considerable doubt. The poorness of its soil, its lack of raw materials and the high wages obtaining there make it uncertain whether Israel can ever hold its own as an industrial or agricultural country on purely economic grounds apart from the possibility of Arab boycotts. Even in the commercial and financial fields it remains to be seen whether the Jews can compete with the Levantine merchants and bankers of, for example, Beirut. It may be that Israel will be able to carry on as a subsidised State. How

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long Jewry will go on paying the subsidies as an act of charity cannot be foreseen and whether it will be worth while for the United States Government to continue to do so when the virtual impossibility of basing a Middle East policy on Israel becomes apparent is also doubtful.

7. So much for the problem as it appears to me. As regards remedies, Sir John Troutbeck has suggested three courses of action. As far as I can see, there are no alternatives and in what follows I do not propose to do much more than elaborate on them. Firstly the need for firmness in dealing with Israel. I venture to suggest that this proposition has a corollary, namely firmness in dealing with the United States Government on questions affecting the Middle East. It is surely significant that on the one occasion when His Majesty's Government made it clear that they were determined to take independent action, i.e. in connexion with the Jewish violation of the Egyptian frontier, the United States Government lost no time in making representations at Tel Aviv and in restraining Israel. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the United States Government will only take an objective line as far as Palestine is concerned when Jewish pressure on it is countered by some other pressure. Secondly, every effort should be made to demonstrate to the United States Government the very real danger of Israel extending its sovereignty or influence widely over the Middle East. The vagueness of Mr. Lovett's views (to which reference has already been made) on the question of approach to the whole Middle East problem as contrasted with the more limited question of Israel, perhaps hold out some hope that we may succeed. But I submit that our arguments might prove more effective if His Majesty's Government could see their way resolutely to avoid committing themselves to anything that might be interpreted as a pro-Israel policy. Thirdly, every effort must be made to strengthen the Arab States. This will be necessary whether or not the United States Government can be weaned from their policy of virtually basing their Middle East policy on Israel. Our object would be twofold - to enable the Arabs to resist Jewish pressure and/or aggression and thus establish an equilibrium in the Middle East, and secondly, to re-establish Arab confidence in the West, now rudely shaken, so as to permit the whole Middle East area and not only Israel to look to the democracies. When the question of means whereby this can be achieved is considered it should be remembered that during the recent struggle the Arabs have suffered not only militarily but also morally. Their armies have been defeated or, owing to lack of ammunition, have been fought to a standstill. These setbacks could presumably be made good by the supply of military equipment and training facilities. At the same time assistance will clearly be needed in the economic field. But on the moral side the remedy is not so easy. The confidence of the Arabs in themselves, in each other and in their friends has been severely shaken and Arab unity undermined. The Arab Governments and peoples will need to be treated with much understanding and sympathy. And in particular they should not be given the impression that because they are weak they are to become mere pawns or counters and that their interests are sacrificed to those of others, Jews, Americans, Italians, French, Turks or even British. The process of Balkanisation to which, Sir, you referred in your recent speech in the House of Commons will have to be firmly resisted. Two examples might be quoted - the return of the Italians to Tripolitania or of French military powers in the Levant States. The support given by His Majesty's Government to the idea of

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Arab unity has gained us much sympathy in the Arab and Moslem worlds, and I submit that if we continue to stand by them in their present difficulties and at the same time spare no effort to ensure that Arab unity is given the right direction, we shall be laying the foundations for a sound Middle East policy.

8. In my despatch No. 128 of August 21st, 1947, on the subject of Anglo-American co-operation in the Middle East, I suggested that our object should be to secure that the United States Government should underwrite our policy in this area and that the division of the Middle East into British and American zones of influence should be resisted. Two years ago a unified policy for the whole Middle East planned by His Majesty's Government and backed by the United States Government, which would have ensured that the whole area would have been stable and well disposed, appeared feasible. Owing to the Palestine question, however, and our differences with the Americans on that issue, it could not be realised and to-day these differences appear to have been intensified and to be no longer confined to Palestine but to look as if they might extend to the whole problem of the Middle East. It may still be possible to induce the United States Government to adopt a more objective attitude towards Israel and towards other countries, but if not, it may be necessary for His Majesty's Government to pursue what for the want of a better term might be called an Arab policy while the United States Government follow a Zionist policy. As it is almost certain that neither we nor the Americans can be friends with both the Jews and the Arabs at the same time, an effort should be made to reach agreement with the United States Government that the Americans should be responsible for the Western orientation of the Israel of their own creation and that it should be His Majesty's Government's responsibility to see that the Arab States continue to follow a democratic policy. It must be admitted that apart from other obvious difficulties, such an arrangement would approximate to a system of zones of influence in the Middle East which it was hoped could be avoided. It has this merit, however, that since Palestine, at least for the time being, is lost to the Arab world, the division would not extend to Arab countries and that Arab unity would be preserved. It might be that Israel and possibly the United States Government might make efforts to include the Lebanon and possibly the Alaouite area in the Zionist American zone of influence. Christian fanaticism in the Lebanon and the Separatist movement in the Alaouite district together with the probable increase in American influence in both areas, as a result of the establishment of pipeline termini and refineries, would facilitate the realisation of such a project - a project which would have as a result the inclusion in an American zone of the periphery States, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon and Israel, leaving the Arab hinterland as a British zone of influence. Such a development would, I feel, be most unfortunate in that it would cut across the current of Arab unity which has been running with increasing strength for a hundred years and which paradoxically started its course in Christian Lebanon. This danger might however be avoided by Anglo-American agreement based on a frank and objective appreciation of the whole Middle East position.

/9.

From Mr. Hoston Boswall

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives at Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Jedda, Damascus and Amman, to the Head of the British Middle East Office and to His Majesty's Consul-General at Jerusalem.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

Mathew Lumley Sonnenwall

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2480

TOP SECRET

No. 126

G2/218/49

BRITISH EMBASSY,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

17th February 1949.

Sir,

E 3518/1026/65

I have read with great interest Sir John Troutbeck's despatch No. 2 (31/38/1G) of the 24th January about Anglo-American relations with Israel and the Arabs. At this distance from the scene my comments must relate chiefly to the views and probable attitude of the United States Government which are, of course, only one factor in this difficult situation.

2. While it is true that in my conversations with him Mr. Lovett laid stress upon the dynamic character of the State of Israel as a fact to be reckoned with and that the recent actions of the United States Government have all too often tended to favour the Jews to the serious detriment of American (and British) relations with the Arabs, it can, I think, safely be said that the restoration of good relations with the Arabs is still an important objective of United States policy. Mr. Lovett referred to the talks of fifteen months ago as still being "the Bible", and no practical results from these would be conceivable if Arab friendship were allowed to go completely by the board.

3. Mr. Lovett's remarks to me were made in the context of a particular problem; they related to developments within Palestine on which the United States view differed from our own, and his thesis was, as reported in my telegram No. 247 of the 13th January, that a policy of containing Israel within a relatively small part of Palestine, with the object of securing for the Arabs certain areas in its southern portion, might in the end be disadvantageous, both because of its effect upon Israeli relations with the West and because of the small value which any facilities in the South would have if Israel were ill-disposed towards us. But this does not invalidate Sir John Troutbeck's comments in para 3 of his despatch. Both the President and Mr. Lovett were primarily concerned with the immediate situation and it is probably true that little thought has yet been given by the United States

/Government

The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.
etc., etc.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

Government to the very real dangers and difficulties in the more distant future to which Sir John Troutbeck draws attention.

4. Such indications as I have of United States policy lead me to believe that the United States Government would oppose by all available diplomatic means any attempt on the part of the Israelis to expand outside their frontiers, once the parties had reached agreement on those frontiers and the settlement had been endorsed by the United Nations. The State Department have often stressed the advantage of Israeli admission into the United Nations since this would subject Israel to all the obligations of membership - see the penultimate sentence of my telegram No. 673 of the 2nd February. Moreover, with United States recognition of Transjordan, the United States Government has now entered into formal relations with all the Arab states, thus recognising the frontiers which they respectively have now, or may have after a Palestine settlement. I do not therefore believe that, once the frontiers of Israel had been established, the United States Government would readily give way to the temptation mentioned in paragraph 10 of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch, and support further Israeli expansion at Arab expense. The sharp United States reaction to the Jewish incursion into Egypt is perhaps relevant in this connexion. We have heard through State Department sources that the President now feels that he need be less responsive to domestic Zionist pressure and that he has been irritated by certain recent events such as the second Israeli incursion into Egypt after he had received an assurance that all Israeli troops were being withdrawn from Egyptian soil in deference to United States representations about the first incursion. Lastly, the United States Government still think as we do about the general strategic picture in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East and about the need for stability in all the countries in that area.

5. In paragraphs 6 to 9 of his despatch, Sir John Troutbeck discusses the questions of viability, immigration and Communism. From what the State Department have told us, the United States mission at Tel Aviv does not regard Communism in Israel as a serious menace at the present time (though it must be remembered that the United States representative at Tel Aviv is a strong supporter of Zionism). Dr. McDonald's estimate is that Communism holds little attraction for the Israelis, although some

/ of them

of them recognise that arms supplies would not have been available from Czechoslovakia without Soviet consent. There is, he says, no real proletariat and every effort is being devoted to the establishment of the new state. The Israeli authorities are doing their best to ensure that Soviet agents do not slip in amongst immigrants from Eastern Europe, although some undoubtedly do manage to get through. The great majority of the immigrants will be aware of the supersession of Zionist leaders by Communist stooges in the Jewish communities in Roumania, for example; they have had their fill of totalitarian government and they are aware that, whatever encouragement the Soviet Government has given to the establishment of a Jewish state, Soviet propaganda describes Israel as bourgeois, and the Soviet Government is at bottom hostile to Zionism. But even if this estimate be true - and Dr. McDonald indeed admits that future developments in Israel may alter the situation, which therefore requires close watching - that is, I agree, far from constituting an assurance that Israel will look to the West and, as Sir John Troutbeck remarks, the Israeli Government has made a point in its statements of policy of asserting that it seeks to remain neutral.

6. There will of course be a limit to the number of Jews who seek to enter Israel (there will be very few from the United States), but the proportion of young people is high and with the advantage of a good medical service, the birth rate also is likely to be high. This may well lead to an expansionist policy and will certainly increase the demand on outside assistance. I am inclined to agree with Mr. Griffis' remark reported in paragraph 8 of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch, that, once the drama is taken out of the Palestine question, contributions from American Jewry will fall off. Last year's target of the United Jewish Appeal here, which was $170 million, fell short of the mark by some $20 million. This year the large sum of $250 million is being asked for and it is being made clear in the United Jewish Appeal's campaign that the whole amount is urgently required for development in Israel, irrespective of any loans which may be granted. The cost of living is still high in this country and despite the strong-arm tactics being employed in some parts of the United States to extract money from Jews, it is hard to believe that the pace can be kept up. As regards loans, thirty-five million dollars have, as you know, already been granted by the Export-Import Bank and a further sixty-five million have been allocated. I think it possible that additional loans may be forthcoming, but in so far as the Export-Import Bank is concerned, some assurance will be needed that its loans can be serviced.

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7. I also agree with Mr. Griffis' estimate (paragraph 11 of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch) that the pro-Jewish trend, which at present prevails in the United States, cannot be considered permanent. Anti-Semitism is strong in this country and it seems to be increasing. It is certainly fairly prevalent in Congress. Many Americans are irritated by the stridency of Zionist propaganda and this irritation might well come into the open as an influence on American policy if the policy of the State of Israel appeared to be leading to international difficulties or to constitute a clear threat to United States strategic or economic interests in the Middle East. The part played by American Zionism in influencing United States policy in favour of the creation of Israel would, in such circumstances, be remembered.

8. But on the whole I would agree that developments in the United States affecting Israel might well contribute to the dangers which Sir John Troutbeck foresees; and I would also agree that the United States Administration has not really looked into the more distant future. The State Department, and probably the United States National Defence Establishment, are conscious of these dangers, but the Administration as a whole has concentrated upon the immediate issues affecting the establishment of a Jewish State as a result of the Zionist and humanitarian pressure exerted upon it. There is perhaps too great a readiness to suppose, as Sir John Troutbeck suggests, that common business interests and a desire for United States assistance on the part of the Arabs, whose governments are considered mercenary and inclined to corruption, will rapidly dispel the bitterness which has been caused. I therefore welcome the suggestion made in paragraph 14 of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch that the whole situation should be discussed with the United States Government. The parallel conclusions reached fifteen months ago clearly need revision in the light of recent developments. Whilst the necessity of assistance to the Arab States is even more urgent if some of the sting is to be taken out of their defeat, permanent provision made for the Arab refugees and a boost given to Arab morale, it is also essential if our common interests are to be safeguarded, that the United States Government should urge moderation and the need for good relations with the Arabs upon the Israelis and that it be made clear to the Arabs that the United States Government will now join His Majesty's Government in fully recognising and protecting Arab interests against threats from whatever quarter.

9. The Palestine issue, as was indeed recognised fifteen months ago, has proved a most serious handicap to our plans. Our relations, and even more United States relations, with the Arabs will have to be built up afresh. A start might, for example, be made, if you considered this useful and practicable, with the attachment of some American experts to the British Middle East Office, in order to facilitate

the/

the coordination of a programme of assistance and advice in the field, and to induce in the United States Government a greater awareness of the practical problems which have to be faced with all their ramifications. But beyond that it will be necessary for both of us to think the situation out together again. We shall need to review the conclusions reached in 1947 and to consider in what respects they call for revision if a common Anglo-American policy over the whole field is to be not only established but also carried into practical effect.

10. The time may well be approaching when such a common policy is possible of achievement. But we shall need to choose our time with care. I doubt whether any proposal on our part for such talks would commend itself to the State Department or, if agreed by them, be likely to produce results so long as the prospects of a Palestine settlement remained as doubtful as they are at present. As you know, the United States Government are now taking the line that the parties and the United Nations Conciliation Commission must be left as free as possible to try to work out whatever settlement can be found. So long as that remains their position they would be apt to regard with reserve any proposals for comprehensive talks and would be reluctant to commit themselves at all clearly if the talks were held. But so soon as a settlement appears to be in sight, I should recommend that we lose no time in proposing a further frank exchange of views over the whole field.

11. In view of the reference which I have made in this despatch to the 1947 discussions, I am not sending copies to the recipients of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch under reference.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

Oliver Franks.

SECRET.
GUARD. (44)
G. 6/43/49.

2505

BRITISH EMBASSY,
BAGDAD.

15th February, 1949.

Sir,

I have the honour to offer the following brief comments on Sir J. Troutbeck's despatch No. 2(31/38/1G) of 24th January, with which I find myself in complete agreement.

2. Sir J. Troutbeck has demonstrated the element of wishful thinking in the Middle East policy of the United States Government and it is probable that a more realistic appreciation will prevail in Washington once the emotions aroused by Israel's fight for life have subsided. America's oil interests in Arab countries should prove a powerful ally to realism. Our interest therefore appears to lie in holding the position as far as possible until America begins to understand that Israel is not going to be as amenable to United States influence as is now thought, and that encouragement of Israeli expansion policies will be most dangerous to the stability of the Middle East. Our information is that all the United States representatives in the Middle East have warned the State Department of the dangers of present American policy in regard to Palestine.

3. In Iraq there is real fear of Israeli expansion and action to strengthen the Arabs, as suggested in Sir J. Troutbeck's paragraph 15, would have a powerful effect in moderating the present feeling of insecurity. Three steps seem to be required, if we are to strengthen the Arabs and restore their confidence in their ability to contain Israel: first, the early delimitation of Israel's frontiers, secondly the resumption of supplies of arms under our Treaties with Iraq and Egypt, and thirdly, in co-operation with the United States, the economic development of the Arab countries.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble servant.

Henry B. Mack

Sir Henry B. Mack

The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
etc., etc., etc.

SECRET.

3157/1026 25 E

No. 18
88/30/49.

British Legation,
Damascus.

25th February, 1949.

Sir,

In his despatch No. 2 (31/38/1G) of the 24th January to you Sir John Troutbeck has suggested that H.M.Representatives in Arab countries may have some views on the questions which he has put forward with regard to the future of Israel.

2. As I see it, there are two main questions to be considered in this connexion, (1) the extent to which the State of Israel is likely to be a centre of Communism in the Middle East, (2) the eventual territorial ambitions of Israel in this area. It is true that the Syrians make great play of the Communist danger, but I am inclined to think that they have deliberately played up that aspect to the extent which they have in order to frighten the Western Powers. I do not, of course, pretend that that danger does not exist but if the Syrians were really sincere about it, it is hard to believe that they would be so complacent about the possibility of a Communist menace in Syria itself. I cannot help thinking that what is really frightening the Syrians to-day is the possibility of Jewish territorial expansion at the expense of Syria and it may well be that they are not too happy about the ability or the desire of the Lebanese to defend themselves against Jewish encroachment. In this connexion there seems to be some significance in the fact that, although the Syrian Army is not at present capable of taking offensive action, steps are being taken at this stage of the Palestine problem to increase the size of the Armed forces. This does not, of course, mean that on a short term basis the Syrians will refuse to enter into a modus vivendi with Israel whereby some form of economic relations will be established; but I feel sure that the suspicion of ultimate Jewish intentions will remain and that, for that reason, military precautions will be taken.

3. I see that in paragraph 11 of the despatch it is stated that "it has been a common criticism of the Jews that they have never known where to stop". This is not at all as I see the situation, for it seems to me that throughout the various negotiations of the past year the Jews have known exactly how far they could go and get away with it. The Syrians are also well aware of this and attribute it to Jewish ramifications in every country of the world - and, of course, also to their influence in a great number of them. Indeed I would go so far as to say that, taking all in all, this is, in the eyes of the Syrians, one of the most important aspects of the Jewish menace in the future.

4. I naturally agree with what Sir J. Troutbeck says in paragraph 15 about not jeopardising the assets we already hold in the Arab world. Indeed, even if it is decided that our strategic interests in Syria are of small account the existence of oil pipe lines will surely make such a policy a selfish interest. But all these considerations will doubtless figure in the review of Anglo-Syrian relations which you have promised me in your telegram No. 92 of the 8th February and I will not elaborate on them here.

/ I am ...

Broadmead

Mr. Broadmead

The Right Honourable Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
etc.,etc.,etc.,
Foreign Office,
LONDON, S.W.1.

I am copying this despatch to H.M.Representatives at Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Jedda, Amman, Jerusalem, United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations New York, and to the British Middle East Office.

I have the honour to be
with the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient, humble Servant,

P. M. Broadmead

EASTERN
GENERAL

E 3223 /G 27

E 3223/1026/65G

Sir H. Dow
Jerusalem
195
10 - 3 - 49
11 - 3 - 49

Record of conversation with Mr. Etheridge about President Truman's Middle East policy.

Last Paper.
E 2480

References.
E 3177/1016/31G
E 2478/1026/65

(Minutes.)

Sir H. Dow's despatch referred to within is attached (E. 2479/1026/65). Unfortunately the B.M.E.O. Despatch (No 2) to which it in turn refers reached the Inward Reg room, but never reached C.D. Another copy has been asked for.

Laurence Mitchell.
12:iii

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)
Reported to Washington

I expect that Mr. Burrows may wish to be aware of the existence of these papers. It has not been possible to submit them because they depend on a despatch No. 2 from Sir John Troutbeck which disappeared between Opening Branch and Classification Branch. British Middle East Office have been asked to provide another copy for us to work on, and until that is received, the papers cannot be fully considered. They raise very important issues of a long term character.

J G S Beith
Mr. J. G. S. BEITH
14/3/49

Pp. now submitted
HB Mar 22

(Action completed.)	(Index.)
24/3	14/2/50

Next Paper.

26513 F.O.P.

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on]

Cypher/OTP POLITICAL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

FROM JERUSALEM TO FOREIGN OFFICE

E 3223

Sir H. Dow.
No.195 D.12.10 p.m. 10th March, 1949
10th March, 1949 R. 1.15 p.m. 10th March, 1949

Repeated to Washington
B.M.E.O. (Cairo)
Cairo Saving
Bagdad Saving
Beirut Saving
Damascus Saving
Jedda Saving
Amman Saving.

IMPORTANT
TOP SECRET
LIGHT

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No.195 of 10th March, repeated for information to Washington, B.M.E.O. (Cairo) and Saving to Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda and Amman.

My telegram No.192 last sentence.

I probed Etheridge on lines of my despatch No.7. His reaction was instantaneous and frank.

2. His Majesty's Government had gravely misjudged President Truman's pro-Zionist policy by attributing it to internal political exigencies. The President had followed the same line after his re-election although he had failed to carry the State of New York, with its four million out of the six million Jews in the country, from the conviction that the Zionist's claim that an independent Israeli State was just. On the other hand becuase his support of Israel was based on the moral principle he was just as ready to oppose Israeli expantionist designs. Here Mr. Etheridge referred to the President's veto on Mr. [illegible] attendance at the meeting of Jewish Constituent Assembly in Jerusalem (Washington telegram No.819). Moreover, the President as a progressive, in which character he had been re-elected by the American people and "a great internationalist" took a serious view of the unjust social conditions prevailing in the Arab States and a further consideration was his determination to win the cold war with His Majesty's Government's aid or without.

3. In view of

TOP SECRET

Jerusalem telegram No.195 to F.O.

- 2 -

3. In view of the President's attitude Anglo American co-operation in the Middle East was impossible on basis of maintenance in power at all costs of reactionary Arab régimes and rulers, whether by His Majesty's Government or American oil interests, merely because they were useful tools in power politics. The United States Government had learned their lesson from the China debacle. Etheridge, who stated that he had discussed Communism at great length with President Truman before leaving, said that the President's appreciation of Soviet policy was that the Middle East had for some time been scheduled as their next objective. Their untimely success in China had found them unprepared to exploit its results, but they would not on that account defer their planned programme in Egypt and Iraq where Communist pressure was now developing. If the Soviet got these two countries they had the Middle East. We could only work together if our policy was one which would raise the standard of living of the Arab masses and so decrease the danger of Communism. Here we pointed out to Mr. Etheridge that the only way rapidly to raise the standard of living of the great masses was by dictatorial regimes and little could be expected from Arab parliamentarians and I think he took the point.

4. It appears to me that the Americans generally under-estimate the practical difficulties of insisting that Arab absolutisms shall be [gp. undec.], and of encouraging popular movements without playing into the hands of Communism. Although they themselves lack the background experience to suggest how development can be rapidly made effective, they incline to attribute our own slow progress to unwillingness or lack of interest. They see the poverty of the Arabs of Transjordan and Saudi Arabia without being able to judge the improvement which has been taking place under Abdullah and Ibn Saud. Also their admiration of Israeli material success and the rapidity with which it has been achieved, blinds them to the cost in human misery at which this has been attained. Present poverty and disorganisation of Arab Palestine is the obverse of the protection of life and property.

Foreign Office please pass Important to Washington as my telegram No.16.

[Repeated Important to Washington].

K K L

31

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E 3346

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

No. 18(17/80/49)
CONFIDENTIAL

10th March, 1949.

Sir,

I have read with interest Sir John Troutbeck's despatch to you No.2(31/38/IG) of January 24th last about British policy in the Middle East, with particular reference to the State of Israel, and also Sir Hugh Dow's despatch No. 7 of February 8th - E2478 containing his comments and reflections on this subject.

2. I would certainly not disagree with what seem to me to be the two main conclusions of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch, namely,

(a) that for both political and economic reasons Israel is likely, unless restrained, to be an expansionist and disturbing element in the Middle East; and

(b) that, while doing our best to bring about friendly relations between Israel on the one hand and ourselves and the Arabs on the other, our primary interest lies in preserving our own friendship with the Arab States on account of their strategic position and oil deposits.

3. It seems to me important, however, that in applying these principles to the problem of our relations with Israel we should not ignore what may be called the climate of United Nations opinion in regard to the Palestine question, by which our policy is bound to be influenced to some extent and on which I would offer the following reflections.

4. In the first place, the majority of Delegations to the United Nations who have no particular stake in the Arab-Jewish quarrel are very far from writing off the State of Israel as -

/to borrow.....

The Right Honourable Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

to borrow Sir John Troutbeck's phrase - a mere "Zionist adventure"; and this holds good whether the matter is looked at from a legal or a practical point of view. To take first of all the legal aspect: there is, after all, some truth in Israel's claim to be the only State, with the possible exception of Southern Korea, which has been formally constituted by the United Nations, viz. in the unrescinded General Assembly resolution of November 29th, 1947. The United Nations, for its part, can point to Palestine as a case in which, for once in a way, its efforts at constructive statesmanship were not thwarted by discord between the two major Powers, but have borne fruit in the emergence of a new and prospectively viable State from the ruins of a bankrupt political experiment.

5. Much has been said in the past about the pressure brought to bear on Delegations in November 1947 in order to bring about the resolution which the Israeli Government regard, not without justice, as a certificate of the historical legitimacy of their State. But it is possible to push this argument too far. In the first place, any vote in a democratic body such as the United Nations Assembly is the outcome of mutual pressures and concessions which, whatever their interest as background, do not invalidate the decision actually reached. We ourselves have experienced to our vexation the effect of the contrary thesis, when Soviet delegate after Soviet delegate in the United Nations has decried this or that decision of the Assembly or the Security Council, e.g. in regard to Greece or Korea, on the ground that the representatives on those bodies are puppets who reflect, not the desires of the "broad masses" of the world or even of their own Governments, but those of "ruling circles" and "governing quarters" in the United States and the United Kingdom.

6. But a more important consideration in assessing the weight of Assembly opinion in the Palestine question is the fact that, in my belief, the majority of Delegations, including particularly those members of the British Commonwealth who voted throughout in favour of partition, did conscientiously try to rise to the level of the problem and to arrive at a solution in the light of broad historical necessities. Such Delegations regard the State of Israel,

/rightly or.....

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

rightly or wrongly, as the heir of a three-thousand-year-old tradition which, interrupted but not extinguished by centuries of misfortune, was again, in the form of Zionism, given tangible reality by the Balfour Declaration and which subsequently acquired irresistible practical and sentimental force from the Nazi persecutions and the convulsions of the second World War. They contend, moreover, that this belief has been vindicated by the achievements, both political and military, during its first few months of revival, of a State which (to quote from the opening paragraph of Sir John Troutbeck's despatch) "possesses a vigour and vitality unmatched by any other State in the Middle East", and by the fact that its deadliest enemies apparently concede its right and ability to live.

7. As regards the Arabs, on the other hand, I think it is true to say that the United Nations as a whole has been unfavourably impressed by their military and diplomatic inoptitude and still more by their attempt, in defiance of the Assembly's will, to crush the State of Israel at birth. That attempt could, of course, be defended by legal niceties arising out of the unique status of Palestine on the termination of the Mandate and the fact that resolutions of the Assembly are not legally binding. But it remains true that the Arab military adventure which began in May 1948 is, to say the least, difficult to square with the moral authority of the United Nations Assembly or with the spirit of the Charter. This point has, perhaps, been thrown into greater relief by the history of the Indonesian question, where the Security Council did not hesitate to interpose its aegis for the protection of a Republic whose title to be regarded as an independent member of the international community was, if anything, more disputable than that of Israel.

8. It is, I submit, against the background of these considerations that we should interpret Sir John Troutbeck's reference to "appeasing" the Israelis and to the necessity if peace is to be secured in the Middle East, for them to renounce extremist ambitions. There is, after all, surely a corresponding necessity for the Arabs to renounce their dream of extinguishing the Jewish State by force of arms - a necessity which, it may be hoped, has now been recognised by

/the Arab.....

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

the Arab leaders and which is corroborated by His Majesty's Government's de facto recognition of Israel.

9. I do not, of course, suggest that United Nations opinion in this matter, if I have correctly assessed it, is necessarily infallible or immutable; nor do I intend to imply that we are obliged to pay exclusive regard to it in shaping our own policies. But inasmuch as His Majesty's Government have declared support of the United Nations to be the overriding principle of their foreign policy, our credit and even perhaps our influence in United Nations councils is likely to suffer if we fail to take into due account the trend of opinion in the Organisation.

10. In this context, some comment is perhaps called for on our recent abstention in the Security Council on the admission of Israel to the United Nations, though it is too early to give any detailed or accurate estimate of its effects. It may, I suppose, have given some gratification to the Arab States, although the Egyptian delegate in the Council argued that we ought to have applied our veto. There may well - despite the arguments to which I have referred above - be other members of the United Nations, and indeed of the Security Council, who harbour inner doubts as to the wisdom of committing themselves so far, and with what may prove to have been undue haste, to the admission of a State whose past record, during its brief period of existence, is far from being unblemished and whose future behaviour is by no means certain to accord with the canons of propriety. If the day should come when some will regret their hurry in climbing on to the Israeli band-wagon, in the unusual wake of the United States and the Soviet Union forging ahead together, there may be wider realisation than there probably now is that the abstention of the United Kingdom was prompted by justified caution with regard to Israel's qualifications and intentions, and by a desire to ensure respect on the part of this applicant for the principles of the United Nations Charter. As things are, however, our abstention seems likely to be interpreted by many as indicating adherence to an unfavourable attitude towards Israel, in which the de facto recognition of its

/Government....

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

Government by His Majesty's Government had seemed to betoken some change. The trouble-makers will, of course, not be slow to make all the capital they can out of our solitary abstention, which can moreover hardly fail to give the impression that differences persist between us and the United States.

11. It is, no doubt, the part of dignity for a Great Power, with a deep sense of its responsibilities to the United Nations, to avoid any appearance of climbing on to bandwagons, especially when that Power has not only major interests in, but also an unrivalled experience of, the troubled area through which the vehicle must make its way. That part we have played by abstaining in the Security Council on Israel's admission. Nevertheless, as I have sought to indicate in the earlier paragraphs of this despatch, I believe that the weight of opinion amongst the members of the United Nations in favour of the full recognition of a State which, if not the creation of the United Nations alone is, in the firm opinion of the majority, an inevitable and justifiable revival, derives from broad historical and practical considerations. That opinion is not likely to change unless there are further blatant violations of the Charter and of United Nations resolutions on the part of Israel; and I should think there is a strong feeling among most members of the Security Council, at least, that Israel may behave, or may be induced to behave, with more propriety as a member of the United Nations, with the obligations as well as the privileges of membership. This, as we know, is the view of the United States Government. I feel, therefore, that in framing our future policy with regard to Israel and the question of its admission to the United Nations, we cannot afford to ignore this weight of opinion. Similarly, it would be less than honest to ignore the judgment of numerous observers, both inside and outside the United Nations, who consider that the role of Israel vis à vis the Arabs has - at any rate hitherto - been essentially defensive within the framework of the Assembly resolution of November 1947, and that there has been an element of "special pleading" in our own public assessment of the respective guilt of the two parties.

12/ So much for the.....

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

12. So much for the United Nations aspect of the situation discussed by Sir John Troutbeck and Sir Hugh Dow, with which I am primarily concerned. Conditions in the Middle East have so greatly changed during the two and a half years which have passed since I served there, that I hesitate to express opinions on other aspects of the Middle Eastern problem, referred to by Sir John Troutbeck and Sir Hugh Dow, which are not strictly within my purview. In venturing the following observations, I trust that I may be excused by all concerned.

13. Sir Hugh Dow will no doubt report on the effect of our abstention on Anglo-Israeli relations, about which the Israeli representative here has expressed concern. In this connection I have noted with particular interest the views put forward in the final paragraph of Sir Hugh Dow's despatch in support of his belief that "we shall soon find we have more influence with the Jews in Tel Aviv than have the Americans". However that may be, I share his opinion that we and the Americans should devote ourselves to the task of promoting neighbourly relations between Israel and the Arab States.

14. The question which formed the point of departure of Sir John Troutbeck's argument, namely, that of the United States attitude towards Israel, is one on which, no doubt His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington will comment. But as far as can be seen from this post, there is no reason to doubt that United States policy, if influenced in no small degree by vote-catching preoccupations, has been dictated in the main by a belief on the part of the United States Government and people that, in giving their blessing to the new State, they have acted in accordance with their conceptions of justice, with their innate urge to help young nations on the road towards freedom and self-development, with their declared policy of supporting United Nations decisions, and with the practical realities of the Middle Eastern situation.

15. I would endorse Sir Hugh Dow's view that "the reply to Jewish expansionist claims is Arab irredentism and that each encourages the other", and that it is of vital importance that the United Kingdom and the United States should firmly

/resist both.....

United Kingdom Delegation
to the United Nations,
New York.

resist both. I have also read with much interest the fifth and sixth paragraphs of Sir Hugh Dow's despatch, in which he discusses the reasons why the United States looks with distrust on our efforts to consolidate an Arab bloc in the Middle East as a barrier to the advance of Communism. Even if the danger of Communism making headway in the Arab States be no greater than it is in Israel, the menace has for some time past seemed, in my humble opinion, to be sufficiently serious to warrant every effort on our part to associate the Americans with ourselves in plans for combating it. I therefore subscribe to Sir Hugh Dow's recommendation that we should endeavour to overcome the reluctance of the United States to participate in schemes for developing Arab resources on modern lines. I am aware of the efforts which we ourselves have made to this end and of the difficulties which we have encountered because of Arab nationalism, exclusiveness, and xenophobia as well as the character of the Arab Governments. It may be hoped that Egypt's agreement to the proposals with regard to the Nile waters and the statement concerning Anglo-Egyptian relations, which Khashaba Pasha is reported in the press to have made soon after his return to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are signs of better things to come.

16. The "viability" of Israel is a matter on which I am not competent to pronounce; but I would hazard a personal guess that the flow of money from the United States may not dry up so soon as Sir John Troutbeck's more knowledgeable informants predict.

17. I am sending copies of this despatch to Sir John Troutbeck, to H.M. Ambassador at Washington and to His Majesty's Representatives at Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, Amman and Jerusalem.

I have the honour to be
with the highest respect,
Sir,
your most obedient, humble Servant

Terence Shone

TOP SECRET *Copy No.* 59

E 6145/1026/65

POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL

Mr. Bevin to Sir J. Troutbeck, Cairo

(No. 154. Top Secret) *Foreign Office,*
Sir, *20th May,* 1949

I have received and read with interest your despatch No. 2 of 24th January concerning the State Department's views on Anglo-American relations with Israel, and I have now been able to consider also the comments on this despatch which I have received from other missions.

2. His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington has pointed out in a despatch which has not been circulated to other posts that in the conversations between himself and Mr. Lovett on 12th January the United States Government were primarily concerned with the particular problem of Palestine, and he agrees that they were not on that occasion looking beyond this problem to the very real dangers and difficulties in the more distant future to which you drew attention. Such indications as Sir Oliver Franks has of United States policy lead him to believe that the United States Government would oppose by all available diplomatic means any attempt on the part of the Israelis to expand outside their frontiers, once the parties had reached agreement on these frontiers and the settlement had been endorsed by the United Nations. There were signs that the United States Government might in the future be less responsive to domestic Zionist pressure and they still held similar views to our own about the general strategic picture in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East and about the need for stability in all the countries in that area.

3. Sir Oliver Franks is inclined to agree with the views expressed to you by Mr. Griffiths that the collection of funds in the United States for Israel may begin to fall off once "the drama is taken out of the Palestine question" and that the pro-Jewish trend which at present prevails in the United States cannot be considered permanent. He also agrees that the Administration have not given careful thought to the dangers and difficulties which the injection of Israel into the Middle East will cause, and he welcomes your suggestion that the whole situation should be discussed with the United States Government. He throws out the suggestion that some American experts might be attached to the British Middle East Office in order to facilitate the co-ordination of a programme of assistance and advice in the field, and to induce in the United States Government a greater awareness of the practical problems which have to be faced with all their ramifications. The concluding paragraph of Sir Oliver Franks's despatch, referring to the desirability of concerting Anglo-United States policy in the Middle East runs as follows:—

> "The time may well be approaching when such a common policy is possible of achievement. But we shall need to choose our time with care. I doubt whether any proposal on our part for such talks would commend itself to the State Department or, if agreed by them, be likely to produce results so long as the prospects of a Palestine settlement remained as doubtful as they are at present. As you know, the United States Government are now taking the line that the parties and the United Nations Conciliation Commission must be left as free as possible to try to work out whatever settlement can be found. So long as that remains their position they would be apt to regard with reserve any proposals for comprehensive talks and would be reluctant to commit themselves at all clearly if the talks were held. But so soon as a settlement appears to be in sight, I should recommend that we lose no time in proposing a frank exchange of views over the whole field."

4. I shall be glad of your comments on the proposal for the attachment of American experts to the British Middle East Office. As regards the possibility of an exchange of views with the United States Government, we have already begun to discuss certain aspects of the future of our Middle East policy with the Americans in the course of conversations with Mr. McGhee of the State Department and with

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Mr. McCloy of the International Bank (a member of the staff of the United States Embassy being present at the latter discussion) on future policy with regard to Arab refugees and on general questions of economic development. I hope that these discussions will be actively continued. As regards the more general exchange of views mentioned by Sir Oliver Franks, I agree with him that the time has probably not yet come for this, but we should constantly bear in mind the desirability of having such an exchange at the earliest convenient time.

5. Final conclusions on the policy to be adopted with regard to Arab–Israeli relations in the framework of the general Anglo-American policy for the Middle East will only appear as a result of an exchange of views with the United States Government of the kind proposed above. Meanwhile it may be useful to set out here the following provisional conclusions and considerations which have suggested themselves to us as the most important of those on which such final conclusions will be based.

6. Our general objective must be to have cordial and intimate relations with all the States of the Middle East including the Arab States and Israel, to see them formally joined to the Western group of States opposed to Soviet aggression and infiltration and co-operating among themselves so as to promote stability and prosperity of the Middle East area as a whole. Some of the obstacles to the achievement of this objective are the present Israeli policy of neutrality as between East and West, the excessively bad relations existing and likely to exist for some time between Israel and the Arab States, the possibility of Israeli territorial or economic expansion, the disunity of the Arab States and their extremely low social and economic standards. It must be our aim to remove as many as possible of these obstacles. Israel's position as between East and West will depend largely on the play of internal political forces which we shall not, at any rate to begin with, be able to influence except in the most indirect manner. We may, however, have good opportunities to use our influence in favour of co-operation between Israel and the Arab States beginning with economic matters in which each will stand to gain from a common approach to the many problems which will confront them. One of the difficulties to be faced is that if and when a stable territorial settlement is reached in Palestine Israel's expansionist activities will no doubt be diverted to the economic field, and we can expect to see an energetic drive to take a hand in economic development and trade outside the boundaries of Israel. It seems not at all impossible that this conception of Israel as the instrument of progress and development throughout the Middle East may appeal to many quarters in America who cannot adapt themselves to the slower tempo of Arab thought. We shall have to steer a difficult course in order to avoid on the one hand appearing to obstruct genuine Israeli efforts to improve their trade and commerce to the benefit also of other neighbouring States, and on the other hand to check the tendency which will almost certainly be present on the part of certain Israelis to secure thorough-going economic and later political penetration of the whole of the Middle East. We must certainly not be too negative or all developments of this kind will necessarily assume an anti-British flavour. Moreover, there is no reason why considerable advantage to the whole Middle East should not result from the establishment of higher standards of social and economic organisation in Israel which may serve as a spur to greater efforts in this direction in other States.

7. The expansion of Israeli political influence would be particularly dangerous if Israel's general orientation in world politics remained as it is now, since this might well result in the spreading into other parts of the Middle East of the idea of neutrality between the eastern and western *blocs* which many of the Arab States seem already to have abandoned.

8. The question of any grouping of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern States either among themselves alone or joined to certain of the Western Powers is one that is arousing considerable speculation but on which no firm expression of our views can yet be given. If such an idea were to come near fruition the ideal would be that any such grouping should include both Israel and the Arab States. The prospect of this seems far removed at present and it must be one of our objectives not only to bring Israel to a recognition of the advantages of the western orientation but at the same time probably to pave the way for the acceptance by the other Middle East States of Israeli participation. It will be interesting in this connexion to discover the United States Government's reaction if, as seems just possible, the Arab States are

willing to enter into a "Western Group" whereas Israel is not willing to do so for fear of abandoning her position of neutrality. It must also always be borne in mind that if for any reason we are faced with the position of having to choose between Israel and the Arabs our overriding interest must be to do our utmost to preserve our position in the Arab countries.

9. I fear that it may be felt that the above considerations do not give all the practical guidance which will be required by His Majesty's representatives in dealing with the many aspects of this problem with which they will be faced in coming months. The answer can only be that, subject to the general principles suggested above, each case will probably have to be judged on its merits and we shall be unable, at least until the future trend is clearer than at present, to lay down any hard and fast line by which all questions at issue can automatically be settled.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, Amman, and to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York.

I have, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

(No. 2)
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SECRET.

QUAID.

British Middle East Office,
10 Sharia Tolumbat,
CAIRO.

24th January, 1949.

Sir,

Mr. Lovett's views on Anglo-American relations with Israel, as reported in Washington tels. No. 246 and 247 of the 13th January, make interesting reading. I do not think anyone would disagree with him that the Israelis possess a vigour and vitality unmatched by any other state in the Middle East and that both for that reason and for its commanding strategic position it must be our aim to orientate Israel westward. Whatever the boundaries of Israel may be, it would be highly prejudicial to western interests if it were to fall under Communist influence. A Communist canker at this vital point would constitute a mortal danger even if it did not spread further afield, as it no doubt would. In fact it is just as necessary to keep Israel as it is to keep Germany out of the Communist fold, and for much the same reasons.

2. But, just as in considering the defence of western Europe we cannot ignore the French or the Benelux countries even though they be less vigorous than the Germans, so also in considering the defence of the Middle East we cannot ignore the undynamic Arabs. The reason is that the Arab world contains two vital assets in the shape of the oil deposits of Arabia and Iraq and the essential base and centre of communications in Egypt. Israel possesses no oil and indeed few economic assets. Nor could she provide, even if she were willing to do so, a base to take the place of that in Egypt. Palestine is a necessary complement to Egypt from the strategic point of view but in no way a substitute. It is therefore encouraging to observe that while emphasising the importance of good relations with Israel, Mr. Lovett does not go so far as to deny the importance of good relations with the Arabs. On the contrary he sees in the re-establishment (sic) of good relations between Egypt and Israel the best chance of safeguarding our common strategic interests. He seems therefore to recognise that these interests can only be fully safeguarded if Israel and the Arab states find a means of composing their differences and working together in harmony, and if they all of them seek their salvation in a western orientation. If this is

indeed.....

The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

his belief, it is not for us, I suggest, to quarrel with it. The object to be aimed at is easy to see. It is when considering the means of attaining it that the difficulties appear.

3. It is perhaps not an unfair comment on the recent conversations recorded between H.M. Ambassador and President Truman and Mr. Lovett to say that there seems to be a good deal of wishful thinking on the American side. President Truman may indeed have reason to feel real optimism that things are now in train for a peaceful settlement. But even if the Israelis have entered into the present negotiations in good faith - an assumption in which it is impossible to feel entire confidence a peaceful settlement will not in itself be enough to allay the justified alarm and anxiety felt by His Majesty's Government. In the first place it will be no guarantee of a western orientation in Israel. Secondly it will not necessarily promote any confidence on the part of the Arabs in the western world. On the contrary it may leave a bitterness against the west which it will take years to eradicate. Thirdly it may be followed by civil commotion in the Arab states, with all that that would imply for western interests therein. Fourthly the mere signing of peace will not necessarily mean the burying of the hatchet.

4. So far as this last point is concerned, the Americans might reply that the Arabs have so keen an eye to the main chance that, while their statesmen and their press will no doubt continue to proclaim implacable hostility to Israel, they will nevertheless make a rush to do business with the Jews the moment a settlement is reached. The Lebanese patriots are indeed already said to be doing a roaring contraband trade with Israel. Nevertheless I think too much can be made of this aspect of the Arab character and that, even while individual Arabs were lining their pockets, the governments might still be preparing a war of revenge. The fact that many Frenchmen did very well out of the German occupation has little effect on France's stubborn attitude to German problems today. I would say indeed that one might reckon at least on a very long interval elapsing before the mere cessation of fighting can blossom into friendly feeling or mutual co-operation except under the counter between Jews and Arabs. One can hardly expect the Egyptians or the other Arab Governments (with the possible exception of Trans Jordan which may have no alternative) at once to greet Israel as a new and welcome member of the Middle Eastern community. The Iraqi delegate was, I think, expressing the common Arab view when, as recorded in your despatch to Baghdad No. 307 of the 31st December, he said that it was time for us to make up our minds whether we wished to be friends with the Arabs or the Jews; it was impossible to have friendship with both. Despite the balm that private business may provide it is likely to be a long time before Arab opinion will change on this subject, even if the Israelis on their side show a co-operative spirit. It seems doubtful if United States opinion in Washington realises the depth of Arab bitterness or the long, patient endeavour that will be needed to overcome it. And neither the Americans nor the Jews nor the Arabs have shown any marked degree of patience in dealing with the Palestine problem hitherto. The best that can be said is that a state

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of peace is a necessary preliminary to the creation of good relations. It will not in itself produce good relations.

5. Whether the Arab States will ever be willing to settle down in happy relationship with Israel must be a matter for speculation. One can however state without equivocation that if they are to do so there is one essential pre-condition. The Israelis must definitely renounce the ambitions which their extremists have been proclaiming from the house-tops down the years and which even their moderates in unguarded moments make no secret of sharing. The Arabs cannot be expected to co-operate with or feel any confidence in the state of Israel so long as they have every reason to suspect the Israeli leaders and indeed the whole Israeli population of designs to expand Israeli frontiers to the Nile in the west and the Euphrates or beyond in the east. Prince Mohamed Ali once told me that Dr. Weizmann had on one occasion suggested to him that the Jews should take over the burden of guarding the Suez Canal. That he also regards Transjordan as part of Israel Irredenta is common knowledge. There can be no peace worthy the name while such ambitions are harboured by even the most statesmanlike of the Israeli leaders.

6. This question of Israeli territorial ambitions or lebensraum will affect not only Israeli-Arab relations but also the whole problem of the eastward or westward orientation of Israel. It is one of the three major issues which, so far as one can see, will face Israel when it becomes a generally recognised state and has made peace with its neighbours. The other two are viability and immigration, and the three of them are interconnected. To judge by the utterances of the Israeli leaders, the general plan is to institute vast development schemes, both agricultural and industrial, in order to make the country a viable proposition without outside assistance, to bring in immigrants at the fastest possible rate, settle them on the land and in industry and, when the flood becomes too great for the original frontiers to hold them, expand into the neighbouring countries.

7. There are three points on which this plan is likely to impinge on American policy. In the first place, if it is the aim of the United States Government to keep Israel orientated to the west, they will be closely concerned with the type of immigrant that comes in. I do not know if the United States Government have given deep thought to this problem, but I imagine that even if official encouragement were exercised, it would have little effect in persuading American Jews to emigrate to Israel and so ensure a western majority in its population. So far as one can see, the main sources of immigration will remain the displaced persons camps of Germany and Austria and the satellite states, with possibly a small flow from the Arab countries. The United States authorities may conceivably be able to do something to inoculate a western outlook among the displaced persons, but it is clear that the satellite Governments intend to keep a close control over the type of immigrant that will be permitted to leave their countries. It looks therefore as though very active efforts will be required to prevent the major part of

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the new immigrants from swelling the communist or near-communist ranks. I have no knowledge what practical steps either the United States Government or the western-minded Zionist leaders have in mind in this respect. But it is clearly a matter of major importance. It is also worth emphasising that even if the western-minded Israelis remain in a majority in the country, this may not necessarily maintain them in power. Communists have little to learn in the art of taking over a country in which they are in a minority. A comparatively small number of well trained and determined immigrants might suffice to do the trick with the assistance of the extremists already there. In fact it may not be left to Israel to "go" communist. Communism may be forced upon her as it has been forced upon other countries.

8. The second matter likely to affect American policy is the agricultural and industrial development which will be needed, not merely to settle the new immigrants, but to render the existing economy independent of outside aid. For this the Israelis have one immense asset in the shape of the dynamism which makes so strong an appeal to Mr. Lovett. But it is permissible to suggest that dynamism, like patriotism, is not enough. The view commonly held by unbiased persons in the Middle East is that the Zionist adventure has from the start depended on outside assistance and can never be independent of it, at any rate within any frontiers that can possibly flow from a forthcoming settlement. In other words the state of Israel will not be viable. Even the more optimistic will admit that assistance will still be required for some time to come and that the development schemes which will be needed to settle the new immigrants will demand a larger outlay of capital than the Israelis themselves can possibly provide. Hitherto these needs have been largely met by the Jews of America, and a question of outstanding importance is how long they will be prepared to go on carrying this burden. On this point the United States Ambassador in Cairo holds some interesting views, which are worthy of respect because in addition to being a hundred per cent American himself, he has through association with the cinematograph world a very good acquaintance with the wealthy American Jews. He is firmly convinced that once the drama has been taken out of the Palestine question by the establishment of peace the American Jews will turn off the tap. There will no longer be a crusade to strike their imagination. The same conclusion is suggested in an interesting series of articles in the Manchester Guardian which have come from the pen of Mr. Arthur Koestler. He claims to have been a supporter of the Zionist movement for twenty-five years and addresses his conclusions to the many thousands in a similar situation. This is what he writes:- "Now that Israel is firmly established it remains for them to wish it good luck and to go their own way - with now and then a friendly glance back and a helpful gesture". But if the common view is right, this will not be enough to maintain Israel in a condition of viability with the result that Israel may be approaching bankruptcy after a few months of peace.

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9. One can foresee that before this happened many strains and stresses would occur. The first move would presumably be for the Israeli authorities to appeal to the United States Government for direct aid, and very possibly they would receive it at any rate once. There has indeed already been talk of a loan from the Export-Import Bank. But it is far from certain that a single loan would be enough, or indeed that anything would be enough but the same kind of regular subsidy which has made the Zionist experiment practicable hitherto. Israel might conceivably find some other sources of capital. I would not even exclude Cairo. But such sources could hardly meet the needs. The question is will the United States Government be prepared to maintain Israel as a more or less permanent pensioner? And if not, how do they hope to prevent bankruptcy from leading to the very thing they are determined to avoid, viz. the rise of communism in Israel? There is no straighter road to communism than a financial and economic collapse.

10. Financial and economic difficulties are also likely to sharpen Israel's territorial ambitions. A country restricted within narrow territorial limits, with a population bursting with vitality and surrounded by people of a medieval outlook, swollen also by immigrants for whom it has no room, is bound in any case to covet its neighbours' lands. The urge for more "lebensraum" will be still further increased if internal difficulties arise within the state. What then will be the attitude of the United States Government? Will they, in order to keep Israel within their sphere of influence, support this policy of manifest destiny at Arab expense? And if so, how can they hope at the same time to hold the western positions in the still more vital Arab countries? They will be in a difficult dilemma and might even be tempted to solve it by backing Israel to the extent of putting her in possession of the Iraqi oil-wells, the Syrian and Lebanese coast-line and the Suez Canal. There may even be some Americans who would hope that with so greatly extended a promised land some of the Jews in the United States might be tempted to emigrate. But it seems doubtful if even the Americans are sufficiently dynamic for so clean-cut and drastic a solution. All one can predict is that the Israelis will be quickly aware of the anxiety of the United States Government to keep them within the western fold and will not miss the opportunities for blackmail which this will afford them both in the financial and territorial spheres.

11. I may here mention a further view which is held by Mr. Griffis. This is that the pro-Jewish sentiments now current in the United States could very easily change overnight if the Israelis were to play their cards too forcibly. Throughout this Palestine embroglio it has been a common criticism of the Jews that they have never known where to stop, and have by their arrogance in success alienated even their own supporters. There seems to me therefore some possibility that by opening their mouths too wide either on the question of subsidies or of territorial expansion they might end by alienating the United

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States Government and public. Should that happen, the last state of the Middle East would be worse than the first. Israel would have been established and, having reached the limits of American support, would turn naturally to Russia. The Arabs on their side would have been alienated by the support given to Israel before the break came, and we and the Americans would then have lost our whole position in the Middle East. Yet another of Mr. Molotov's dreams would have come true.

12. There is a final point to which I would draw attention. Mr. Lovett speaks vaguely of the need to orientate Israel westwards. But is he content with the merely negative asset of keeping Israel from allying itself with Soviet Russia? Or does he hope for some positive assistance on the Israeli side? In all the existing treaties which we have concluded with the Arab states, and in all the prospective treaties of which there has been talk, we have taken the line that they must contain provisions giving us certain concrete facilities. A mere expression of mutual friendship and support would be quite useless. But it seems highly improbable that Israel would be prepared to conclude even an anodyne agreement placing her in the western camp, let alone a treaty providing for concrete facilities. Dr. Weizmann, the most western-minded of Israeli statesmen, is reported in the "Times" of January 13th, to have said that Israel "wanted to remain a neutral country. To accuse it of being the ally or puppet of Russia against the west, or of being the ally of the western democracies against the east was equally absurd." Neutrality would of course be better than an Israel in the communist camp. But it would be far from meeting our strategic needs.

13. I fear that while I have posed a number of questions I have made no attempt to answer them, and I hope that those to whom I am sending copies of this despatch will offer their contributions. Meanwhile I do not feel able to do more than offer one or two suggestions. First, as a matter of general principle, I do not believe (and I think my view is shared by the majority of people who have had dealings with the Israelis) that the Israeli problem can be cured by kindness alone. The response of the Jews to appeasement seems to be the same as that of the Germans. They merely become more arrogant. Those who have to deal with Israel will need to be firm as well as conciliatory.

14. Secondly I suggest that we might stimulate the United States Government, who have constituted themselves the protectors of Israel, to think out rather more deeply where they want to go. We could give them such evidence as we have and may obtain of Soviet designs in Israel and endeavour to convince them that until there are much stronger grounds than exist at present for believing that those designs can be safely ignored or easily overcome, it would be folly to allow Israel to extend its sovereignty or influence very widely over the Middle East. It

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should not escape the Americans that communism (when presented in a form suitable for Arab consumption) appeals just as much to the Arabs as to the Jews. America is becoming a big employer of labour in the Middle East, e.g. in Dhahran and Bahrein, and there is a very old tradition of revolt against social injustice in Islam. America will sooner or later be facing just the same labour problems as we are facing in southern Persia. American oil companies will have troubles enough without a Jewish Communist state as a reservoir and reserve of strength for a possible "Democratic Party of Arabia".

15. Thirdly, where so much is uncertain, it would be madness to jeopardise such assets as we already hold in the Arab world. The Arabs may indeed be everything that their detractors say of them. But they do possess the oil and the bases, and I believe they would also prefer our friendship to that of any other Power. This holds true of the Egyptians as much as of the remainder. While therefore we should do all in our power to promote a western outlook in Israel and to encourage the Arabs to live in peace with the new state, I suggest that we should also try to strengthen the Arab states so that they will feel a renewed confidence in us as well as in their own power to contain Israel should the need arise. We should be abandoning principle and be false to ourselves if we deserted the Arabs simply on the American argument that the Jews are wise, pushing and successful. We should in our own interests begin seriously to work for sound defence agreements with the Arab countries. We and they have seen what they lack as military powers; so, as soon as there is a settlement, we should do our best to make good that deficiency.

16. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives at Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jeddah and Amman, to His Majesty's Consul General at Jerusalem, to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York and to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East Land Forces.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient, humble, Servant,

J. M. TROUTBECK

Please treat as top copy

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INWARD SAVING TELEGRAM

By Confidential Bag **Diplomatic Distribution**

From B.M.E.O. (Cairo) to Foreign Office

Sir J. Troutbeck
(No. 25. Saving)
8th March, 1949 Received 10·30 a.m., 11th March, 1949

Repeated, Saving, to Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Amman, Jedda, Jerusalem, Washington, United Kingdom Delegation, New York, Rome and Cairo.

I have so far seen no reaction on the part of the Arab States to the Security Council's resolution on the admission of Israel to the United Nations or to the vote given by the United Kingdom delegate. I hope, however, they will realise that we did for them the best we could do in the circumstances since we have declared our intention not to exercise our veto in cases of this nature. They will, however, inevitably be on the watch for the line we take when the question comes before the Assembly.

2. At the forthcoming meeting of the Assembly two questions will arise which acutely concern the Arab States. In addition to Palestine there will be the question of the Italian colonies. On this I note from your Savingram to Rome, No. 92, that we have now told the Italians that we have no objection in principle to their eventual return to Tripolitania and that our only concern is that it should not be forcibly opposed by the local population. We hope that the opposition of the latter may in due course be overcome by what is described in your telegram to Rome, No. 384, as a policy of appeasement. I venture to suggest, however, that the matter is larger than one of persuading the local politicians. It is a question on which the independent Arab States are likely to feel very strongly, whatever success we may achieve locally.

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3. As regards the admission of Israel to the United Nations, it is quite clear that this must come some time, and I have no doubt that it will in fact come during the forthcoming Assembly meeting. But the Arab States will surely have good grounds for seeking our support in arguing that Israel should at least not be admitted at a time when she has not yet accepted two of the important principles laid down by the United Nations for a peace settlement, viz., the internationalisation of Jerusalem and the return of the refugees to their homes. If they go further and argue that she should not be admitted until a peace settlement has actually been concluded and the frontiers fixed, they might lay themselves open to the charge that they were in effect claiming a power of veto over Israel's admission. But they have a perfect right to contend that Israel must at least accept the principles of settlement already laid down by the United Nations before she can be admitted as a member of that body. Unless we give them our full support to that extent, they will, I think, have a very legitimate grievance against us.

4. I have an impression, which may be quite mistaken, of a feeling in London that the Arab States have behaved so foolishly over Palestine and are in any case now so demoralised that their views and aspirations may be ignored. If so, I think we are being short-sighted. Unless the whole Arab movement fades out and the Arab States decline into insignificance or even chaos—which must be the last thing we would wish to see—they surely have to be reckoned with. They may be fatalists, but I should be surprised if they will forget all about Palestine or Tripolitania if the decisions on these issues go against them. Neither the Jews nor the Italians are in any case likely to let them do so. In both cases a perpetual sore will remain and, in so far as we may have been responsible for creating it, our position in the Arab world will suffer. It seems a particularly bad moment for flouting Arab sentiment when we are about to start a new drive for economic development in the Arab countries. According to the draft paper sent to me by Mr. Burrows on 22nd February it is our intention to take the lead in this matter on the ground that we are the only country in which the Arabs to-day have confidence. Such confidence will be lost if we give them reason to believe that we are either too feeble or too treacherous to have any regard for their interests. The line we adopt at the Assembly meeting both over the admission of Israel to the United Nations and the return of Italy to Tripolitania is likely to be regarded by the Arab States as a touchstone of our whole attitude towards them.

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INWARD SAVING TELEGRAM

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TELEGRAM FROM UKDEL NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE. Political.

EN CLAIR
(BY CONFIDENTIAL BAG) DESPATCHED: 18th March 1949.

Sir T. Shone.
No. 129 Saving.
18th March 1949.

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Repeated to: Beirut No.16 Saving;
Bagdad No. 16 Saving;
Damascus No. 16 Saving;
Haifa No. 9 Saving;
Cairo No. 12 Saving;
Amman No. 14 Saving;
Jedda No.22 Saving;
Jerusalem No.22 Saving;
B.M.E.O. Cairo No. 17 Saving;
Washington No.709 Saving.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No.129 Saving of 18th March, repeated for information Saving to: Beirut, Bagdad, Damascus, Haifa, Cairo, Amman, Jedda, Jerusalem, B.M.E.O. Cairo, Washington.

B.M.E.O. telegram to you No.25 Saving /of 8th March/.

Arab States and admission of Israel to the United Nations.

I have no doubt that Sir John Troutbeck is right in saying that this is one of the matters before the Assembly which the Arabs will regard as a touchstone of our attitude towards them; and I imagine that in their present discomfiture they are likely to bear resentment for any action by His Majesty's Government which falls short of their expectations of support for their attitude towards Israel. I am not so sure, however, that the Arabs - whatever may be the case with other States - will have a "very legitimate grievance" against us if we fail to withhold our support from Israel's application until it is clear that she intends to abide by the principles of settlement laid down by the United Nations.

2. It should not, I submit, be forgotten that, as pointed out in paragraph 4 of my despatch No.18 of March 10th, the fundamental principle of settlement laid down by the United Nations in regard to Palestine was the resolution of November 29th, 1947, which the Arab invasion of Palestine was expressly designed to overthrow and which the Arabs presumably still do not recognise (cf. Azzam Pasha's remark reported in paragraph 5 of B.M.E.O. telegram No.24 Saving /of March 4th/). It is true that neither the Security Council nor the Assembly have at any time taken steps to enforce that resolution or to censure the Arabs' defiance of it, and that the various truce resolutions of the Security Council have not discriminated on this ground between Israel and its opponents. But the inference from this would seem to be that the United Nations has accepted the position

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that its "preferred solution" of 1947 is not sacrosanct and could be modified by the fortunes of war (subject to the provisions of the truce agreements) and by such negotiations as might take place between the parties under its auspices.

3. In any case, the Assembly decisions of 1948 regarding Jerusalem and the Arab refugees are certainly not more sacred than its decisions of 1947. The proposal to internationalise Jerusalem indeed goes back to the 1947 resolution; and the refugee problem is to a large extent the result of the Arab attack on the 1947 settlement by propaganda and by force of arms before and since the termination of the Mandate.

4. It may be recalled that in the Security Council debate on the Mediator's proposals of July last for the modification of the 1947 settlement (under which, inter alia, Jerusalem was to go to the Arabs, with municipal autonomy for the Jews and special arrangements for the Holy Places), Sir A. Cadogan in expressing general approval of those proposals took the line that the Mediator had not been appointed to enforce the resolution of November 1947 but to "promote a peaceful adjustment" on the basis of the fact that it had not been possible to enforce that solution. Similarly, His Majesty's Government have never withdrawn their support from the candidature of Transjordan for membership of the United Nations despite the prominent part which that country has taken in opposition to the Assembly resolution of 1947.

5. There is, of course, a wide difference between such changes as might be secured under United Nations auspices and a unilateral attempt to thwart the Assembly's recommendations, such as was undertaken by the Arab League in May last and such as may now be meditated by Israel. And I do not suggest that we are wrong in determining our attitude towards the Israeli application by the indications which exist of Israeli intentions vis-a-vis the decisions of the Assembly and Security Council. This is, indeed, a similar principle to the one we have adopted in dealing with the applications of such countries as Hungary and Bulgaria. But I would suggest that in applying this principle we should not allow ourselves either to be unduly influenced by fears, which may possibly prove exaggerated, of Arab reactions, or to offer any corroboration to those at the United Nations and elsewhere who accuse us of applying a "double standard" to the Israelis and the Arabs respectively.

6. Another point which, I submit, deserves consideration in regard to Israel's application is that her admission would, by virtue of Article 25 of the Charter, strengthen the legal obligation of Israel to carry out United Nations decisions. This may be of importance, since, as pointed out in your telegram to Jerusalem No. 192 of February 16th, it is at least doubtful whether Israeli designs on Jerusalem can be challenged on legal grounds. It is true that Article 2 (6) of the Charter already empowers the Organisation to ensure that non-members shall act in accordance with its principles "so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security"; but this Article cannot in itself oblige a non-member State to conform to each and every recommendation which may be formulated by the Security Council, let alone the Assembly. While, however, the point

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/about

about Article 25 is worth bearing in mind, I have naturally no illusions as to the weight which legal considerations of this kind are likely to carry with the Israeli Government, particularly in the circumstances to which I have drawn attention in paragraphs 2 to 4 above.

No. of copies - 54 DISTRIBUTION.

File	
Sir A. Cadogan	
Sir T. Shone	
Mr. Lawford	
Mr. Falla	
Mr. Cole	
Mr. Mackenzie	
Legal Adviser	
Mr. Fletcher Cooke	
Mr. Ledward	
Mr. Fearnley	
Sir A. Burns	
Col. Williams	6
Spares	2
Washington	22
Foreign Office	3
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Bagdad	1
Damascus	1
Haifa	1
Cairo	1
Amman	1
Jedda	1
Jerusalem	1
B.M.E.O. (Cairo)	1

TS/MPW.

57

Secretary of State

E

Cutem

E3991

CONVERSATION WITH ADMIRAL CONOLLY

TOP SECRET

I lunched to-day at his invitation with Admiral Conolly, who has recently returned from several days' discussion at Tobruk with the Anglo-American team planning for the defence of the Middle East. Mr. Lewis Jones was present.

Admiral Conolly said that he was looking forward to a further visit to Tobruk from May 3rd to 8th, to carry matters a stage further.

Four principal points of interest arose:-

(1) I asked Admiral Conolly whether in the course of the planning so far any factors had arisen which might tend to modify one way or another the present Anglo-American thinking that the security of the Middle East is of essential importance both to us and to the Americans.

Admiral Conolly said that nothing had so far arisen to cause him to modify or question his present views, which were already known to me. He said (as he has previously) that in his view the West had suffered a major reverse in China. (His actual word was "debacle"). We could ill afford to see this followed by additional reverses in the Indian Ocean, and he particularly mentioned India and Pakistan. Still less could we afford to lose the Middle East. If we lost the Middle East we should "crash". It would be fifteen years before we could recover our position there, and indeed we should probably never do so. He was convinced that we must do our best to hold it, and to do this it might be necessary to make considerable effort and contributions. He had been glad to hear from Field Marshal Slim that the Egyptians were being somewhat more forthcoming. It was urgently desirable to secure at least a temporary settlement in Palestine; so that we could concentrate on closer relations with the whole region. He wanted to bring Turkey into defence planning as well as other Middle Eastern countries.

(2) Admiral Conolly went on to say that he had been thinking about the desirability of a Mediterranean Pact after the Atlantic Pact. Besides the United States and the United Kingdom, he thought it might include Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, the Lebanon and Israel, in fact the Mediterranean Powers strictly speaking. I pointed out the obvious difficulties of this concept, particularly duplication with the Atlantic Pact at the Western end of the Mediterranean, the drawing of an artificial line of division through the Middle East at the other end, and the omission of Persia, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, which were the main oil-producing countries. He seemed to appreciate

/these

these considerations, and ended by saying that he had no fixed views but was casting about in his mind for methods of increasing the sense of security in the area. In any case he felt sure it would be unwise to attempt anything until after ratification of the Atlantic Pact, which might be in June.

(3) Admiral Conolly said that the United States Ambassador at Tehran and the United States Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow were sending somewhat disturbing appreciations of the probable Soviet reactions to the Atlantic Pact. They thought this might take the form of a serious war scare, coupled with a further offer to discuss Germany. The most obvious and probable choice of scene for the war scare would be Persia, and they thought that some Russian move there might take place at any moment. Admiral Conolly himself thought that the possibility ought to be reckoned with.

(4) I said to Admiral Conolly that speaking entirely personally I thought there was one step which might be taken which would have even greater value than a Mediterranean or Middle East Pact in encouraging and stiffening the determination of Mediterranean and Middle East Powers, namely if the United States were to agree to take the Trusteeship for Tripolitania. Admiral Conolly reacted eagerly and said that I was speaking to the converted. He had himself advocated this strongly to Washington. He thought it was not absolutely impossible that the Americans would take it. Mr. Lewis Jones thought that as time went by this possibility would increase, and again speaking personally considered that this was a strong argument in favour of postponement. Admiral Conolly then asked firstly whether we could not press the State Department more strongly, and secondly whether we could not induce other Powers to propose or support the idea, whether direct with the United States Government or at the Assembly. He seemed to think that Greece and Turkey might be willing to do so. He also said that there was doubt in Washington whether the proposal, if made, would obtain a two-thirds majority. I said we were inclined to think that on this issue the Assembly would divide on the lines of the Slavs v. the Rest, and if so a majority would be obtained. But it was, of course, impossible to be certain. Admiral Conolly went on to say that among deterrent factors in Washington was probably a feeling that the Americans did not possess the "know-how" or personnel with the training and experience required. He asked whether we should be willing either to continue to administer the territory for say six months or a year until an American team could be collected, and also whether we could make expert personnel available temporarily whether on loan or on secondment.

/The

The Minister of State might like to discuss (4) with the Secretary of State before they leave. It is worth considering whether we should follow up any of Admiral Conolly's suggestions about Tripolitania. They were, of course, made in informal and personal conversation and commit no one but himself.

Mr Knight

23rd March, 1949.

Copy sent to:
Minister of State
Mr. I. Mallet
Mr. Shuckburgh
Mr. Brain
Mr. Burrows
Mr. Bateman
Sir Gladwyn Jebb
Mr. Dening
Mr. Makins

W. Strang
23/3

I have not to have a good talk with Dickerson. especially French green Tripoli Egypt
PO

MTLO
25.3

1088

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on].

Cypher/OTP DIPLOMATIC DISTRIBUTION

FROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mr. Houstoun Boswall, D. 6.47 p.m. 26th March, 1949.
No. 176
26th March, 1949. R. 7.50 p.m. 26th March, 1949.

Repeated to Damascus,
Amman,
Jerusalem,
Cairo,
B.M.E.O.(Cairo),
Jedda Saving,
Washington Saving,
UKDEL New York Saving,
Rome Saving.

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 176 of 26th March, repeated for information to Damascus, Amman, Jerusalem, Cairo, B.M.E.O.(Cairo) and Saving to Jedda, Washington, UKDEL New York and Rome.

B.M.E.O.(Cairo) telegram No. 25 Saving. Lebanese reaction to United Kingdom delegates attitude to Security Council resolution on admission of Israel was most favourable and the Secretary General for Foreign Affairs went out of his way to pay tribute to Sir Terence Shone's stand, arranging proper publicity to be given to it in the press.

2. I agree the Arabs will watch our attitude at the forthcoming meeting of the Assembly of United Nations very closely as regards the admission of Israel and the Italian Colonies. It is often said here that the question of Israel's admission to United Nations was a powerful weapon in our hands which should be used in the event of the Jews continuing to flout the decisions of United Nations and to produce specious excuses for doing so when called in question. It is hoped here too that the influence of the Vatican and Catholic countries will be brought to bear when the question of admission of the Jews to membership of United Nations is considered. Incidentally, Turkish member of the Conciliation Commission has also mentioned this weapon to me deploring what he regarded as a serious divergence of opinion between His Majesty's Government and the United States Government on the whole Palestine problem. In fact he as good as said that he would do exactly what His Majesty's Government required if only he knew what that was.

3. As regards/...

SECRET

Beirut telegram No. 176 to Foreign Office.

3. As regards Tripolitania it is, I submit, important that the views of the Arab states and not only the politicians of Tripolitania should be taken carefully into consideration (c.f. paragraph 7 of my despatch No. 22). My Italian colleague has been busy here and there is a report that he has been speaking in terms of the new state being in relations with the Arab League (this may mean membership) as well as having a treaty with the Italians. The Italian Minister is also believed to have left a document on the subject embodying his Government's ideas at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but I have not been able to see it yet.

4. In my opinion it would create an unfortunate effect on Arab states if the Italians were to govern the country during interim period. They would, like the Minister of State, wonder why any change was necessary. Moreover, the Arab States have far more confidence in us than they have in the Italians. But if transition from the present to the new independent régime which is envisaged could be effected smoothly and without the reintroduction of Italian administrators the result would be probably much the same as that foreshadowed by Brigadier Clayton in his letter of February 21st, 1948 to Burrows.

Foreign Office pass to Washington and UKDEL New York as my telegrams Nos. 19 and 24 Saving respectively.

[Repeated Saving to Washington and UKDEL New York].

QQQQQ

OUT FILE

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on]

Cypher/OTP
Secret.

POLITICAL DISTRIBUTION

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO BEIRUT

No. 219
28th March, 1949

D. 2.00 p.m. 29th March, 1949

And to: Damascus No. 194.

Repeated to Washington No. 3444
B.M.E.O. (Cairo) No. 549
Amman No. 86 Saving
Jerusalem 139 Saving
Bagdad 119 Saving
Jedda 138 Saving
Cairo 154 Saving
Paris No. 747 Saving
UKDEL New York 528 Saving.

SECRET

Addressed to Beirut telegram No. 219 of 28th March and to Damascus No. 194. Repeated for information to Washington, B.M.E.O. (Cairo), and Saving to Amman, Jerusalem, Bagdad, Jedda, Cairo, Paris, and United Kingdom Delegation New York.

Beirut telegram No. 119 [of March 4th: Israel and Levant States].

Syrian Minister who has just returned from a short visit to Damascus tells us that he was shown a record of one of the meetings in the Israel-Lebanon Armistice discussions at which the Israel representatives had suggested a political and military alliance between the Lebanon, Syria and Israel. They said that these three countries could raise between them an army of five hundred thousand men which would enable them to protect their neutrality. They suggested there was no need to ask the United States and European countries for war material since Israel could supply all the needs of Syria and the Lebanon.

2. The Syrian Minister said that the Syrian Government had not been impressed with the suggestion since they had no confidence in Israel's intentions.

7 7 7 7

TOP SECRET

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1

E 6145/1026/65

20th May, 1949

No. 154 POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL

Mr. Bevin to Sir J. Troutbeck, Cairo

Sir,

I have received and read with interest your despatch No. 2 of 24th January concerning the State Department's views on Anglo-American relations with Israel, and I have now been able to consider also the comments on this despatch which I have received from other missions.

2. His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington has pointed out in a despatch which has not been circulated to other posts that in the conversations between himself and Mr. Lovett on 12th January the United States Government were primarily concerned with the particular problem of Palestine, and he agrees that they were not on that occasion looking beyond this problem to the very real dangers and difficulties in the more distant future to which you drew attention. Such indications as Sir Oliver Franks has of United States policy lead him to believe that the United States Government would oppose by all available diplomatic means any attempt on the part of the Israelis to expand outside their frontiers, once the parties had reached agreement on those frontiers and the settlement had been endorsed by the United Nations. There were signs that the United States Government might in the future be less responsive to domestic Zionist pressure and they still held similar views to our own about the general strategic picture in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East and about the need for stability in all the countries in that area.

3. Sir Oliver Franks is inclined to agree with the views expressed to you by Mr. Griffiths that the collection of funds in the United States for Israel may begin to fall off once "the drama is taken out of the Palestine question" and that the pro-Jewish trend which at present prevails in the United States cannot be considered permanent. He also agrees that the Administration have not given careful thought to the dangers and difficulties which the injection of Israel into the Middle East will cause, and he welcomes your suggestion that the whole situation should be discussed with the United States Government. He throws out the suggestion that some American experts might be attached to the British Middle East Office in order to facilitate the co-ordination of a programme of assistance and advice in the field, and to induce in the United States Government a greater awareness of the practical problems which have to be faced with all their ramifications. The concluding paragraph of Sir Oliver Frank's despatch, referring to the desirability of concerting Anglo-United States policy in the Middle East runs as follows:-

> "The time may well be approaching when such a common policy is possible of achievement. But we shall need to choose our time with care. I doubt

/ whether

whether any proposal on our part for such talks would commend itself to the State Department or if agreed by them, be likely to produce results so long as the prospects of a Palestine settlement remained as doubtful as they are at present. As you know, the United States Government are now taking the line that the parties and the United Nations Conciliation Commission must be left as free as possible to try to work out whatever settlement can be found. So long as that remains their position they would be apt to regard with reserve any proposals for comprehensive talks and would be reluctant to commit themselves at all clearly if the talks were held. But so soon as a settlement appears to be in sight, I should recommend that we lose no time in proposing a frank exchange of views over the whole field".

4. I shall be glad of your comments on the proposal for the attachment of American experts to the British Middle East Office. As regards the possibility of an exchange of views with the United States Government, we have already begun to discuss certain aspects of the future of our Middle East policy with the Americans in the course of conversations with Mr. McGhee of the State Department and with Mr. McCloy of the International Bank (a member of the staff of the United States Embassy being present at the latter discussion)on future policy with regard to Arab refugees and on general questions of economic development. I hope that these discussions will be actively continued. As regards the more general exchange of views mentioned by Sir Oliver Franks, I agree with him that the time has probably not yet come for this, but we should constantly bear in mind the desirability of having such an exchange at the earliest convenient time.

5. Final conclusions on the policy to be adopted with regard to Arab-Israeli relations in the framework of the general Anglo-American policy for the Middle East will only appear as a result of an exchange of views with the United States Government of the kind proposed above. Meanwhile it may be useful to set out here the following provisional conclusions and considerations which have suggested themselves to us as the most important of those on which such final conclusions will be based.

6. Our general objective must be to have cordial and intimate relations with all the States of the Middle East including the Arab States and Israel, to see them formally joined to the Western group of States opposed to Soviet aggression and infiltration and co-operating among themselves so as to promote stability and prosperity of the Middle East area as a whole. Some of the obstacles to the achievement of this objective are the present Israeli policy of neutrality as between East and West, the excessively bad relations existing and likely to exist for some time between Israel and the Arab States, the possibility of Israeli territorial or economic expension, the dis-unity of the Arab States and their extremely low social and economic standards. It must

/ be

be our aim to remove as many as possible of these obstacles. Israel's position as between East and West will depend largely on the play of internal political forces which we shall not, at any rate to begin with, be able to influence except in the most indirect manner. We may, however, have good opportunities to use our influence in favour of co-operation between Israel and the Arab States beginning with economic matters in which each will stand to gain from a common approach to the many problems which will confront them. One of the difficulties to be faced is that if and when a stable territorial settlement is reached in Palestine Israel's expansionist activities will no doubt be diverted to the economic field, and we can expect to see an energetic drive to take a hand in economic development and trade outside the boundaries of Israel. It seems not at all impossible that this conception of Israel as the instrument of progress and development throughout the Middle East may appeal to many quarters in America who cannot adapt themselves to the slower tempo of Arab thought. We shall have to steer a difficult course in order to avoid on the one hand appearing to obstruct genuine Israeli efforts to improve their trade and commerce to the benefit also of other neighbouring States, and on the other hand to check the tendency which will almost certainly be present on the part of certain Israelis to secure thorough-going economic and later political penetration of the whole of the Middle East. We must certainly not be too negative or all developments of this kind will necessarily assume an anti-British flavour. Moreover, there is no reason why considerable advantage to the whole Middle East should not result from the establishment of higher standards of social and economic organisation in Israel which may serve as a spur to greater efforts in this direction in other States.

7. The expansion of Israeli political influence would be particularly dangerous if Israel's general orientation in world politics remaind as it is now, since this might well result in the spreading into other parts of the Middle East of the idea of neutrality between the eastern and western blocs which many of the Arab States seem already to have abandoned.

8. The question of any grouping of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern States either among themselves alone or joined to certain of the Western Powers is one that is arousing considerable speculation but on which no firm expression of our views can yet be given. If such an idea were to come near fruition the ideal would be that any such grouping should include both Israel and the Arab States. The prospect of this seems far removed at present and it must be one of our objectives not only to bring Israel to a recognition of the advantages of the western orientation but at the same time probably to pave the way for the acceptance by the other Middle East States of Israeli participation. It will be interesting in this connexion to discover the United States Government's reaction if, as seems just possible, the Arab States are willing to enter into a "Western Group" whereas Israel

/ is

is not willing to do so for fear of abandoning her position of neutrality. It must also always be borne in mind that if for any reason we are faced with the position of having to choose between Israel and the Arabs our overriding interest must be to do our utmost to preserve our position in the Arab countries.

9. I fear that it may be felt that the above considerations do not give all the practical guidance which will be required by His Majesty's representatives in dealing with the many aspects of this problem with which they will be faced in coming months. The answer can only be that, subject to the general principles suggested above, each case will probably have to be judged on its merits and we shall be unable, at least until the future trend is clearer than at present, to lay down any hard and fast line by which all questions at issue can automatically be settled.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, Amman, and to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York.

I have, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN

E 6145

TOP SECRET

Israel and British Policy in the Middle East

Flags A & B

On January 12th His Majesty's Ambassador had discussions with the State Department about Palestine which he reported in his telegrams Nos. 246 and 247. The State Department made it clear that their approach to the Palestine question was very different from that of His Majesty's Government, although the United States Government "were just as convinced as His Majesty's Government of the importance of the Near East in the overall Anglo-American strategic position." Briefly, the Americans:-

(a) Did not regard the maintenance of land communications between Egypt and the rest of the Arab world via the southern Negeb as of primary importance. They preferred to see a friendly State of Israel established in the Negeb.

(b) Wished to ensure at all costs that Israel should look to the West and not to the East and considered that His Majesty's Government's policy of containing the Israelis ran the risk of permanently estranging them.

These telegrams showed that the United States Government were concentrating on reaching a solution of the Palestine problem in a vacuum without giving overmuch thought to the consequences in the Arab world. It was in a way a relief to receive a clear statement of divergent opinion from the United States Government after months of equivocation, but the American line of thought was revealed as limited and optimistic.

Flag C

These Washington telegrams elicited comments from the British Middle East Office in the shape of Sir J. Troutbeck's despatch No. 2 of January 24th. This despatch invited and received comments from a number of other posts and the papers are well worth reading. In view of their length, however, it may be convenient to summarise them as follows:-

Sir J. Troutbeck points out that the Americans are unduly optimistic about the re-establishment of good relations between the Jews and the Arabs even after a peace settlement is reached. The Israeli State will be expansionist. Such immigrants as may reach Israel from behind the Iron Curtain will probably be picked communists. The State of Israel will not be viable and American funds will begin to dry up once "the drama is taken out of the Palestine question." Are the United States prepared to maintain Israel as a pensioner in order to avoid the growth of communism in conditions of financial and economic collapse? Such conditions would moreover exacerbate the Jewish urge to expand. And Israeli neutrality, though better than communism, would hardly meet our strategic needs.

Sir J. Troutbeck recommends:

(i) That we do not accept the view that the Israeli problem can be cured by kindness. Firmness is just as necessary;

(ii) that we should stimulate the United States Government to think more carefully where they want to go, bearing in mind that there is just as fertile ground for communism in the Arab States as in Israel.

(iii) that we should continue to give primary importance to relations with the Arab States and should begin seriously to work for sound defence agreements with them.

His Majesty's Consul-General at Jerusalem has commented as follows on the British Middle East Office despatch. We now see that the American attitude over Palestine is based not only on internal political considerations but on a logical line of reasoning (whether mistaken or not) to the effect that a Jewish State in the Middle East is likely to prove a stronger bulwark against communism than can be formed out of the Arab States. The American outlook on this pioneer immigrant State is bound to be different from the British, in view of recent American experience in assimilating large numbers of immigrants. The Americans can also point to the bad record of the Arabs in conducting their own case and co-operating amongst each other. In the circumstances a joint Anglo-American policy is required to prevent both Israel and the Arab States from going communist. Israeli expansionism could be controlled by a firm Anglo-American policy, and, owing to American inexperience and volatility in foreign affairs, it is Sir Hugh Dow's opinion that His Majesty's Government might eventually wield greater influence in Israel than the United States Government "without any abandonment of our primary aims of supporting and strengthening the Arab States". Flag D

His Majesty's Minister at Damascus comments that the Syrian Government are more frightened of Israeli expansion than of communist contagion and that they will continue to take military precautions against Israelis. Flag E

His Majesty's Minister at Beirut agrees generally with Sir J. Troutbeck and suggests that the United States Government should be left in no doubt as to the very real danger which will arise if Israel expands its sovereignty or influence widely over the Middle East. Our object should be to persuade the United States Government to underwrite British policy in the Middle East and we should resist any temptation to divide the area into British and American zones of influence. Flag F

His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad supports Sir J. Troutbeck and advocates the three following steps:- Flag G

(i) The early de-limitation of Israeli frontiers.

(ii) The resumption of supplies of arms under our treaties with Iraq and Egypt.

(iii) In co-operation with the United States, the economic development of the Arab countries.

Sir T. Shone has certain comments on Sir J. Troutbeck's despatch arising out of what he describes as the climate of opinion at the United Nations. Briefly, the United Nations organisation is favourable to the Jews and takes a low view of the Arab States' incursion into Palestine on the double grounds that it was wrong and had failed. Sir T. Shone points out that the United Kingdom are thought at the United Nations to have been biased in this matter in favour of the Arabs. He advocates a closer co-ordination of policy with the United States. Flag H

/Finally

Flag I

Finally, His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington, while conceding many of the points made by Sir J. Troutbeck, suggests that further steps in the direction of educating the United States administration should be postponed until a Palestine settlement is more clearly in view. Strategic discussions with the United States Government about the Middle East should be resumed as soon as "a settlement appears to be in sight". Meanwhile the Conciliation Commission should be given a clear run.

No doubt this major problem of policy will be considered by Sir J. Troutbeck, in the light of the comments he has received, when he comes to work at the Foreign Office. It seems to me that the general recommendations he has made, as qualified by Sir Oliver Franks, represent the policy we should adopt. I should point out that, although it will probably be necessary to defer political and strategic discussions with the Americans until things have worked themselves out a little more in Palestine, it may be desirable at an earlier date to discuss with Washington the American help which will have to be given to the Arab refugees and the Arab States which are harbouring them. The American attitude towards the refugees will be a test case. The administration will have to shake themselves free of Zionist influence if they are going to be prepared to provide, or encourage such bodies as the World Bank or the Export-Import Bank to provide, the funds which alone will begin to solve the refugee problem and remove perhaps the most dangerous source of communism of the whole lot.

Ivor S Beith

22nd March, 1949

TOP SECRET

FOREIGN OFFICE. S.W.1

E 6145/1026/65

20th May, 1949

No. 154

POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL

Mr. Bevin to Sir J. Troutbeck, Cairo

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2. His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington has pointed out in a despatch which has not been circulated to other posts that in the conversations between himself and Mr. Lovett on 12th January the United States Government were primarily concerned with the particular problem of Palestine, and he agrees that they were not on that occasion looking beyond this problem to the very real dangers and difficulties in the more distant future to which you drew attention. Such indications as Sir Oliver Franks has of United States policy lead him to believe that the United States Government would oppose by all available diplomatic means any attempt on the part of the Israelis to expand outside their frontiers, once the parties had reached agreement on those frontiers and the settlement had been endorsed by the United Nations. There were signs that the United States Government might in the future be less responsive to domestic Zionist pressure and they still held similar views to our own about the general strategic picture in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East and about the need for stability in all the countries in that area.

3. Sir Oliver Franks is inclined to agree with the views expressed to you by Mr. Griffiths that the collection of funds in the United States for Israel may begin to fall off once "the drama is taken out of the Palestine question" and that the pro-Jewish trend which at present prevails in the United States cannot be considered permanent. He also agrees that the Administration have not given careful thought to the dangers and difficulties which the injection of Israel into the Middle East will cause, and he welcomes your suggestion that the whole situation should be discussed with the United States Government. He throws out the suggestion that some American experts might be attached to the British Middle East Office in order to facilitate the co-ordination of a programme of assistance and advice in the field, and to induce in the United States Government a greater awareness of the practical problems which have to be faced with all their ramifications. The concluding paragraph of Sir Oliver Frank's despatch, referring to the desirability of concerting Anglo-United States policy in the Middle East runs as follows:-

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/ whether

whether any proposal on our part for such talks would commend itself to the State Department or if agreed by them, be likely to produce results so long as the prospects of a Palestine settlement remained as doubtful as they are at present. As you know, the United States Government are now taking the line that the parties and the United Nations Conciliation Commission must be left as free as possible to try to work out whatever settlement can be found. So long as that remains their position they would be apt to regard with reserve any proposals for comprehensive talks and would be reluctant to commit themselves at all clearly if the talks were held. But so soon as a settlement appears to be in sight, I should recommend that we lose no time in proposing a frank exchange of views over the whole field".

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6. Our general objective must be to have cordial and intimate relations with all the States of the Middle East including the Arab States and Israel, to see them formally joined to the Western group of States opposed to Soviet aggression and infiltration and co-operating among themselves so as to promote stability and prosperity of the Middle East area as a whole. Some of the obstacles to the achievement of this objective are the present Israeli policy of neutrality as between East and West, the excessively bad relations existing and likely to exist for some time between Israel and the Arab States, the possibility of Israeli territorial or economic expension, the dis-unity of the Arab States and their extremely low social and economic standards. It must

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be our aim to remove as many as possible of these obstacles. Israel's position as between East and West will depend largely on the play of internal political forces which we shall not, at any rate to begin with, be able to influence except in the most indirect manner. We may, however, have good opportunities to use our influence in favour of co-operation between Israel and the Arab States beginning with economic matters in which each will stand to gain from a common approach to the many problems which will confront them. One of the difficulties to be faced is that if and when a stable territorial settlement is reached in Palestine Israel's expansionist activities will no doubt be diverted to the economic field, and we can expect to see an energetic drive to take a hand in economic development and trade outside the boundaries of Israel. It seems not at all impossible that this conception of Israel as the instrument of progress and development throughout the Middle East may appeal to many quarters in America who cannot adapt themselves to the slower tempo of Arab thought. We shall have to steer a difficult course in order to avoid on the one hand appearing to obstruct genuine Israeli efforts to improve their trade and commerce to the benefit also of other neighbouring States, and on the other hand to check the tendency which will almost certainly be present on the part of certain Israelis to secure thorough-going economic and later political penetration of the whole of the Middle East. We must certainly not be too negative or all developments of this kind will necessarily assume an anti-British flavour. Moreover, there is no reason why considerable advantage to the whole Middle East should not result from the establishment of higher standards of social and economic organisation in Israel which may serve as a spur to greater efforts in this direction in other States.

7. The expansion of Israeli political influence would be particularly dangerous if Israel's general orientation in world politics remaind as it is now, since this might well result in the spreading into other parts of the Middle East of the idea of neutrality between the eastern and western blocs which many of the Arab States seem already to have abandoned.

8. The question of any grouping of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern States either among themselves alone or joined to certain of the Western Powers is one that is arousing considerable speculation but on which no firm expression of our views can yet be given. If such an idea were to come near fruition the ideal would be that any such grouping should include both Israel and the Arab States. The prospect of this seems far removed at present and it must be one of our objectives not only to bring Israel to a recognition of the advantages of the western orientation but at the same time probably to pave the way for the acceptance by the other Middle East States of Israeli participation. It will be interesting in this connexion to discover the United States Government's reaction if, as seems just possible, the Arab States are willing to enter into a "Western Group" whereas Israel

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is not willing to do so for fear of abandoning her position of neutrality. It must also always be borne in mind that if for any reason we are faced with the position of having to choose between Israel and the Arabs our overriding interest must be to do our utmost to preserve our position in the Arab countries.

9. I fear that it may be felt that the above considerations do not give all the practical guidance which will be required by His Majesty's representatives in dealing with the many aspects of this problem with which they will be faced in coming months. The answer can only be that, subject to the general principles suggested above, each case will probably have to be judged on its merits and we shall be unable, at least until the future trend is clearer than at present, to lay down any hard and fast line by which all questions at issue can automatically be settled.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, Amman, and to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York.

I have, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN

No. 5.

(E 6145/1026/65)

TOP SECRET

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

5 January, 1950.

E 6145

Sir,

On your departure for Tel Aviv you may wish to have certain general instructions with regard to the work of your Mission.

2. My general attitude to the position of Israel in the Middle East so far as it can at present be formulated, is set out in my despatch No. 154 of the 20th May to the British Middle East Office, of which a copy is enclosed, and you should be guided by this.

3. The general tenour of your relations with the Israeli Government should be objective and businesslike with a view to handling practical problems in a practical manner. You should avoid all argument and recrimination about the recent past while of course taking advantage of such favourable feelings towards the United Kingdom as may exist in Israel as a result of the establishment by His Majesty's Government of a national home for the Jews in Palestine. You will no doubt find it most difficult to convince many Israelis of the goodwill felt towards Israel by His Majesty's Government but it will be one of the most important parts of your task to persuade them that His Majesty's Government sincerely wish for normal and friendly relations with them and that this is not incompatible with the maintenance of the cordial relations existing between His Majesty's Government and the Arab countries. The success of your mission in reaching its objective would be of very great value from the political, strategic and economic points of view.

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Sir Knox Helm, K.C.M.G., C.B.E.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Tel Aviv.

From Mr. McNeil

4. Israel is an important potential market for British exports and the country can play a useful and productive part in the economy of the Middle East as a whole provided that this development is not pressed to the extent of Israeli economic imperialism to the prejudice of neighbouring states. You should do all you can to promote British trade and to settle outstanding economic and financial questions between the two governments and between British firms and the Israeli authorities. The most important question under this heading is of course that of the Haifa refinery. It is a major British interest that this refinery with the pipelines from Iraq should begin to operate fully again as soon as possible. You will no doubt be receiving detailed instructions with regard to any action to be taken with regard to this question.

5. As regards the elements of the final settlement in Palestine which remain to be decided - of which the most important are the frontiers of Israel, Jerusalem, and the Arab refugees - your general line must be, at any rate for the time being, that the Conciliation Commission is dealing with these matters in discussions with both parties concerned and while His Majesty's Government are ready to give the Commission any assistance in their power it is not for them to volunteer their own interpretations of United Nations recommendations to either party. For your own information, the views of His Majesty's Government on these three questions are briefly as follows.

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We regard the present armistice demarcation lines as allotting more territory to Israel than is justified. We have never been convinced that the territorial settlement proposed by Count Bernadotte was wrong but that is now probably well outside practical politics. The best line to take at present seems to be that announced so often by the United States Government, namely that if Israel obtains anything more than the territory allotted to her by the November 1947 resolution of the United Nations Assembly she ought to make territorial concessions in compensation elsewhere. We have however never been able to determine how the United States Government intend that this doctrine should be applied in practice. The most important considerations with regard to the frontiers are that there should if possible be a line of communication between Egypt and Transjordan, that any increase of Arab territory automatically helps to ease the problem of refugees and that if it is impossible to have a complete international zone at Haifa there should at least be proper arrangements for a free commercial port there.

6. As regards Jerusalem the attitude of His Majesty's Government is set out in my telegram No. 1774 to the United Kingdom Delegation, New York, of which I attach a copy. If we were called upon to advise on the possible methods by which the principle of internationalisation could be applied in practice there are various suggestions which could be made. At present, however, it must be left to the Conciliation Commission to discuss the various possibilities without outside intervention.

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7. The question of refugees is in many ways the most acute of those resulting from the recent developments in Palestine and the one by which the Israeli attitude will mainly be judged in the outside world. Here again our own attitude is clear, namely that the United Nations decisions should be fully carried out and we must leave it to the Conciliation Commission in the first instance to settle how many of the refugees can be repatriated and how compensation can be paid for the remainder. For your own information we do not expect that more than a comparatively small number will ever be readmitted to Israel, but we must be careful not to give the impression that this is a foregone conclusion or that Israel is justified in adopting the restrictive attitude which she has so far shown. When it has become clear that the maximum possible repatriation has been provided for we shall have to concentrate on securing the largest possible allocation of funds from Israel to help finance the resettlement of refugees elsewhere.

I am, with great truth and respect,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(For Mr. McNeil)

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SUGGESTED BASIS FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF VARIOUS OUSTANDING QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH PALESTINE WHICH MIGHT BE PUT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR. ACHESON IN PARIS

There are at present three questions connected with Palestine which require to be dealt with urgently in order to preserve good relations so far as possible with the Arab States on the one hand and Israel on the other. The first, and probably the most embarrassing of all, is the problem of how to supply Arab countries with which we are in Treaty relationships with the arms essential to them for training and internal security without running into difficulties with the United Nations and the United States Government. The second is the problem of how to give Transjordan all the support we can in her negotiations with Israel for a peace settlement and in particular how to extend the support we are obliged to give her under the Treaty to the Transjordan occupied area of Eastern Palestine. The third problem is when to grant de jure recognition to Israel.

Arms Embargo

Since the Arms Embargo was imposed by a resolution of the United Nations it can presumably only be lifted by another United Nations resolution. We consider, however, that if we can secure the approval of the United States Government there would be no obstacle to supplying arms and ammunition to the Arab States for internal security and training purposes. We have suggested this course to Mr. Acheson who has not yet given us his final views. When it was first put to him he said he foresaw criticism from the United States Congress on the grounds that the United Kingdom would be enabled directly or indirectly to supply war-materiel to the Arabs as a result of assistance from the United States under the Atlantic Pact. Such an accusation would be totally untrue and we could supply arguments to refute it if necessary. There the matter stands at present.

Undertaking by H.M.G. to support Transjordan in case of any attack on the Transjordan-held areas of Eastern Palestine.

It is important politically to afford Transjordan such support as we can for the purpose of her negotiations for a peace settlement with Israel. There are two principal difficulties in the way of our covering the Transjordan position in Eastern Palestine. The first is that if H.M.G. recognised a formal Transjordan annexation of Eastern Palestine and the extension of their liabilities under Treaty to that area, it might be claimed by Israel that this was contrary to the terms of the Israeli-Transjordan Armistice which laid down that neither side should gain any political advantage during the Armistice and that H.M.G. were abetting an illegality. The second difficulty is that the Chiefs-of-Staff ~~doubt~~ consider that ~~We are militarily in a position to protect Transjordan against a full-scale Israeli attack and that it would therefore be unwise for Transjordan to provoke this by an act of annexation~~ The Chiefs-of-Staff suggest that the most practical help which we can give Transjordan at present is to supply the Arab Legion with ammunition. We have not so far been able to do anything about this but it should be possible to help under the procedure outlined in the previous section.

De Jure Recognition of Israel.

Although Mr. Helm has now gone to Tel Aviv with the rank of a fully accredited Minister, H.M.G. do not consider that this

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is in any way tantamount to de jure recognition and a suitable moment will have to be found for granting such recognition.

It is suggested that the early de jure recognition of Israel might be set against our action in providing essential ammunition for training and internal security and in supporting the position of Transjordan in Eastern Palestine. A formula might be found on the last issue on the following lines. The Transjordan Government have for some time been administering the areas of Eastern Palestine which they occupy under the necessary ordinances, though no formal act of annexation has taken place. Any such act should be avoided but H.M.G. would state that they recognised de facto the military position of Transjordan in Eastern Palestine without prejudice to a final peace settlement or to the arrangements to be made for the internationalisation of the entire Jerusalem area in accordance with the wishes of the United Nations. H.M.G. would therefore lend Transjordan their support in the event of any encroachment on their present position in Arab Palestine.

H G S Beith

16th May, 1949.

Mr Beith - we discussed

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NEW YORK TIMES, June 9th, 1949.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 19

Talk of Rivalry Between Britain and U. S. Rises in Middle East as Aides Tour Area

By SAM POPE BREWER

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

BEIRUT, Lebanon, June 8—The simultaneous Middle East tours of Samuel Kopper of the State Department and Sir William Strang, Permanent Under-Secretary of the British Foreign Office, has accentuated interest in a supposed rise in British-United States rivalry in the Middle East generally. When both observers arrived here today, it was taken by local political observers as proof of the careful watch that the Western powers were keeping on each other.

The basis of the rivalry is supposed to be twofold, and to some extent it certainly exists. The Lebanese view is that while the United States and Britain cooperate where Russia is concerned, they are imperialistic rivals otherwise. Whatever its source, the story serves as good Communist propaganda.

The main bone of contention between the two is said to be Middle East oil. The second is believed to be a Palestine peace settlement. In the case of oil, the cause is obvious. In the case of Palestine it is said to be the United States desire for the best possible settlement for Israel to increase United States political influence in the Middle East through the Jewish state, and opposing the British desire to get the best possible settlement for the Arabs so that the British can keep the predominant place politically that they have held for so long in these countries.

The very innocence of the denials by United States and British sources that either Mr. Kopper's visit or Sir William's is anything more than an educational tour tends to confirm the impression that something is being carefully studied, and that possibly some short cut to a settlement of the entire Palestine problem is being sought through joint Anglo-United States efforts. This is far more likely than a major diplomatic struggle for political ascendency.

Britain's premier place in Middle East oil, long jealously guarded, has been split with United States interests since the war, and the United States share is constantly growing. This is seen by Middle East observers as an obvious cause for friction between the two countries. It is being exploited equally by nationalist elements, who hope vaguely that disagreements will keep either country from bothering the Arab states, and by Communists, who wish to impress the public with the calm strength of Russia and the probable split between the Western allies.

While there is an excess of Middle East tortuous thinking in detailed accounts of the situation, it is evident at least that elements of rivalry exist in the oil situation. British comments frequently show politely veiled resentment of the mushroom growth of United States oil enterprises and the money that they are able to spend.

NEW YORK TIMES, 10th June, 1949.

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ANGLO-U. S. MOVES IN MIDEAST SEEN

Some Quarters Hold That Talks of Officials With Lebanese Heads Mean Coordination

By SAM POPE BREWER
Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

BEIRUT, Lebanon, June 9 — Visiting representatives of the State Department and the British Foreign Office both talked today with Lebanese leaders, and though the subjects discussed were not revealed there is a growing impression of some concerted Anglo-United States moves to coordinate the respective policies in the Middle East of the United States and Britain.

Samuel Kopper of the State Department and Sir William Strang of the Foreign Office saw Premier Riad es-Solh, and Sir William again called on Foreign Minister Hamid Frangie, whom he saw yesterday with President Beshara el-Khoury.

Mr. Kopper, who handles United Nations matters in the Near East and Africa for the State Department, declined to discuss the subject matter of his talk with the Premier and said that his entire Middle East tour was a routine matter. All British sources said that Sir William was merely on an informative tour.

Though United States Legation sources deny knowledge of any specific movement for a common policy by the United States and Britain in the Middle East, as has been reported from Cairo, signs point toward an effort to eliminate divergences.

Even if no concrete plan for reshaping policy exists, there has been evidence recently of a special interest by both British and Americans in getting a first-had up-to-date picture through personal visits by responsible officials. The British are about to have a conference in London of Middle East experts, and it is a reasonable assumption that the two Governments are making all possible efforts to eliminate the conflicts on policy that have occurred during the last few years, particularly on the Palestine question.

Both Communists and extreme nationalist xenophobes here have made capital in the past of supposed hostility between Britain and the United States growing out of divergent views on Palestine. The British always have been more friendly to the Arab States and the United States to Israel. All observers here have seen the disagreement on Palestine as a point that could benefit in the long run only the enemies of the Western powers.

Though some circles here still look on the simultaneous visits of United States and British officials as evidence of rivalry and mistrust, sound sources indicate that these visits probably will be followed soon by careful efforts to find agreement between London and Washington on the line to be followed on any major question in this part of the world. Any actual conferences may be kept quiet, but there is little doubt that they will be held in some form.

The Middle East is a vital barrier to Russia's tendency to expand, and is an area where none of the Western powers can afford to see disorder continue, let alone increase, as is likely if it continues.

Sir William, who is remaining here until Saturday, is expected to have further talks with leaders of the Government. Mr. Kopper is leaving tomorrow for Damascus, Amman and Jerusalem.

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BRITISH MIDDLE EAST OFFICE,
10 SHARIA TOLUMBAT,
CAIRO.

No. 19.
(31/3/430).

9th June, 1949.

TOP SECRET

GUARD.

Sir,

E 6145/1026/65

1. In para. 4 of your despatch No. 154 of the 20th May you invited my comments on a proposal made by His Majesty's Ambassador in Washington that American experts might be attached to the B.M.E.O.

2. In the light of subsequent correspondence on the subject of American aid to the rehabilitation of the Middle East with particular reference to Arab refugees, it seems possible that this proposal may for the time being have become academic, seeing that the United States Government apparently intend that such aid as they may offer, whether in the form of money, material or technical assistance, shall be given under the auspices of the Conciliation Commission. This would of course not necessarily exclude the attachment of American experts to the B.M.E.O., but it seems on the whole improbable that the United States Government would be prepared to provide two categories of experts simultaneously in the single Middle East field. There is also the consideration raised in despatch No. 265 of the 12th May from H.M. Minister in Paris reporting that the United States Government may appoint Mr. Caffery as special Ambassador for the Middle East. This intention has been mentioned by the members of the International Bank Commission who have just passed through to Iraq. If, as appears not unlikely, the United States Government go forward with this proposal, they would presumably attach to Mr. Caffery any experts whom they might consider appointing outside the framework of the organisations which would be set up by the Conciliation Commission.

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3. The foregoing considerations apply of course only to the probable intentions of the United States Government, a matter which is outside my competence. From the local point of view I can quite see that the attachment of American experts to this office might facilitate the co-ordination of a programme of assistance and advice in the field, and induce in the United States Government a greater awareness of the practical problems which have to be faced. It might also make American officials in the Middle East a little readier to impart information than they usually are at present. At the same time I see very considerable difficulties. As you are aware, the Egyptian Govt. are in any case suspicious of this office, whose existence indeed they refuse to recognise. There have been some signs of their softening in this respect in recent months, but their suspicions would be immediately revived if this office were to start harbouring Americans. The combination of dollar and colonial imperialism under a single roof and in the Egyptian capital would, I think, be more than the most friendly Egyptian could swallow. I fear too that this suspicion might percolate to other Arab countries. It is true that in Persia British and American experts are working together under the O.C.I. without any apparent objection on the part of the Persian Government. But I should be somewhat nervous as to the effect on the good name of this office in, say, Iraq and Syria if American experts were to visit those countries under its auspices.

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The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

BRITISH MIDDLE EAST OFFICE,
10 SHARIA TOLUMBAT,
CAIRO.

4. I have considered the matter again from the security point of view. As to this we work of course to-day in very close collaboration with the United States Government in every sphere of activity and the Middle East Defence Committee is itself authorised under its new terms of reference to invite United States observers to attend its meetings. In principle therefore there could be no security objection to American experts being present in this office, and administrative arrangements could no doubt be made to prevent their having access to papers which we should not wish them to see. Nevertheless the situation might be a little awkward. One of the most important roles of this office is to give political guidance to the Commanders-in-Chief in the Middle East and there is a continual flow of papers and persons between this office and the Canal Zone. This would be quite impossible to hide from any American expert who was working in this office. There is no reason why the United States Political and Service authorities should not fully aware of this connexion. On the other hand it might cause surprise and suspicion to an American agronomist, who might in turn be singularly indiscreet in disclosing our nefarious activities to friends in the American press. As you will also be aware, there are too a number of secret organisations who, though not connected with the B.M.E.O., have their offices on the premises. An American expert employed in this office might well be interested to discover what particular work is being done by the various officers in the compound, and if he were of a probing disposition it might not take him a very great deal of time to find out.

5. Another point which would need careful consideration is that of the precise status that the American experts would hold. In the first place to whom would they be responsible? Would the B.M.E.O. become an Anglo-American Middle East Office with joint heads taking their instructions from their respective governments? Or would the experts be responsible to myself? Or would they, like the Treasury representative in the Middle East, be within my jurisdiction on purely administrative matters but take their policy instructions from their home government? Unless their status was clearly laid down from the start, one can conceive that considerable difficulties might arise. Secondly there would be the question of their status vis à vis the Egyptian Government. In the diplomatic list my name and those of my staff appear as members of the British Embassy. Would the United States Government and the Egyptian Government be prepared to agree that the American experts should be regarded for official purposes as members of the United States Embassy? This too would have to be cleared up in advance.

6. To sum up, I feel some doubt whether the United States Government would themselves in present circumstances wish to attach experts to this office. Should, however, they wish to do so, I foresee considerable objection from the Egyptian Government and perhaps some suspicion on the part of the other Arab Governments. I should not be entirely happy from the security aspect, and I should strongly recommend that before any such arrangement was made, the status of the American experts should be clearly defined.

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BRITISH MIDDLE EAST OFFICE,
10 SHARIA TOLUMBAT,
CAIRO.

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7. There is one other point arising out of Sir Oliver Franks' despatch to which I would draw attention. He recommends that so soon as a settlement of the Palestine question appears to be in sight, we should lose no time in proposing a frank exchange of views with the United States Government over the whole field. It occurs to me that this question of an exchange of views with the United States Government over the whole field of policy in the Middle East might profitably be considered at the Middle East Conference in July.

8. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Representatives in Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, Amman and to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York.

I have the honour to be
With the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient, humble Servant,

Tel Trouttbeck