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Egypt Pt 6.

The P.M. wishes to discuss this with FS, Mr Nutting, LPS, Lt. Presdt, Chamberlain, Mr of Defense & Chiefs of Staff at 12 on Fri. 16 Mar. I have asked Capt Min to arrange it & to circulate the minutes for perusal & return.

TOP SECRET

PM/MS/56/57

The P.M. has seen Mr Nutting's minutes of 12 Mar below before this meeting.

Ms.

PRIME MINISTER

Sir Humphrey Trevelyan has had information from a generally well-informed source that Nasser has already decided to engage in hostilities with Israel and has even decided that June would be the best time (our troops will then be out of the Canal Zone). The report says that the Egyptian plan is to seize the territory they want quickly; and when called on by the United Nations or the three powers to stop, they would do so, but not give up the territories acquired.

2. Trevelyan thinks that this is a possibility which we should certainly take into consideration. Nasser seems to him to have given up the idea of a Palestine settlement. Specific pointers quoted by Trevelyan are:

- (a) Nasser's loss of interest in Alpha and in the Johnston Plan; and Fawzi's warning that "opinion would harden" if the matter were not settled soon;
- (b) Nasser's recent statements to Trevelyan that hostilities between Egypt and Israel would be so arranged that there was doubt about who was the aggressor, and that the military correct/

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- correct action for Egypt in Palestine would be to capture the Israeli forward base of Beersheba;
- (c) the importance Nasser attaches to the moment when British troops will no longer be able to cut his communications;
 - (d) Nasser's fear that the Israelis will get substantial arms from the Americans and his remark to Trevelyan that if there is to be a preventive action soon the Arabs ought to begin it;
 - (e) the increase of tension and of firing in the Gaza strip;
 - (f) the calling-off of the anti-Iraqi campaign and new emphasis on Arab unity;
 - (g) Egyptian fear that Jordan might not support Egypt, especially while Glubb was there.

3. Trevelyan is afraid that if a clash occurs and the Russians step in with some outrageous statement about it being a clear case of Israeli aggression they will enormously strengthen their position in the Arab world.

4. To the evidence listed by Trevelyan I would mention two other factors. There has recently been evidence that the Egyptians are stockpiling food and petroleum products bought

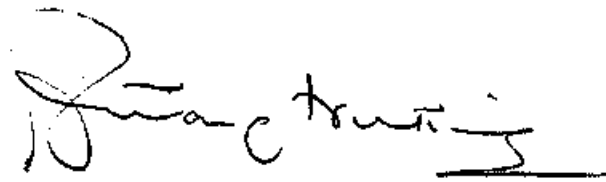
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- 3 -

from the Communists (possibly at Communist suggestion); and the recent statements of leading Egyptians that the Aswan Dam project is no longer urgent and that they will probably not begin work for some time.



March 14, 1956

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R.F. 15.5.57.

Middle East (Policy)
(Arab. Jewish War)

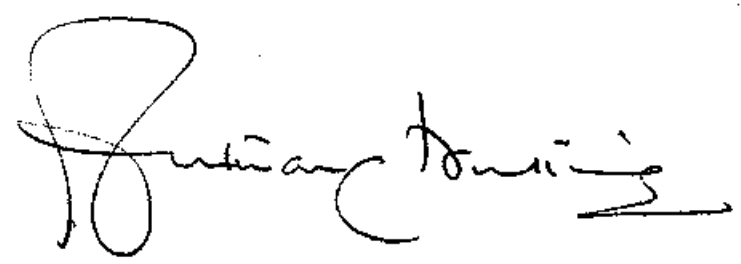
B.L. after Cyprus Debate.

TOP SECRET

PM/MS/56/53

PRIME MINISTER

I have had some thoughts about the situation in the Middle East and our policy. I have discussed these with Shuckburgh who is in general agreement and I send them to you for what they are worth. You will wish to discuss all this with the Foreign Secretary on his return. If you and he agree with some or all of these thoughts we should I think discuss them urgently with the Americans.



R. March 12, 1956

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TOP SECRET

The failure of Alpha creates a new situation. It brings new advantages but does not obviate all our present disadvantages.

It releases us from our obligations to appease Egypt. And it enables us to go all out to build on the Northern Tier, to try and detach Egypt's allies from her, and to isolate or replace Nasser.

But it doesn't release us from that millstone called the Tripartite Declaration. I submit that we should now decide

- (a) to concentrate on our Allies actual and potential; and
- (b) rid ourselves of the Tripartite Declaration.

*New
heard
2/5*

The Chiefs of Staff recently concluded that it would be impossible for us to fight for Israel against the Arabs. We should lose our oil, British communities in the Arab world would be massacred, and we should be involved in a conflict of loyalties with all our Arab allies and friends. On the other side of the medal recent events in Jordan have made it more difficult for us to defend her against an Israeli aggression and we have (or shall have very shortly) neither troops in, nor military understandings with, any other Arab neighbour of Israel.

In/

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In any case I fail to see why we should be saddled with these onerous obligations for an indefinite period. The Tripartite Declaration was intended as a stop-gap to hold a situation resulting from an armistice until a settlement could be reached. Six years have passed and after fervid efforts we are now forced to admit that a settlement is out.

We should therefore lay down this intolerable burden which the Jews and their supporters keep telling us gives them no real guarantee and which confounds our relations with the Arab world. At the same time we mustn't appear to be throwing Israel to the wolves.

I therefore submit that we should disengage, but decently - i.e. under U.N. cover. We cannot afford the burdens we now carry. Our policy should be to concentrate on our interests. I attach a note giving the headings of such a policy. This can be summed up as being positive where our interests are involved, negative where they are not.

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1. Strengthen Gulf States.
 - (a) show the flag by military and naval visits, propaganda, etc.;
 - (b) keep local Rulers up to the mark e.g. work on Bahrain to stiffen its police and quieten the Reformists;
 - (c) more long-term, political operation to strengthen British (and Iraqi) influence and to weaken Egyptian.

2. Rebuild Jordan as prop for Iraq.
 - (a) secure guarantees of Legion's continued efficiency;
 - (b) revise system of co-operation with Legion and perhaps treaty and subsidy;
 - (c) cautiously encourage Iraqi influence; and
 - (d) cautiously work for some tripartite arrangement (British-Iraq -Jordan) within or without Bagdad Pact.

3. Work through Iraq ~~to~~ to replace present régime in Syria with a view to closer Syrian-Iraqi ties.

4. As more long-term prospect cautiously encourage Fertile Crescent.

5. Detach/

- 2 -

5. Detach Saudi Arabia from Egypt.
 - (a) sow distrust of Egypt and fear of Russia and communism;
 - (b) U.S. to help - their share of effort to build Northern Tier if they won't join Bagdad Pact;
 - (c) Iraq to support;
 - (d) possibly offer as bribe to Saudi access to Persian Gulf.

- irrelevant*
6. Isolate Egypt or replace Nasser, Mossadeq operation might be difficult because we ~~have no Zaidi~~. We cannot be sure that anarchy would suit our purpose.

7. Abandon Alpha.

8. Secure appointment of U.N. Agent-General if Security Council accepts.

(This is an American idea to create a super Burns who would be empowered to recommend action to U.N. both in emergency and as precautionary measures to safeguard peace).

We must ensure that Agent-General's powers are adequate but not too far-reaching.

9. Announce/

- 3 -

9. Announce, with U.S. and France, "ideal solution" for Arab-Israel settlement.

In other words spell out the Guildhall Speech in terms of frontiers, water and refugees.

Give the parties a decent interval to accept or reject negotiations on this basis.

If they accept, we

10. Offer to guarantee a settlement, but if they reject, we

11. Announce that our obligations under the Tripartite Declaration are at an end, and in future

Measures for keeping the peace are responsibility of U.N. and Security Council as a whole, to whom

Agent-General will recommend what he deems necessary.

We should then be free to sell arms to both sides or to neither.

12. Hold firm to and help Libya.

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PRIME MINISTER.

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Copy No. 4

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE
AND THE ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER IN JERUSALEM ON
MARCH 13, 1956**

Present:

The Secretary of State.	Mr. Ben-Gurion.
Sir J. Nicholls.	Mr. Sharett.
Sir H. Caccia.	Dr. Eytan.
Mr. Hancock.	Mr. Schneerson.
	Mr. Kollek.

Mr. Ben-Gurion welcomed the Secretary of State as the first British Foreign Secretary ever to visit Israel.

The Secretary of State then briefly reviewed the situation in the Arab countries. He concluded that elements of domestic instability were present in all of them. The dispute between Israel and the Arab countries added a further major unsettling factor. The Soviet intervention, exemplified by the Egyptian-Czech arms deal, had brought about a change of the first importance. In this situation, it was difficult to play the hand so that the weak countries of the area did not fall a prey to Soviet Russia. Britain had many interests in the area, of which the chief was to see that oil supplies from the Persian Gulf were maintained.

Mr. Ben-Gurion replied that, whereas it was natural for the British to see Israel in the context of Middle Eastern problems, the Israelis themselves thought of Israel as a world problem, seeing that there were Jews all over the world and that Jewry was a spiritual and cultural influence everywhere.

Unfortunately, the immediate problems of Israel were Middle Eastern problems. The great danger to Israel was that Russia was using Egypt as a stalking horse. The danger from Russia was a danger not only to the Middle East but also to Africa. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* did not consider that Colonel Nasser was a Communist. He was only an imperialist. His philosophy now was the same as what he had outlined in his pamphlet "Philosophy of the Revolution." Colonel Nasser might have chosen the method of building up the Egyptian economy over a long period and ameliorating the lot of the Fellahin. But he had chosen to take the short cut of using Russian help. He now required, in order to keep up his prestige, not only in Egypt but in the Arab world as a whole, to eliminate Israel. Thus it was that Nasser was the key to Soviet penetration. A beginning had been made in Jordan. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* thought that a Junta of young officers might assume power before long. If Jordan was won, Iraq would be next. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* thought that it would be easy enough to assassinate Nuri. Africa would come later. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* thought that Africa would be more susceptible to Communist influence than Asia had been.

Mr. Ben-Gurion said that Colonel Nasser, being a dictator, was not his own master. He did not see how Colonel Nasser could avoid a conflict with Israel. Colonel Nasser respected the capacity of the Israeli army. But he had received some 200 MIGs and some 60 ILs. His trainees were already in Czechoslovakia and Poland in hundreds. His military superiority, in fact, was overwhelming and he could be expected to strike against Israel soon.

The Secretary of State asked how soon. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* replied that he thought it would be in two, three or four months. Only one thing could prevent Nasser from beginning a war, namely action on the part of the Western Powers to redress the balance of armaments in Israel's favour. The Israeli Government,

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who would never themselves undertake a preventive war, did not require absolute parity, but only a sufficient quantity of arms to act as a deterrent against Egyptian aggression.

It had been said that Israel must rely for protection upon the Tripartite Declaration, but Mr. Ben-Gurion could place no reliance at all upon it because, if Israel were attacked, neither Britain nor America could move with sufficient rapidity. Ten minutes would suffice for the Egyptian bombers to destroy Tel Aviv. Nor was Mr. Ben-Gurion at all certain that Britain and America would ever come in on Israel's side. He believed that they might well be deterred by the danger of Soviet intervention.

Mr. Ben-Gurion concluded by saying that, if Britain and America continued in their present policy, they would be held responsible before history for the coming war. All Israel wanted and needed was peace.

The Secretary of State asked whether, if the Western Powers were now to supply Israel with what she considered a sufficient quantity of defensive arms, would not the result be a further Egyptian application for Russian arms followed by the supply of Russian arms to the other Arab States. In that case, would Israel not end by being faced with the more critical situation of a ring of States round her borders armed with Soviet arms and probably with Soviet technicians.

Mr. Ben-Gurion said that this reasoning was fallacious. Of the Arab countries, only Egypt could fight Israel. For the next five or ten years, Egyptian capacity had a limit. Ninety per cent. of the recruits to the Egyptian army were unhealthy, illiterate or both. Thus there was a serious lack of technicians. Egypt already had more equipment than she could use effectively. Israel had as many able-bodied and educated soldiers as Egypt.

The Secretary of State said that he did not see why the Russians should not send technicians. They had plenty of them in readiness, including Arabic speakers. In this situation, he still thought that Israel's best defence lay in the deterrent of the Tripartite Declaration.

Mr. Sharett then developed his reasons for considering the Tripartite Declaration inadequate. First, it did not confer a contractual obligation. If Britain failed to apply the Declaration, she would not be involved in a breach of faith. Second, the situation had been changed by the Soviet intervention. The Soviet Government had themselves said that they would not remain indifferent if the Western Powers intervened in the Middle East. Mr. Sharett feared that the Western Powers would not act because they feared a global war. Third, Colonel Nasser would no doubt choose to adopt tactics designed to avoid raising a *casus foederis*. The Egyptians could infiltrate parties of saboteurs or assassins into Israel. If the Israelis reacted with military force, they would themselves appear to be the aggressors.

The Secretary of State said that the Tripartite Declaration meant exactly what it said and the United Kingdom meant to honour it. This was also the American intention, as had been apparent in the Washington discussions. As to Soviet military action in the Middle East, the Secretary of State thought that the logistic difficulties would be overwhelming. As to the difficulties of a confused situation, without certainty as to which side was responsible for aggression, the Secretary of State thought that the remedy was to improve conditions along the border, perhaps increasing the number of United Nations personnel.

Mr. Ben-Gurion then intervened to complain that Britain and America had been unwilling to make a Treaty with Israel, and yet the United States Government had entered into a treaty committing themselves to fight Communist China in respect of Formosa. Mr. Ben-Gurion asked whether it was possible in this situation for Israel to take the Tripartite Declaration seriously. In any case, it was a principle arising out of the Tripartite Declaration that both sides should receive equal treatment. But they had not received such treatment.

The Secretary of State said that the plain fact was that in present circumstances Israel was a military match for the Arab States. He then pointed out the strength of the British and United States forces in the area, and the weakness of Egypt's strategic position. He doubted whether Nasser, vulnerable as he was to British and American forces already in the Middle Eastern area, would gamble on anything which might be considered aggression and expose him to those forces.

Mr. Ben-Gurion agreed that Israel might win if there was a conflict now. But he asked what would be the price of such a victory. He also asked why British or American soldiers should be expected to die for Israel. All that Israel needed was a sufficient quantity of defensive arms now.

In reply to a question from the Secretary of State, *Mr. Ben-Gurion* said that in his view there was no immediate prospect of an Arab/Israel settlement. Provided that war could be avoided, there was a distant prospect.

The Secretary of State said that he understood the Israeli anxieties about Egyptian intentions. But in Israel's own interest, it was necessary to avoid anything which might consolidate Arab unity. To supply a considerable number of arms to Israel would do just that. Our present aim ought to be to diminish Egyptian influence.

Mr. Ben-Gurion said that Nasser was not Egypt. Nasser ought to be faced with a clear choice by the Western Powers. They should ask him to choose between themselves and Russia. At present, Nasser was having the best of both worlds, playing the Western Powers off against the Soviet Union.

The Secretary of State raised the question of an extension of United Nations activity along the demarcation line.

Mr. Ben-Gurion said he did not see how even a considerable increase of United Nations personnel could prevent infiltration into Israel by small groups of terrorists. The Israeli Army themselves were unable to prevent such infiltration. Nor did *Mr. Ben-Gurion* think that physical demarcation, e.g., barbed wire, would be of much use. The demilitarised zones had been a source of constant confusion and uncertainty as to responsibility. What kept a frontier quiet was the presence of adequate forces in the vicinity. Thus the Israel/Jordan border had been kept quiet because the Arab Legion was in Jordan. Since Glubb's dismissal incidents on the Jordan frontier had begun. A physical barrier with patrols synchronised by each side had been suggested. But such an arrangement depended on the agreement of both sides. When the Israelis had made such a proposal in respect of the Gaza strip, the Egyptians had been unwilling to work with them.

Mr. Ben-Gurion then referred to the Secretary of State's suggestion that there might be a withdrawal on each side of the line. Colonel Nasser could accept such a proposal. His country was so large that a slight loss of ground was a matter of indifference to him. Israel, on the other hand, was so small that a withdrawal of even half a kilometre would considerably diminish her area. In any case, cultivation was carried on right up to the demarcation line. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* concluded by saying that he did not think that even an increase in the United Nations observers now at the disposal of General Burns would be useful since, if there was aggression, that could be determined by the observers already on the ground.

The Secretary of State asked what contribution Israel would be ready to make to a settlement with the Arab States.

Mr. Ben-Gurion replied that, as regards territory, Israel was a State of less than 8,000 square miles. She could not yield one inch.

As to Jerusalem, it had been the Jewish capital for 3,000 years and would remain so. It must be eliminated from any contribution.

As to refugees, there could be Israeli assistance in their resettlement. But the admission of increased numbers of refugees into Israel could be "symbolic." *The Secretary of State* asked if this meant that 10 per cent. of the refugees could be admitted. *Mr. Ben-Gurion* said the amount must be much less. There could be a widening of the present family reunion scheme. There could be no readmission of new Arab families.

For the rest, Israel would hope to assist a settlement with the Arabs by helping the Arab States to combat poverty and illiteracy and offering trade and transit facilities, provided that these were reciprocal.

Mr. Ben-Gurion and *Mr. Sharett* concluded their exposition of the contribution which Israel might make to a settlement by contending that the first step must be to enter into negotiations with their Arab neighbours. Israel's terms could not be stated in advance and peace could not be bought by preliminary offers.

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Middle East (Policy)
Arab-Israeli War PR 9
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Copy No. 4

SURVEY OF ISRAEL'S ARMED STRENGTH AND MILITARY THINKING

Sir John Nicholls to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received March 14)

(No. 37. Secret)
Sir,

Tel Aviv,
March 10, 1956.

The three armed services of Israel have been the subject of my despatches No. 6 and No. 11 of the 13th and 21st of January, and No. 144 of the 14th of November, 1955. Each service individually is probably the best in its element, in quality though not in quantity, in the Middle East. Nevertheless there has been a widespread feeling among Israelis that their defence is in jeopardy and that they must be permitted to buy equipment at least as good in any category as that held by their prospective opponents. Any suggestion that this would in practice aggravate their political difficulties without, in the long run, improving their military position *vis-à-vis* their opponents, and that they must rely on outside help to make good the deficit simply does not carry conviction. This state of mind is in part a deliberate creation of the Government of Israel but it also corresponds in part to the real facts of the predicament in which Israel now finds itself.

2. Although open warfare is not perhaps any more intrinsically probable between Israel and the Arab States than it is between the Soviet Union and the West, the balance of armed strength in the Middle East has a constant bearing upon the power and prestige of the protagonists and thus upon the problems of the type of "limited" war which is always threatening on Israel's borders. It may therefore be appropriate first of all to discuss the capacity of the Israeli Defence Force in the event of a "hot" war before passing on to consider more normal conditions.

3. In terms of "hot" war Israel, by all the facts of geography, should be completely indefensible, on land, sea or air, against the combined power of the Arab States if this were efficiently brought to bear. Israel has land frontiers of 49 miles with Lebanon, 47 miles with Syria, 330 miles with Jordan and 165 miles with Egypt. The size of the active Israeli army is approximately the size of the British force which defended the 22-mile perimeter of Tobruk in the last war and the size of the active and reserve armies together is approximately the size of the combined British and American forces which defended the slightly larger perimeter at Anzio. The land forces which the Arab States could put into the field against them are by now better armed and certainly not inferior in numbers, indeed, their regular forces approximately match Israel's active and reserve armies together. Israel's army is thus faced—on paper at least—with a hopeless task in trying to defend nearly 600 miles of frontier unless it can attack and destroy one or more of its enemies and then turn upon the others. But to be certain of attacking successfully is generally held to require either a 3:1 advantage in concentration of forces at the selected point of attack, or, if fighting against equal or superior numbers, an exceptional advantage in equipment and morale. Failing any of these the quality of leadership might be such that it gave a fair promise of gaining the same ends by tactical surprise but it is not easy for a nation to be reduced to relying upon anything so uncertain for its continued existence. In these circumstances the Israeli army is bound to pay particular attention to equipment and to morale (which in some measure depends upon equipment).

4. The air defence problem is equally intractable. Any part of the country can be reached from "hostile" territory by a jet aircraft in a matter of tens of seconds or at most in a few hundreds of seconds. Some interceptions might be achieved by flying airborne early warning patrols, as an aircraft carrier does at sea, in order to extend the range of radar warning but not to any effect if enemy bombers can fly higher and faster than the defending fighters. This therefore is also an element in which quality becomes of supreme importance and where the capacity to attack enemy airfields is a prime means of defence.

5. Although naval problems are less important to Israel she could not afford to allow control of her coastal waters to pass to other hands. She would be gravely embarrassed within a short time by an effective blockade and, if war continued for more than a matter of a few months, could probably be brought to her knees by submarine warfare and the mining of coastal waters.

6. The forces available to meet this strategic problem are described in an Annex⁽¹⁾ to this despatch. Though large in proportion to the population of the country, well-organised, well-led and inspired by a fanatical devotion, they are in terms of armament and equipment not capable of conducting a prolonged campaign against the forces which the Arab States are, in theory, capable of putting into the field against them. All available manpower is already committed in one way or another to defence; there is no untapped source which can be drawn upon if the Arab States increase their regular forces or create reserve armies, and Israel's geographical configuration renders her peculiarly liable to be overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers.

7. Since it would be militarily such an easy matter to destroy Israel it is vital to her continued existence that the Arab countries should never conceive of her destruction as a practical possibility. Once this occurred the necessary co-ordination and training might be set on foot with incalculable consequences. It therefore follows in Israeli eyes that no Arab country must ever be allowed to obtain a temporary moral or material superiority which might lead them to translate their dream of destroying Israel into terms of a practical and realisable ambition. The Western concept of a balance of power in which Israel with the help of the tripartite Powers would have nothing to fear from the Arab States is anathema to Israel. It presupposes an admission of Israeli inferiority which, in their eyes, would mean that the fatal rot had set in. Their conviction on this point is reinforced by the belief that, in practice, military assistance from the West would not be forthcoming or at least would arrive too late, and that the Arabs know this.

8. The same moral ascendancy is also to Israeli eyes an essential ingredient of their border policy. The scale of the problem is illustrated by figures of Israeli casualties quoted by the Israeli Prime Minister in the Knesset on January 2: in 1951, 137; in 1952, 147; in 1953, 162; in 1954, 180; in 1955, 258. Again I believe that the key to the Israeli attitude is a consciousness of their vulnerability to this form of "limited" attack. The length of the frontier has already been mentioned. This makes interception on the border extremely difficult. Even if the army were to be diverted from normal peacetime training for defence tasks and devoted solely to the desert and mountain equivalent of jungle-bashing the task would still not be easy. But once an infiltrator has crossed the border into an inhabited area the task of interception becomes virtually impossible. Once inside the country an infiltrator need expect no serious difficulty in passing himself off as an Israeli Arab or as a Jew from an Arab country. The Israelis have therefore resigned themselves to a philosophy of border control which holds that only the Government and people of the Arab country concerned can prevent an infiltrator from coming over into Israel on a foray and since both Arab Governments and Arab people are inclined to regard a foray into Israel as a meritorious act the only possible deterrent is fear of the consequences. For lack of effective support in the Security Council or by the Tripartite Powers the Israelis see this deterrent power as lying in their own hands only. Nor has it been entirely ineffective in the short term. But it is an essential basis of police action against criminals that the police should not have their hands tied by public opinion and that in the last resort the criminals should not be better armed and more powerful than the police. If I may apply this metaphor to Israel neither of these preconditions for successful police action any longer holds good. Firstly Israeli methods have not received public support in the rest of the world and as a result Israel's hands have become more and more tied, especially by the United Nations Security Council resolution on January 19, on the Lake Tiberias incident. Secondly the balance of power is shifting so that if it comes to a showdown the time is approaching when there will no longer be any assurance that the policeman will win.

9. Very little infiltration is in fact going on at present but, if anything, this confirms that infiltration is less and less the spontaneous action of a dispossessed refugee and more and more a disgraceful act of State.

10. The ultimate fear of the Israelis, and it has been confirmed recently in conversation by the Israel Director of Military Intelligence, is that when Egypt considers the time is ripe she will gradually goad Israel into "police" actions which could either progressively destroy the remains of Israel's moral case until she stood

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completely isolated or become the signal for general fighting. In the latter case the Tripartite Powers might be either "unfairly" on the side of the Arabs or thrown into such confusion by the absence of a clear cut issue that they would fail to come to Israel's assistance in time. The Israelis point out that the advent of jet bombing aircraft to the theatre has made the time factor very important.

11. For all these reasons the Israelis cannot, as I have said, acquiesce in the suggested solution of allowing the Arabs to maintain a local ascendancy balanced from the outside by the Tripartite Powers. The arguments advanced in favour of this solution as I understand them are that:—

- (a) the supply of adequate arms to Israel would cause irreparable harm to our much more important relations with the Arab States; if Israel were adequately armed, she might attack; the British forces in the area must not be qualitatively inferior to those of Israel in case they had to be used against Israel under the Tripartite Declaration or for the defence of Jordan;
- (b) if Israel were supplied with adequate arms, the Egyptians and perhaps other Arab States would look to the Soviet Union for additional supplies, thus enabling the latter to secure a dominant position in them.

12. If these arguments are valid, there is no way of reconciling our present policy with Israel's conviction that peace in the area can only be ensured by allowing her to obtain sufficient arms of sufficient quality to maintain her now precarious moral superiority. In short, a settlement of the whole Arab-Israel dispute is the only solution to this political and military dilemma.

13. Even in negotiation for a settlement the Israelis would still, I am sure, retain their belief that Arabs and Arab Governments only respond to force or a threat of force. One of the roles of the Israeli Defence Force is to create a position of strength from which the Israeli Government could afford to try to negotiate an acceptable settlement. I have little doubt that this has been an important factor in the persistent Israeli cry for arms—as, indeed, it has presumably been in the reluctance of the Western Powers to supply them.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Bagdad, Beirut, Paris and Washington and to the Political Officer, Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

J. W. NICHOLLS.

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Middle East (Iraq)
Arab-Israeli War Prs
Embassy of the United States of America,
London.

SECRET

March 10, 1956.

Dear Sir Anthony,

7176/56

I have been asked to deliver to you the following message from President Eisenhower:

"Dear Anthony:

"I share your concern over the current developments in the Middle East and know that Foster has discussed them with Selwyn Lloyd.

"We face a broad challenge to our position in the Near East and to our objectives of strengthening our ties with those countries. I believe that our reaction should consist not of isolated moves, but a carefully thought out program.

"The Soviets have made abundantly clear even in their public statements their intentions toward the Near East. It is of course true that some of the moves made by Nasser, though for different reasons, have the effect of assisting the Soviets. It may be that we shall be driven to conclude that it is impossible to do business with Nasser. However, I do not think that we should close the door yet on the possibility of working with him. For one thing, such a decision would cancel out any prospects of obtaining now an Arab-Israeli settlement.

"I agree thoroughly with you on the necessity of aiding our friends and have written you separately with respect to the additional centurion tanks for Iraq. However, I question whether adherence by the

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United States to the Baghdad Pact now is the right answer. Measures apart from actual accession to the Pact such as our recent decision to increase aid to Pakistan and Iran may be more effective support for our friends. This is particularly true when drawbacks to adherence are considered, such as the effect on the other Arab States and probable demands for arms and a security guarantee to Israel.

"I do not believe that our assessment of the situation in Jordan is firm enough to permit useful comment on your suggestion that you allot to Iraq some of the aid currently given to Jordan.

"I am pleased that you sent me your preliminary thoughts and shall be waiting to hear the results of the discussions between Selwyn Lloyd and Foster.

"Sincerely,

"DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER"

I am further directed in delivering this message to you, to make clear that the United States position on adherence to the Baghdad Pact is not frozen.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) WALWORTH BARBOUR

Charge d'Affaires a.i.

Copies on.

*Egypt Part 3.
Middle East Policy (Baghdad Pact)
Iraq (Tanks) + Iraq (Treaty)*

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Foreign Office (Secret) and Whitehall (Secret) Distribution

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Copy No. 4

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE
AND MR. NEHRU AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE, DELHI,
ON MARCH 4 FROM 3 P.M. TO 6 P.M.**

Arab/Israel Dispute

The Secretary of State explained that until recently he had thought that there was a serious risk of an attack by Israel from March onwards. The danger was still grave but Colonel Nasser seemed to have formed the impression that the risks had now become less acute.

In response to a question from Mr. Nehru about the Johnston Plan, the *Secretary of State* explained the present difficulties about putting it into effect. He also outlined the ideas regarding a settlement which Colonel Nasser had put to him. He was well aware, however, that when he went to Israel he would probably be given a set of completely irreconcilable demands. The present situation was not only very difficult to solve but seemed in some respects even more dangerous than Indo-China had been while the fighting was going on, chiefly because war was logistically so much easier in the Middle East.

Mr. Nehru commented that all these local problems were dependent upon relations between the Great Powers. Unless some progress could be made towards understanding among the Powers, the local problems would continue to grow and the Soviet Union was geographically in a favourable position to exploit them.

The Secretary of State commented that we considered the Soviet arms deal with Egypt had been a grave act, which had greatly added to tension between Israelis and Arabs. It had undoubtedly been planned a long time before. The Russians were also moving in on the African countries, establishing Embassies with large staffs.

Mr. Nehru commented that, so long as both sides were playing the game of seeking to undermine each other, one must expect such moves from the Soviet side. Soviet actions such as the arms deal were moves in a bigger game; the Russians were not much interested in the Arabs or the Israelis as such.

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Makins
No. 391
February 15, 1956

D: 2.12 a.m. February 16, 1956
R: 3.22 a.m. February 16, 1956

PRIORITY
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 391 of February 15.

Repeated for information to Cairo	Tel Aviv	
and Saving to Paris	Beirut	Bagdad
	Ankara	Damascus
	Amman	
	P.O.M.E.F. Jedda	UKDel New York

My telegram No. 368: Talks on Tripartite Declaration.

Mr. Allen, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, presided over the meeting which was attended by the French Ambassador and Her Majesty's Minister.

2. The following were the subjects discussed.

- (a) Mr. Ben Gurion's Statement about Jisr Banat Ya'acob and the Johnston Plan. (See my telegram No. 385).

It was agreed that Mr. Ben Gurion's statement, if confirmed was an encouraging development which radically affected the course of these discussions. It made any tripartite démarche to the Israelis on the subject unnecessary, though it was suggested that it might be useful to give Ben Gurion a word of commendation and encouragement.

Mr. Allen said that Mr. Johnston was leaving on February 20 on a six weeks' visit to the Far East. He intended to pay another visit to the Middle East later if it would be useful, but had no definite plans. He would be ready to amend his programme if there were good reason. It was agreed that it would be desirable for any public comment on Mr. Johnston's reported plans to emphasize his readiness to return to the Middle East, even though this was not his present intention. Mr. Allen said he would have to discuss this with Mr. Johnston.

/ (b)

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TSECRETWashington telegram No. 391 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

(b) Proposed Syrian Action in the Security Council.

It was agreed that Ben Gurion's statement made it much less likely that the Syrians would wish to pursue this proposal.

(c) Tripartite Démarches

The consensus of opinion was that this proposal should now take the form of démarches by the three Ambassadors in Cairo, with the object of persuading the Egyptian Government to call a meeting of Arab States to reconsider the Johnston Plan. Mr. Allen said that the Egyptian Foreign Minister had been optimistic about prospects last week. The French Ambassador thought that Mr. Ben Gurion's statement was a helpful factor: the Arabs would not be able to argue that they were being pressed to accept the Johnston Plan under Israeli threats to take the law into their own hands. Mr. Allen said that, as the British and French representatives would have to await instructions, the swiftest procedure would be for the State Department to send instructions to the United States Ambassador in Cairo to consult with his British and French colleagues about concerted, but separate, démarches to the Egyptian Government. The message would express the hope that similar instructions would be sent by the British and French Governments. With regard to other Arab States, it was agreed that representatives of the three countries should be instructed to keep the Governments informed of the action being taken.

(d) The Russian Declaration on the Middle East.

Mr. Allen thought that the guidance given in the three capitals had been on the right lines and that, in the absence of some fresh Russian move, the matter might be dropped. The French Ambassador was also rather doubtful whether a further statement was required.

Her Majesty's Minister pointed out that, according to press reports, the Prime Minister had said he would be prepared to consider a formal reply, but said he had as yet had no instructions to pursue this. The consensus of opinion was against any fresh statement, but that if one were made

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Washington telegram No. 391 to Foreign Office

- 3 -

the best form would be parallel statements rather than a joint one. Some discussion took place on the lines which any fresh statement should take. This is being reported by bag.

(e) Turkish Request for Information

See my immediately following telegram.

Foreign Office please pass to Tel Aviv and Cairo and Saving to Paris, Beirut, Bagdad, Ankara, Amman, Damascus, P.O.M.E.F. and Jedda as my telegrams Nos. 13, 29, 89, 22, 19, 24, 21, 18, 23 and 20 respectively.

[Repeated to Tel Aviv and Cairo and Saving to Paris, Beirut, Bagdad, Ankara, Amman, Damascus, P.O.M.E.F. and Jedda].

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Cairo telegram No. 238 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

on Egypt. Egypt also stood by the joint tripartite offer of subsidy to replace British aid. Jordan could then dispense with the British command of the Arab Legion, especially as the Anglo-Jordanian treaty did not provide for this command.

4. As for closing the Arab ranks, i.e. mediating between Egypt and Iraq, the two countries' foreign policies differed fundamentally, Iraq had chosen to come under British influence, while Egypt maintained that the Arabs should provide their own defence without foreign intervention. How could the two policies be reconciled? For a year the Arab countries had been pressed to join the Bagdad Pact and the question was whether the Amman meeting would be taken by Britain or Iraq as further opportunity to exert such pressure. If the meeting was intended to revive the collective security pact, what relation would there be between the Bagdad Pact and the other Arab countries? If Bagdad was to be link between two pacts the heads of the Arab countries would be serving indirectly the policy of the Bagdad Pact Powers to obtain accession of Arab countries to the Pact.

5. Egypt, therefore, would agree to join the proposed conference, provided Iraq undertook to bring no pressure on Arab countries to join the Bagdad Pact. The conference should also be preceded by preliminary meetings between Arab representatives to discuss the means of closing the Arab ranks without unwittingly helping the policy of expanding the Bagdad Pact.

6. Egypt maintained that if the meeting were held, its true results should be announced, unlike the past procedure of issuing statements indicating agreement when differences actually existed.

Foreign Office pass to Washington as my Saving telegram No. 7.

[Repeated Saving to Washington]

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TSECRETFROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

P R I S E CSir R. Makins
No. 241
January 30, 1956D: 1.43 a.m. (L/T) January 31, 1956
R: 11.37 a.m. January 31, 1956PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL TELEGRAMIMMEDIATE
SECRET

SERIAL No. T 67/56

Following for Lord Privy Seal from Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary.

Today's talks have gone well, with the President in good form. We gave our views about Europe, but Americans are attracted by Euratom and to a lesser extent by Messina, if only to encourage integration. The rest of the day was spent on discussions on the Middle East.

2. Arab-Israel Dispute.

The Americans agreed in principle with our view that we should put teeth into the 1950 Declaration. But they stressed, first, their constitutional difficulties in giving any definite commitments without congressional approval; and second, the need to be sure that both sides - Arab and Israel - would be convinced that we were not bluffing. The Americans have in mind to consult congressional leaders. But they feel that this would be helped by prior consideration of the following:-

- (a) an anticipatory resolution by the United Nations which would lay the foundation for action in the event of hostilities and would be a cover for any immediate military moves;
- (b) military talks between United States and United Kingdom staffs which would be exploratory to see:-
 - (i) what we should do in the way of military moves as a deterrent; and
 - (ii) the scope of the military problem if Arab-Israel hostilities broke out.

Sub-committees on both these matters are meeting tomorrow, and General Whiteley will be our representative on the military

/ talks.

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TSECRETWashington telegram No. 241 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

talks. We both think this is extremely satisfactory and, indeed, what we wanted. I should be glad if you will keep Cabinet informed of these developments.

3. Bagdad Pact

It is clear that the United States will not join the Pact until there is a settlement with Israel. But they will give it support by helping member countries, e.g. off-shore purchase of Centurions for Iraq, and agree that the communiqué should make reference to United States moral support for the Pact. We emphasized the desirability of doing something to show public opinion in Iran that membership of the Pact was beneficial. In spite of the difficulty that the Americans find in giving budgetary, as opposed to military or development, assistance, they will in the end provide some, but they will not make it too easy.

4. Egypt

We agreed that the future of our policy in the Middle East depended to a considerable extent on Nasser. If he showed himself willing to cooperate with us, we should reciprocate. The Americans thought that present talks about the Aswan Dam with Mr. Black might indicate his state of mind. If his attitude on this and other matters showed that he would not cooperate, we both should have to reconsider our policy towards him.

5. Saudi Arabia

We went over familiar ground, but there seems to be some improvement in the American attitude. The Americans now feel that the first thing is direct negotiation, whatever may follow subsequently. They have asked us to see whether we could dress up propositions in Secretary of State's message (Foreign Office telegram No. 341 to Washington). The President said that the essential was to get direct discussions going.

[Copies sent to Lord Privy Seal and No. 10 Downing Street].

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Mr. Dulles said that at the luncheon both sides had been agreed that it was necessary to do something to show the Arabs and the Israelis that they could not go to war without drawing stern measures upon themselves. The best way of doing this might be through the Tripartite Declaration of 1950. But this would raise constitutional difficulties for the United States: the President could not commit himself to use force without Congressional approval. They would consider discussing the matter with Congressional leaders.

The Prime Minister said that the conference must go further than a vague re-affirmation of the Tripartite Declaration. At present neither side really thought that the British and the Americans would take action, and this was a temptation to them to start trouble.

Mr. Selwyn Lloyd agreed and said that we must show that we were ready to take military measures and not merely consult.

Mr. Dulles suggested that it would be helpful to the United States if the United Nations could pass an anticipatory resolution which would form the basis of subsequent military action. The combination of such a resolution and talks with Congressional leaders would show that we meant business.

Mr. Allen mentioned the possibility of increasing the number of United Nations observers in Palestine or setting up a Peace observation group composed of civilians. He also referred to the Palestine Conciliation Commission which could be reactivated.

Mr. Hoover said that among the military measures that the United States might take were the following. The Mediterranean Naval Task Force might move to Turkish waters; the United States minesweeper at Bahrain might move to Massawa and be reinforced by destroyers; the Marine complements of United States ships in the area might be increased; and carrier-based aircraft might be stationed in the North African bases.

Mr. Selwyn Lloyd asked whether it would be difficult for the Americans to say that they would consult with us over military action.

Mr. Dulles said it would not. But unless there was some basis such as an anticipatory resolution in the United Nations or talks with Congressional leaders, it would be known that the United States did not mean business. It was essential that they should not seem to be bluffing. It was necessary to be ready to take action immediately without awaiting the results of an

/investigation

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-3-

investigation into the rights and wrongs of any incident.

The Prime Minister said that we should be careful of United Nations resolutions lest the Russians should have an opportunity of making difficulties. Nevertheless a combination of three measures - a reference to the matter in the final statement after the Conference, a United Nations resolution, and talks with Congressional leaders - would probably be satisfactory.

Mr. Dulles asked whether the British Military authorities had studied what should be done.

Mr. Hoover said that the United States preliminary studies showed that economic sanctions would not have an immediate impact. Military demonstrations would have no value if they were bluff.

The Prime Minister, after explaining what troops the United Kingdom had available in the area, said that so far our planning was on the basis of protecting British subjects in Jordan.

After further discussion it was agreed that two sub-committees should be set up at once to study:

- (a) the possibility of an anticipatory resolution being passed by the United Nations which would form the basis of subsequent military action; and
- (b) the military problems involved in implementing the Tripartite Declaration.

The Prime Minister and Mr. Dulles mentioned the desirability of associating the French with this matter before the end of the conference.

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BRITISH EMBASSY,
WASHINGTON.

TOP SECRET

January 12, 1956

My dear Ivone,

I arrived at lunchtime to-day and have already seen Francis Russell and George Allen. The talks proper start to-morrow.

Russell has given me the following information on the basis of the utmost secrecy about Alpha. He had been asked by Mr. Dulles to enquire from me exactly to whom I would be imparting the information; the Americans are treating it as so secret that they are not even telling their Ambassador in Cairo. They have in fact brought Byroade home for consultation precisely in order that he should not be present in Cairo at the relevant time and need not therefore be told!

As you know, Nasser and Ben-Gurion both agreed recently to receive a mediator. The U.S. Government have now appointed Mr. Robert B. Anderson, formerly Secretary of the Navy and Deputy Secretary of Defence. He leaves for Cairo in a few days' time and will be smuggled unobtrusively into the country. Nasser has agreed to devote two or three days to discussions with him about a possible settlement with Israel. Mr. Anderson will then go to Israel and he will devote a month to going between the two parties.

The indications which the Americans have had from Nasser are that he is now likely to be less rigid than we previously thought about the land connexion in the Negev. It seems to be believed that Nasser might settle for something much more like the original Alpha triangles, or some corridor arrangement, provided we will help him in the furtherance of his aims for Arab unity. I am not at all clear what this means and will probe it further. I have pointed out to Russell that one of the things Nasser might consider an obstacle to his aims is the British position in the Arab Legion and that this might create difficulties. I will let you know anything more I can discover.

As I am not sending any telegram on this subject, I will let Russell know, for Mr. Dulles' information, that only you and the Secretary of State are being made aware of the secret talks now about to take place in Cairo. I have undertaken that you will not inform Humphrey Trevelyan or any other Ambassador "in the field".

Since dictating the above I have learned that Anderson will be accompanied by Mr. Kermit Roosevelt of the C.I.A. and by two State Department Palestine experts, both of whom I know to be fully acquainted with Alpha in all its aspects.

Yours ever,

(sgd) Evelyn Shuckburgh.

Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

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Middle East (Bling)
(Israel/Middle East)

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Trevelyan

No: 1938
December 17, 1955

D. 12.16 a.m. December 17, 1955
R. 12.47 a.m. December 17, 1955

IMMEDIATE

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1938 of December 17,
Repeated for information to Tel Aviv
Jerusalem

And Saving to Washington
UK Del New York
P.O.M.E.F.

My telegram No. 1937.

Following is the full text of the Prime Minister's letter
to the Secretary General.

Begins:

I regret to inform you that Israel, which has hitherto followed a policy of premeditated aggression against Egypt, has gone further still in her aggressive acts, violating the border of other Arab countries. Her latest aggressive act against the Syrian forces is, according to the bilateral agreement concluded between Syria and Egypt, considered an act of aggression against Egypt as well. Egypt has hitherto shown patience with regard to Israeli aggression in order to prove to the world that she does not follow an aggressive policy and that she endeavours to maintain peace in the region of the Middle East. Egypt has tolerated these continuous acts of hostility only to demonstrate her peaceful policy to world public opinion. Now that these acts of hostility have been continuing and have been carried out not only against military forces but also, in a barbarous fashion, against civilians, Egypt finds herself compelled to adopt similar methods in dealing with the situation. I should like to remind you, particularly, of the premeditated acts of aggression perpetrated by Israel since February last, including the following:

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Cairo telegram No. 1938 to Foreign Office.

- 2 -

1. The attack on Gaza on February 28, 1955 which was condemned by the United Nations Security Council as "premeditated" and "brutal".
2. The attack on Khan-Younis in the Gaza sector on August 31, 1955, after the "cease-fire" order given by the Chief Truce Observer and after Egypt had announced her agreement to it.
3. The attack on the El-Auja demilitarized zone on September 21, 1955 and Israel's defiance of the Security Council resolution to withdraw, by continuing to occupy that zone.
4. The attack on the Egyptian forces at El-Contilla inside Egyptian territory on October 25, 1955.
5. The attack on Egyptian forces at El-Sabha, inside Egyptian territory on November 2, 1955.
6. The latest attack on both Syrian forces and civilians east of Tiberias Lake on December 11, 1955.

Consequently, I wish to inform you that the Egyptian Government is forced to take matters into its own hands and it will not hesitate to use its land, sea and air forces to ensure her security and maintain peace in the region, since the Security Council has shown itself incapable of preventing the recurrence of such incidents. Meanwhile, I wish you would inform the Member-States of the Security Council of this message so that they may be acquainted with our position.

Ends.

ADVANCE COPIES TO

Private Secretary
Sir I. Kirkpatrick
Mr. Shuckburgh
Levant Department

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file.

The Prime Minister.

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RECORD OF CONVERSATION IN PARIS ON DECEMBER 15, 1955

MIDDLE EAST: ALPHA

Present:

Mr. Dulles.	Secretary of State.
Mr. Elbrick.	Her Majesty's Ambassador, Paris.
Mr. Dillon.	Sir H. Caccia.
Mr. F. Russell.	Mr. Shuckburgh.

Mr. Hancock.

Mr. Dulles said that he had been "feeling out" the Israelis and the Egyptians through covert channels to explore whether there was any possibility of secret contacts between the two sides. He had the impression that the Israelis were not willing to accept such contacts. But his conversations with Mr. Sharrett had been ambiguous. Mr. Sharrett had started from the position that no cessions in the Negeb were possible for Israel. His last word had been that he would not enter into negotiations with Egypt committed to cessions but that he was willing to have the Negeb as an item on the Agenda.

2. Mr. Dulles said that Mr. Sharrett had suggested that the best thing might be to wait, say until February, in order to see how Colonel Nasser's attitude toward the Johnston Plan might develop. Mr. Sharrett thought that Colonel Nasser's attitude on this point would be a touchstone of his good faith. In reply Mr. Dulles had spoken strongly to Mr. Sharrett on the dangers of delay. He had said that the next two months would probably be crucial for Israel. At present the scale in the military balance between Israel and the Arab States were more or less level. But delay would worsen Israel's situation. Mr. Dulles thought that Mr. Sharrett had accepted this argument.

3. The discussion then turned on the method by which negotiation between Israel and Egypt might be pursued. The consensus of opinion was that it would be best at the outset for the British and American Ambassadors in Cairo and Tel Aviv to handle negotiations. If there was to be a division of functions, the American Ambassador in Tel Aviv could best approach the Israelis and Her Majesty's Ambassador in Cairo might with advantage go to Colonel Nasser. Mr. Dulles was inclined to think that this was the right approach, but wished to consider the matter further and to take advice upon his return to Washington.

4. Negotiations would continue on this basis, viz., through the Ambassadors in Cairo and Tel Aviv, until the Egyptians and Israelis were sufficiently involved. It was only at that stage that it would be appropriate to arrange for someone to act as a go-between or agent between the Egyptian and Israel Governments. In fact, the Trieste method would then be followed, though the negotiations must clearly be much brisker than those which led to the Trieste settlement. Both the Secretary of State and Mr. Dulles favoured this method as opposed to direct contact which they felt was calculated to lead to a breakdown in the negotiations. The fact that negotiations were proceeding would have to be kept secret as long as possible. A premature disclosure that negotiations were going on might lead to their suspension, especially on the Egyptian side. The possibility was not excluded that the negotiations might take place in London, Washington, Italy or Switzerland, but obstacles to this method were the fact that Colonel Nasser had few subordinates whom he could trust and also the fact of the vulnerability of Egyptian communications.

5. It was agreed in conclusion that Mr. Dulles would consider this matter further upon his return to Washington. This would be convenient because no progress could in any case be made until Mr. Sharrett had returned to Israel and consulted his Cabinet.

December 15, 1955.

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Copy also on Baghdad Pact
S.E. - middle East (Policy) Jan. 1955
and
Youssef Shuadom -
middle East (Policy)
SECRET April 1952

2 copies

Message from Mr. Dulles to Mr. Macmillan

December 6, 1955.

"Dear Harold,

I appreciate very much your message of November 19 and also your firsthand account of the Baghdad Pact meeting with your impressions of the current atmosphere in the Near East. All the participants at the meeting are to be congratulated on the businesslike manner in which the new organization was launched.

We certainly should not lose the impetus which has been developed. At the same time we need to keep in mind our present plans to make another try through Egypt towards an Arab-Israel settlement. I am encouraged by your assessment that the Arabs appear receptive to concrete moves towards a settlement and also by a report from Byroade of a conversation with Nasser in which the latter endorsed Fawzi's encouraging remarks to our two ambassadors. Accordingly, I think that the next order of business should be another major effort to secure Egypt's cooperation in moving towards a settlement.

Sharett is calling on me again on December 6 and I shall stress anew the essentiality of Israel making its contribution to a settlement.

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An immediate move to expand the Baghdad Pact would probably deny us Nasser's cooperation. Therefore, I think we should wait a little before trying to bring in Jordan and Lebanon. If we are not successful in Egypt, we should endeavour to secure the adherence of those two states as soon as possible.

U.S. adherence to the pact would probably have to be coupled with a security guarantee for Israel. My thought is that such a guarantee should not be extended prior to agreement on Israel's permanent frontiers at least on the part of the northern Arab states. Otherwise, we would be giving up our strongest lever for use with Israel in obtaining a settlement.

I was pleased that you mentioned the Buraimi incident as a matter of our mutual concern. I am disturbed by the possibility of this becoming another issue to be seized upon by nations in the area to attack the West and I believe a solution is urgently needed, possibly through a resumption of arbitration with an effective neutral supervisory commission in

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the zone of dispute.

The question of Saudi Arabia's injudicious use of its large oil revenues is a most difficult problem. I believe it would be useful for us to exchange information regarding Saudi activities but it will be difficult for us to reduce or control Saudi Arabia's income.

I am convinced as you are of the necessity of our continuing to work together closely in dealing with your problems in the Near East.

Sincerely yours,

John Foster Dulles"

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TTOP SECRETFROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Makins

No. 2994

D. 1.40 a.m. December 8, 1955.

December 7, 1955.

R. 3.41 a.m. December 8, 1955.

IMMEDIATETOP SECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 2994 of December 7.

Repeated for information to Cairo

Tel Aviv. ✓

My telegrams Nos. 2983 and 2991: Palestine. ✓

Mr. Russell told Her Majesty's Minister this afternoon that Mr. Dulles and he, in discussing yesterday's meeting with Mr. Sharett, had been struck by the following factors in the present situation:-

- (a) some significance could be attached to the facts
- (I) that in stating the Israel Government's objections to submitting to Egyptian pressure over Elath, Mr. Sharett had said that they would not, of course, force this issue if there were real hopes of serious negotiations, and
- (II) that in stating Israel's refusal to contemplate territorial concessions in advance, he had drawn a distinction between these and mutual exchanges of territory by negotiation, the final result of which might even be a net loss to Israel.
- (b) It will not be possible to delay much longer a reply to the Israel request for arms which cannot be completely negative. This will adversely affect the possibilities of a settlement.
- (c) At the same time, Nasser, with assistance for the Aswan Dam within sight, has strong material reasons for wanting a settlement now.
- (d) It is generally agreed that there is not much hope of further progress with Egypt until we have some indication of a willingness to move on the Israel side.

/(e) Mr. Sharett's

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TOP SECRET

Washington telegram No. 2994 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

(e) Mr. Sharett's presence here for another few days present an opportunity for a follow-up of Mr. Dulles' earlier conversation which would carry much more weight than any action in Tel Aviv.

(f) The Israelis are now aware that Mr. Russell has been working for some months on ideas for a settlement.

2. Taking all these factors together, Mr. Dulles has come to the conclusion that this situation presents an opportunity which must not be missed, and has instructed Mr. Russell to see Mr. Shiloah, the Israel Minister, tomorrow and give him some indication of the broad lines of the Alpha proposals, in the hopes that some real progress can be made with Sharett before he leaves.

3. Mr. Russell said that he had wanted to inform us at once of these developments and make certain that we did not at first sight see any strong objection.

4. Her Majesty's Minister said he saw the force of the arguments Mr. Russell had stated in favour of this course, but that he could not of course commit you on them.

5. The meeting with Shiloah is being arranged for 1500 G.M.T. tomorrow. May I please have any comments you wish to make to the Americans before then?

Foreign Office please pass to Cairo and Tel Aviv as my telegrams Nos. 137 and 67 respectively.

[Repeated to Cairo and Tel Aviv].

ADVANCE COPIES:-

Private Secretary
Sir I. Kirkpatrick
Mr. Shuckburgh
Head of Levant Department
Resident Clerk.

SSSSS

SECRET

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

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WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Makins
No. 2991
December 7, 1955.

D: 1.05 a.m. December 8, 1955.
R: 4.18 a.m. December 8, 1955.

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 2991 of December 7.

Repeated for information Saving to Tel Aviv	Cairo
	Amman
	Bagdad
	Beirut
	Damascus
	P.O.M.E.F.

My telegram No. 2983 paragraph 6: Palestine.

Mr. Russell has given the following account of the conversation between Mr. Dulles and Mr. Sharett.

2. Mr. Sharett said he had been taken aback by the upsurging wave of optimism about a settlement. It seemed to have been started in Cairo, but there were indications that State Department were giving encouragement to it. As far as the Israelis were concerned, they had had indirect contacts with Nasser for more than a year and they could see no justification for optimism or any signs of a change of heart in Nasser.

3. Mr. Sharett then said that at the time of Mr. Dulles' speech in August, the Israelis had been assured that territorial adjustments did not mean drastic territorial concessions. The suggestion by Sir Anthony Eden and Mr. Dulles that Israel should now make such concessions was a new departure. At the same time, there was a lot of talk about helping Egypt to build the Aswan Dam. The chronological sequence was such that he could only conclude that the cession of territory and the Aswan Dam were the premium to be paid to Nasser for making an arms deal with the Communists. Mr. Dulles interrupted to say that Mr. Sharett was arguing from false premises: the Aswan Dam had been discussed for two years, and there had been no change since last August in his ideas about the need for territorial changes as part of a Palestine settlement.

SECRETWashington telegram No. 2991 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

4. Mr. Sharett said he was impelled to use the analogy of Munich. Any show of conciliation on Nasser's part was mere playing for time until he could absorb and bring into effective use his Communist arms, and get his loan for the Aswan Dam. The crux of what he, Mr. Sharett, had to tell Mr. Dulles was that there could be no question of Israel ceding territory. He had never been reckoned an extremist, but he had never been so sure of a position as this. No Israel Government or Parliament would accept anything else.

5. He then talked at some length about the Prime Minister's speech which he described as "not only a blunder, but a disaster", since it had encouraged the Arabs to make totally unjustifiable demands.

6. He argued that Israel's attitude, as shown by the memorandum he had handed to Mr. Dulles, was constructive and demonstrated her readiness to negotiate. Nevertheless, it was not a good time for Israel to negotiate. She had no promise of arms to counterbalance the Communist arms given to Egypt, she was under pressure not to exercise her right to use the port of Elath, and she was under pressure to cede territory in the Negev. He said it would be well to wait for two months to see whether Nasser made good his promise to get Syria and Jordan to accept the Johnston Plan. On the question of Elath, he said that Israel could not renounce her right to use her port for normal trade. The request that they should not press this issue was a suggestion that they should submit to Egyptian force.

7. In his reply, Mr. Dulles said that so far as optimism was concerned, he had stated his personal attitude at his press conference that morning when he said: "the gains to come out of a settlement for both sides are immense. We continue to hope that both sides will see the possibilities of such gains in the situation. I would not say there were any concrete developments which could be adduced as proof that they had been so convinced as yet. But the possibilities, in our opinion, still exist."

8. On the subject of territorial changes, Mr. Dulles made the point that the Armistice lines were agreed upon without prejudice to a settlement and were therefore not intended to be

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TSECRETWashington telegram No. 2991 to Foreign Office

- 3 -

final. The Israelis, he said, always explained at great length the difficulties involved in making territorial concessions. He thought there were ways of meeting these difficulties and still providing land communication between Egypt and Jordan. The offer of rights of transit was not enough.

9. A settlement was probably possible only with mediation. The United States was not going to impose herself as mediator but was ready to help. The next two months were far too valuable to waste in waiting. The Egyptians had refused to negotiate from a position of weakness, but their acquisition of Czech arms made them feel that their strength was increasing. At the same time, Israel still had military superiority. There was thus a sort of temporary equilibrium during which an all out effort to reach a settlement should be made. Of the Israel memorandum, he said he had only glanced at it but his first impression was that it was not adequately responsive, though it did show a welcome readiness to negotiate.

10. Mr. Sharett asked whether, in fact, it was suggested that Israel should make drastic territorial concessions. Mr. Dulles at this point said that Mr. Russell had been working on this problem and had come to the conclusion that it would be possible to devise a scheme which would be fair to both sides. (On Mr. Dulles' suggestion, the Israel Minister afterwards had a further discussion with Mr. Russell who argued that there were various possibilities, such as corridors, triangles or a Condominium. There was no desire to impose any scheme on Israel: all that was asked was that she should not start from the position that territorial concessions in the Negev could not be the subject of negotiation). Mr. Sharett said that it was one thing to negotiate, another to be presented with a prejudged plan.

11. Mr. Sharett said finally that he was not leaving the United States until December 13. It was most important that he should be able to take home some word about arms. Mr. Dulles said that the Defence Department were still considering the list submitted by the Israel Ambassador and it was impossible to say anything before they had reported on it.

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PRIME MINISTER

You asked whether, under our latest proposals for a Palestine settlement, Israel was to have any outlet to the sea at Elath.

Under the original Alpha proposals, the Arabs were to obtain two small triangles, with a road for Israel across the point of intersection, in the extreme south of the Negev. Subsequently we came to the conclusion that Egypt would not accept so small a concession of territory. We therefore suggested to the Americans that it might be necessary to provide two much larger triangles further north.

It now appears that Mr. Dulles thinks that Israel may have to give up as much as one-third of the Negev. The idea is that Israel should retain Elath and have guaranteed rights of access, but not a corridor, to it.

It is probable that the Egyptians will accept nothing less than this. It has several advantages over the double triangle. But it will be very difficult for

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the Israelis to accept it and they could only be brought to do so by severe American pressure. The Foreign Office do not wish to press Mr. Dulles on this at the moment, but if he puts the idea forward officially they think that we should support it.

Sen.

Edgar 10

December 7, 1955

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Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

(VR 1076/478G)

December 5, 1955.

TOP SECRET

R 712

My dear Neil,

In your letter of December 1 you asked for a description of our proposals for a territorial settlement of the Palestine affair.

on Part I.
The Alpha proposals, which were described in paragraph 7 (a) of C (55)96 of April 6 and in paragraphs 3 - 7 of C.P.(55)35 of June 11, were agreed with the Americans in March and approved in principle by the Cabinet at its meeting on June 16 (C.M. (55) 15th Conclusions, Minute 6). These proposals were marked by red lines on the map enclosed with my letter of November 25.

Part II

As you will see from the map, the Alpha proposals provide for the cession by Israel to the Arabs of a double triangle of territory in the extreme south of the Negev. The principle underlying these two triangles was explained in paragraph 3 of C.P. (55)35. We soon began to suspect, however, that the Egyptians would not accept so small a cession of territory in the Negev; and the Secretary of State therefore suggested (paragraph 6 of C.P.(55)35) that it might be necessary to apply the double triangle principle further north, so as to link both Egypt and the Gaza Strip to Jordan and provide a fairly large transfer of territory. The Americans had some reservations about this proposal, though they admitted that the small triangles in the south would probably not be sufficient to tempt the Egyptians to make a settlement. It was therefore agreed that we

/should attempt

N. Cairncross, Esq.,
No. 10, Downing Street.

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should attempt to get the Israelis and the Arabs to accept the double triangle principle as the only means of reconciling their conflicting claims on the Negev. If they accepted the principle, the size and location of the triangles could be negotiated at a later stage.

That is how the matter still stands. We have recently learned, however, that Mr. Dulles is now thinking that Israel might have to give up as much as one third of the Negev (see paragraph 6 of Washington telegram No. 2799 of November 17). This idea was represented by the shaded area on the map which I sent you with my letter of November 25. The Americans have not yet put this proposal to us officially, but from conversations with Mr. Dulles' advisers in Geneva, we understand that the idea is that Israel should retain Elath and have guaranteed rights of access (but not a corridor) to it.

It is in fact probable that the Egyptians will accept nothing less than Mr. Dulles' latest idea. The Egyptian Foreign Minister has told us that they will not agree to an Arab corridor through an Israeli Negev, nor to an Israeli corridor through an Arab Negev. Mr. Dulles' idea has several other advantages over the double triangle principle: it is neater, produces a far shorter and more easily defensible frontier, and is less open to public mockery. But it will be very difficult for the Israelis to accept it. They could only be brought to do so by severe and sustained American pressure. It is therefore fortunate that the idea should have originated with Mr. Dulles, and we think we should be well advised not to press him on it for the present. If after due consideration he puts it forward officially as a definite proposal, we think that we ought to support it.

Yours ever
John Graham.

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TS E C R E TInward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations OfficeFROM: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIARPTD: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN

D: 29th November 1955

R: 1st December 1955

No. 172 SAVING SECRETAddressed Commonwealth Relations Office No. 172 Saving,
repeated U.K. High Commissioner in Karachi No. 65 Saving.BAGDAD PACT

In my talk with the Indian Prime Minister on Saturday evening I spoke to him fully as instructed in your telegram No.2565.

2. Nehru was in quiet mood and listened carefully. Then he treated me to a longish exposition of his own well-known views. He said that if there were a threat of Russian military aggression in the Middle East, he could understand our policy. But there was no threat of even a small aggression, because the Russians must know that it would lead to a major war, and they did not wish for that. In any case we had not increased our military strength by making the Pact. American and United Kingdom forces available would provide the only effective defence of the Middle East, and these would not be augmented by the creation of the Pact. The military resources of the small nations in the Pact could not provide effective resistance in any circumstances.

3. Therefore, said Nehru, the Pact had not added to the security of the area. On the other hand it had produced two most unfortunate results; it had:-

- (a) divided the Arab world, which was previously united, and
- (b) given the Russians a chance to woo the disgruntled part of the Arab world, i.e. Egypt and her associates. He did not know to what extent the Pact had created this chance for the Russians, for other elements also entered into the situation; but he felt that it must have been a distinct contributory cause.

4. He felt that the authors of the Pact were repeating the mistake of thinking too much in military terms. He did not charge the United Kingdom with this fault so much as the United States. Military pacts were provocative; they stimulated instead of allaying distrust between nations. Moreover, they were not the proper answer to a Communist threat, especially when they appeared to bolster reactionary regimes such as those in Persia and Iraq. Nehru launched into a criticism of the land-ownership system in Persia. By appearing to give military security to such regimes, he argued, we were presenting Communist and other extreme elements in those countries, perhaps encouraged by the Russians, with an opportunity to develop subversive activities.

5. Economic and social aid was the proper answer to the Communist threat. He appreciated that America in particular had given immense economic aid to various countries, but in some of them

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the aid did not reach the right people. It did not percolate to the peasants. Much of it went on expensive administration, and in reactionary countries like those in the Middle East a lot more went to assisting the already well-off people to become even better off.

6. For India there was the extra objection to the Bagdad Pact that military aid to its member countries involved additional military supplies to Pakistan. The Indians had been deeply concerned when America first promised military aid to Pakistan. They welcomed American aid of other kinds to their neighbour, but military assistance was a different matter. Now the prospect of the United Kingdom also giving extra military aid to Pakistan made the situation much worse. The Indian Government could not overlook the fact that military supplies given to Pakistan might be used against India.

7. I replied that the Russians might well attempt military interference in the Middle East if they were not effectively deterred from doing so. They could encourage internal disorders, and then send in military help of various kinds to assist their friends. Before the creation of the Bagdad Pact they might have thought that they could get away with such activities without the risk of a major war. Now the Pact had given them clear warning that the United Kingdom and the United States of America would support the Arab States in resisting any form of aggression or interference. In view of the evidence of Russian ambitions in the region - which I had recited in my opening remarks referred to in paragraph 1 above - that deterrent was most timely.

8. In addition the Pact gave a sense of security to the Arab States concerned, which would make them confident in their dealings with Russia. Otherwise they might feel that, from a position of comparative weakness, they should make concessions to Communist blandishments and infiltration. The total effect would be therefore to promote a sense of security and calm in the area.

9. I agreed that the Pact had perhaps aggravated a division in the Arab world, but that result was being exaggerated by critics. The division had existed long before, and was due to deeper Arab causes. In any case, the disadvantages of its temporary accentuation was outweighed by the immense advantage of securing the northern tier against Communist penetration. Her Majesty's Government was pursuing policies in other directions calculated to reduce and eventually heal the division in the Arab world.

10. I said that I thought that Nehru's criticism of the Pact as being too military-minded was unfair. Possibly there was a school of thought in America which did think too much in military terms, but they were not the dominant school. President Eisenhower and his administration were showing a most valuable appreciation of the importance of other economic, political and diplomatic factors. The Pact itself was an example of United Kingdom and U.S.A. views on that score. Major emphasis in the recent Bagdad discussions had been placed on the policy of aid in the economic development of the Middle East. I did not know what could be done about the landlord system in Persia, for when countries were independent sovereign nations, it was difficult to advise them about their internal policies. But the whole purpose of our economic programmes under the Bagdad Pact was to assist the ordinary populations in the regions to enjoy better conditions of living.

11. As regards Pakistan, the last thing that Her Majesty's Government would wish would be to upset any military balance between

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India and Pakistan. We must, of course, give help to Pakistan as a partner in the Bagdad Pact, but I could assure him that it would be done in ways which should not give Pakistan an advantage against India in the affairs of this sub-continent.

12. I said that the Bagdad Pact had not hotted up the cold war or spoilt the Geneva spirit in the Middle East. The Pact had been announced early this year, long before the "summit" conference which produced the Geneva spirit. It had not prevented the birth of the Geneva spirit, and for months afterwards that spirit had flourished in the Middle East as elsewhere. The U.S.A. and the United Kingdom were at that time doing their best to encourage a settlement of the Arab-Israel dispute. Then the Russian sponsoring of arms supplies to Egypt had suddenly spoilt the atmosphere and broken the Geneva spirit. The Russians were to blame for the serious deterioration and threat to peace in the area.

13. In Her Majesty's Government's view Nehru could do something to help. He had expressed frankly to us his criticisms of our policy. Would he express with equal frankness to the Russians his criticisms of their policy? He was in a unique position to do so. The Russian leaders were now his guests, they did not wish to offend India or him, for their policy was obviously designed deliberately to gain Indian sympathy and support: so they would listen to what he said. I hoped that he would express to Bulganin and Krushchev India's concern at the Russian policy of stirring up division and trouble in the Middle East.

14. Nehru said that he intended to do so. For various reasons he could not speak to the Russians with the same direct frankness as he used with us. He did not know them so well, they were not such friends, and it was not easy to talk through interpreters. But he would make his views plain. He would tell them what India's policy would be in the Middle East, and by implication criticise the Russian policy.

15. I remarked that whatever method he used to express his views, it should be in words which meant the same thing to the Russians as they did to him and us.

16. Nehru then asked what was our policy for reducing tension between Israel and the Arab States. I spoke on the lines of the relevant paragraphs of your telegram No. W.301. He said that he thought Sir Anthony Eden's Mansion House speech was helpful, and that he has received vague information that Colonel Nasser was quite pleased with the speech. Had we any specific indication of this? I replied that, so far as I knew, there was nothing specific, but a number of indirect indications seemed to show that Egypt was not ill-disposed on the issue. I felt that our policy would gradually bring a greater understanding and reconciliation between Egypt and ourselves.

17. I cannot pretend that my remarks had any influence on Nehru's views on the Bagdad Pact, for his ideas on the subject are fixed. But perhaps he appreciates our views slightly better.

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TELEGRAM TO WASHINGTON

Repeated to Cairo, Tel Aviv.

TOP SECRET

The Prime Minister saw the Israeli Ambassador for a personal interview at the latter's request for an hour on November 23. The Ambassador, who said that he was speaking without instructions, explained the increasing sense of isolation of his country and expressed the fear that the Prime Minister's Guildhall speech meant that Israel was being asked to surrender large areas of territory. Israel was not in a position to make important territorial concessions. She had colonized right up to the edge of her territory.

The Prime Minister replied that he had not attempted to define the concessions which would be necessary from both sides if a settlement was to be reached. They need not in his view involve the loss of land of any substantial value.

The position was that Israel could win a battle against any one of the Arab States and perhaps even against all of them together, but at the end of it

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she would be no stronger. Israel was undergoing a slow choking process. It was the Prime Minister's conviction that the value to Israel of a settlement far outweighed what might be required of her. Not only the new element of Russian arms in the Middle East, but the growing wealth of the Arab States made a settlement more urgent. The Prime Minister told the Ambassador that we were in complete accord with what Mr. Dulles had said to Mr. Sharett in Washington (your telegrams Nos. 2839 and 2840), as of course we had been with his earlier initiative of August 26.

Finally the Prime Minister reminded the Ambassador of the part which the Italian and Yugoslav Ambassadors had played in the Trieste situation two years ago. The sole concern of the British and American Governments was to do anything in their power to bring about a settlement. This could not be done by concessions on one side alone.

A.E.

November 24, 1955

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The Israeli Ambassador asked to see me this afternoon and was with me for an hour. He explained at length and with some feeling the sentiments of his country at this time. Their refusal to compromise with Russia - their increasing sense of isolation from ourselves. It was in this mood and this context that they read my Guildhall speech. They were particularly concerned that, in it, I spoke of Israel surrendering large areas of territory. I interrupted the Ambassador to say that I never said anything of the kind. I had made no attempt to define the areas - I had simply said what I still believe, that if a settlement was to be reached, both sides must make some contribution. The Ambassador said that he ^{was} ~~would be~~ glad to hear what I said, but continued that Israel was not in a position to make important territorial concessions. She had colonized right up to the edge of her territory. It was the planting of the new settlements which was the token of the life of Israel. I ^{replied} ~~told him~~ that as we were not speaking for the record or officially, I wanted to tell him what I thought the true position was.

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I believed that Israel could militarily win a battle against any one of the Arab states and perhaps even against all of them together, but at the end of that adventure, Israel would be no stronger. The Ambassador indicated his assent. On the contrary, the danger to Israel lay in the fact that the Arab states surrounding her had not made peace with her or recognised her and that Israel was therefore undergoing a slow choking process. It was my sincere conviction that the value to Israel of a settlement far outweighed what might be required of her to procure it. I said this, not merely because of the new elements of Russian arms in the Middle East, but because ~~that~~ the growing wealth of many of the Arab states and the pressure upon Israel, made a settlement ever more urgent. The Ambassador asked me about the territorial concessions which I had in mind. I said that I was not in a position to define them, but that in my thought they need not involve the loss of land populated to any appreciable extent of ^{of} land of any substantial economic value.

I asked the Ambassador whether he had had any account

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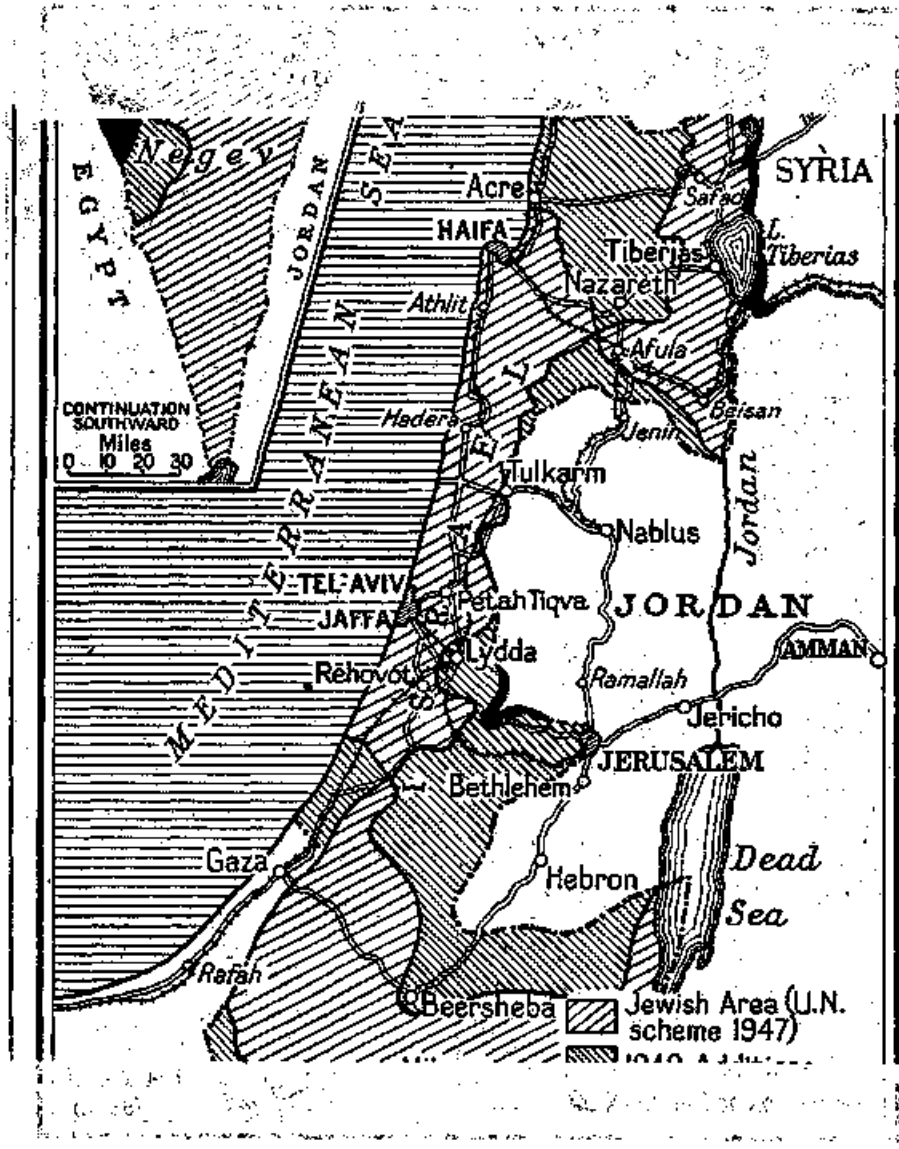
- 3 -

of Mr. Sharett's interview with Mr. Foster Dulles in Washington. He said that he had not. I replied that in due course he would no doubt be receiving one and therefore I would like to tell him now that we were in complete accord with what Mr. Dulles had said as, of course, we had been with his early ^{idea} initiative of August 26. The Ambassador said that he understood this.

Finally, I reminded Mr. Elath of the part played by Mr. Velebit and Signor Brosio in what was also a dangerous international situation two years ago. I hoped that he would be able to influence his Government to understand ^{what} the sole concern of ourselves and, I was sure, of our American friends, was to do anything that lay in our power to bring about a settlement between Israel and her neighbours, but that could not be done by concessions on one side alone.

November 23, 1955.

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TTOP SECRETALPHA

The Prime Minister has asked for a short factual brief on the present phase of the Alpha operation for his interview with the Israeli Ambassador tonight.

2. The Arabs have received the Prime Minister's Guildhall speech very well: it earned the approbation even of Radio Mecca. The Israeli reactions have, as we expected, been bad.

3. On November 10 the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs welcomed the Prime Minister's statement and told H.M. Ambassador that Egypt would in certain circumstances be ready to lead the way towards a settlement. In conversation with H.M. Ambassador on November 12 the Egyptian Prime Minister also spoke very favourably of the Prime Minister's speech and agreed that the British and United States Ambassadors should take the discussion further with Dr. Fawzi at a dinner party on November 16.

4. On this occasion Dr. Fawzi, whilst refusing to commit himself to any form of negotiations, said that we could inform the Israelis that we had reason to believe that the Egyptians might accept a settlement on certain lines. If the Israelis leaked this he would disavow it; but if after discussion with the Israelis we thought there was a "51 per cent. chance of a settlement", the Egyptians would start discussions with other Arab States and decide how to proceed. The Egyptian terms for a settlement, as outlined by Dr. Fawzi, are not greatly different from the Alpha proposals except in the matter of the Negev. It is fairly clear that Jerusalem, the refugee problem and economic questions would not be beyond solution if a satisfactory territorial settlement could be reached. Here Fawzi demanded full territorial continuity between Egypt and

/Jordan

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Jordan without corridors; but the Ambassadors got the impression that the Egyptian position was still open on the exact portion of the Negev which they would regard as their minimum.

5. We suggested to the Americans that the Egyptian attitude was sufficiently encouraging to justify an approach to Israel, to the effect that we had reason to believe that the Egyptians were ready to take the lead, provided the Israelis were prepared to make some concession in the Negev. We should not press the Israelis to offer concessions before negotiations begin; but we would ask them to accept an agenda on which the problem of the Negev appeared as one of the topics for discussion. The idea was that if both sides accepted such an agenda, both would have admitted that their claim on the Negev was negotiable.

6. The Americans have not replied directly to our proposals; but on November 21 Mr. Dulles handed to Mr. Sharrett a memorandum to say, among other things, that "the territorial adjustments referred to in Secretary Dulles' August 26 speech may have to include concessions in the Negev to provide an Arab area joining Egypt with the rest of the Arab world".

7. The Americans believe that it is possible that the Israeli response to Mr. Dulles' memorandum may provide our next stepping stone.

8. The Israelis have not yet been told that we have reason to believe that the Egyptians might negotiate on certain conditions. The Americans believe that it is not safe to tell the Israelis this until we have assured

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ourselves that Colonel Nasser is behind what Fawzi said to our Ambassadors. Past experience shows that they are right to be cautious, in spite of the fact that Nasser knew that the conversation with Fawzi was to take place; on several occasions in the past Dr. Fawzi has said things to us about Palestine which Colonel Nasser has subsequently disowned.



(E. M. Rose.)
November 23, 1955.

Levant Department.

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TOP SECRETPRIME MINISTER

The Arab-Israeli Dispute
(DC(55)53)

In this paper, the Chiefs of Staff recommend that certain steps should be taken to prepare ourselves for the possibility that an Arab-Israeli war may break out in the near future and that we shall become involved in it.

2. The most serious commitment for us would arise if Jordan were attacked and we had to go to her assistance under the terms of the Anglo/Jordan Treaty. Paragraphs 16 to 23 describe our plans for helping Jordan, and the preparatory steps necessary to enable us to implement these plans. The rapid neutralisation of the Israeli air force is an essential first step in the plan. If the conflict were confined to an Israeli attack on Egypt, we should still be committed to help Egypt under the Tripartite Declaration: but we might not be able to operate forces from Jordan territory.

3. Ministers will no doubt agree that, from the purely military point of view, the preparatory steps which the Chiefs of Staff recommend are necessary if we are to be able to fulfil our commitments. The crucial question is that of timing. As the Chiefs of Staff point out in paragraph 24, a demonstration by the Tripartite Powers that they will intervene quickly and effectively will be a powerful deterrent against

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aggression. On the other hand, there is the danger that the already tense situation might be exacerbated by such a demonstration.

Recommendations

4. Paragraph 25. You may feel that the recommendation in paragraph 25 that statements should be made by the Tripartite Powers of their ability and determination to fulfil their Treaty obligations has been overtaken by recent western pronouncements.

5. Paragraph 26. Clearly it is desirable that plans for military action should be concerted with our partners in the Tripartite Declaration. Recent information from Washington suggests, however, that

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of it
the Americans would be reluctant to do more than exercise economic sanctions and join in the blockade of Israel, while France has no military contribution to make. In the circumstances, there is little to be gained by disclosing our military plans in detail to our Allies. Nevertheless the Americans could provide carrier forces in the Mediterranean and could probably help us with the air transport of reinforcements. We should press them to consider these possibilities and also to concert plans for the blockade.

6. Three of the recommendations in paragraph 27, namely, (a), (g) and (j), require only decisions in principle at this stage. The timing of the implementation of these measures will clearly be

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difficult, particularly the despatch of air reinforcements from U.K. and the concentration of the Mediterranean Fleet. It is suggested that the Defence Committee should approve these recommendations as a basis for planning, but emphasise that action must be subject, in ~~each~~ ^{each} case, to the specific approval of Ministers.

7. The remainder of the recommendations require action now. You may feel that recommendations (b) and (c), which involve an approach to the Jordan Government and the stationing of additional air forces in north Jordan, would have a beneficial effect on the Jordan Government and also act as a deterrent to Israel; and that they should therefore be approved forthwith. On the other hand, the approaches to Egypt and the Lebanon recommended in (e) and (f) raise delicate political considerations, on which the Foreign Secretary will doubtless have views.

8. The recommendations in paragraph 27(h) seem reasonable in the light of our commitments, and should not be provocative; you may feel that the Defence Committee should approve them.

M. P. Brown

17th November, 1955.

SECRET

Keep ~~to~~ Wright

her/OTP

FROM BAGDAD TO FOREIGN OFFICE

*12
16/11/55*

M. Wright

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

917
November 15, 1955

D. 4.32 p.m. November 15, 1955
R. 4.58 p.m. November 15, 1955

MEDIATE
CRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 917 of November 15.

Repeated for information to Cairo	Washington
Codel Geneva	Ankara
Beirut	Damascus
Jedda	Tehran
Tel Aviv	P.O.M.E.F.

My telegram No. 887: Palestine.

I had a further talk with Nuri this morning about the Prime Minister's speech and gave him an indication of Nasser's reaction as reported in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Cairo telegram No.1708 to the Foreign Office (not to all addressees).

2. Nuri repeated the assurance contained in my telegram under reference and again said that he wished Nasser to know that he would help and support him in any constructive steps to follow up the Prime Minister's speech. (Incidentally Nuri said that he was not responsible for the Syrian newspapers to which Nasser referred). Nuri continued that if a settlement could be reached on the lines indicated by the Prime Minister, it would be welcomed by a great majority of responsible opinion in Arab countries, although not of course by the extremists. In his opinion it was important to follow up this initiative. If Nasser wished to make any move jointly with Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq (Saudi Arabia might well be hopeless), or alternatively through the Arab League in support of the Prime Minister, Iraq would associate herself with Nasser whether in private or in public. On the other hand, Iraq would not support Nasser in opposition to the Prime Minister's proposal. Meanwhile the Iraqi Government would refrain from public comment.

3. What Nuri thought was required immediately was an endorsement by the United States. Without this Israel would play off the United States against the rest, and we should drift back into a deadlock with all its dangers. He repeated several times that early American support was essential. He added with great

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TSECRETBagdad telegram No. 917 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

earnestness that an honourable peace between the Arab countries and Israel was the great need of the Middle East. It must surely be to Israel's interest to substitute for an uneasy armistice, which might be broken at any time, a real peace which would enable her to trade and establish friendly relations with her Arab neighbours. But Israel would have to contribute something to a compromise settlement.

4. Prime Minister's speech had, for the first time, opened a real possibility of reaching such a settlement. By his reference to the United Nations resolution he had unlocked the door. At the same time the speech had at one stroke undone 50% of the damage caused in the Arab world by Egyptian arms deal with the Communist countries. He hoped it would prove a turning point, and we must make it so.

Foreign Office pass immediate to Cairo, Washington, Codel Geneva, and routine to Ankara, Jedda, Tehran and P.O.M.E.F. as my telegrams Nos. 152, 128, 18, 170, 56, 95 and 298 respectively.

[Repeated to Cairo, Washington, Codel Geneva, Ankara, Jedda, Tehran and P.O.M.E.F.]

ADVANCE COPIES

Private Secretary
Sir H. Caccia
Mr. Shuckburgh
Head of Levant Department
Resident Clerk

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*Do thank Mr. Caccia
(and Shuckburgh)*

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TOP SECRET

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO GENEVA (UNITED KINGDOM
DELEGATION TO THE MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS)

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET
AND WHITEHALL SECRET
(CABINET) DISTRIBUTION

No. 482

November 14, 1955

D. 9.15 p.m. November 14, 1955

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Codel Geneva telegram No. 482 of November 14.
Repeated for information to Cairo P. O. M. E. F. Washington
Bagdad Tel Aviv

My immediately preceding telegram. (Not to all).

Following is suggested line of instructions to Sir H. Trevelyan for dinner meeting with Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs on Wednesday.

1. It seems important not to set too fast a pace especially when dealing with Fawzi alone. Objects of the first meeting might be:-

- (i) to agree upon the broad headings under which the problem must be considered;
- (ii) to find out whether the Egyptians agree that something should soon be said to the Israelis by us about Egyptian willingness to consider a negotiation; and if so what;
- (iii) to start the process of probing Egyptian thought as to their minimum demands.

2. The main elements in any arrangement must be the territorial settlement, the question of refugees (repatriation, compensation and re-settlement), the status of Jerusalem, the end of the state of war and of the blockade, and the guarantees to be applied to a settlement itself. It is clear that the two most difficult and at the same time key questions for Egypt are the territorial settlement and the ending of the blockade. These two questions in fact represent the first bargain which must be struck, i. e. territorial concessions by Israel in return for permanent security and peace on her borders.

3. Territorial settlement. We know that the official Arab demand is for a return to the 1947 United Nations frontiers. We also know that the Egyptians and others would be willing to write-off Western Galilee if the Arab world could obtain territory in the Negev (which was not allotted to them by the 1947 Resolution). From the point of view of Egypt, the problem boils down almost exclusively to the Negev. Their present demand for the "Beersheba line" is unrealistic. But it is clear that they will have to have some part of the Negev if they are to agree to any settlement at all. The Ambassadors will naturally try to find out whether behind their maximum demands the Egyptians have in mind any more moderate method of dealing with the Negev problem, including that of the Israeli port of Elath. It

/would not

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TOP SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No. 482 to Geneva (U. K. Del. to the Meeting of Foreign Ministers)

- 2 -

would not be right for the Ambassadors at this stage to produce proposals of their own, except by way of illustration and without commitment of any kind. But they might suggest to Fawzi that it would be a step forward if the Egyptian and Israeli Governments could both agree to an item on "The problem of the Negev" being included in the list of topics for negotiation. This in itself would imply, on the Israeli side, a willingness to consider concessions there and, on the Egyptian, an admission that their extreme demands are negotiable.

4. On the other side of the picture we must, before we go to the Israelis at all, have a clear idea what the Egyptians are offering. If we are to go to the Israelis with suggestions for territorial concessions by them we must be able to show them clear evidence that a genuine negotiation is intended and that a settlement is possible which will give them real security for the future. While we need not insist that the Arabs should agree in advance to contemplate a complete "peace" with Israel, including diplomatic and commercial relations etc., we must be able to assure the Israelis that the settlement sought would be an overall one and would include abandonment of the active blockade and termination of the state of war (the alleged justification for restrictions on Suez Canal traffic).

5. In discussing with Fawzi the nature of any approach we might make to the Israelis, the Ambassadors might suggest that the first requirement is to draw up a list of topics which both sides would agree should be the subject of negotiation. By means of such a list we could show the Israelis that a genuine and complete negotiation is contemplated. The Ambassadors may think that to produce a list at their first discussion with Fawzi would frighten him but they might offer to work one out for later discussion with Nasser. If, on the other hand, Fawzi seems responsive, they might suggest the headings in my immediately following telegram.

6. The Ambassadors might also discuss with Fawzi some of the procedural problems. These include:-

- (a) at what stage to bring in Jordan and the other Arab countries;
- (b) how we can best operate as mediators.

We suggest that until we reach the point at which an agenda is agreed by both the Egyptians and the Israelis there is no need for any special emissaries. After that it may be necessary to find someone who has access to both sides.

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TSECRETFROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Trevelyan

No. 1715
November 12, 1955D. 11.31 p.m. November 12, 1955
R. 4.59 a.m. November 13, 1955PRIORITYSECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1715 of November 12.
Repeated for information to Tel Aviv Jerusalem
Washington New York (U.K.C.S.).

My telegram No. 1677: Demilitarised Zone.

General Burns has told me that the Egyptian attitude is as follows:-

- (a) They agree to demarcation of the whole of the boundaries of the demilitarised zone, but not of the old international frontiers only;
- (b) They will maintain their checkpoints as defensive posts in their present positions, unless the Israelis remove from the demilitarised zone their military forces and the so-called civil police, leaving only the Kibbutz. If the Israelis do remove these forces, then they will reduce their posts to the status of checkpoints and remove them over the Egyptian frontier where they now project a few metres into the demilitarised zone, thus conforming to the previously sanctioned arrangements;
- (c) They are not ready to remove their defensive positions east of Abu Auweigla/Quesseima (Article 8 (III) of the Armistice Agreement) unless the Israelis abide by the prohibitions on defensive armaments in Article 7 of the Agreement.

2. Burns says that in his opinion the Israeli police attached to the Kibbutz are in fact military personnel, and it is true that the Israelis are not observing the provisions of Article 7 of the Agreement. He considers that the Egyptian attitude is not unreasonable on grounds of their security. He believes that the question of demarcation is only a secondary matter. He says that it would in any case be of no practical use unless both sides previously agreed on withdrawal of forces

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Cairo telegram No. 1715 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

from the demilitarised zone.

3. It appears, therefore, that matters will remain for the present more or less as they are now. The Commander in Chief assured Burns that Egyptian forces had instructions not to open fire unless they were threatened by Israeli attack. After discussion we agreed that he should propose to Nasser that he might send a senior officer to Jerusalem or Gaza, so that discussions could be continued more easily by Burns separately with both sides, direct Israeli/Egyptian discussions being clearly out of the question.

4. Burns has since seen Nasser who took line in paragraph 1 above adding that he had given instructions prohibiting commando operations and opening fire on individuals. Nasser had been non-committal regarding proposal in preceding paragraph.

5. Burns's contacts with the Egyptians here have been very useful. Some Egyptian suspicions have been removed, and he hopes to arrange to visit Egyptian forces in the neighbourhood of the border. He leaves for Jerusalem early November 13.

Foreign Office pass Priority to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem as my telegrams Nos. 166 and 93 and to Washington and New York (U.K.Del.) as my telegrams Nos. 214 and 110.

[Repeated to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Washington and New York (U.K.Del.)]

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET (CABINET)
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Sir H. Trevelyan
No. 1708
November 12, 1955

D. 10.29 p.m. November 12, 1955
R. 11.52 p.m. November 12, 1955

PRIORITY
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1708 of November 12.
Repeated for information to Washington Bagdad P.O.M.E.F.
Codel Geneva Tel Aviv

My telegram No. 1693: Palestine.

I spoke to Nasser today, on the lines of your telegrams Nos. 2587 and 740 to Amman. He replied as follows.

2. He welcomed the Prime Minister's speech, which was the first constructive declaration from the British side since the end of the Palestine war. He had made a statement on these lines to Barber of the News Chronicle. He had told the Egyptian Press to comment favourably on the speech, and in particular to stress the reports of Israeli objections to it. The Israelis were now adopting Russian tactics of smiling and talking about peace, and he had to do the same, but he sincerely wanted peace.

3. He had spoken in favour of the Prime Minister's remarks to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, the Syrian Prime Minister and the Lebanese Foreign Minister, but it was always possible that Nuri would attack him for favouring a settlement. The Syrian paper, Nas, edited by Mohsin el Barazi (?), which was paid for by Nuri and expressed Nuri's point of view, had in the last few days attacked him for favouring a settlement with Israel. He did not worry, but many of his people did. I asked him whether he would like us to get from Nuri an assurance that Nuri would not attack him for any steps which he took in cooperation with us towards a settlement with Israel. I thought that we could get such an assurance, and we should not, of course, put it to Nuri as a request from him. He said that it would be useful for him to have this.

/4. We then

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Cairo telegram No. 1708 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

4. We then discussed methods of procedure. At first he said that we should discuss this matter simultaneously with the other Arab States. Otherwise Egypt might find herself in an awkward position with them. I told him that his Minister for Foreign Affairs had advised me that we should discuss it at first with the Egyptians alone. He said that he would have to discuss this with his Minister. It might be advisable for us to discuss it with them alone in the initial stages, in view of the probability of leaks if simultaneous discussions were going on in all the Arab capitals. In Syria particularly, no secret was ever kept. He quite agreed that my American colleague and I should take the discussion further with the Minister for Foreign Affairs at dinner on the 16th, and that the Minister should be kept in on this. He clearly contemplated, however, that I and my American colleague should take the discussions further with him personally, preferably separately in a way which would not attract attention. He thought that it would be better to make no further public references to discussions being held on this question, as there were plenty of people who would take every opportunity to sabotage them. He could not discuss the matter directly with the Israelis.

5. I assured him that we and the Americans were at one on this question, but he suggested that Zionist influence was affecting American policy. For instance, our spokesman had blamed the Israelis for the Sabha attack, whereas the Americans had blamed both sides. He showed that he was at last beginning to understand the dangers of an arms race resulting from his latest arms deal. He seemed to fear that the Israelis would succeed in buying substantial quantities of arms from the United States. He would then have to buy more arms, which he could not afford, tension would mount, and there would be an explosion. I said that I would not go into the past, but that the only sure way to prevent an explosion was to settle the Israeli question.

6. I said that I was glad to be able to communicate to you his positive reaction to the Prime Minister's statement and your message.

7. I hope that I may now have instructions to open discussions here on the nature of a settlement, and that it can be left to the discretion of my American colleague and myself how we carry on the discussions here.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington, Codel Geneva, Bagdad and Tel Aviv as my telegrams Nos. 213, 4, 156, 165 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington, Codel Geneva, Bagdad and Tel Aviv.]

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TCONFIDENTIALFROM TEL AVIV TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Nicholls

No. 459

November 11, 1955.

D. 5.13 p.m. November 11, 1955.

R. 6.30 p.m. November 11, 1955.

PRIORITY
CONFIDENTIALAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 459 of
November 11

Repeated for information Saving to: Washington.
Cairo.
Bagdad.
Amman.
Beirut.
Damascus.
UKDEL New York.
Paris.

Your telegram No. 771: Prime Minister's Speech.

I spoke accordingly to the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He expressed regret that Mr. Ben Gurion had been unable to see me, as he was resting in Sde Boker and that Mrs. Myerson, as acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, was not available.

2. When I had finished Doctor Eytan said that the speech would no doubt be considered by the Cabinet next Sunday and that Mrs. Myerson would wish to see me thereafter. Meanwhile, he would like to put a few considerations to me.

3. First, he had been struck by the emphasis placed on territorial changes. In Mr. Dulles statement of August 26, these had been touched on simply as one of several subjects requiring settlement and not even the most important. Subsequent elucidations had still further reduced their importance. The Prime Minister now appeared to have put them right in the foreground, and this could only give rise to great anxiety in Israel.

4. I replied that I thought this was a misreading of the Prime Minister's speech. He had, like Mr. Dulles, mentioned refugees and the Johnston plan; but he evidently felt the real problem was the impossibility of getting negotiations started so long as one party said it would only negotiate on the basis of the United Nations partition scheme, while the other refused in advance to consider any change in the Armistice lines. Unless both sides modified their attitudes, there could be no negotiation and without negotiation there could be no settlement.

5. Doctor Eytan then said that the real obstacle to a settlement was the the Arabs did not want one. The Arabs knew that their professed willingness to settle the dispute

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CONFIDENTIAL

Tel Aviv telegram No. 459 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

on the basis of the 1947 Resolutions would never be put to the test. Had we any reason to think that any Arab leaders would really be willing to negotiate on a realistic basis?

6. I replied that that was precisely what the Prime Minister's speech, and your instructions to my colleagues in neighbouring countries were designed to discover. I could, however, tell him that there were indications that some, at least, of the Arab leaders realized that a settlement had to come, and that their insistence in public statements on the 1947 Resolutions was in part at least, a question of public relations and of Arab League compliance.

7. Eytan said that the Israeli Government had always expressed its readiness to negotiate. But they could not accept a position where as a condition of negotiations taking place they would be expected to concede in advance Arab desiderata on what ought to be the subject of those negotiations. I said that I found that quite reasonable, that if the Israeli Government declared in advance that they would never yield an inch of territory, they were doing in reverse precisely what they objected to the Arabs doing. We were not asking Israel to declare publicly her willingness to make territorial adjustments: but we were asking her not to say that she would only negotiate if such adjustments were excluded from the agenda. At the same time I added that it would not be realistic to suppose that there could be fruitful negotiations without some readiness on Israel's part to make concessions on the question of the frontier. The point was that it was only when negotiations were under way that Israel would be able to judge how extensive those concessions would have to be and whether they would be a fair price to pay for peace.

8. Finally, Dr. Eytan asked me what Her Majesty's Government's intentions were. Were they offering to act as mediators or intermediaries, or did they simply intend to see whether the Prime Minister's speech had the desired effect or not? I said that the Prime Minister had expressed his willingness, and that of Her Majesty's Government to help in any possible way. I was sure that we in association with the Americans, would be at the disposal of either side or both, if they wished to find out whether such concessions as they were prepared to make offered prospects of constructive negotiations. I was sure that if either side did so, we should be ready to respect its confidence and not remove those concessions from the field of negotiation by revealing them to the other side as points already conceded.

9. I ended with an appeal for helpful and constructive guidance to the Press.

Foreign Office pass Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, UKDEL New York and Paris as my Saving telegrams Nos. 89, 37, 29, 100, 51, 42, 66 and 121 respectively.

[Repeated Saving to Washington, Cairo, Bagdad, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, U.K.Del. New York and Paris].

I.B.