

No. 219

S/S-NSC files, lot 63 D 351, "NSC 155 Memoranda"

*Statement of Policy by the National Security Council*¹TOP SECRET
NSC 5428

WASHINGTON, July 23, 1954.

UNITED STATES OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES WITH RESPECT TO THE
NEAR EAST *

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Near East is of great strategic, political and economic importance to the free world. The area contains the greatest petroleum resources in the world; essential locations for strategic military bases in any world conflict against Communism; the Suez Canal; and natural defensive barriers. It also contains Holy Places of the Christian, Jewish, and Moslem worlds, and thereby exerts religious and cultural influences affecting people everywhere. The security interests of the United States would be critically endangered if the Near East should fall under Soviet influence or control.

2. Current conditions and trends in the Near East are inimical to Western interests. During recent years the prestige and position of the West have declined. The nations of the Near East are determined to assert their independence and are suspicious of outside interest in their affairs. In particular, the influence of the United Kingdom has been weakened, with distrust and hatred replacing

¹ A note by Executive Secretary of the NSC Lay stating that the National Security Council, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget had adopted NSC 5428 at the 207th meeting of the NSC on July 22, is not printed. The note further stated that the President directed the implementation of NSC 5428 by all appropriate executive departments and agencies of the U.S. Government and designated the Operations Coordinating Board as the coordinating agency.

NSC 5428 was composed of the statement of policy in NSC 155/1 (Document 145) and the statement of policy supplementary to NSC 155/1 contained in a memorandum for the NSC from Lay, dated July 6 (S/P-NSC (Memoranda), lot 61 D 167 "Near East (NSC 5428)"); amended by the Council in NSC Action No. 1184, July 22 (S/S-NSC files, lot 66 D 95, "Record of Actions by the NSC, 1954"). Neither the July 6 memorandum nor NSC Action No. 1184 is printed, but their substance is indicated in footnotes below.

A Financial Appendix, an NSC Staff Study, and a map of the Middle East were enclosed with the source text; none is printed.

* Includes Egypt, Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Israel, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, the Arabian Peninsula Sheikdoms. Iran, the subject of a separate policy statement (NSC 5402), is not included. This paper takes into account the importance of Turkey and Pakistan to the Near East, particularly as regards defense of the area, but does not attempt full coverage of U.S. policies toward Turkey and Pakistan, which are included in other NSC reports (NSC 5402, NSC 109, and NSC 5409). [Footnote in the source text.]